

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)098

(Question Serial No. 0613)

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 (Donald NG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Currently, the Liquor Licensing Board (LLB) has the authority to approve liquor licence applications and revoke any liquor licence as it considers necessary. In this connection, please advise this Committee of:

- (1) the number of liquor-licensed premises, the number of liquor-licensed premises holding a one-year licence and the number of liquor-licensed premises holding a two-year licence in the territory in each of the past 3 years, with a breakdown by the 18 districts;
- (2) the number of liquor licences for which imposition of additional licensing conditions was recommended by the Police, and the number of liquor licences on which the LLB decided to impose additional licensing conditions as recommended by the Police in each of the past 3 years, with a breakdown by the 18 districts;
- (3) the number of liquor licences the revocation of which was recommended by the Police, and the number of liquor licences revoked by the LLB as per such recommendations in each of the past 3 years, with a breakdown by the 18 districts;
- (4) the number of liquor licences revoked in each of the past 3 years, with a breakdown by the 18 districts and reason for revocation;
- (5) the average time taken for processing an application for (i) a one-year liquor licence and (ii) a two-year liquor licence in each of the past 3 years;
- (6) the average time taken for listing an appeal case for hearing in each of the past 3 years;
- (7) the success rate of appeal in the past 3 years;
- (8) the establishment, strength and expenditure on emoluments of different ranks of staff, and the total expenditure of the LLB responsible for approving liquor licence applications in the past 3 years and in 2025-26; and
- (9) whether there are plans to streamline the licensing procedures or extend the validity period of liquor licences so as to reduce the burden of the regulatory regime on the trade, and help the trade face the current operating difficulties. If yes, what are the details? If no, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LAI Tung-kwok (LegCo internal reference no.: 22)

Reply:

- (1) The number of liquor-licensed premises in each of the past 3 years, with a breakdown by the 18 districts, is as follows:

District	Number of liquor-licensed premises					
	2022		2023		2024	
	One-year liquor licence	Two-year liquor licence	One-year liquor licence	Two-year liquor licence	One-year liquor licence	Two-year liquor licence
Central and Western	638	642	573	691	504	717
Eastern	190	250	176	256	142	271
Southern	61	107	54	108	57	110
Wan Chai	587	752	576	755	482	773
Islands	119	199	108	218	109	219
Yau Tsim Mong	1 076	1 109	1 102	1 111	998	1 112
Sham Shui Po	271	146	246	152	224	166
Kowloon City	243	247	272	248	280	230
Wong Tai Sin	116	88	112	95	98	106
Kwun Tong	178	212	169	206	155	199
Tsuen Wan	203	164	176	182	172	183
Kwai Tsing	83	94	94	81	94	74
North	72	68	73	72	69	73
Tai Po	97	111	91	119	78	124
Sai Kung	206	120	190	126	166	130
Sha Tin	165	201	198	199	187	205
Tuen Mun	135	134	138	130	123	139
Yuen Long	216	223	227	220	230	204
Total	4 656	4 867	4 575	4 969	4 168	5 035

- (2) The number of liquor licences for which imposition of additional licensing conditions was recommended by the Police, and the number of liquor licences on which the Liquor Licensing Board (LLB) decided to impose additional licensing conditions as recommended by the Police in each of the past 3 years, with a breakdown by the 18 districts, are as follows:

District	Number of liquor licences for which imposition of additional licensing conditions was recommended by the Police			Number of liquor licences on which the LLB agreed to impose additional licensing conditions as recommended by the Police		
	2022	2023	2024	2022	2023	2024
Central and Western	131	103	74	131	102	74
Eastern	12	10	11	12	10	11
Southern	0	0	1	0	0	1
Wan Chai	28	19	14	28	19	14
Islands	2	2	1	2	2	1
Yau Tsim Mong	22	22	29	22	20	29
Sham Shui Po	1	3	1	1	3	1
Kowloon City	1	2	1	1	2	1
Wong Tai Sin	1	0	0	1	0	0
Kwun Tong	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tsuen Wan	0	0	1	0	0	1
Kwai Tsing	1	1	1	1	1	1
North	0	1	1	0	1	1
Tai Po	0	1	0	0	1	0
Sai Kung	4	14	4	4	14	4
Sha Tin	0	2	2	0	2	2
Tuen Mun	0	3	1	0	3	1
Yuen Long	3	2	3	3	2	3
Total	206	185	145	206	182	145

- (3) The number of liquor licences the revocation of which was recommended by the Police, and the number of liquor licences revoked by the LLB as per such recommendations in each of the past 3 years, with a breakdown by the 18 districts, are as follows:

District	Number of liquor licences the revocation of which was recommended by the Police			Number of liquor licences revoked by the LLB as recommended by the Police		
	2022	2023	2024	2022	2023	2024
Central and Western	0	0	0	0	0	0
Eastern	0	0	0	0	0	0
Southern	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wan Chai	0	0	0	0	0	0
Islands	0	0	0	0	0	0
Yau Tsim Mong	1	2	0	0	2	0
Sham Shui Po	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kowloon City	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wong Tai Sin	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kwun Tong	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tsuen Wan	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kwai Tsing	0	0	0	0	0	0
North	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tai Po	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sai Kung	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sha Tin	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tuen Mun	0	0	0	0	0	0
Yuen Long	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	1	2	0	0	2	0

