

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**EEB(F)162**

**(Question Serial No. 3792)**

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:

As regards taking forward the streamlining of the food licensing regime, please advise this Committee of the latest numbers of applications received and approved, and the average reduction in the licence processing time under the new Professional Certification System in the past 2 years (i.e. from 2023-24 to 2024-25).

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 82)

Reply:

In order to expedite the processing procedures and enable the trade to have a better grasp of the time needed to acquire a full licence, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department introduced on 1 March 2023 a Professional Certification System (PCS) for light refreshment restaurant and food factory licences on a pilot basis as an additional option on top of the existing regime. Since 1 February 2024, the scope of the PCS has been expanded to cover general restaurant licences. In the past 2 years (i.e. 2023-24 and 2024-25), there were 10 and 4 cases where the applicants opted for the PCS, and 6 and 4 of them were approved respectively. Under the PCS, an applicant could receive a full licence around 14 days earlier as compared to the existing licensing regime.

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