

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)297

(Question Serial No. 6257)

Head: (49) Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

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:

- (1) Please provide information on the following in respect of each of the past two years, with a breakdown by year and District Council district:
 - a. the number of complaints received regarding the illegal display of easy-mount frames and banners;
 - b. the number of illegally displayed easy-mount frames and banners removed;
 - c. the number of owners of illegally displayed materials who were asked to bear the costs incurred and the number of demand notices issued; and
 - d. the number of cases in which penalty notices could not be served on the owners of illegally displayed materials.
- (2) Please advise on the respective costs for removing an easy-mount frame and a banner, the number of current default cases with unsettled payments, and under what circumstances the Government will write off these payments.
- (3) Please advise whether the Government will bear the relevant costs if penalty notices cannot be served on the owners of illegally displayed materials. Please also advise on the amount in this respect.

Asked by: Dr Hon Kenneth CHAN Ka-lok (Member Question No. 388)

Reply:

- (1) The information sought is given below –
 - a. The number of complaints received regarding unauthorised display of publicity materials in 2014 and 2015 was 5 181 and 6 558 respectively. The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (the Department) does not keep a breakdown of the complaints by district.

- b. The number of unauthorised publicity materials removed in 2014 and 2015 was 3 002 810 and 2 885 562 respectively, including 4 885 and 28 253 easy-mount frames with display of unauthorised publicity materials respectively. The Department does not keep a breakdown, by district, of the unauthorised publicity materials removed.
- c. & d. The Department identifies the beneficiaries based on the information shown on the unauthorised publicity materials. If the beneficiaries of the unauthorised publicity materials cannot be identified, no demand notes would be issued. The number of demand notes issued in 2014 and 2015 was 643 and 1 495 respectively. The Department does not keep a breakdown, by district, of the demand notes issued. Nor does it keep information on the number of owners on whom the Department has or has not served demand notes.
- (2) The Department recovers the removal cost from the beneficiaries of the publicity materials removed in accordance with section 130 of the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Cap. 132). The removal cost includes the cost of labour, transport, supervision and departmental charges, and will be apportioned among the beneficiaries of the publicity materials removed during the same operation. The removal cost for each publicity material removed depends largely on the number of publicity materials removed in the operation. In 2015, 109 out of 1 495 demand notes issued have not been settled as at February 2016. There are well established Government-wide guidelines on write-off based on which the Department considers if the circumstances of a payment arrear justify a decision to write-off the arrear.
- (3) If the unauthorised publicity materials removed do not contain sufficient information for identifying the beneficiaries, the removal cost concerned will be borne by the Department. The Department does not keep a breakdown of the costs involved.

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