- (4) The number of liquor licences revoked in each of the past 3 years, with a breakdown by the 18 districts and reason for revocation, is as follows:

District	Number of liquor licences revoked					
	Cessation of business			Contravention of legislation ¹		
	2022	2023	2024	2022	2023	2024
Central and Western	1	3	2	0	0	0
Eastern	0	0	0	0	0	0
Southern	0	0	1	0	0	0
Wan Chai	1	3	4	0	0	0
Islands	0	1	1	0	0	0
Yau Tsim Mong	1	9	4	0	2	0
Sham Shui Po	0	2	2	0	0	0
Kowloon City	2	1	2	0	0	0
Wong Tai Sin	0	0	1	0	0	0
Kwun Tong	3	1	1	0	0	0
Tsuen Wan	0	2	1	0	0	0
Kwai Tsing	0	0	0	0	0	0
North	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tai Po	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sai Kung	0	0	1	0	0	0
Sha Tin	0	2	0	0	0	0
Tuen Mun	0	0	0	0	0	0
Yuen Long	2	2	1	0	0	0
Total	10	26	21	0	2	0

¹ Involves dangerous drug trade.

- (5) The average time taken for processing an application for a one-year liquor licence and a two-year liquor licence in each of the past 3 years is as follows:

	2022		2023		2024	
Average time taken for processing a liquor licence application	One-year liquor licence	Two-year liquor licence	One-year liquor licence	Two-year liquor licence	One-year liquor licence	Two-year liquor licence
	40 days ²	37 days	40 days ²	37 days	38 days	38 days

² The majority of applications for one-year liquor licence were contested cases and the processing time was therefore longer.

- (6) The average time taken for the Municipal Services Appeals Board (MSAB) to list an appeal case for hearing in each of the past 3 years is as follows:

	2022	2023	2024
Average time taken to list an appeal case for hearing (day)³	69	78	74

³ This is counted from the date on which the MSAB received the appeal application to the date of the first scheduled hearing. The scheduling of dates for hearing may be affected by factors such as the schedules of the parties to the appeal and/or their legal representatives, as well as their request for extension of time limit to submit the relevant documents.

- (7) The success rate of appeal to the MSAB in the past 3 years is as follows:

	2022	2023	2024
Success rate of appeal (i.e. appeals allowed by the MSAB)⁴	25%	33.3%	33.3%

⁴ Only cases with the MSAB's decision issued before the end of a year are taken into account for calculating the success rate of appeal in that year.

- (8) In the past 3 years, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department had 9 staff working at the LLB Secretariat and 40 in the 3 Liquor Licensing Offices of the Department. They were responsible for assisting the LLB in handling liquor licence and club liquor licence applications. Some of them also carried out administrative and clerical work of other licences. The establishment, strength and expenditure on emoluments of different ranks of staff, as well as the expenditure of LLB Secretariat and the 3 Liquor Licensing Offices each year is as follows:

LLB Secretariat	Establishment and strength of staff in different ranks							
	2022-23		2023-24		2024-25		2025-26 (Estimate)	
Rank⁵	Establishment	Strength	Establishment	Strength	Establishment	Strength	Establishment	Strength
Chief Executive Officer⁶	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Executive Officer⁶	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Senior Clerical Officer	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Assistant Clerical Officer⁶	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Workman II⁶	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Sub-total	9							

⁵ The above staff provide clerical and other support services for the LLB.

⁶ The Chief Executive Officer, 2 Executive Officers, 1 Assistant Clerical Officer and Workman II are also required to assist in handling appeal cases of the Licensing Appeals Board and the MSAB.

Liquor Licensing Offices	Establishment and strength of staff in different ranks							
	2022-23		2023-24		2024-25		2025-26 (Estimate)	
Rank	Establishment	Strength	Establishment	Strength	Establishment	Strength	Establishment	Strength
Superintendent	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Chief Health Inspector	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Executive Officer	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
Clerical Officer	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Assistant Clerical Officer	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14
Clerical Assistant	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
Sub-total	40							

	Expenditure on emoluments and total expenditure each year			
	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25 (Revised estimate)	2025-26 (Estimate)
Expenditure on emoluments (\$ million)	13.1	14.3	14.8	14.8
Total expenditure (\$ million)	17.0	19.2	16.5	16.3

- (9) The Government has implemented a number of trade facilitation measures for liquor licences in the past, such as the extension of the maximum duration of a liquor licence to 2 years since August 2015, and providing the applicants with the option of issuing liquor licence in electronic form since 28 June 2024. The Government will continue to consider the views of different stakeholders and optimise the procedures and system for liquor licence application in a timely manner.

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