

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)309

(Question Serial No. 4565)

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 5 years, and the estimated expenditure for 2020-2021.
- (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 is/are the difference(s) and the reason(s)?
- (5) please provide in tabular form 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.: 146)

Reply:

Under the co-operation agreement between the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department and the Shenzhen authorities, frozen meat from overseas for import into Hong

Kong may be stored temporarily in the Qianhaiwan Bonded Port Area (QBPA) for subsequent delivery to 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 the cold stores in which the frozen meat is kept, in order to ensure hygiene and food safety. The storage requirements in the 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.

After leaving the QBPA, frozen meat conveyance vehicles must enter Hong Kong via the Man Kam To Control Point for inspection by the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Department. Every consignment of 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 the QBPA and not subject to spoilage or deterioration during the period of temporary storage in the QBPA. Besides, the importer is required to obtain an import licence from the Department. CFS will collect samples of frozen meat for testing under a risk-based approach. CFS makes use of its existing resources to carry out work in relation to import of frozen meat from the QBPA. We do not have breakdown figures for this area of work.

At present, there is one registered cold store for temporary storage of frozen meat in the QBPA under the co-operation 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.

- End -