

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

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(Question Serial No. 6543)

Head: (49) Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer: Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene (Miss Vivian LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

Please advise whether the Department has any plan(s) under its 2015-16 estimate to step up the sampling of imported live poultry and the testing of avian influenza; if yes, please also advise on the details, as well as the manpower and expenditure, in this respect; if not, the reason(s).

Asked by: Hon KWOK Ka-ki (Member Question No. 361)

Reply:

Currently, every consignment of imported poultry is subject to a robust regime of inspection and testing for avian influenza (AI). To strengthen early warning against AI infection in imported live poultry, the Government has since April 2013 and January 2014 introduced respectively the Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) tests for H7 AI and the H7 serological tests on top of the then existing tests for H5 AI. The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) will keep in view the need to further step up the sampling of imported live poultry and the testing of AI in 2015-16, taking into account the prevailing AI risk and the latest scientific assessment.

In 2015-16, the estimated expenditure for inspection of imported live poultry is \$8.8 million. A total of 37 staff in FEHD are involved in this area of work.