

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**EEB(F)102**

**(Question Serial No. 2427)**

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:

With regard to the implementation of municipal solid waste charging in phases this year, please advise this Committee of the following:

1. The indicator for the estimated quantity of refuse collected in 2024 is the same as the actual quantity collected in 2023. Can the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department explain why the estimated quantity of refuse collected will not be reduced following the implementation of the policy?
2. Have additional resources and manpower been allocated to cope with the peak season of waste disposal prior to the implementation of the policy and the possible problem of illegal dumping after it comes into effect? If yes, please set out the additional resources and manpower allocated by district; if no, please explain the reason(s);
3. Have additional resources and manpower been allocated to cope with the inspection and prosecution work following the implementation of the policy? If yes, please set out the additional resources and manpower allocated by district; if no, please explain the reason(s) and list the respective staff establishment.

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Hei, Edward (LegCo internal reference no.: 65)

Reply:

1. In preparing the estimated expenditure for the 2024-25 financial year, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department has taken into account that the municipal solid waste charging scheme will be implemented during the year. As there will be a phasing-in period upon the commencement of waste charging and the quantity of refuse collected is subject to various factors, the Department considers it appropriate, as in the past, to estimate the quantity of refuse collected in 2024 by making reference to the actual data of the previous years .
- 2 & 3. To cope with the problem of refuse disposal that may arise from the implementation of waste charging, the Department will strengthen refuse collection services and law enforcement through flexible deployment of resources according to actual needs. On refuse collection services, reference can be made to the arrangements for the enhanced version of the year-end clean-up campaign conducted between January and February

2024, during which over 200 additional temporary junk collection points were set up in various districts. Cleaning as well as refuse and bulky waste collection services at the refuse collection points in all districts were also enhanced. The measure of extending the opening hours of some refuse collection points will be maintained in 2024 to facilitate proper disposal of refuse by the public. Besides, having regard to the actual situations of illegal disposal of domestic waste and refuse in public places near “three-nil” buildings in various districts, the Department will consider providing additional large-size waste containers in the vicinity progressively as an interim measure to assist members of the public in need.

On the enforcement front, the Department will adopt a multi-pronged approach to enhance enforcement efficiency. For instance, dedicated teams in plain clothes are deployed to take enforcement actions; Internet Protocol cameras are installed at illegal refuse deposit blackspots, so as to institute prosecutions or plan more effective enforcement actions through analyses of the information obtained from the video footages. In 2024-25, there will be a total of 272 members in 55 dedicated enforcement teams, an increase of about 5% over 260 members in 52 teams in 2023-24. The dedicated teams will be flexibly deployed to different districts for inspections and enforcement actions. Besides, the foremen in the Cleansing Sections, and the Hawker Control Teams will also take enforcement actions against illegal dumping when performing their routine duties.

- End -