

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)099

(Question Serial No. 3157)

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 Environment and Ecology

Question:

It is mentioned in the Programme that the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department will continue to implement and trial new measures to enhance and sustain the effectiveness of its rodent control work, including continuing with the night rodent operations and trial use of new rodent control technologies and tools, etc. In this connection,

- A) please advise this Committee of the number of rodents caught since the launch of the night rodent operations, as well as the expenditure and staffing involved; and
- B) please set out the number of new rodent control technologies and tools tried out, the expenditure involved and the number of rodents caught by each new technology and tool in each of the past 3 years.

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 62)

Reply:

- A) 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

B) The new methods and technologies tried out by the Department for rodent control in the past 3 years (2020-21 to 2022-23), their effectiveness and the expenditure involved are tabulated as follows:

Rodent control method/ technology	Effectiveness	Expenditure		
		2020-21	2021-22	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.	About \$3,000	No breakdown is available	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 \$3.96 million	About \$2.39 million	About \$3.89 million

Rodent control method/ technology	Effectiveness	Expenditure		
		2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
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 is widely employed currently.	About \$20,000	-	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 suitable places under its management.	-	-	About \$380,000
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	-	-	About \$630,000

Rodent control method/ technology	Effectiveness	Expenditure		
		2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
	November 2022. The initial results are positive. Further trials of the equipment are being conducted in 11 markets.			

In 2022, the numbers of live rodents caught with the trial use of alcohol rodent trapping devices and glue traps were about 300 and 580 respectively. The Department does not keep a breakdown of the numbers of live rodents caught by other methods.

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