

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**FHB(FE)211****(Question Serial No. 2797)**Head: (49) Food and Environmental Hygiene DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not specifiedProgramme: (3) Market Management and Hawker ControlControlling Officer: Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene (Miss Vivian LAU)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and HealthQuestion:

Regarding the work of hawker control under Programme (3), will the Government provide further information on the following:

1. Please set out in the table below the number of unlicensed hawkers prosecuted in the past 5 years, with a breakdown by age group.

	Aged 18 or below	Aged 18 to 29	Aged 30 to 44	Aged 45 to 64	Aged 65 or above	Total
2014						
2015						
2016						
2017						
2018						

2. Under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2019-20, it is stated that the Department will issue new hawker licences for trading at suitable vacant fixed pitches. However, the indicator shows that the number of licensed hawkers slightly dropped in 2018, while the estimated number of licensed hawkers in 2019 are less than that in 2017. What are the reasons for the decrease?
3. What is the effectiveness of the Assistance Scheme for Hawkers in Fixed-pitch Hawker Areas that ended last year? Does the Department have any plans to launch similar assistance scheme?
4. Will the Department increase the number of fixed-pitch hawker areas to protect the livelihood of hawkers?

Asked by: Hon TAM Man-ho, Jeremy (LegCo internal reference no.: 26)Reply:

1. Information on the number of prosecutions against unlicensed hawkers in the past 5 years is provided at Annex. The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (the Department) does not keep statistics on the age of the prosecuted unlicensed hawkers.
2. The decrease in the number of licensed hawkers is attributed to natural attrition and voluntary surrender of fixed-pitch hawker licences for ex-gratia payment (EGP) under the Hawker Assistance Scheme (HAS). We expect the number to go up in 2020 when vacated fixed pitches are to be allocated to eligible persons. We are now consulting relevant District Councils and expect to invite applications for the licences later this year.
3. The HAS ended in June 2018. Among the 4 329 licensed fixed-pitch hawkers eligible for the HAS, the Department received applications from 854 of them for EGP on surrender of their licences. The approval procedures for EGP applications were completed and the pitches concerned were vacated. Besides, the Department received 422 applications for relocation cum reconstruction grant and 3 002 applications for in-situ reconstruction grant. In other words, 98.8% of the eligible licensed hawkers joined the HAS.

With the conclusion of the HAS, the fire risks posed by on-street hawking activities is significantly reduced. Moreover, we have brought about a face-lift to the hawker areas, rationalised the overall layout of these areas and enhanced the electrical safety therein. We have no plans to re-launch the HAS in the near future.

4. The Department's priority task is to expeditiously re-allocate vacant hawker pitches in existing fixed-pitch areas so as to respond to the stakeholders' expectations. We have no plans to set up new hawker areas at the moment either.

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Number of prosecutions against unlicensed hawkers

Calendar year	Number of prosecutions
2014	26 025
2015	23 054
2016	15 310
2017	6 402
2018	5 564