

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)097

(Question Serial No. 2539)

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:

Regarding the rodent control work of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department, please advise this Committee of:

- (1) the overall actual expenditure or revised estimated expenditure of the Department on pest control services in the past 5 years;
- (2) the overall estimated expenditure of the Department on pest control services for 2024-25;
- (3) the number of dead rodents collected and the number of live rodents caught by the Department in the 18 districts in the past 3 years;
- (4) the manpower and expenditure involved for overnight rodent control teams and the rodent inspection officers additionally engaged in the past 2 years; and
- (5) the new technologies tried out by the Department in the past 3 years, their effectiveness and the expenditure involved.

Asked by: Hon LEE Tsz-king, Dominic (LegCo internal reference no.: 7)

Reply:

- (1) & (2) In the past 5 financial years (2019-20 to 2023-24), the overall expenditures of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department on pest control were \$663 million, \$726 million, \$762 million, \$786 million and \$808 million (revised estimate) respectively. In 2024-25, the total estimated expenditure of the Department on pest control services is \$875 million.
- (3) The number of dead rodents collected and the number of live rodents caught by the Department in the past 3 years (2021 to 2023), with a breakdown by District Council district, are provided at **Annex 1**.

- (4) The manpower and expenditure involved for overnight rodent control teams and rodent inspection officers in the past 2 financial years (2022-23 to 2023-24) are provided as follows :

2022-23

Team/Post	Number of teams	Number of staff	Actual expenditure (\$ million)
Overnight rodent control team	19	57	10
Rodent inspection officer	N.A.	11	4
Total	19	68	14

2023-24

Team/Post	Number of teams	Number of staff	Revised estimated expenditure (\$ million)
Overnight rodent control team	68 ^{Note}	204 ^{Note}	26
Rodent inspection officer	N.A.	19	9
Total	68 ^{Note}	223 ^{Note}	35

Note: The Department has progressively increased the number of overnight rodent control teams to 31 (93 staff in total) since August 2023. Besides, the Department temporarily deployed additional 37 teams (111 staff in total) from mid-December 2023 to February 2024 to support the Year-end Clean-up Campaign.

- (5) The new methods and technologies tried out by the Department in the past 3 financial years (2021-22 to 2023-24), their effectiveness and the expenditure involved are provided at **Annex 2**.

**Number of dead rodents collected and number of live rodents caught
by the Department (with a breakdown by District Council district)**

District	Year					
	2021		2022		2023	
	Dead rodents collected	Live rodents caught	Dead rodents collected	Live rodents caught	Dead rodents collected	Live rodents caught
Central and Western	2 040	1 679	1 885	1 873	1 370	2 261
Eastern	2 053	2 259	1 363	2 982	905	4 004
Southern	706	537	465	936	546	1 268
Wan Chai	1 532	2 920	1 402	2 915	1 231	4 402
Kowloon City	2 474	2 102	1 915	2 271	3 811	3 458
Kwun Tong	2 740	3 528	2 037	3 779	1 293	4 277
Wong Tai Sin	1 424	2 137	1 298	2 481	4 031	4 592
Sham Shui Po	3 763	6 198	4 132	5 842	3 926	6 133
Yau Tsim Mong	6 732	4 690	6 639	6 862	6 230	9 342
Sha Tin	1 237	799	1 298	1 253	917	2 598
Tai Po	1 126	713	1 692	957	2 322	1 465
North	1 307	760	1 041	2 281	527	2 414
Kwai Tsing	466	747	692	1 007	1 173	2 052
Tsuen Wan	958	1 864	906	2 903	557	2 491
Tuen Mun	881	755	1 747	2 681	2 501	4 521
Yuen Long	1 634	1 377	1 550	2 723	1 960	4 843
Sai Kung	874	539	746	794	592	1 087
Islands	1 389	242	1 002	882	604	2 136
Whole Territory	33 336	33 846	31 810	45 422	34 496	63 344

**New methods and technologies for rodent control,
their effectiveness and the expenditure involved**

Technological applications for rodent control	Effectiveness	Expenditure		
		2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
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 has been widely employed in the strategic anti-rodent operations. Moreover, the Department has fully adopted thermal imaging cameras for conducting the Rodent Activity Survey as a replacement for the Rodent Infestation Survey from 2024 onwards to enhance rodent surveillance in districts and deploy more effective anti-rodent actions in blackspots.	About \$2.39 million	About \$3.89 million	About \$5.77 million
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 has been widely employed.	N.A. ^{Note}	About \$580,000	About \$140,000
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 results are positive. The equipment will be used in suitable places as necessary.	N.A. ^{Note}	About \$380,000	About \$5.78 million

Technological applications for rodent control	Effectiveness	Expenditure		
		2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
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 November 2022. Positive results have been achieved, and the rodent infestation problem in public markets has been alleviated effectively. The equipment will be used in suitable indoor venues, such as markets and refuse collection points, as necessary.	N.A. ^{Note}	About \$630,000	About \$2 million

Note: The Department did not procure such equipment in that year.

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