

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)013

(Question Serial No. 0178)

Head: (49) Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer: Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene (Ms Irene YOUNG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

It is proposed in the Budget that a total additional funding of \$500 million be allocated within 2 years for the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department to enhance environmental hygiene services, including improving the hygiene of public markets. Besides, the Government has earmarked \$2 billion for the implementation of the Market Modernisation Programme (MMP) to improve the facilities in public markets under the Department. In this connection, please advise this Committee:

- (1) of the manpower and expenditure involved in public market-related work in the past 5 years;
- (2) whether the Department has any plan to introduce or employ new technologies, in addition to the existing programmes, to improve the hygiene of public markets. If yes, please provide the details;
- (3) whether any mechanism is in place to assess the usage of each public market, whereby under-utilised public markets are closed so that resources can be focused on improving the hygiene of markets with higher utilisation rate. If yes, please provide the details;
- (4) whether the Department has drawn up a list and a definite timetable for the MMP, given that the pioneering project of the MMP commenced in November 2021. If yes, please provide the information about each of the markets to be refurbished (anticipated commencement date of the works and the estimated expenditure); and
- (5) of the lead time for a project under the MMP to proceed from preparatory and consultation work to the actual commencement and completion of the works.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Kapui, Judy (LegCo internal reference no.: 4)

Reply:

- (1) The manpower (including government staff and contractors' management staff) allocated by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) to the daily management of public markets and the expenditure involved in the past 5 years are as follows:

Financial year	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Manpower (Number of staff)	386	416	434	447	445 (As at 31 December 2021)
Total expenditure on market management <small>Note 1</small> (\$ million)	807.1	838.8	849.1	1,025.1	1,123.4 (Revised estimate)

Note 1: including salary expenditure

In addition, FEHD set up a dedicated team in July 2018 to develop new public markets and take forward the Market Modernisation Programme (MMP) and other related work. The number of government staff in the team and the salary expenditure involved in the past 4 years are tabulated as follows:

Financial year	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Manpower (Number of staff)	22	30	45	42 (As at 31 December 2021)
Salary expenditure (\$ million)	20.37	27.24	34.23	35.43 (Revised estimate)

- (2) FEHD has all along been piloting and applying innovative technologies to enhance the effectiveness of anti-rodent work in public markets. To further improve the hygiene of public markets, FEHD has, since September 2021, geared up with the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) to launch a pilot scheme in Yeung Uk Road Market, Tsuen Wan to deploy wireless motion detection sensors ^{Note 2}, rodent traps, bait boxes, etc. through the application of Internet of Things solutions, so as to step up the monitoring of rodent prevention and control work in markets, and carry out focused improvements and follow-up work. EMSD has introduced new types of rodent traps and bait boxes to support the implementation of the pilot scheme. These new rodent control devices, which are now being tested and refined, are equipped with wireless sensors that can remotely notify the market management staff once rodents are caught or the bait is depleted, thus ensuring timely treatment and bait refilling or replacement by the relevant staff. FEHD has been installing these rodent control devices in phases starting from the fourth quarter of 2021, with a view to implementing the pilot scheme in the second quarter of 2022. With the assistance of EMSD, FEHD has also started to install progressively ultraviolet-C sterilisers at escalator handrails in its public markets, cooked food

markets and cooked food centres. The works are expected to be completed in the second quarter of 2022.

- Note 2: FEHD will install wireless motion detection sensors at appropriate locations in markets. Data collected by these sensors can assist market management staff in monitoring the areas and the extent of rodent activities, thereby formulating targeted rodent prevention and control strategies. The relevant data can also be used to continuously monitor the effectiveness of rodent prevention and control work.
- (3) The Government is conducting a comprehensive review of the utilisation and development potential of existing markets, with a view to formulating appropriate development plans for meeting the policy objectives of optimising land uses, benefitting the public and promoting district development. When considering whether an under-utilised market is to be closed or consolidated, FEHD will take into account various factors, including the vacancy rate, room for improvement, availability of fresh provision shops in the vicinity, possible cost-effectiveness of upgrading works and the views of the local community.
- (4)&(5) The Government has earmarked \$2 billion for the implementation of the 10-year MMP. The pioneering project is the overhaul of Aberdeen Market. The estimated capital cost of the project is about \$254 million. The works officially commenced in November 2021 and are expected to be completed within this year. We have also proposed the overhaul or redevelopment of Yeung Uk Road Market, Ngau Tau Kok Market, Kowloon City Market and Lai Wan Market, the preparatory and consultation work of which are underway at various stages.

The MMP also includes minor refurbishment or improvement works. The first batch of 11 markets benefitting are Ngau Tau Kok Market, Yeung Uk Road Market, Luen Wo Hui Market, Fa Yuen Street Market, Quarry Bay Market, Shui Wo Street Market, Tsuen Wan Market, Mong Kok Cooked Food Market, Ngau Chi Wan Market, Shek Tong Tsui Market and Nam Long Shan Road Cooked Food Market. Amongst these 11 projects, nine have been completed and one is scheduled for completion within 2023. Preparation for the remaining project is underway. The works are expected to commence in phases in the second half of this year. The project estimates for taking forward the above minor refurbishment or improvement works are about \$78.73 million in total and the estimated expenditure in 2022-23 is about \$39.40 million. The minor refurbishment or improvement works in Yan Oi Market, Sai Kung Market, Po On Road Market, Wong Nai Chung Market and Smithfield Market are at the early stage of planning. The relevant work will commence within this year.

Support from relevant stakeholders, in particular tenants, is crucial to the smooth implementation of projects under the MMP. In implementing the MMP, FEHD will work closely with the relevant works departments to identify potential hardware improvement options. The detailed scope of works, timetable and estimated expenditure will be confirmed upon consultation with stakeholders (including tenants) and completion of relevant technical feasibility studies, assessment and design. We will report to the District Councils concerned in a timely manner, and

seek funding approval for taking forward the projects according to the established mechanism.

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