

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)096

(Question Serial No. 3131)

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:

Under Programme (1), the estimated number of mosquito breeding places eliminated by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department in 2016 is 55 400, which is similar to the number in 2015 (i.e. 55 353). Please advise on the manpower and expenditure involved in eliminating mosquito breeding places in the past three years; whether the 18 District Councils requested the Department to enhance elimination of mosquito breeding places in the past three years (if yes, the districts involved as well as the number of requests made by the respective District Councils); and given that Zika virus infections are rampant mainly in Central America and Latin America, and that *Aedes albopictus* mosquitoes, which are one of the disease vectors, are found in the territory, whether additional resources will be provided by the Department for eliminating mosquito breeding places (if yes, the details; if not, the reason(s)).

Asked by: Hon Alice MAK Mei-kuen (Member Question No. 39)

Reply:

In 2014 and 2015, 49 425 and 55 353 mosquito breeding places were eliminated respectively. The increase in 2015 was attributable to the enhanced mosquito prevention and control measures taken by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (the Department) in public places in response to a number of confirmed local cases of Japanese encephalitis and dengue fever in that year. In addition to about 700 departmental staff responsible for pest control (including mosquito control), the Department engages private contractors to provide pest control services in the territory through roving teams. In the wet season from April to October in 2013, 2014 and 2015, 274, 274 and 266 roving teams (with a workforce of about 1 640, 1 640 and 1 600) respectively were deployed to undertake mosquito control work during that period. The number of local cases of dengue fever in 2014 and 2015 were three and two respectively. The number of roving teams was largely maintained at 274 and 266 in the winter months of 2014-15 and 2015-16 respectively. A total of 32 additional roving teams were deployed to enhance work in this respect during the "Keep Clean 2015 @ Hong Kong: Our Home" Campaign in August and September 2015. The actual expenditure on mosquito control and prevention work in 2013-14 and 2014-15

were \$231.3 million and \$243.1 million respectively. The revised estimate of expenditure in 2015-16 is \$253.8 million.

The Department organises annual anti-mosquito campaigns on a territory-wide basis to enhance public awareness of the potential risk of mosquito-borne diseases; encourage community participation; and promote concerted efforts of government departments concerned in anti-mosquito work. To enlist support and active participation of District Councils (DCs) in the campaigns, DC members have been invited to participate in related events and publicity activities, and offer views on the mosquito prevention and control work. The Department does not have a breakdown on the number of requests for enhancing the anti-mosquito work from DCs. In view of the dengue fever situations of areas neighbouring Hong Kong and the spread of Zika virus by mosquito, we will keep up the work on mosquito control and prevention in 2016-17 with an estimated expenditure of \$247.2 million. The Department will continue to convene district task force meetings with major departments concerned, coordinate joint mosquito control operations and invite DC members' participation in our work in this respect.

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