

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

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(Question Serial No. 2429)

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:

1. How many locations of the 11 154 pest control surveys conducted in 2022 were identified as rodent blackspots and what was the percentage? Of the 78 148 rodent trappings used, what was the success rate?
2. Despite the anti-rodent measures and technologies in place as mentioned by the Government, there are frequent complaints from members of the public that the rodent problem is deteriorating. Will the Government engage an independent consultant to conduct a more systematic study on the causes or solutions for hygiene blackspots?
3. What was the budget for reducing the number of priority rodent blackspots in 2022? What is the budget for achieving the target of reducing the number of priority rodent blackspots by 50% in 2023?

Asked by: Hon LI Sai-wing, Stanley (LegCo internal reference no.: 40)

Reply:

1. In 2022, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department conducted a total of 11 154 pest control surveys, including 746 rodent control surveys. Of these surveys, 156 were conducted on 19 priority rodent blackspots, which accounted for 20.9% of the rodent control surveys conducted.

The number of rodent trappings used by the Department in 2022 was 78 148, representing the number of trapping programmes carried out by the Department. In the course of each trapping programme, the number of rodent traps deployed varies flexibly, depending on the seriousness of rodent infestation and the actual circumstances of the area covered. Therefore, it is difficult to ascertain with accuracy the number of rodent traps used and the success rate. The number of rodents caught by the Department in 2022 was 45 422.

2. In 2019, the Department invited an expert referred by the World Health Organization to review the rodent prevention and control work of Hong Kong. The expert considered

that the Department had relatively well-established procedures for monitoring and controlling rodent infestation, and provided technical advice on the use of traps and poisonous baits. The recommendations of the expert have been implemented by the Department. Moreover, in March 2023, 2 experts from the Mainland were invited to visit Hong Kong for sharing experiences and deliberating with government departments and trade members on the latest developments in rodent prevention and control. The experts inspected the anti-rodent work in various locations, including rear lanes, public markets, parks and public housing estates, to learn more about the rodent prevention and control measures adopted in different circumstances in Hong Kong. They also shared their experiences.

Besides, 3 contractors have been engaged in 2023 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.

3. The overall expenditures of the Department on pest control services (including rodent control and mosquito control services) in 2022-23 and 2023-24 are \$796 million (revised estimate) and \$797 million (estimated expenditure) respectively. Reducing the number of priority rodent blackspots is part of the rodent control work of the Department, and it does not keep a separate breakdown of the expenditure involved.

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