

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)066

(Question Serial No. 1801)

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:

Regarding pest control work, please set out:

- I. the number of in-house staff of the Department who were responsible for work relating to the provision of pest control services, and the expenditure involved, in the past 3 years;
- II. the number of pest control services provided by service contractors engaged by the Department, the service items and the number of staff employed in the past 3 years; and
- III. the details of various types of work on pest control carried out by the Department (including the venues, item descriptions and manpower) in the past 3 years, with a breakdown by District Council district.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hoi-yan (LegCo internal reference no.: 17)

Reply:

- I. The total number of in-house staff of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department responsible for pest prevention and control work in 2017, 2018 and 2019 was 702, 699 and 727 respectively. The expenditure on pest control services in 2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-20 was \$569 million, \$630 million and \$647 million respectively. The Department does not keep a separate breakdown on the expenditure relating to its in-house staff responsible for pest prevention and control work.
- II. The Department currently procures a total of 19 contracts for pest control services. The total number of staff engaged by pest control services contractors in 2017, 2018 and 2019 was about 1 740, 1 860 and 1970 respectively. The services provided by these contractors include the prevention and control of mosquitoes, rodents and other arthropod pests with medical importance. The contractors' work includes patrolling and eliminating potential mosquito breeding places, applying larvicides to mosquito

breeding places, killing adult mosquitoes, biting midges or other adult insects by fogging, cutting grass, wild growth and other vegetation, as well as carrying out surveys and prevention and control work of rodent and other pests.

- III. The Department is responsible for pest prevention and control work, such as the control of mosquitoes, rodents and other disease vectors. The Department has carried out a series of anti-mosquito operations, including removal of water accumulation, as well as mosquito prevention and control work at potential breeding places over the territory. Emphasis will be placed on the surrounding areas of residential buildings, schools, construction sites, public housing estates, hospitals, illegal cultivation sites, waterfront public and private cargo handling areas, cross boundary check points, typhoon shelters, cross boundary ferry terminals, etc. The Department adopts multi-pronged strategies for effective rodent disinfection in designated target areas through elimination of the survival conditions of rodents, namely food, harbourage and passages, by improving environmental hygiene, stepping up rodent disinfection and enforcement actions. Emphasis will be placed on locations at markets, municipal services buildings, hawker bazaars, typhoon shelters, lanes adjacent to food premises and other problematic spots as well as their surroundings. For effective control of disease vectors, the prevention and control measures will be targeted at sites where the pests frequent. The Department does not keep a separate breakdown on the various types of pest control work carried out in each District Council district.

The Department carries out vector surveillance programmes to monitor the distribution and seasonal variation of vector mosquitoes and rodents including vector surveillance of dengue fever, Japanese encephalitis and malaria as well as rodent infestation surveys, rat-flea surveys and ad hoc surveys on other insect pests. In response to vector-borne diseases, the Department also conducts vector surveys in surrounding areas of all locations visited by the patients. The Department will continue to step up public education and publicity as well as provide support and technical advice to other departments on mosquito and rodent prevention and control. It also provides training to staff of other departments to enhance their knowledge and skills in pest control.

The Department has been proactively applying technologies in the provision of pest control services. Dedicated staff are assigned to explore technologies on pest control, including thermal imaging camera, ovitrap with a new design and new mosquito trap, and to put on trials these technologies with a view to assessing their applicability and effectiveness before putting them into use widely in the territory.

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