

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)396

(Question Serial No. 5249)

Head: (49) Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

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

Programme: (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

In the coming year, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (the Department) will issue new hawker licences for trading at suitable vacant fixed pitches. In this connection, please provide information on the following:

- (1) The Department plans to issue new hawker licences in 2019 while at the same time expects a decrease in the number of fixed-pitch hawkers and itinerant hawkers. What is/are the reason(s)?
- (2) Will the Department issue more itinerant hawker licences to help promote the development of community economy?
- (3) What hawker control measures were taken in each district during the Lunar New Year in 2019? Will the arrangement and practice of delineation of pitches on the ground be regularised? If yes, the details; if not, the reason(s).

Asked by: Hon KWOK Ka-ki (LegCo internal reference no.: 311)

Reply:

- (1) The decrease in the number of licensed hawkers from 5 740 in 2017 to 5 531 in 2018 was attributed to natural attrition and voluntary surrender of fixed-pitch hawker licences for ex-gratia payment (EGP) under the 5-year Hawker Assistance Scheme. The number of licensed hawkers in 2019 (on a calendar year basis) is estimated to decrease further for the same reasons. Our estimation does not take into account the number of fixed-pitch hawker licences to be issued under the impending re-allocation exercise where the balloting procedure will take place within 2019.
- (2) Itinerant hawkers usually operate at prime locations. They may impede pedestrian and/or vehicular flow with their trolleys and goods and bring about environmental hygiene and general nuisance concerns. Hence, the Government maintains the existing policy of not issuing new itinerant hawker licences.

- (3) To deter the illegal activities of cooked food hawkers during the Lunar New Year in 2019, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (the Department) enhanced publicity at strategic locations through mounting roadside banners and handing out notices in the run up to the festival period. Public health and safety of members of the public and enforcement staff are of our primary concerns when carrying out enforcement action against illegal cooked food hawking activities and the Department would pay due attention to the actual circumstances before any such enforcement action is to be taken. Delineation of markings on the ground has never been part of the Department's enforcement consideration.

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