

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)132

(Question Serial No. 1140)

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:

It is mentioned under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2019-20 in the Programme that the Department will roll out the Enhanced Public Toilet Refurbishment Programme to improve the design and facilities of existing public toilets by phases. It is also proposed in the Budget that the Government “will allocate more resources to the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department for refurbishing its public toilets by phases, improving ventilation and other facilities, as well as enhancing their cleanliness and hygiene. It is estimated that a total expenditure of over \$600 million may be incurred, involving about 240 public toilets in the coming five years.” Please advise this Committee on:

- (a) the expenditure and manpower deployment to be involved in the plan, as well as the details and schedule of implementation;
- (b) the 10 public toilets with the highest usage and their usage rates in each of the 18 districts in the past 3 years;
- (c) the 10 most heavily complained public toilets and the number of complaints in each of the 18 districts in the past 3 years;
- (d) the manpower deployed for each public toilet in each of the 18 districts as it is understood that there are generally 3 categories of manpower deployed for public toilets depending on their usage rates, namely 1. toilet attendants; 2. roving cleansing teams; and 3. toilet attendants and roving cleansing teams alternatively (e.g. toilet attendants in the daytime and roving cleansing teams at night);
- (e) the procedures of referring to the Architectural Services Department (ArchSD) by the Department for repairs of damaged facilities at public toilets reported by its contractors;
- (f) the number of reports of damaged facilities at public toilets in each of the 18 districts in the past 3 years, as well as the average time lapse between the referral of damages reports and the completion of repairs;

- (g) the list of 240 public toilets to be refurbished as well as the selection criteria and procedures (e.g. consulting District Councils);
- (h) whether the Department will consider consulting 18 District Councils or relevant organisations and compile a priority list for improvement of public toilets with higher usage and more serious problems; and
- (i) whether the Department will consider engaging an independent third-party (e.g. District Councils or consultancy firms), other than the ArchSD which is normally responsible for the design and maintenance of public toilet facilities, to participate in the design and supervision of public toilets, so as to enhance their standards.

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 2)

Reply:

- (a), (g)-(h) About 240 public toilets will be refurbished or facelifted in the coming 5 years from 2019-20 to 2023-24 with an estimated capital expenditure of \$600 million. 26 additional staff (comprising 11 civil servants and 15 contract staff) will be deployed to implement the refurbishment programme, incurring an estimated annual expenditure of about \$19.8 million. The list of these public toilets is being worked out with regard to their conditions and level of utilisation. We plan to commence the refurbishment or facelifiting works for about 40 public toilets in 2019-20. Further details such as the location and geographical distribution, as well as the estimated cost of the works of these toilets will be available at a later stage. The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) will consult the relevant District Councils on refurbishment of public toilets, including the layout, duration of the refurbishment works as well as temporary arrangements during closure.
- (b)-(c) FEHD does not keep a list of the top 10 public toilets with the highest utilisation in each of the 18 districts nor the top 10 public toilets with the largest number of complaints. Amongst the 799 public toilets managed by FEHD, 207 have a high utilisation rate (a daily average of over 300 visitors). The number of public toilets with a high utilisation rate is set out at Annex.
- (d) Amongst the 799 toilets managed by FEHD, 264 are provided with toilet attendants, and a total of some 900 toilet attendants are employed by its service contractors. The remaining toilets are cleansed by about 40 mobile cleansing teams involving a total of about 110 cleansing workers.
- (e)-(f) FEHD's staff inspect daily the hygiene, cleanliness and other conditions of public toilets. In respect of minor defects or damage, the cleansing contractors will carry out minor repairs or replacement within 24 hours. For more serious cases, FEHD's staff will notify the Architectural Services Department (ArchSD) or the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department for arranging

repairs as soon as possible. FEHD does not maintain a consolidated list of damaged facilities at public toilets.

- (i) On design of public toilets, FEHD and ArchSD have set up a working group to work on design of toilet facilities which may best suit users and individual toilets. FEHD would continue to work in close partnership with ArchSD and engage stakeholders to tap their views.

To continue to monitor contractors' performance, FEHD will also conduct routine and surprise inspections to public toilets. If FEHD finds a contractor in breach of contract provisions, it will take appropriate follow up actions including the issuance of verbal warnings, written warnings and default notices with deduction of monthly payment of service charge. Since November 2018, FEHD has stepped up surprise inspections of cleansing and other public hygiene services provided by outsourced service contractors to better monitor the quality of services. FEHD considers that the above enhancement measures can effectively improve the supervision of toilet services and a review on how to further enhance cleanliness of public toilets can be carried out at a later stage. In parallel, FEHD is stepping up public education on proper use of toilet facilities.

- End -

Number of public toilets with a high utilisation rate

District	Number of Public Toilets
Central and Western	30
Wan Chai	18
Eastern	9
Southern	7
Yau Tsim Mong	13
Sham Shui Po	7
Kowloon City	15
Wong Tai Sin	3
Kwun Tong	4
Kwai Tsing	7
Tsuen Wan	4
Tuen Mun	7
Yuen Long	20
North	14
Tai Po	15
Sha Tin	7
Sai Kung	5
Islands	22