

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)089

(Question Serial No. 0306)

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:

Regarding pest control services, please set out:

- I. the number of in-house staff of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department who were responsible for work relating to the provision of pest control services, and the expenditure involved, in the past 3 years;
- II. the number of pest control services provided by service contractors engaged by the Department, the service items, the number of staff employed and the expenditure involved in the past 3 years; and
- III. the details of various types of work on pest control carried out by the Department (including the venues, item descriptions and manpower) in each of the past 3 years, with a breakdown by District Council district.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hoi-yan (LegCo internal reference no.: 24)

Reply:

- I. The total number of in-house staff of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (the Department) responsible for pest control work for 2016, 2017 and 2018 was 702, 702 and 699 respectively. The expenditure for pest control services for 2016-17, 2017-18 and 2018-19 was \$544 million, \$569 million and \$637 million respectively. The Department does not keep separate breakdown on the expenditure relating to its in-house staff.
- II. The Department currently procures a total of 19 contracts for pest control services. Total workforce of outsourced pest control services for 2016, 2017 and 2018 was about 1 680, 1 740 and 1 860 respectively. The outsourced pest control services provided by the contractors include the prevention and control of mosquito, rodent and

other arthropod pests with medical importance, including patrolling and eliminating potential breeding places, applying larvicides to mosquito breeding places, carrying out control measures against adult mosquito, biting midge or other adult insects by fogging, cutting grass, wild growth and other vegetation, as well as carrying out surveys and control work of rodent and other pests, etc.

The expenditure for pest control services contracts for 2016-17, 2017-18 and 2018-19 was \$268 million, \$277 million and \$321 million respectively.

- III. Pest control work, such as the control of mosquito, rodent and other disease vectors, is carried out by the Department. The Department carries out a series of operations including removal of water accumulation, as well as mosquito prevention and control work at potential breeding places over the territory. Emphasis will be placed on locations in close proximity to human residences, schools, construction sites, public housing estates, hospitals, illegal cultivation sites, waterfront public and private cargo working areas, cross boundary check points, typhoon shelters and cross boundary ferry terminals. The Department adopts multi-pronged strategies for rodent disinfection in designated target areas through elimination of the survival conditions of rodents, namely food, harbourage and passages, by improving environmental hygiene, stepping up rodent disinfection and enforcement actions. Emphasis will be placed on locations at markets, municipal services buildings, hawker bazaars, typhoon shelters, lanes adjacent to food premises and other problematic spots as well as their surroundings. For effective control of disease vectors, the prevention and control measures will be targeted at sites where the pest frequents. There is no breakdown on the various types of pest control work carried out by the Department by District Council district.

The Department carries out vector surveillance programmes to monitor the distribution and seasonal variation of vector mosquitoes and rodents including vector surveillance of dengue fever, Japanese encephalitis and malaria as well as rodent infestation surveys, rat-flea surveys and ad hoc surveys on other insect pests. In response to vector-borne diseases, the Department also conducts vector surveys in surrounding areas of all locations visited by the patients. The Department will continue to step up public education and publicity as well as provide support and technical advice to other departments on mosquito and rodent prevention and control. It also provides training to staff of other departments to enhance their knowledge and skills in pest control.

The Department has been proactively applying technologies in the provision of pest control services. Dedicated staff will be assigned to explore technologies for trial use with a view to assessing their applicability and effectiveness before putting them to use in the territory.

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