

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)078****(Question Serial No. 2374)**Head: (49) Food and Environmental Hygiene DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not specifiedProgramme: (1) Food Safety and Public HealthControlling Officer: Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene (Donald NG)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

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

1. What are the numbers of dead rodents collected and live rodents caught in the 18 districts in the past 3 years?
2. What are the staffing and expenditure involved in the provision of pest control services by the Department in the past 3 years? What are the details of the service items provided by the pest control service contractors engaged by the Department and the number of staff employed by the contractors in the past 3 years?
3. What are the resources and staffing involved for overnight rodent control teams in the past 3 years?
4. What are the expenditure and effectiveness of the new technologies used by the Department in the past 3 years?

Asked by: Hon CHENG Wing-shun, Vincent (LegCo internal reference no.: 33)Reply:

1. The number of dead rodents collected and the number of live rodents caught by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department in the past 3 years, with a breakdown by District Council district, are provided in **Annex 1**.
2. The information on the staffing involved in the pest control work, including rodent and mosquito prevention and control, of the Department in the past 3 years is provided as follows:

Year	Civil service staffing		Total number of staff employed by pest control service contractors
	Planning and implementation of pest control work in districts	Vector surveillance, technical support and advisory work	
2022	745	109	1 977 ^{Note}
2023	745	109	1 860 ^{Note}
2024	745	109	1 573

Note: Excluding positions created under the Anti-epidemic Fund.

In the past 3 financial years (2022-23 to 2024-25), the overall expenditure of the Department on pest control were \$786 million, \$795 million and \$871 million (revised estimate) respectively.

As stipulated in the outsourced pest control service contracts of the Department, services that the contractors are required to provide include prevention and control of mosquitoes, rodents and other arthropod pests with public health importance, such as eliminating potential mosquito breeding places, conducting fogging operations to eradicate adult mosquitoes at suitable locations, trapping rodents, placing poisonous baits to eradicate rodents, filling rat holes, clearing refuse and junk as well as removing wasp/wild bee nests at the common parts of the buildings which have not engaged property management companies.

3. The information on the staffing and expenditure involved for overnight rodent control teams and rodent inspection officers in the past 3 financial years (2022-23 to 2024-25) is provided in **Annex 2**.
4. The rodent control technologies and tools adopted by the Department, their effectiveness and the expenditure involved in the past 3 financial years (2022-23 to 2024-25) are provided in **Annex 3**.

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

District	Year					
	2022		2023		2024	
	Dead rodents collected	Live rodents caught	Dead rodents collected	Live rodents caught	Dead rodents collected	Live rodents caught
Central and Western	1 885	1 873	1 370	2 261	1 338	4 268
Eastern	1 363	2 982	905	4 004	714	5 819
Southern	465	936	546	1 268	440	1 562
Wan Chai	1 402	2 915	1 231	4 402	1 290	6 360
Kowloon City	1 915	2 271	3 811	3 458	4 213	5 356
Kwun Tong	2 037	3 779	1 293	4 277	1 166	5 016
Wong Tai Sin	1 298	2 481	4 031	4 592	4 304	6 566
Sham Shui Po	4 132	5 842	3 926	6 133	3 818	8 530
Yau Tsim Mong	6 639	6 862	6 230	9 342	6 128	14 550
Sha Tin	1 298	1 253	917	2 598	731	4 111
Tai Po	1 692	957	2 322	1 465	2 167	2 025
North	1 041	2 281	527	2 414	380	3 209
Kwai Tsing	692	1 007	1 173	2 052	1 245	3 917
Tsuen Wan	906	2 903	557	2 491	550	3 290
Tuen Mun	1 747	2 681	2 501	4 521	2 055	4 934
Yuen Long	1 550	2 723	1 960	4 843	1 639	5 528
Sai Kung	746	794	592	1 087	532	1 571
Islands	1 002	882	604	2 136	539	3 017
Whole Territory	31 810	45 422	34 496	63 344	33 249	89 629

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	Actual expenditure (\$ million)
Overnight rodent control team	68 ^{Note 1}	204 ^{Note 1}	26
Rodent inspection officer	N.A.	19	9
Total	68 ^{Note 1}	223 ^{Note 1}	35

Note 1: The Department had progressively increased the number of overnight rodent control teams to 31 (93 staff in total) since August 2023. Besides, an additional 37 teams (111 staff in total) were temporarily deployed to support the Year-end Clean-up Campaign from mid-December 2023 to February 2024.

2024-25

Team/Post	Number of teams	Number of staff	Revised estimated expenditure (\$ million)
Overnight rodent control team	78 ^{Note 2}	234 ^{Note 2}	42
Rodent inspection officer	N.A.	19	10
Total	78 ^{Note 2}	253 ^{Note 2}	52

Note 2: The Department had progressively increased the number of overnight rodent control teams to 61 (183 staff in total) since July 2024. Besides, an additional 17 teams (51 staff in total) were temporarily deployed to support the Year-end Clean-up Campaign from mid-December 2024 to February 2025.

**Technologies and tools for rodent control,
their effectiveness and the expenditure involved**

Rodent control technology and tool	Effectiveness	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
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 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 at locations where the rodent problem is more serious.	About \$3.89 million	About \$5.77 million	About \$12.67 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.	About \$580,000	About \$140,000	About \$130,000
Alcohol rodent trapping device	The Department has conducted trials progressively on alcohol rodent trapping devices in public markets and refuse collection points since	About \$380,000	About \$5.78 million	About \$1.70 million

Rodent control technology and tool	Effectiveness	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
	October 2022. The results are positive. The equipment will be used in suitable places as necessary.			

The Department will continue to keep track of the rodent control technologies and tools in the market and introduce them for use at locations with higher rodent activities when appropriate.

- End -