

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)174

(Question Serial No. 1673)

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:

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department is responsible for the management of public toilets in the territory. In this connection, please advise this Committee on:

- (1) the types of public toilets (including aqua privies) in the territory, with a breakdown by region (Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and New Territories);
- (2) whether assessment has been made on the adequacy of public toilets in the territory. Is the male-to-female toilet compartment ratio reasonable? If yes, the details; if no, the reason(s);
- (3) the number of public toilets that are provided with cleansing attendants, with a breakdown by region (Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and New Territories), as well as the reason(s) for not providing attendants in some public toilets;
- (4) the number of complaints about unsatisfactory hygiene conditions of public toilets received in each of the past three years, with a breakdown by tourist district and non-tourist district respectively; and
- (5) whether there is any plan to increase the frequency of cleansing public toilets and the details of resources (including manpower and expenditure) to be involved.

Asked by: Hon NG Wing-ka, Jimmy (LegCo internal reference no.: 68)

Reply:

- (1) The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (the Department) manages 799 public toilets with a flushing system, comprising 90 on Hong Kong Island, 62 in Kowloon and 647 in the New Territories and on outlying islands. In addition, there are 52 aqua privies in the New Territories and on outlying islands.

- (2) The Department assesses the adequacy of public toilet services with regard to a number of factors, including the availability of toilets nearby for use by the public (including the toilets provided by other government departments and the private sector), local pedestrian flow, the availability of suitable sites for provision of public toilets, etc. The Department keeps under review the design and facilities of public toilets. The ratio of male-to-female toilet compartments is generally 1:2 for new and refurbished public toilets. The actual number of toilet compartments that can be provided mainly depends on site condition and space availability.
- (3) Generally speaking, toilet attendant services are provided in public toilets with a high patronage rate or at tourist spots. At present, 264 public toilets managed by the Department are provided with toilet attendant services, comprising 77 on Hong Kong Island, 60 in Kowloon and 127 in the New Territories or on outlying islands.
- (4) In the past 3 years (from 2016 to 2018), the Department received about 8 400 complaints concerning public toilets or bathhouses. There is no further breakdown on complaints against public toilets or bathhouses by tourist and non-tourist spots.
- (5) Dedicated deep cleansing teams have been provided for enhancing cleansing services to selected public toilets with a high patronage rate or at tourist spots since March 2019. The Department plans to provide such services to all public toilets upon renewal of respective street cleansing services contracts, at an estimated cost of about \$30 million in 2019-20 and about \$60 million per annum upon renewal of all street cleansing contracts. Some 200 additional cleansing workers will be hired under outsourced service contracts to perform the dedicated deep cleansing work.

- End -