

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**EEB(F)086****(Question Serial No. 0176)**Head: (49) Food and Environmental Hygiene DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not specifiedProgramme: (4) Public Education and Community InvolvementControlling Officer: Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene (Donald NG)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and EcologyQuestion:

Regarding green burial,

- (1) please provide the figures of green burial cases in the past 3 years (2022, 2023 and 2024).
- (2) please set out the details of the promotion work of green burial in recent years, including the staffing and expenditure involved.
- (3) has the Government assessed the effectiveness of the promotion and implementation work? Have any indicators been set in this regard?

Asked by: Hon CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy (LegCo internal reference no.: 17)Reply:

- (1) The numbers of green burial cases in the past 3 years are provided as follows:

Number of cases Year	Scattering of ashes		
	In Gardens of Remembrance (GoRs)*	At sea	Total
2022	8 437	1 012	9 449
2023	8 237	1 144	9 381
2024	8 522	1 032	9 554

* Including cases handled by private cemeteries.

- (2)&(3) Green burial promotion was coordinated by a dedicated team of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department comprising 5, 6 and 6 full-time staff respectively in the past 3 years, i.e. the 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25 financial years. The expenditure on promoting green burial in these years were about \$13 million, \$19 million and \$17 million respectively.

The Department has been promoting green burial through different channels in recent years, including organising exhibitions and talks, producing and broadcasting promotion videos, distributing publications, putting up posters and banners, collaborating with relevant non-governmental organisations such as tertiary institutions, secondary schools, religious bodies, District Councils and district organisations to enlarge its network with various sectors of society, as well as collaborating with non-governmental organisations to organise talks and guided tours and carry out promotional activities at exhibitions for seniors. As a standing arrangement, the Health Education Exhibition and Resource Centre of the Department located in the Kowloon Park in Tsim Sha Tsui provides an exhibition area with multi-media display equipment for promotion of green burial.

Since October 2023, the Department has been further promoting green burial on three fronts, namely broadening the coverage of promotions, enhancing understanding and discussion on green burial and pre-life planning, and liaising with different partners in the community to promote life and death education. The Department has been making use of a wide range of contents and channels to promote green burial to a wider audience. Activities targeting students of secondary schools and tertiary institutions have been organised to promote life and death education and green burial. Expos targeting at the middle-aged and the elderly, online publicity programmes, after-death arrangement information seminars and guided tours, etc. have been organised as well.

In addition, the Department launched a design thinking consultancy study in 2022 to gain a better understanding of the views of users, stakeholders and the general public so as to promote green burial and enhance service quality. Taking into account the findings of the consultancy study, the Department has been rolling out appropriate and caring new facilities and services since April 2024 to enhance the sense of ritual in green burial, which include the display of a wooden sculpture artwork “To My...” for letter posting, provision of different options of ash scatterers in GoRs, the launch of a dedicated website on “After-death Arrangements” and the Cemeteries and Crematoria Services Platform, etc.

The Department has been reviewing the effectiveness of its promotion of green burial through on-going monitoring and analysis of the relevant statistics, including the data of people opting for green burial, the utilisation of green burial facilities and the number of registrations in the Green Burial Central Register, to adjust and enhance the promotion work of green burial. The efforts the Government made over the years to promote green burial are bearing fruit. The number of green burial cases handled in 2024 accounted for 18.2% of the total number of deaths in Hong Kong, an increase of more than two-fold as compared to 8.4% in 2014. Green burial is a matter of personal choice and life planning, for which it is not suitable to have a performance indicator. As it takes time to bring about the change of social norms and conventions, the Government will continue, through providing and enhancing green burial facilities and services, public education and publicity, to gradually make green burial the mainstream arrangement of handling ashes, so as to achieve the policy objectives of being more environmental friendly and sustainable development.