

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO  
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

**FHB(FE)145**

Question Serial No.

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

2588

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Food and Health

Question :

- (a) Is the net increase of 3 permanent posts in 2009-10 related to (i) following up the outcome of the review of market policy, or (ii) following up the outcome of the review of hawker licence policy? If not, to which areas of work of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department is it related in 2009-10?
- (b) What measures are in place to address the market management problems (e.g. stall subletting to make profits) as mentioned in Chapter 6 of the Director of Audit's Report No. 51 and the related report of the Public Accounts Committee? Have resources been earmarked in 2009-10 for implementing such measures? What is the expenditure involved?

Asked by : Hon. CHAN Mo-po, Paul

Reply :

The information sought is provided as follows –

- (a) The 3 permanent posts created in 2009-10 are Health Inspector Grade staff. They are created for performing food safety regulatory duties.

- (b) The key measures to address the market management problems as mentioned in Chapter 6 of the Director of Audit's Report No. 51 and the related report of the Public Accounts Committee are set out as follows –
- (i) We will conduct utilization and patron opinion surveys on public markets by batches in 2009-10 at an estimated expenditure of \$8 million. The surveys are intended to collect patronage information on individual markets, as well as tenants' and customers' views on possible market improvement measures. The surveys will commence in March 2009. We will present their findings to the Legislative Council Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene in mid-2009;
  - (ii) We will introduce service trades (e.g. beauty care/massage, real estate services, Chinese medicine and bone-setting) in selected public markets; and expand the variety of permitted trades, for example traditional snack shops or bakeries with a view to further enhancing the vibrancy of public markets. The estimated expenditure on publicity is estimated at \$200,000;
  - (iii) We will review the provision of cooked food markets in the second half of 2009. The expenditure involved will be included in the surveys as set out in (i) above;
  - (iv) We are reviewing the mechanisms for market rental adjustment, recovery of air-conditioning charges and rates in consultation with the relevant bureaux/departments;
  - (v) We are actively following up on suspected subletting cases and will review and improve the monitoring and investigation procedures for subletting cases;
  - (vi) We will consult the relevant District Council on the future of Market A as mentioned in the Director of Audit's report and follow up as appropriate;
  - (vii) We have revised the planning standards and guidelines for the provision of public markets and have drawn up internal guidelines for conducting viability studies for new public markets; and
  - (viii) We plan to organise workshops/seminars in the second half of 2009 inviting District Councils, Area Committees and other stakeholders to discuss measures to improve public market operation and explore design concepts of new public markets. The resources required can only be determined after detailed arrangements are worked out.

Measures (iv) to (vii) are implemented by existing staff and do not incur additional expenditure.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name in block letters \_\_\_\_\_ W H CHEUK

Post Title \_\_\_\_\_ Director of  
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date \_\_\_\_\_ 17.3.2009