

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)148

(Question Serial No. 3525)

Head: (49) Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

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

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:

With regard to environmental hygiene and related services, please provide information on the following:

- (a) the Department's estimated expenditure and manpower resources for the provision of cleansing services in 2018-19 (including the expenditure on various cleansing services as well as the number of contractors, in-house staff and contractor staff), with a breakdown by type of services; and the changes in expenditure and manpower over the past 3 years;
- (b) the details of the programme, the progress of trial use and implementation, as well as the difficulties anticipated to be encountered upon the introduction of automated cleaning machines or technology, i.e. "using automation to enhance efficiency: exploring the introduction of automated cleaning machines or technology for trial use at suitable venues or after large-scale events" as mentioned in the Policy Address; and
- (c) whether there are any measures to encourage the cleansing-related industry to introduce automated cleaning machines or technology to enhance efficiency as cleansing workers are getting old in Hong Kong where the problem of ageing population is becoming increasingly serious in recent years; whether consideration will be given to providing relevant assistance and skills training courses to the industry.

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (Member Question No. (LegCo use): 71)

Reply:

The information sought is provided as follows –

- (a) The estimated expenditure of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (the Department) in providing public cleansing services in 2018-19 is \$3,091 million. A total of 10 800 staff, including 2 920 in-house staff and 7 880 contractors' staff, are involved in providing these services. Comparing the expenditure on a year-on-year basis, there is an increase of about 7.0% in 2016-17, 7.7% in 2017-18 and 14.9% in

2018-19 respectively. In terms of headcount, the level of manpower provision on a year-on-year basis is maintained at a similar level during this period.

- (b) The Department is looking for suitable equipment/machineries for providing street cleansing services. Examples like leaf blowers, walk-behind mini-street sweepers, and pressure washer surface cleaners will be incorporated into the street cleansing contracts upon renewal.

The Department has recently commenced a trial on solar-powered compacting refuse bins for use at suitable bin sites in rural areas, and on the use of mini-street sweeping vehicle to enhance street cleansing services. The Department is also exploring the feasibility of introducing other machines or equipment such as vacuum litter collector, mini-refuse compactor, etc.

- (c) The outsourcing policy of the Department aims at achieving greater cost-effectiveness and efficiency in the delivery of services. Through the imposition of a mandatory requirement on use of machines in delivery of services, the contractors are motivated to explore suitable equipment/machines to enhance quality of service. The contractors would provide necessary and appropriate training for their staff.

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