

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)212

(Question Serial No. 0585)

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:

For the work of “providing efficient and effective public cleansing services, including street cleansing and household waste collection, and management of public cleansing facilities such as public toilets and refuse collection points” in 2018-19, please advise this Committee of the following:

- (1) As mentioned in the Policy Address in 2018, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department will strive to improve the existing surveillance system for mosquitoes and rodents by application of technologies. What are the manpower involved, the estimated expenditure and the specific work plan?
- (2) On the anti-rodent front, as mentioned in the Police Address in 2018, the Government will keep enhancing its efforts in rodent control throughout the territory. Inter-departmental co-ordination will be strengthened to carry out targeted rodent control operations in rodent-infested areas. In view of the effectiveness of its anti-rodent operations at designated target areas, the Department will continue to adopt this approach in various districts and provide technical support to relevant departments. What are the manpower involved in the above work, the estimated expenditure and the details of the work plan?

Asked by: Hon TIEN Puk-sun, Michael (LegCo internal reference no.: 13)

Reply:

- (1) The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (the Department) adopts a multi-pronged approach to enhance mosquito and rodent control services including the application of technologies as well as providing better municipal services. There are about 70 departmental staff responsible for general surveillance work at present. In 2019-20, 2 additional positions will be deployed to conduct testing of technologies in enhancing surveillance of mosquitoes and rodents. The estimated expenditure is \$1.64 million. The details of application of technologies in enhancing surveillance of mosquitoes and rodents are set out at Annex.

- (2) To intensify district rodent prevention and control work, the Department will launch 2 two months long anti-rodent operations in designated target areas in all districts in May and November 2019, and 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 also step up public education and publicity during the operation, and arrange health talks for building management of private buildings, persons-in-charge of food premises, and market and hawker stall operators.

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. There is no separate breakdown on the expenditure and manpower related to the anti-rodent operation in designated target areas.

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Application of Technologies in Enhancing Surveillance of Mosquitoes and Rodents

(a) Gravitraps

A gravitraps includes a sticky trap to collect adult mosquitoes that can provide quantitative results by counting the actual number of mosquitoes collected. The Department will conduct field trial of gravitraps in the third quarter of 2019.

(b) Night-vision cameras

Night vision cameras with artificial intelligence (AI) function are used to analyse the extent and severity of the rodent problem so as to formulate more targeted rodent control measures. Trial has commenced in March 2019.

(c) Thermal imaging cameras

Thermal imaging cameras with AI function can identify rodents' movements and facilitate rodent surveillance. Trial has commenced in March 2019.

(d) Real-time dengue vector surveillance

The Department is developing an imaging system with AI function for recognising adult Aedes mosquitoes laying eggs in ovitraps. Trial will be conducted in December 2019.

(e) Nara Bloc and Spray

Nara Bloc is a new product that contains non-poisonous bait claimed to have better attractiveness to rodents. Nara Spray may be applied to rodenticides and rodent traps to increase their attractiveness to rodents in order to achieve better poisoning and trapping effects. Trial is being conducted and will be completed by December 2019.