

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)278

(Question Serial No. 3940)

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 the temporary storage service for cremains provided by the Department, please advise on the number of cases with storage period longer than two months, the longest storage period and the total amount of fees collected in the past five years. Please also advise whether there will be an increase in the expenditure for providing the service; if yes, the amount of the increase, the number of additional temporary storage facilities as planned and their storage capacity.

Asked by: Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung (Member Question No. 623)

Reply:

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (the Department) provides service for temporary storage of cremains in all its crematoria free of charge in the first two months following cremation. The duration may be extended upon application at a monthly fee of \$80. In the past five calendar years, there were altogether 243 cases in which the duration of temporary storage exceeded two months. Among these cases, the longest storage time was 41 months. The total revenue collected in the past five calendar years in respect of this service was \$148, 220.

The Department at present has a total of about 23 000 temporary urn storage spaces at the Kwai Chung Crematorium and Wo Hop Shek Columbarium (Phase III & Phase V). An additional 28 000 temporary urn storage spaces will be made available at the old Kwai Chung Crematorium and vacant staff quarters at Cape Collision Crematorium and the Hong Kong Cemetery by stages from Q2 2016 to Q2 2017. In other words, the total number of temporary urn storage spaces will be increased to more than 50 000 in the coming year. We are exploring the feasibility of increasing temporary storage spaces in other venues.