

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**EEB(F)122**

**(Question Serial No. 0573)**

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:

In connection to rodent infestation,

1. please advise this Committee of the number of poison treatments of rodent infestation and the number of rodent trappings in public places, as well as the number of live rodents caught and the number of dead rodents collected in the past 3 years.
2. please set out the details of the anti-rodent work plan as well as the relevant staffing and estimated expenditure for 2023-24.

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Man-kwong (LegCo internal reference no.: 8)

Reply:

1. The number of poison treatments of rodent infestation conducted in building blocks, the number of rodent trappings used, the number of live rodents caught and the number of dead rodents collected by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) in the past 3 years are tabulated as follows:

| <b>Item</b>  | <b>2020</b> | <b>2021</b> | <b>2022</b> |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Number of poison treatments of rodent infestation in building blocks | 100 101     | 109 685     | 113 083     |
| Number of rodent trappings   | 81 830      | 86 164      | 78 148      |
| Number of live rodents caught  | 28 872      | 33 846      | 45 422      |
| Number of dead rodents collected                                     | 31 988      | 33 336      | 31 810      |

2. In order to effectively deal with the rodent infestation problem, a cross-sectional, inter-disciplinary and public participation approach, as well as the joint efforts of all concerned departments, are required. To further enhance the effectiveness of rodent control, the Environment and Ecology Bureau launched the Cross-sectoral Territory-wide Anti-rodent Action (the Action) on 28 December 2022 to encourage different sectors in the community (including the pest control trade, property management companies, operators of market and hawker stalls, the catering industry as well as the construction industry) and members of the public to collaborate with the Government in anti-rodent work and enhance public awareness of rodent control.

FEHD takes a proactive role in the Action. Apart from continuing to step up the routine rodent control work, FEHD also studies and tries out new rodent prevention and control strategies to enhance the effectiveness of its anti-rodent work, and keeps on providing support and advice on rodent control to the relevant departments and industries. Specifically, the rodent prevention and control measures to be adopted by FEHD in 2023-24 include:

- (a) continuing with the night rodent operations in all districts to enhance the effectiveness in capturing rodents;
- (b) continuing to use new technologies, tools and baits, including wider application of T-shaped bait boxes at suitable locations, piloting the use of alcohol rodent trapping device in more public markets and refuse collection points and introducing glue traps to some public markets and indoor facilities with more serious rodent infestation, as additional rodent control methods;
- (c) engaging 3 contractors to carry out a three-month project to assess the rodent infestation, draw up anti-rodent strategies and carry out anti-rodent work in Shek Tong Tsui Market in Central and Western District, Shui Wo Street Market in Kwun Tong and Heung Che Street Market in Tsuen Wan respectively, with a goal to bring in the latest and most effective anti-rodent strategies and methods;
- (d) extending the current trial scheme in phases after review to allow more food premises to place large-size waste containers in rear lanes and requiring such premises to strengthen rodent control, so as to improve the environmental hygiene and tackle the rodent problem in rear lanes;
- (e) stepping up public education and publicity and reminding the public of the importance of rodent control, including organising the School Cleaning Video Production Competition in collaboration with the Education Bureau to further enhance students' awareness of environmental cleanliness and strengthen their understanding of rodent control;
- (f) continuing to arrange health talks for building managers of private buildings, persons-in-charge of food premises, operators of market and hawker stalls, etc. to provide them with information and technical advice on rodent prevention and control; and

- (g) exploring ways to improve the existing methodology of rodent surveillance and conducting trials on the use of thermal imaging cameras with artificial intelligence function for detecting rodent activities at individual survey locations. The aim is to assess the feasibility of formulating a more representative new Rodent Infestation Rate (RIR) to progressively replace the existing RIR, so as to better reflect the rodent infestation situation of the survey locations and facilitate the planning of anti-rodent operations at blackspots.

In addition, strategic anti-rodent operations are being conducted against over 100 priority rodent blackspots. More resources are deployed to improve the rodent infestation situations in these areas in a comprehensive and sustainable manner, striving to achieve the indicator set in the 2022 Policy Address, that is, to reduce the number of priority rodent blackspots at least by half by end-2023.

745 in-house staff and 2 175 staff engaged by the contractors provide pest control services, including rodent and mosquito control services. In 2023-24, the total estimated expenditure on pest control services is \$797 million.

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