

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)347

(Question Serial No. 6918)

Head: (49) Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not specified

Programme: Not specified

Controlling Officer: Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene (Miss Vivian LAU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

With regard to the service of temporary storage of cremains provided by the Department, please advise this Committee of the following:

- (1) the number of cases with storage period longer than 2 months in the past 5 years;
- (2) the longest storage period;
- (3) whether there will be an increase in the expenditure for providing the service; if yes, the amount of the increase; and
- (4) the number of additional temporary storage facilities planned and their storage capacity.

Asked by: Hon CHEUNG Chiu-hung, Fernando (LegCo internal reference no.: 7700)

Reply:

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (the Department) provides temporary storage services for human cremains in all its crematoria free of charge in the first 2 months following cremation. The duration may be extended upon application at a monthly fee of \$80. In the past 5 years, there were 3 889 cases in which the duration of temporary storage exceeded 2 months. The longest storage time was 54 months.

In 2019-20, the temporary storage services will be provided with existing resources. The estimated expenditure for cemeteries and crematoria services is about \$493 million. There is no separate breakdown for the temporary storage services.

The Department at present has a total of some 35 000 temporary storage spaces. Some 41 000 additional ones would be made available in the coming 2 years. The Department will keep the usage of such facilities under review.

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