

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)015

(Question Serial No. 0110)

Head: (49) Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

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

Programme: (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

In this Programme, it is stated that the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department will implement the Enhanced Public Toilet Refurbishment Programme to improve the design and facilities of existing public toilets in phases, continue to improve the planning, provision and management of public toilets, and try out dedicated contracts to enhance public toilet cleansing. In this connection, please advise this Committee of:

- a) the number of public toilets refurbished in the past year, and the percentage of refurbished public toilets out of the total number of public toilets in the territory;
- b) the projected number of public toilets to be refurbished in the coming year, and the expected completion date for the refurbishment of all public toilets in the territory; and
- c) the specific plan for trying out dedicated contracts to enhance public toilet cleansing and the expected results.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Kin-por (LegCo internal reference no.: 8)

Reply:

- a) It was announced in the 2019-20 Budget Speech that the Government would make an additional allocation of \$600 million to implement the Enhanced Public Toilet Refurbishment Programme (Enhanced PTRP), under which the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) would refurbish or facelift about 240 public toilets under its management by phases in 5 years starting from 2019-20 (i.e. from 2019-20 to 2023-24). FEHD has been working closely with the Architectural Services Department (ArchSD) to streamline work procedures and speed up works progress under the programme. Generally speaking, refurbishment works take about 2 to 3 years to complete, while facelifting works require about 1 to 1.5 years. In the past 3 years, refurbishment or facelifting projects for over 140 public toilets were rolled out. Works for 57 public toilets have been completed, of which 34 were completed in 2021. Completed public toilets account for about 24% of the public toilets under the Enhanced PTRP.

- b) Refurbishment or facelifiting projects for another 50 public toilets are being planned for commencement in 2022-23. FEHD will continue to work with ArchSD to expedite the progress of the remaining works by applying construction methods such as Modular Integrated Construction and Design for Manufacture and Assembly as appropriate. FEHD will prioritise the public toilets for inclusion in the Enhanced PTRP having regard to such factors as utilisation rates, conditions of facilities, locations and the time lapse since they were last refurbished. Subject to the progress of the programme, FEHD will consider bidding for additional resources to expedite the refurbishment or facelifiting of the remaining public toilets in due course.

- c) At present, the public toilet cleansing service of FEHD is generally included in its street cleansing services contracts and undertaken by street cleansing contractors serving respective contract areas. A new approach of dedicated contracts will be tried out in one of the districts upon renewal of its street cleansing services contract in the fourth quarter of 2022. Public toilet management service will be taken out from the current street cleansing services contract and procured separately under a dedicated contract. Provisions requiring toilet attendants to have undergone relevant vocational training with recognised qualifications will be added to the new contract with a view to upgrading service standard.

The approach of dedicated contracts for providing public toilet cleansing service will attract small and medium enterprises with expertise in toilet cleaning and management but insufficient capital to undertake the whole street cleansing services contract to join the service. The introduction of new players will promote competition and inspire public toilet service with new ideas. Thus, higher contract management efficiency can be achieved and more accurate management data can be obtained for further service enhancement.

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