

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)412

(Question Serial No. 6152)

Head: (49) Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

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

Programme: (1) Food Safety and Public Health

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

Under the co-operation agreement between the Government and the Shenzhen Entry-Exit Inspection and Quarantine Bureau, frozen meat imported into Hong Kong from overseas are allowed to be stored temporarily in Qianhaiwan Bonded Port Area (QBPA) in Shenzhen. In this connection,

- (1) please set out the items of expenditure and amounts incurred for implementing the agreement in the past 3 years, and the estimated expenditure for 2019-2020.
- (2) please provide the details of the inspection of frozen meat by the Department at the control point, including the inspection rate and number of inspections conducted.
- (3) does the Department have any plans to monitor the implementation of the agreement at Qianhai and what measures will be taken for continued surveillance of the operation of cold stores in QBPA? If yes, what are the details? What testing method(s) will be used? Will surprise checks be conducted? If yes, what is the estimated expenditure?
- (4) please provide the requirements set by the Department for cold stores in QBPA. Are the requirements on temperature control, facilities standards, etc. identical with the existing statutory requirements for cold stores in Hong Kong? If not, what are the difference(s) and the reason(s)?
- (5) please provide tabulated information on the names of approved and unapproved cold stores in QBPA, their respective sizes and operators, as well as the reason(s) for rejection of approval.

Asked by: Hon KWOK Ka-ki (LegCo internal reference no.: 75)

Reply:

Under the co-operation agreement (the Agreement) between the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) and the Shenzhen authorities, frozen meat from overseas for import into Hong Kong may be stored temporarily in Qianhaiwan Bonded Port Area (QBPA) for subsequent delivery into Hong Kong in batches. The Shenzhen authorities are responsible for the inspection and quarantine of frozen meat entering the QBPA, including monitoring the facilities and temperatures of cold stores in which the frozen meat is kept, to ensure hygiene and food safety. The storage requirements in QBPA are consistent with Hong Kong's licensing requirements for cold stores, including requiring the frozen meat to be kept at a temperature of -18°C or below.

Lorries transporting the frozen meat from QBPA must enter Hong Kong via Man Kam To Control Point for inspection by the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of FEHD. Every consignment of the frozen meat must be accompanied by a health certificate issued by an issuing entity of the place of origin recognised by the Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene, and a transshipment certificate issued by the Shenzhen authorities certifying that the frozen meat was properly imported into QBPA and was not subject to spoilage or deterioration during the period of temporary storage in QBPA. The importer is required to obtain an import licence from FEHD. CFS collects samples of the frozen meat for testing under a risk-based approach. CFS does not have a breakdown on the manpower and expenditure for inspecting frozen meat imported into Hong Kong through QBPA.

At present, there is 1 registered cold store for temporary storage of frozen meat in QBPA under the Agreement. The cold store is operated by China Merchants International Cold Chain (Shenzhen) Co. Ltd. and has a floor area of about 1 750 square metres.

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