

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

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(Question Serial No. 0644)

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:

I have received complaints concerning bedbug infestation in Kowloon West districts. With regard to the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department's work on the control and eradication of bedbugs, please advise this Committee of the following:

1. details of the work on the control and eradication of bedbugs, as well as the expenditure involved, in the past three years;
2. whether the Department has assessed the effectiveness of the control and eradication of bedbugs; if yes, the findings of the assessment; and
3. whether professional training, such as training programmes or seminars conducted by experts, or study/interflow visits to countries/regions with notable achievement in bedbug control, was provided for staff engaged in the control and eradication of bedbugs in the past three years; and whether there are plans to organise such activities in the next three years; if yes, the details; if not, the reason(s).

Asked by: Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun (Member Question No. 12)

Reply:

1. Our pest control work focuses on the prevention and control of breeding of disease vectors, including rodents, mosquitoes and other arthropod pests with medical importance. There is at present no known evidence which indicates that bedbug spreads diseases. Bedbug is considered a nuisance pest more commonly found indoors, in such places as the cracks on walls in bed room, folds and tufts of mattresses, the upholstery of chairs and sofa, etc. At present, a good number of private companies that provide pest control services are available in the market. Starting from 2014, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (the Department) has implemented bedbugs preventive measures on furniture disposed of in refuse collection points (RCPs) managed by the Department. A total of 2 780 and 1 375 disinfection operations were performed in the RCPs in 2014 and 2015

respectively. The Department has also closely liaised with Housing Department (HD), provided expert advice on the handling of bedbug infestation to HD according to the situation of individual estates, and held talks on the prevention and control of bedbugs. Moreover, to help the public better understand the problem of bedbug, the Department has uploaded information on bedbug control onto its website, published relevant leaflets for general reference and organized thematic talks for members of the public. The Department does not keep breakdown on the expenditure involved in the disinfestation operations.

2. In 2014 and 2015, the Department received 33 and 27 complaints about bedbug infestation respectively. The bedbug preventive and disinfestation measures now in use are generally effective. There is no indication of bedbug infestation spreading in the community. The Department will monitor the situation closely.
3. Staff of the Department have established contact with experts in other countries and cities through attending international pest control conferences organized by the National Pest Management Association of U.S.A., the Confederation of European Pest Control Associations and the Federation of Asian and Oceania Pest Managers Association, etc. The Department will continue to arrange suitable professional training for its staff to keep them abreast of the latest methods and strategies in pest control.

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