

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**FHB(FE)170**

**(Question Serial No. 0191)**

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 number of poison treatments of rodent infestation in building blocks and the number of rodent trappings in 2018 both increased substantially as compared with 2017. Please advise on the details and effectiveness of the relevant work. Regarding rodent control, what are the Department's specific work plan and timetable in 2019? Please advise on the details of the work, the manpower involved and the estimated expenditure.

Asked by: Hon LEE Kok-long, Joseph (LegCo internal reference no.: 33)

Reply:

In 2017 and 2018, the number of poison treatments of rodent infestation in building blocks was 70 121 and 93 815 respectively, and the number of trappings was 54 438 and 60 432 respectively. The increase in the number of poison treatments and trappings for rodent in 2018 was attributable to the strengthening of prevention and control measures taken by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (the Department) in response to increasing public concerns about rodent infestation. In addition, street cleansing has been stepped up to improve the general hygiene condition to deplete food and harbourages for rodents. The total number of dead rodents collected and live rodents caught increased from 41 038 in 2017 to 44 378 in 2018.

In 2019, on top of routine anti-rodent work, the Department will organise territory-wide interdepartmental anti-rodent campaigns to strengthen rodent prevention and control and step up public education. The first phase of anti-rodent campaign was launched in January 2019 and the second phase will commence in July 2019. To intensify district rodent prevention and control work, the Department will also launch 2 two months long anti-rodent operations in designated target areas in May and November 2019. The operations adopt multi-pronged strategies to combat the rodent problem, including elimination of food sources and hiding places of rodents, as well as blocking their passages. The Department will continue to step up public education and publicity as well as provide support and technical advice to other departments on rodent prevention and control.

The Department adopts an integrated approach on rodent prevention and control. Such an approach is premised on the recommendations and technical guidelines of the World Health Organization (WHO) and is in line with that adopted by the Mainland and other countries, like Malaysia, Singapore as well as those in Europe and North America. The Department will continue to carry out rodent surveillance programmes, keep in view the rodent prevention and control measures recommended by WHO and adopted by other countries, and to explore the feasibility of applying technologies to improve the rodent surveillance and control work.

The estimated expenditure in 2019-20 on rodent prevention and control is \$213.5 million and 700 departmental staff and 1 800 contractors' staff will be deployed to provide pest control and prevention services.

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