

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)115

(Question Serial No. 0037)

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:

During 2024-25, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department will continue to implement and trial new measures to enhance and sustain the effectiveness of its rodent control work, including continuing with the overnight rodent operations and trial use of new rodent control technologies and tools. The Department will also strengthen co-operation with and provide necessary support for other departments and sectors to enhance rodent control. In this connection, please advise this Committee of:

1. the details of the rodent control work by items, as well as the staffing and expenditure to be involved for each item; and
2. the actual work of the overnight rodent operations and the number of staff involved.

Asked by: Hon SHIU Ka-fai (LegCo internal reference no.: 10)

Reply:

1. In 2024-25, apart from continuing to step up the routine rodent prevention and control work, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) will also adopt targeted rodent prevention and control strategies to enhance the effectiveness of its anti-rodent work, and keep on providing support and advice on rodent control for the relevant departments and industries. Specifically, the rodent prevention and control measures to be adopted by FEHD in 2024-25 include:
 - (a) continuing with the overnight rodent operations in all districts to enhance the effectiveness in capturing rodents;
 - (b) continuing to use new technologies, tools and baits, including wider application of T-shaped bait boxes at suitable locations and pilot use of alcohol rodent trapping device and glue traps in more public markets and refuse collection points;
 - (c) extending the current arrangement of allowing food premises to place large-size waste containers in suitable rear lanes and requiring such premises to strengthen rodent control, so as to improve the environmental hygiene and tackle the rodent problem in rear lanes;

- (d) fully adopting thermal imaging cameras with artificial intelligence technology to monitor rodent infestation situation and formulating the “Rodent Absence Rate” to replace the existing Rodent Infestation Rate, so as to plan rodent prevention and control work and deploy more effective anti-rodent actions in blackspots;
- (e) continuing to assist the Environment and Ecology Bureau to implement the Cross-sectoral Territory-wide Anti-rodent Action to encourage different sectors in the community, including property management companies, operators of market and hawker stalls, the catering industry, the construction industry and the pest control trade to strengthen anti-rodent work within their respective sectors, and arranging health talks to provide them with information on rodent prevention and control; and
- (f) continuing to carry out public education and publicity activities to remind the public of the importance of rodent control.

In addition, FEHD will continue to conduct strategic anti-rodent operations against 97 priority rodent blackspots in 2024, in order to achieve the indicator set in the 2023 Policy Address, that is, to reduce the number of priority rodent blackspots by 60% by end-2024.

854 in-house staff and 2 352 staff engaged by the contractors provide pest control services, including the prevention and control services of rodents, mosquitoes and other arthropod pests with public health importance. In 2024-25, the total estimated expenditure on pest control services is \$875 million. FEHD does not keep a separate breakdown on rodent control work by type.

2. Since July 2022, FEHD has set up a number of overnight rodent control teams in all districts across the territory. Continuous and intensive rodent trapping work, including placing a large number of rodent traps with food baits, handling the rodents caught, etc., has been carried out in areas with more serious infestation in the small hours under the supervision of rodent inspection officers to enhance the effectiveness of rodent control. The information on the staff to be involved in 2024-25 is provided as follows:

Team/Post	Number of teams	Number of staff
Overnight rodent control team	31	93
Rodent inspection officer	N.A.	19
Total	31	112

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