

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**FHB(FE)138****(Question Serial No. 1495)**

Head: (49) Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

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

Programme: (4) Public Education and Community Involvement

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

With regard to the green burial services, please advise this Committee of the following:

1. the number of cases of using the services of scattering cremains in the Gardens of Remembrance and scattering cremains at sea, the utilisation rate, and the percentage of these cases over the number of deaths in each of the past 3 years;
2. whether assessment has been made on the effectiveness of the efforts to promote green burial, and whether policy objectives regarding green burial will be formulated; if yes, the details; if not, the reason(s); and
3. the manpower and expenditure involved in implementing the Department's work plan for promoting the green burial services in the coming year.

Asked by: Hon CHIANG Lai-wan (Member Question No. (LegCo use): 11)

Reply:

1. The information sought is provided as follows –

Year	Number of cases	Scattering of ashes			Percentage of total no. of deaths
		In Gardens of Remembrance*	At sea	Total	
2015	3 196	877	4 073	8.7%	
2016	4 004	900	4 904	10.5%	
2017	4 966	966	5 932	12.9%	

*Managed by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD)

2. The efforts we made over the years to promote green burial are bearing fruit. The number of green burial cases handled by FEHD in 2017 accounts for about 12.9% of the total number of deaths in Hong Kong, as compared to 4.6% in 2010. Taking into account green burial cases handled by private cemeteries, the aggregate number in 2017 accounts for 14.3% of the total number of deaths that year.

Green burial remains an important aspect of Government's policy on post-death arrangements, as it is a more sustainable way to dispose of cremated human ashes given scarce land resources in Hong Kong. We will continue to improve green burial facilities and services, engage community stakeholders for support and step up our publicity and public education efforts.

3. In 2018-19, green burial promotion will be coordinated by a dedicated team, comprising 5 officers and other supporting staff. The estimated amount of provision earmarked for promoting green burial in 2018-19 is about \$15.4 million.

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