

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)067

(Question Serial No. 2322)

Head: (49) Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (1) Food Safety and Public Health
(2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services
(3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer: Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene (Ms Irene YOUNG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

As shown in the Analysis of Financial and Staffing Provision, due to increased provision for operating expenses, the estimated provision on Programme (1) Food Safety and Public Health, (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services and (3) Market Management and Hawker Control were all increased for 2024-25. In this connection, please advise this Committee of:

- (a) the respective numbers of permanent posts and supernumerary posts out of the 103 posts decreased under Programmes (1) to (3), as well as their ranks and salaries;
- (b) the estimated savings in expenditure achieved from the decrease of the posts; and
- (c) the reason(s) of the increase in estimated provision but a decrease in staffing.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Wing-yan, Joephy (LegCo internal reference no.: 23)

Reply:

The increase in estimated provision is mainly due to increased provision for operating expenses and the increased cash flow requirement for capital account items. In order to maintain the sustainability of our public finances, the Government has strictly controlled the civil service establishment since 2021-22. The Government will continue to implement this initiative, and maintain the target of zero-growth in the civil service establishment in 2024-25, with the aim of containing the establishment at a level not exceeding that as at end-March 2021. The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department has enhanced effectiveness and efficiency through re-prioritisation, internal redeployment and streamlining of work processes, so that various new policies and initiatives can be taken forward. In addition, there are time-limited posts deleted every year upon expiry of the duration for which the posts are created or upon completion of the jobs concerned. Posts which no longer have operational needs would also be deleted by the Department after review of the departmental civil service establishment.

In 2024-25, the Department plans to create 41 posts and delete 144 posts under Programmes (1) to (3), resulting in a net decrease of 103 posts. The information on the 144 posts planned to be deleted is as follows:

Type of posts planned to be deleted	Grade	Number of posts to be deleted	Total annual salary involved
Supernumerary post	Executive Officer	1	\$2.41 million
Permanent post	Health Inspector	22	\$50.81 million
	Executive Officer	9	
	Clerical Officer	4	
	Analyst/Programmer	3	
	Workman II	105	
	Total	144	\$53.22 million

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