

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)154

(Question Serial No. 0001)

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:

Please advise on the number of liquor licence applications received and appeals lodged, the average time taken for processing an application and listing an appeal for hearing, the success rate of appeals, as well as the number of liquor licences revoked (with a breakdown by reasons for revocation), in 2013, 2014 and 2015 respectively.

Asked by: Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan (Member Question No. 1)

Reply:

The statistics sought are given below -

Year	2013	2014	2015
Total number of liquor licence applications received (with the number of applications for new licence given in brackets)	8 179 (1 087)	8 630 (1 116)	8 936 (1 236)
Average time taken for processing an application for liquor licence	42 days ¹	37 days	37 days
Number of appeals lodged with the Municipal Services Appeals Board (MSAB)	55	32	28
Average time taken for listing an appeal for hearing ²	84 days	74 days	97 days
Success rate of appeals (i.e. appeals allowed by MSAB) ³	49%	58%	63%

¹ Since November 2012, liquor licence applications are required to be put on the Liquor Licensing Board (LLB) website for 14 days before LLB considers them (on top of requiring the applicants to place advertisement in local newspaper(s) to notify members of the public of the applications). Also, under the new consultation mechanism which took effect in May 2013, in respect of liquor licence renewal / transfer applications for premises which are recorded with objection to the previous

licence application or are the subject of complaints in the preceding 12 months, the District Councillor of the relevant geographical constituency will be consulted as a matter of course. Largely as a result of the above two measures, the average processing time in 2013 has gone up to 42 days from 35 days in 2012. The average processing time has since dropped to 37 days in 2014 and 2015. We believe that this is attributable to the lower number of contested cases in 2014 and 2015.

- 2 This is counted from the date of MSAB receiving the appeal application to the date of the case being heard. The longer average time it takes for appeals to be heard in 2015 was due to the adjournment of some MSAB hearings requested by the appellants for personal reasons as well as an increase in the number of appeal cases for other types of licence received by MSAB in 2015.
- 3 Only appeal cases with MSAB's decision issued before the end of a year are taken into account for calculating the success rate of appeals in that year.

The number of liquor licences revoked in 2013, 2014 and 2015 with breakdown by reasons is provided in the table below.

Reasons for revocation of liquor licence	Number of liquor licences revoked		
	2013	2014	2015
Cessation of business	20	12	15
Licensee leaving without transferring the licence	2	0	0
Breach of licensing condition	5	1	0
Contravention of legislation	0	2	1
Total	27	15	16

- End -