

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)143

(Question Serial No. 0247)

Head: (49) Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

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

Programme: (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

With regard to the management of public markets, please provide information on the following:

- (a) the expenditure on subsidising public market management from 2013-14 to 2015-16;
- (b) the number of vacant stalls in public markets and the vacancy rate at present; the average and longest vacancy period; the total rental receivable (in terms of open market rental) from all vacant stalls in 2015-16 as compared with the expenditure on subsidising public market management;
- (c) the number of in-house staff involved in the management of public markets; and
- (d) the number of contractors engaged, the manpower they deploy, the types of services they provide and the expenditure involved in the various aspects of market management.

Asked by: Hon Steven HO Chun-yin (Member Question No. 14)

Reply:

The information sought is provided as follows:

- (a) For 2013-14 and 2014-15, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department recorded deficits of \$237.3 million and \$327.8 million respectively in the management of public markets. The deficit in this regard for 2015-16 is estimated to be \$ 317 million.
- (b) "Vacant" stalls refer to stalls that have not been let-out. Not all let-out stalls are in active operation. As at 31 December 2015, 1 290 stalls out of a total 14 439 stalls in public markets were not let out; this represented 8.9% of the total number of stalls. The figure has included those stalls being frozen for various purposes, such as stalls in markets undergoing improvement works or stalls that may be needed for housing

tenants from cooked food hawker bazaars being planned for closure. Information on the average and longest period of vacancy is not readily available. As these stalls cannot be let out for valid reasons, we have not assessed the rental that is otherwise receivable.

- (c) As at 31 December 2015, 256 in-house staff including Non-civil Service Contract staff were involved in the management of public markets.
- (d) As at 31 December 2015, a total of 10 contractors and about 1 500 contractors' staff were engaged in the management of public markets, including venue management, cleansing, pest control and security guard services. The estimated total expenditure involved for 2015-16 is about \$231 million.

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