

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**FHB(FE)021**

**(Question Serial No. 0153)**

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 (Ms Irene YOUNG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

In recent years, there have been increasing public concerns about pest infestation and incessant calls for improvement in pest control work. In this regard, please advise this Committee of the following, with a breakdown by 18 districts, in the past 5 years:

The expenditure incurred by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department on pest control work;

The amount involved in engaging outsourced service providers and the number of outsourced staff;

The actual effectiveness of the current pest control technologies adopted by the Department; and

Whether the Department has any plan to introduce new pest control technologies; if yes, the details and the costs.

Asked by: Hon LEE Tsz-king, Dominic (LegCo internal reference no.: 3)

Reply:

In the past 5 years, the overall expenditure on pest control services by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department and the total value of pest control service contracts are provided at Annex I, and the number of staff employed by pest control service contractors in each district is provided at Annex II. The Department does not keep a separate breakdown of the expenditure on pest control services involved in each district.

Regarding pest control technologies, the Department adopts an integrated approach to the prevention and control of mosquitoes and rodents. Such approach is mainly premised on the recommendations and technical guidelines of the World Health Organization (WHO), which includes the elimination of mosquito breeding places and the 3 survival conditions of rodents, namely food, harbourage and passages, to achieve the aim of prevention and control of pests. The Department strives the best to prevent and control mosquitoes and rodents. In 2021, the

territory-wide mosquito surveillance index during the rainy season was at a relatively low level similar to the levels of the past years, and there was no local dengue fever case in Hong Kong. As regards rodent infestation, the overall Rodent Infestation Rate (RIR) for 2021 was 3.1%, which improved as compared with the 3.6% figure in 2020. The number of survey locations that recorded an RIR reaching Level 2 (i.e. rodent infestation was slightly extensive) also decreased from 7 in 2020 to 3 in 2021. The Department will continue to keep in view the methods of vector prevention and control recommended by the WHO and adopted by other places.

The Department takes a proactive approach in trying out and introducing new technologies and devices, such as new mosquito trapping devices, large robotics ultra-low volume fogger, new design snap trap, thermal imaging camera surveillance system, etc., for application to its pest control work. It will continue to follow new products and technologies in the market and, by taking into account experts' advice and the actual situation in Hong Kong, keep an open mind on adopting new products and technologies to further improve the effectiveness of pest control work.

**The overall expenditure on pest control services by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department and the total value of pest control service contracts**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Overall expenditure on pest control services <sup>Note 1</sup> (\$ million)</b>	<b>Total value of pest control service contracts <sup>Note 2</sup> (\$ million)</b>
2017-18	569	541
2018-19	630	610
2019-20	663	914
2020-21	726	1,161
2021-22 (Revised estimate)	731	1,397

Note 1: The overall expenditure on pest control services includes government staff expenditure, expenditure on service contracts in the year and other day-to-day operating expenses in this regard.

Note 2: The total value of pest control service contracts refers to the total amount of the whole service contract period which has been changed from 2 years to 3 years from October 2019 onwards.

**Number of staff employed by pest control service contractors engaged by  
the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department**

District/Section	Number of staff employed by pest control service contractors				
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Central and Western	96	108	114	114	114
Eastern	66	66	78	84	78
Southern	78	78	84	90	96
Wan Chai	60	66	72	78	72
Islands	90	102	138	150	150
Kowloon City	66	78	84	90	96
Kwun Tong	96	96	108	114	114
Wong Tai Sin	84	90	96	102	102
Sham Shui Po	66	72	78	84	90
Yau Tsim	36	48	48	48	48
Mong Kok	36	42	42	48	48
Sha Tin	102	108	114	120	126
Tai Po	102	108	102	114	120
North	96	102	108	108	114
Kwai Tsing	114	126	132	132	132
Tsuen Wan	120	126	114	132	144
Tuen Mun	126	108	108	138	138
Yuen Long	120	132	138	192	192
Sai Kung	114	132	138	150	156
Cemeteries and Crematoria Section (Hong Kong)	12	18	12	18	30
Cemeteries and Crematoria Section (Kowloon)	24	18	24	30	30
Cemeteries and Crematoria Section (New Territories)	30	36	36	42	42
Whole territory	1 734	1 860	1 968	2 178	2 232

- End -