

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)313

(Question Serial No. 3883)

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 the service of temporary storage of cremains provided by the Department, please advise this Committee of the following:

- (1) the number of cases with storage period longer than 2 months in the past 5 years;
- (2) the longest storage period;
- (3) whether there will be an increase in the expenditure for providing the service; if yes, the amount of the increase; and
- (4) the number of additional temporary storage facilities planned and their storage capacity.

Asked by: Hon CHEUNG Chiu-hung, Fernando (Member Question No. (LegCo use): 2059)

Reply:

The information sought is provided as follows –

- (1) & (2) The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (the Department) provides service for temporary storage of cremains in all its crematoria free of charge in the first 2 months following cremation. The duration may be extended upon application at a monthly fee of \$80. In the past 5 calendar years, there were altogether 735 cases in which the duration of temporary storage exceeded 2 months. The longest storage time was 47 months.
- (3) & (4) In 2018-19, the temporary storage service will be provided with existing resources. The estimated expenditure for cemeteries and crematoria services is about \$331 million. There is no separate breakdown for temporary storage service.

The Department at present has a total of some 28 000 temporary storage spaces at the Kwai Chung Crematorium, Wo Hop Shek Columbarium Phases III and V, and the vacant staff quarters at Cape Collision Crematorium and Hong Kong Cemetery. About 40 000 additional temporary urn storage spaces will be made available by stages in 2018 and 2019 at the vacant old Kwai Chung Crematorium, Wo Hop Shek Columbarium Phase V, the vacant store rooms at Fu Shan Columbarium, Cape Collinson Columbarium, Kwai Chung Columbarium and the new columbarium at Wo Hop Shek Cemetery (Phase 1). We are exploring the feasibility of increasing temporary storage spaces in other venues.

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