

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)056

(Question Serial No. 2865)

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

Under Matters Requiring Special Attention of the Programme, it is mentioned that the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department will continue to support the District Matters Co-ordination Task Force to eliminate environmental hygiene blackspots and tackle “long-standing, major and difficult” district-based environmental hygiene and street management issues. The first phase of work, i.e. the Government Programme on Tackling Hygiene Black Spots, is now completed. The rodent control measures in place include (1) setting up a total of 19 overnight rodent control teams across the territory; and (2) using new technologies, tools and baits. Please advise this Committee of:

1. the manpower, expenditure and operation effectiveness of the 19 overnight rodent control teams; and
2. the expenditure required for using new technologies, tools and baits as well as the expected operation effectiveness of such use.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Chun-ying (LegCo internal reference no.: 9)

Reply:

1. Since July 2022, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department has set up 19 overnight rodent control teams in all districts under outsourced service contracts. In addition, 11 rodent inspection officers have been engaged to arrange and supervise the work of the teams. The number of live rodents caught has remarkably increased since the formation of overnight rodent control teams. The number of live rodents caught in the second half of 2022 was 27 728, an increase of around 57% over that in the first half of the year (17 694), and around 50% more than that in the corresponding period in 2021 (18 459). The information on the manpower and expenditure involved in 2022-23 is provided as follows:

Team/Post	Number of teams	Number of staff	Expenditure (revised estimate) (\$ million)
Overnight rodent control team	19	57	10
Rodent inspection officer	N.A.	11	4
Total	19	68	14

2. The new methods and technologies tried out by the Department for rodent control in 2022-23, their effectiveness and the expenditure involved are tabulated as follows:

Rodent control method/technology	Effectiveness	Expenditure in 2022-23
New design snap trap	The new design snap trap was tested in 5 districts and 6 markets between January and June 2020. Test results showed that it was effective in catching rodents. The Department has introduced the use of the new design snap trap in its regular anti-rodent work.	No breakdown is available
Thermal imaging camera surveillance system	The Department conducted trials on thermal imaging cameras with artificial intelligence analytical function in 2020 and found it effective in facilitating objective assessment of rodent infestation situation. The equipment is widely employed currently.	About \$3.89 million
Placing poisonous baits in a T-shaped bait box	The bait box was tested between October and November 2020. Test results showed that the T-shaped bait box was more effective than ordinary rectangular bait boxes in attracting rodents to enter and consume the baits. The equipment has been widely employed since 2022.	About \$580,000
Alcohol rodent trapping device	The Department has conducted trials progressively on alcohol rodent trapping devices in public markets and refuse collection points since October 2022. The initial results are positive. The Department will consider the introduction of alcohol rodent trapping devices in other	About \$380,000

Rodent control method/technology	Effectiveness	Expenditure in 2022-23
	suitable places under its management.	
Glue trap	The Department has tried out the application of glue traps in public markets with more serious rodent infestation as an additional measure for rodent disinfestation since November 2022. The initial results are positive. Further trials of the equipment are being conducted in 11 markets.	About \$630,000

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