

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)056

(Question Serial No. 0647)

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:

Regarding the enforcement against shop front extensions,

1. please provide the number of notices issued against street obstruction by goods during the joint operations conducted in each of the past 3 years, and the total weight of the articles removed by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department when handling cases of non-compliance beyond deadlines each year.
2. the Department introduced Body Worn Video Cameras (BWVCs) last year to support frontline staff in gathering evidence and enhance the accuracy of enforcement. How many BWVCs have been acquired by the Department? What is the expenditure involved? How many of them have been put to use?
3. how many operations conducted last year involved staff being equipped with BWVCs? In how many cases were the footages BWVCs used as evidence?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Hoi-yan (LegCo internal reference no.: 20)

Reply:

1. Since September 2021, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) has launched a new mode of joint operations with the Hong Kong Police Force (the Police) on a trial basis in 3 districts, namely Kwun Tong, Kowloon City and Tsuen Wan, under which obstructive items illegally placed on the streets would be removed and seized. Such joint enforcement mode has successively been adopted in all districts across the territory since October 2022. The number of Notices to Remove Obstruction issued by the Police under section 32(1) of the Summary Offences Ordinance (Cap. 228) against street obstruction by goods during the joint operations, and the total weight of the articles removed by FEHD when handling cases of non-compliance beyond deadlines since September 2021 are tabulated as follows:

	2021^{Note}	2022	2023
Number of Notices to Remove Obstruction issued	107	445	407
Total weight of the articles removed	About 5.8 tonnes	About 18.8 tonnes	About 18.5 tonnes

Note: The trial scheme on joint operations has been launched in 3 districts (Kowloon City, Kwun Tong and Tsuen Wan) since late September 2021.

2. In order to assist frontline staff in carrying out their duties more effectively and safeguard the safety of the public and staff, since 12 July 2023, Hawker Control Officers in various districts under FEHD have been equipped with Body Worn Video Cameras (BWVCs), which will be used based on actual needs and circumstances. As at 31 December 2023, a total of 920 sets of BWVCs have been procured and all of them have been put to use. The expenditure of the BWVCs, including the relevant supporting devices such as computer operation system, was around \$7.9 million.
3. Between 12 July and 31 December 2023, over 750 joint operations were mounted by FEHD and the Police to enforce against shop front extension blackspots in various districts across the territory. In all these operations, the enforcement officers were equipped with BWVCs. Such arrangement proved to be remarkably effective in actual practice. In over 80% of the cases involving radical acts, the person(s) concerned calmed down upon the activation of BWVC. The footage captured by BWVC was used as evidence by FEHD in 1 case involving obstructing a public officer in the execution of duty where prosecution was successfully instituted. In another 3 cases under investigation involving assaulting or obstructing a public officer in the execution of duty, the footages captured by BWVCs will be used as evidence for prosecution as necessary.

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