

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)335

(Question Serial No. 3402)

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 number of poison treatments of rodent infestation in building blocks and the number of rodent trappings in 2019 both increased substantially as compared with 2018. Please advise on the details and effectiveness of the relevant work. Regarding rodent control, what are the Department's specific work plan and timetable in 2020? Please provide the details of the work, the manpower involved and the estimated expenditure.

Asked by: Hon LEE Kok-long, Joseph (LegCo internal reference no.: 74)

Reply:

In 2018 and 2019, the number of poison treatments of rodent infestation in building blocks was 93 815 and 98 322 respectively, and the number of rodent trappings was 60 432 and 68 490 respectively. In 2019, the number of poison treatments of rodent infestation in building blocks and the number of rodent trappings were increased to facilitate the implementation of rodent prevention and control measures. In addition, street cleansing has been stepped up to improve the general hygiene condition to deplete food and harbourages for rodents. The total number of dead rodents collected and live rodents caught increased from 44 378 in 2018 to 53 986 in 2019.

In 2020, on top of routine anti-rodent work, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department will organise a territory-wide inter-departmental anti-rodent campaign to strengthen rodent prevention and control and step up public education. The first phase of the anti-rodent campaign was launched in January 2020 and the second phase will commence in July 2020. The Department will launch 2 anti-rodent operations in designated target areas, each lasting for 8 weeks, in May and November 2020. Multi-pronged strategies, including elimination of food sources and hiding places of rodents as well as blockage of their passages, will be adopted in the operations. The Department will continue to step up public education and publicity, and provide support and technical advice to other departments on rodent prevention and control.

The Department adopts an integrated approach to rodent prevention and control. Such approach is premised on the recommendations and technical guidelines of the World Health

Organization (WHO) and is in line with the anti-rodent approach adopted by the Mainland and other countries such as Malaysia, Singapore, as well as those in Europe and North America. The Department will continue to carry out rodent surveillance programmes, and the number of survey locations will be increased from 41 to 50. The Department will also keep in view the rodent prevention and control measures recommended by WHO and adopted by other countries, and explore the feasibility of applying technologies to improve the rodent surveillance and control work.

The estimated expenditure in 2020-21 on rodent prevention and control is \$209.1 million. About 740 in-house staff and 2 040 staff engaged by the contractors will provide pest control services.

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