

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**FHB(FE)210**

**(Question Serial No. 2064)**

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:

The Government is committed to developing Kowloon East into a new core district with a range of commercial, recreational and tourism facilities. The Kai Tak Development implemented since 2007 has helped promote economic development and revitalise the old districts. With the emergence of new commercial buildings and restaurants in Kwun Tong and Wong Tai Sin, hygiene problem has become a matter of concern in the districts. The rodent problem is particularly serious in San Po Kong of the Wong Tai Sin District. Although the District Councillor of the constituency has repeatedly reflected the situation to government officials and conducted inspections with them, no improvement has been made.

One of the matters requiring special attention in 2018-19 as stated by the Department is to “continue to take forward initiatives to enhance pest control services to prevent vector-borne diseases”. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following:

1. the manpower and expenditure to be allocated by the Department to enhance pest control services in the new financial year;
2. whether expenditure or additional manpower will be earmarked for the establishment of a special working group in the new financial year to strengthen publicity work at various rodent blackspots; and
3. as the rodent problem has shown signs of worsening, whether new initiatives will be implemented to tackle rodent infestation effectively at the district level.

Asked by: Hon TSE Wai-chun, Paul (Member Question No. (LegCo use): 9)

Reply:

1. The estimated expenditure in 2018-19 in rodent prevention and control is \$194.3 million. In addition to about 700 departmental staff deployed to pest control (including rodent control), the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (the Department) engages service contractors to provide pest control services in the territory through some 290 roving teams with a workforce of about 1 740.

2. To intensify district rodent prevention and control work, the Department launched 2 two-month anti-rodent operations in designated target areas in all districts in May and September 2017, and adopted multi-pronged strategies to combat the rodent problem, including elimination of food sources and hiding places of rodents, as well as blocking their passages, so as to work for a clean and hygienic community. The Department also stepped up public education and publicity during the operation and arranged health talks for building management offices of private buildings, persons-in-charge of food premises, and market and hawker stall operators to provide information and technical advice on rodent prevention and control. Anti-rodent operations in designated target areas will continue in 2018 in which public education and publicity will also be stepped up.
  
3. The Department has been adopting an integrated approach in the prevention and control of rodents through cleansing, rodent elimination, enforcement as well as publicity and public education. This approach is premised on the recommendations and technical guidelines of the World Health Organisation (WHO) and is in line with that adopted by the Mainland and other countries, like Malaysia, Singapore, as well as countries in Europe and North America. The Department will continue to keep in view the methods of disease vector surveillance, prevention and control recommended by WHO and adopted by other cities. We keep an open mind on adopting or trying out methods that are suitable for use in local circumstances for further improving the effectiveness of our rodent infestation survey, as well as prevention and control work. The Department will also continue to enhance rodent control work and launch district-specific rodent control measures, including further rounds of anti-rodent operations in designated target areas, publicity and educational programmes to promote greater community involvement, in addition to the regular pest control work and annual territory-wide publicity campaigns.

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