

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)077

(Question Serial No. 0661)

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:

It is stated under the Programme that the Department will continue to take stringent enforcement actions against unlicensed food premises and food premises which pose immediate health hazards or have illegal extension of food business areas. In this connection, please advise this Committee of:

- 1) the respective numbers of directly investigated cases and reported cases investigated in 2022-23, including the number of operators engaging in food production in unlicensed food establishments and food sale activities through social media;
- 2) the details of the expenditure and staffing arrangement involved in 2022-23; and
- 3) whether measures will be adopted to step up enforcement actions against unlicensed food business operators in the coming year.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Kin-por (LegCo internal reference no.: 22)

Reply:

- 1) In 2022, the respective numbers of inspections of licensed/permitted food premises and investigations of suspected unlicensed food premises conducted by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department were 197 778 and 49 790. The Department does not keep a breakdown of the figures sought.
- 2) In 2022-23, the Department has an establishment of 337 health inspectors deployed to 19 District Environmental Hygiene Offices across the territory to undertake various environmental hygiene duties, including inspecting unlicensed food premises and taking enforcement actions against food premises which pose immediate health hazards or have illegal extension of food business areas. The Department does not maintain a breakdown of the expenditure involved in carrying out the above duties.

- 3) During an inspection of a food premises, staff of the Department will normally check whether the premises has a valid licence and whether there is any irregularity, and institute prosecution based on the evidence collected. In 2022, the Department instituted 3 775 prosecutions for operating unlicensed food business. The relevant work will be continued in the coming year.

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