

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)354

(Question Serial No. 4673)

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:

It is stated that the Department will “assist FHB (Food and Health Bureau) in developing proposals for improving the operating environment of public markets, taking into account the recommendations of the consultancy study conducted in 2014”. In this connection, please provide information on the following:

1. the manpower and expenditure for implementing the proposals; and
2. given that the Department has consulted the Market Management Consultative Committees of Sheung Fung Street Market and Lockhart Road Market, the estimated earliest time for commencement of the improvement works.

Asked by: Hon WU Chi-wai (Member Question No. 75)

Reply:

The Consultant commissioned by the Food and Health Bureau put forward recommendations on the functions and positioning of public markets, ways to improve their operating environment and the modes of management of public markets. The Consultant selected six representative markets for detailed study and put forward specific improvement recommendations. The six markets are Tsuen Wan Market, Yau Ma Tei Market, Ngau Chi Wan Market, Sheung Fung Street Market, Lockhart Road Market and Wing Fong Street Market. The Government is following up the specific improvement proposals for these markets in phases. Specifically, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (the Department) consulted the Market Management Consultative Committees (MMCCs) of Sheung Fung Street Market and Lockhart Road Market in the fourth quarter of 2015 on the recommended improvement works. The MMCCs expressed support for some of the proposals that do not require temporary closure of stalls or suspension of business. The Department is carefully considering their views and will conduct feasibility studies and seek funding according to the established mechanism for taking forward the improvement works at those two markets, and the implementation timetable will be worked out accordingly. We will start following up the Consultant's recommended improvements for the other four

markets in 2016-17. The experience gained and the improvement recommendations taken forward will serve as reference for pursuing improvements to other similar markets in future.

Apart from the improvement works for the six markets selected by the Consultant, we have been implementing various improvement works in public markets to improve the operating environment. In 2016-17, in addition to regular maintenance and daily management of markets, the Department will carry out improvement works in Fo Tan Cooked Food Market (East), Fo Tan Cooked Food Market (West), Kwun Chung Market, Haiphong Road Temporary Market, Pei Ho Street Market and Tsuen Wan Market. The estimated cost of these improvement works is \$68.5 million. The works may include installation of a goods lift, improvement of ventilation, lighting systems and fire services, refurbishment of external wall and refurbishment of toilets.

In addition, to ensure the smooth operation of lift and escalators in the public markets, we have plans to replace by phases lifts and escalators which are over 20 years old. We have earmarked \$115 million to replace 12 lifts and 34 escalators in 16 markets, and will start the replacement work in 2016-17.

The Consultant also suggested implementing some non-physical improvement measures relating to the management, hygiene, as well as marketing and promotion of public markets. As pointed out by the Consultant, the pursuit of these non-physical measures will incur additional costs, require additional resources for management, and require the setting of priorities for implementation. On the management of public markets, the Department agrees with the Consultant that priority should be given to tackling inactive stalls and keeping markets clean and hygienic in general. On marketing and promotion, the Department has been organising various promotional activities in public markets, including festive promotions, games booths, cooking demonstrations and distribution of souvenirs. The Department will sustain its promotional efforts with a view to increasing customer flows in public markets and improving business viability.

The above work will be undertaken by existing staff. The estimated cost of market promotional activities in 2016-17 is \$7 million. The Department plans to create an additional 13 civil service foreman posts in 2016-17 with an annual expenditure of \$3 million to strengthen the existing manpower in market management.

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