

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**FHB(FE)171****(Question Serial No. 1172)**Head: (49) Food and Environmental Hygiene DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not specifiedProgramme: (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related ServicesControlling Officer: Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene (Miss Diane WONG)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and HealthQuestion:

With regard to “overseeing the implementation of the regulatory regime for private columbaria in accordance with the Private Columbaria Ordinance (Cap. 630)”,

- please set out as per the table below the number of applications received so far, the progress in processing the applications, as well as the estimated expenditure involved; and

| Types of applications | Number of applications approved | Number of applications refused | Number of applications withdrawn | Number of applications under vetting | Estimated expenditure involved |
|---|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Application for a licence | | | | | |
| Application for an exemption | | | | | |
| Application for a temporary suspension of liability | | | | | |
| Total | | | | | |

- what is the expected completion time for processing all applications?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kwok-kin (LegCo internal reference no.: 60)Reply:

As at 28 February 2021, the Private Columbaria Licensing Board (PCLB) was processing 237 applications for specified instruments submitted by 99 private columbaria. The figures are summarised as follows:

| Types of applications | Approved | Approved in principle | Refused | Withdrawn | Being processed |
|--|----------|-----------------------|---------|-----------|----------------------|
| Application for a licence | 6 | 2 | 21 | 11 | 87 |
| Application for an exemption | 1 | 1 | 12 | 9 | 39 |
| Application for a temporary suspension of liability (TSOL) | 0 | 11 | 29 | 13 | 111 |
| Total number of applications | N.A. | N.A. | N.A. | N.A. | 237 |
| Number of private columbaria | 7 | 13 ^{Note 1} | 26 | 14 | 99 ^{Note 2} |

Note 1: “Approval-in-principle” has been given to the application for a TSOL and the application for an exemption submitted by one columbarium.

Note 2: Including 13 columbaria of which “approval-in-principle” had been given to their applications for a licence/an exemption/a TSOL.

The time the PCLB taking to process a licence application depends on the actual circumstances of each case, particularly whether the private columbarium has complied with the relevant requirements under the Private Columbaria Ordinance (Cap. 630) and those specified by the PCLB (including the requirements relating to planning, land, buildings, fire safety, electrical and mechanical safety, management plan, right to use the premises, environmental protection, etc.), and whether the applicant has submitted sufficient documents to prove that the private columbarium has complied with such requirements.

The expenditure of the PCLB and the manpower for providing the executive support to it are included in the estimated expenditure of the Private Columbaria Affairs Office (PCAO) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department. In 2021-22, the PCAO has about 70 staff and the estimated expenditure is \$83.6 million.

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