

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)084

(Question Serial No. 0215)

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:

The Government will continue to re-engineer workflow, overhaul and develop new information technology systems for the Centre for Food Safety for more effective management of data in food import and food safety incidents. Please provide the details, including the specific measures, implementation timetable, information technology systems involved, specific targets of enhancement and optimisation, and the manpower and expenditure required.

Asked by: Hon CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy (LegCo internal reference no.: 9)

Reply:

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department set up a dedicated team in end 2017 to look closely at its operational workflow, revamp its information technology (IT) systems for higher efficiency, and enhance its mode of operation through IT to support the work of its frontline staff and reinforce its capability in food import control, surveillance, incident management, risk assessment and traceability. CFS also launched the Food Trader Portal (FTP) in stages at the end of 2019 as a platform for electronic communication with the trade. Through the FTP, food traders can complete registration as importers or distributors by electronic means. In the first quarter of 2020, CFS further introduced an online service to facilitate food traders to apply online for import licences and import permission in respect of meat, poultry and game. In the future, CFS will provide online application services for import of more types of food. The existing Food Import Control System will be replaced by a newly developed system to support the workflow and procedures on food import applications and the issuance of food export certification with the delivery of e-service. In addition, there will be a newly established Food Incident Management System to strengthen the management of food safety incidents. The above systems will interface with each other to provide a well-connected network of information in support of risk profiling and risk-based inspection to step up food safety control. CFS will continue to enhance its IT systems in the order of priorities.

The dedicated team in charge of the above work will have 87 staff at an estimated staffing expenditure of about \$71 million in 2020-21.

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