

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)113

(Question Serial No. 0814)

Head: (49) Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

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

Programme: (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

Before the enactment of the Private Columbaria Ordinance, the Development Bureau used to provide the public with land/lease and town planning information on the private columbaria which had been made known to the Lands Department and/or the Planning Department. The information contained two parts, Part A and Part B, which were presented in two tables.

- Please provide as per the table below the number of various types of applications received after the commencement of the Private Columbaria Ordinance, and the number of applications with which all the required supporting documents or information have been submitted.

Districts	Types of applications	Number of applications submitted by columbaria included in Part A (Number of applications which have provided all the required supporting documents or information)	Number of applications submitted by columbaria included in Part B (Number of applications which have provided all the required supporting documents or information)	Number of applications submitted by columbaria not included in the information provided by the Development Bureau (Number of applications which have provided all the required supporting documents or information)
District 1	Application for a licence	-- (--)	-- (--)	-- (--)
	Application for an exemption	-- (--)	-- (--)	-- (--)
	Application for a temporary	-- (--)	-- (--)	-- (--)

	suspension of liability			
District 2	Application for a licence	-- (--)	-- (--)	-- (--)
	Application for an exemption	-- (--)	-- (--)	-- (--)
	Application for a temporary suspension of liability	-- (--)	-- (--)	-- (--)
...
	Total number			

- What is the expected time of the issue of the first batch of licences? How many licences will be granted? What is the expenditure incurred in processing the applications for these licences?

Asked by: Hon KWOK Wai-keung (LegCo internal reference no.: 14)

Reply:

As at 6 March 2020, the Private Columbaria Licensing Board (PCLB) has granted 5 licences and approved in principle 2 licence applications and 1 application for a temporary suspension of liability (TSOL). The PCLB was processing 287 applications for specified instruments submitted by 116 private columbaria. We do not keep statistics on private columbaria by district. A summary of the 287 applications is as follows:

Types of applications	Number of applications submitted by columbaria included in Part A	Number of applications submitted by columbaria included in Part B	Number of applications submitted by columbaria not included in the information provided by the Development Bureau
Application for a licence	9	84	12
Application for an exemption	3	43	5
Application for a TSOL	10	109	12
Total number of applications	22	236	29
Number of private columbaria	11	92	13

Regarding the status of applicants' submission of the required supporting documents or information, the PCLB announced on 30 August 2019 that TSOL applicants should submit the required documents/information on or before the deadline of 31 December 2019. After the expiry of the deadline, the PCLB has carefully examined the status of the documents/information received and has decided to cease the vetting of the TSOL applications submitted by 15 private columbaria.

As regards licence applications and exemption applications, other than 5 private columbaria which have been granted licences, the remaining applicants have not yet submitted all the required supporting documents or information. Upon receiving the documents or information required for an application, the Private Columbaria Affairs Office (PCAO) of

the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department will invite the relevant departments to provide comments. The applicant will then be asked to take the necessary follow-up actions and submit reports, which will be forwarded to the relevant departments for their vetting. After confirming that a licence application has complied with the application requirements, the PCAO will arrange for the submission of the application to the PCLB for determination.

In 2020-21, the estimated expenditure of the PCAO is \$83.6 million. The Department does not keep a separate breakdown of the expenditure involved in processing applications for different types of specified instruments.

- End -