

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

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(Question Serial No. 1949)

Head: (49) Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not specified

Programme: (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer: Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene (Donald NG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

1. What is the budget for the work on eliminating rodent infestation in 2025-26? What are the expenditures for conducting Rodent Activity Survey and extending its coverage, and continuing to implement and trial new measures to enhance and sustain the effectiveness of rodent control work?
2. What key performance indicators are used for assessing the outcomes of “continuing to implement and trial new measures to enhance and sustain the effectiveness of rodent control work”? What are the details of the indicators for the past 3 years?
3. Despite the Government’s commitment to “reducing the number of priority rodent blackspots”, the target has been lowered from 65% in 2023 and 2024 to 60% in 2025. What are the reasons for the downward adjustment? What are the specific indicators for identifying rodent blackspots? Were the targets for “reducing the number of priority rodent blackspots” in 2023 and 2024 met?

Asked by: Hon LI Sai-wing, Stanley (LegCo internal reference no.: 35)

Reply:

1. In 2025-26, the overall estimated expenditure of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department on pest control services is \$856 million. The expenditure covers not only rodent prevention and control but also the prevention and control work of mosquitoes and other arthropod pests with public health importance.

In 2025-26, the Department will continue to engage outsourced contractors for installing and operating thermal imaging cameras as well as using artificial intelligence to help analyse the thermal images captured so as to conduct the Rodent Activity Survey. The estimated expenditure in this regard is \$5.91 million. The Department does not maintain a separate breakdown of the estimated expenditure on other rodent control measures by type.

2. In 2023, the Department conducted strategic anti-rodent operations at a total of 108 priority rodent blackspots in all districts and eliminated around 60% of the priority rodent blackspots (70 in total), achieving the indicator of reducing the number of priority

rodent blackspots at least by half as set in the 2022 Policy Address. In 2024, the Department continued to conduct anti-rodent operations targeting 97 priority rodent blackspots and eliminated around 65% of the priority rodent blackspots (63 in total), achieving the performance indicator of reducing the number of blackspots by 60% by the end of 2024 as set in the 2023 Policy Address. For 2025, the Department's target is to reduce the 93 rodent blackspots by 60% by the end of the year.

3. From 2024 onwards, the Department has upwardly adjusted the target of "reducing the number of priority rodent blackspots" in the Controlling Officer's Report from 50% to 60%. In both 2023 and 2024, the Department successfully eliminated 65% of the priority rodent blackspots, achieving the target of "reducing the number of priority rodent blackspots" as set in the report.

In considering whether or not a location is a rodent blackspot, the Department will take into account various factors, including the Rodent Absence Rate of each district, the actual situation of the location and views from the local community.

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