

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)160

(Question Serial No. 0694)

Head: (49) Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

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

Programme: (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer: Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene (Miss Diane WONG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

Given that only about 30% of stall tenants have participated in the subsidy scheme for promotion of contactless payment in public markets since the launch of the scheme, what specific measures will the Government adopt to promote the popularisation of electronic payment systems in markets? What are the manpower and expenditure involved?

Asked by: Hon QUAT Elizabeth (LegCo internal reference no.: 36)

Reply:

To reduce the risk of possible transmission of COVID-19 or other diseases by operators and patrons in public markets through physical touch of cash, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department launched a subsidy scheme for promotion of contactless payment in public markets in October 2020.

To promote electronic payment systems in markets, the Department held briefings for various service providers and representatives of market traders, and arranged for service providers to visit around 90 public markets to explain the contents of their service plans to stall tenants and promote their service contract plans.

During the application period of the scheme, the Department arranged for representatives of market traders to meet with service providers so that the service providers could promote their services to stall tenants. Besides, the Department conducted publicity work using Keep Clean Ambassador Ah Tak, which included distributing promotional leaflets of Keep Clean Ambassador Ah Tak to market traders in various districts and publishing posts on the Facebook page of Keep Clean Ambassador Ah Tak. The Department also arranged to publish advertorials on newspapers to publicise the support of the Federation of Hong Kong Kowloon New Territories Hawker Associations for the subsidy scheme for contactless payment. Meanwhile, gift redemption programmes were launched at a number of markets in various districts to encourage patrons to use contactless payment means during shopping.

The Department received a total of 3 555 applications during the application period. So far 3 542 applications (99.6%) have been approved in principle and \$13.62 million of subsidies

have been disbursed for 2 724 applications. The remaining applications were not processed as the applicants failed to submit the relevant documents and complete the installation. The financial implications of the related measures were absorbed by the Anti-epidemic Fund, which does not form part of the Appropriation Bill or the estimates of the General Revenue Account. The expenditure for the relevant promotion activities was about \$700,000. The work involved was absorbed by the existing manpower.

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