

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**FHB(FE) 328**

**(Question Serial No. 4638)**

Head: (49) Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

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

Programme: (1) Food Safety and Public Health

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

Under the co-operation agreement between the Department and the Shenzhen Entry-Exit Inspection and Quarantine Bureau, frozen meat imported into Hong Kong from overseas are allowed to be stored temporarily in Qianhaiwan Bonded Port Area (QBPA) in Shenzhen. In this connection, please provide information on the following:

- (1) the items of expenditure and amounts incurred for implementing the agreement in 2016-2017, and the estimated expenditure for 2017-2018;
- (2) details on inspections of frozen meat by the Department at the control point, including the rate of sampling and number of tests conducted;
- (3) whether the Department plans to monitor the implementation of the agreement at Qianhai; whether measures will be taken for continued surveillance of the operation of cold stores in QBPA (if yes, the details); and whether surprise checks will be considered (if yes, the estimated expenditure);
- (4) the Department's hygiene requirements for cold stores in QBPA; whether the requirements on temperature control, facilities standards, etc. are identical with the existing statutory requirements for cold stores in Hong Kong (if not, the difference(s) and the reason(s)); and
- (5) tabulated information on the names of approved and unapproved cold stores in QBPA, including their respective sizes and operators, and the reason(s) for rejection.

Asked by: Hon KWOK Ka-ki (Member Question No. 142)

Reply:

- (1) The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) is responsible for carrying out food import control measures, including frozen meat imported under the co-operation agreement (the

Agreement) between FEHD and the Shenzhen Entry-Exit Inspection and Quarantine Bureau. There is no breakdown of expenditure for implementing the work related to frozen meat imported under the Agreement.

- (2) – (4) Under the Agreement, frozen meat imported from overseas into Hong Kong may be stored temporarily in Qianhaiwan Bonded Port Area (QBPA) for subsequent delivery into Hong Kong in batches. The Mainland authorities are responsible for the inspection and quarantine of frozen meat transhipped through QBPA, including monitoring the facilities and temperatures of cold stores in which the frozen meat is kept, to ensure hygiene and food safety. The requirements of storage in QBPA are consistent with Hong Kong's licensing requirements for cold stores, including among others requiring frozen meat to be kept at a temperature of -18°C or below.

Lorries transporting the frozen meat cargoes from QBPA must enter Hong Kong via Man Kam To Control Point for inspection by CFS. Every consignment of frozen meat that has been stored in QBPA, upon entry into Hong Kong, must be accompanied by a health certificate and a transhipment certificate issued by the relevant authorities, certifying that the frozen meat was properly imported into QBPA and did not suffer any spoilage or deterioration during its stay there. CFS adopts a risk-based approach in conducting food surveillance, where samples are taken for testing as required.

- (5) At present, there is 1 registered cold store for temporary storage of frozen meat in QBPA under the Agreement. The cold store is operated by China Merchants International Cold Chain (Shenzhen) Co. Ltd. and has a floor area of about 1 750 square metres.

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