

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)376

(Question Serial No. 3928)

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:

With regard to the work of continuing to enhance the viability of public markets by improving the management and upgrading the facilities of public markets, please advise this Committee on the following:

- 1) details of the work on providing “a more flexible” mix of trade, and of the promotional activities carried out by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (the Department) in the past year;
- 2) given that the Government planned to increase the Department’s manpower to enhance the management of markets last year, details of the manpower for market management and its change in each of the past 3 years and in the coming year;
- 3) whether the Department has reviewed the current average staffing expenses for managing markets of different sizes; whether there is any plan to enhance the efficiency of management; and
- 4) with regard to the work of developing proposals for improving the operating environment of public markets, taking into account the recommendations of the consultancy study conducted in 2014, the details as well as the manpower and expenditure in this respect in 2017-18 and 2018-19.

Asked by: Hon WU Chi-wai (Member Question No. 95)

Reply:

The information sought is provided as follows-

- (1) In early years, public markets were built by the 2 former Municipal Councils to resite on-street hawkers so as to improve environmental hygiene. The trade mix of resitees was a major factor affecting the commodities to be sold in public markets from the outset. Generally speaking, in considering the appropriate trade mix, we aim to cover key categories of daily provisions that the community would normally procure from

public markets such as vegetables, fruits, fish, meat and poultry, etc. To provide a more flexible mix of trade, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) introduced a greater variety of service trade stalls to enhance the occupancy rates of public markets. In 2016-17, we successfully let out stalls for conducting service trades such as Chinese medicine practitioners / bone-setters' clinics, computer-related services, beauty / manicure / massage parlours, laundry delivery services, etc. in a number of public markets. In parallel, FEHD continued with promotional activities to enhance the patronage of public markets. These include festive celebrations, thematic activities, display of multi-language recipes, publication of booklets to provide updated market information as well as other promotional activities that could help attract members of the public to visit the public markets.

- (2) Information on the manpower deployed for market management in the past 3 years and in the coming year is given below-

Manpower	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18 (Estimate)
Civil Servant	115	115	128	128
Non-civil Service Contract Staff	81	81	79	79
Contractors' Staff	188	180	183	183
Total	384	376	390	390

- (3) Deployment of market staff is district-based. In determining the number of management and cleansing staff in each district, FEHD will consider factors including the number and size of markets, number of market stalls, facilities available in the markets and market conditions. We have been monitoring the expenditure for managing markets closely, and will continue to explore possible ways to further enhance efficiency.
- (4) The Consultant commissioned by the Food and Health Bureau selected 6 representative markets for detailed study and put forward specific improvement recommendations. FEHD is following up the improvement proposals in phases in consultation with the Market Management Consultative Committees of these markets. In 2017-18, FEHD plans to commence improvement works for Lockhart Road Market at an estimated project cost of \$21.2 million. For Sheung Fung Street Market, the scope of improved works is being finalized in consultation with relevant departments.

The Consultant also suggested implementing some non-physical improvement measures relating to the management, hygiene, as well as marketing and promotion of public markets. On the management of public markets, FEHD agrees to the suggestions of the Consultant and has given priority to tackling inactive stalls and keeping markets clean and tidy in general. On marketing and promotion, FEHD has been organising various promotional activities in public markets, including festive promotions, games booths, cooking demonstrations and distribution of souvenirs. FEHD will sustain its promotional efforts with a view to increasing customer flows in public markets and improving business viability. In 2017-18, the estimated expenditure for market promotional activities is \$7 million.