

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)137

(Question Serial No. 2532)

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 Diane WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

With regard to the number of various protective gears (including but not limited to face masks, gloves and protective coverall suits) procured by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) or provided by the Government Logistics Department in the light of the COVID-19 epidemic, what were the expenditures involved in the past 2 financial years? How many were distributed to FEHD's street cleaners and cleansing staff of outsourced contractors?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Mei-fun, Priscilla (LegCo internal reference no.: 40)

Reply:

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) attaches great importance to the safety and occupational health of staff (including in-house staff and those employed by outsourced contractors). FEHD and public cleansing service contractors assess the risks of various working environment settings to take appropriate protective measures, which include providing staff with adequate and suitable protective gear and safety training. In 2019-20 and 2020-21 (as at February 2021), the personal protective equipment (PPE) received from the Government Logistics Department included about 8.2 million face masks, 170 000 pairs of gloves and 50 000 protective coverall suits for use by in-house staff. The expenditure incurred was about \$4 million. FEHD does not keep statistics on the PPE distributed to in-house street cleaners.

Outsourced contractors provided PPE for their staff and FEHD does not keep such statistics. Nevertheless, for face masks, in view of the COVID-19 epidemic and the overall tight supply of masks, the Government has made temporary arrangements to provide masks for the frontline staff of outsourced cleansing contractors since February 2020 to safeguard their health and maintain daily cleansing service. In 2019-20 and 2020-21 (as at February 2021), a total of about 12.4 million face masks were provided for frontline staff of outsourced contractors at an expenditure of about \$2 million.

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