

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)141

(Question Serial No. 0245)

Head: (49) Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

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

Programme: (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

With regard to public niches, please provide information on the following:

- (a) the number of deaths (Hong Kong residents) and the means of disposal of the dead (by burial or cremation) from 2013-14 to 2015-16; and
- (b) the number of applications for public niches in Hong Kong, the number of niches allocated, the total number of applicants on the waiting list for public niches and the average waiting time for a public niche from 2013-14 to 2015-16.

Asked by: Hon Steven HO Chun-yin (Member Question No. 12)

Reply:

The information sought is provided as follows –

(a)

Year	No. of Deaths	No. of Burials	No. of Cremations
2013	43 399	3 573	38 914
2014	45 710	3 477	41 244
2015	46 757	3 355	42 737

- (b) For new niches in public columbaria, there is no waiting list for their allocation. New niches are allocated through computer balloting. Unsuccessful applications would be carried forward automatically to subsequent phases of allocation through computer balloting if the applicant has so requested in the application form. The information sought is as follows –

Year	New niches	
	No. of applications	No. of niches allocated
2013	13 172	12 913
2014	16 321	12 053
2015	11 627	14 573

Note: The year in which new niches are allocated may not be the same as that in which the applications are made.

In the past three years, on average about 280 niches per annum are returned to the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (the Department). These niches are re-allocated according to the priority in the waiting list of the respective columbarium. The information sought is as follows –

Year	Re-allocated niches			
	No. of applications	No. of niches re-allocated	No. of applications on the waiting list	Average waiting time (months)
2013	5 037	230	21 360	45
2014	5 554	193	23 235	54
2015	7 164	394	21 048	45

Note: The average waiting time is dependent on the number of niches that are returned to the Department for re-allocation.

- End -