

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)273

(Question Serial No. 5369)

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:

With regard to the service of temporary storage of cremains provided by the Department, please provide this Committee with the following information: (1) the number of cases with storage period longer than 2 months in the past 5 years; (2) the longest storage period; (3) whether there will be an increase in the expenditure for providing the service; if yes, the amount of the increase; and (4) the number of additional temporary storage facilities planned and their storage capacity.

Asked by: Hon CHEUNG Chiu-hung, Fernando (LegCo internal reference no.: 1645)

Reply:

All crematoria under the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department provide the service of temporary storage of ashes free of charge in the first 2 months following cremation. The public may then apply for extension of the storage period at a monthly fee of \$80. In the past 5 calendar years, there were a total of 6 764 cases where the duration of temporary storage exceeded 2 months. The longest storage period was 66 months.

In 2020-21, the Department will provide the service of temporary storage of ashes with the existing resources. The estimated expenditure on cemeteries and crematoria services is about \$484 million. The Department does not keep a separate breakdown on the expenditure involved in the service of temporary storage of ashes.

At present, the Department provides some 64 000 temporary storage spaces for ashes. It is estimated that some 12 000 additional storage spaces for ashes will be available by the end of 2020. The Department will keep the usage of the relevant temporary storage facilities under review.

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