

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

S-EEB(F)001

(Question Serial No. S014)

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:

Follow-up question to Reply Serial No. EEB(F)048:

With regard to the 6 existing crematoria in Hong Kong, the utilisation rates of 5 of them have reached 99% or above in the past year (2023). However, the Government only plans to build a new crematorium at Wo Hop Shek for estimated completion earliest in 2031.

1. How will the Government handle the situation of saturated utilisation of the above crematoria in the coming few years, in particular in respect of the impact on usage generated during the period when the operation of some aged cremators have to be suspended for replacement?
2. With rapid population growth on Lantau Island, the Government has yet to have a plan to build a crematorium in the district for the convenience of residents. Will this give people an impression that the Government stays away from difficult issues?

Asked by: Hon TSE Wai-chuen, Tony

Reply:

1. The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department has a performance pledge that members of the public can be provided with cremation sessions within 15 days from the day next to the application day. This performance pledge has all along been met over the years. Currently, if the regular cremation sessions available are fully booked on a day, the Department will release additional cremation sessions through manpower deployment and special operation arrangements at the relevant crematoria to meet service demand. The Department reviews the service life and maintenance status of the cremators in its crematoria from time to time, and carries out reprovisioning works in phases in an orderly manner. During the reprovisioning of a crematorium, additional cremation sessions will be released from other crematoria to maintain a stable provision of cremation services. The Department has also been proactively exploring the use of technology to enhance the efficiency of cremators, in order to further optimise its cremation services.
2. In planning for the construction of a new crematorium, the Government will take into account various factors in detail, including the overall supply and demand of cremation

services, the existing or planned use of the selected site, the supporting infrastructure, the impact on traffic and the environment, the use of public resources (including land), the opinions of the relevant stakeholders and the local residents, etc. The Government will continue to keep in view the situation and take forward crematorium projects as and when appropriate based on the projection of the overall demand for cremation services. There is no district restriction on application for the cremation services under the Department. Members of the public can book cremation services from any crematoria according to their needs and actual circumstances.

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