

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)055

(Question Serial No. 2599)

Head: (49) Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title): (000) Operational expenses

Programme: (1) Food Safety and Public Health
(2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services
(3) Market Management and Hawker Control

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

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

As regards staff establishment, there will be a decrease of 112 posts, 68 posts and 53 posts for the Programmes of Food Safety and Public Health, Environmental Hygiene and Related Services, and Market Management and Hawker Control respectively, totalling a decrease of 233 posts. Please advise this Committee of:

1. the reason(s) for the significant reduction of posts for the 3 Programmes;
2. the numbers of posts for the 3 Programmes in the past 3 years; and
3. the details of the posts deleted, including their post titles, respective branches and main duties, as well as the annual expenditure involved.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Chun-ying (LegCo internal reference no.: 33)

Reply:

1. & 3. The Government has been strictly controlling the civil service establishment. It has implemented the zero-growth policy in the overall civil service establishment since 2021-22, with the overall establishment controlled at a level not exceeding that as at end-March 2021. In line with the Government's Productivity Enhancement Programme (PEP) and the objective of optimising the use of manpower resources, the civil service establishment will be reduced by 2% each in 2026-27 and 2027-28.

After reviewing factors such as overall service demand, operational needs and vacancy situations, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department has made arrangements to tie in with the aforementioned 2% reduction in the civil service establishment of the Government for 2026-27. In 2026-27, together with other time-limited posts due to lapse and the posts to be deleted arising from the Department's internal reorganisation or redeployment of resources, the proportions of civil service junior rank posts (generally remunerated on Master Pay Scale (MPS) Points 0 to 15 and Model Scale 1 Pay Scale), middle rank posts (generally remunerated on MPS Points 16 to 33) and senior rank posts (generally remunerated

on MPS Points 34 to 49) deleted under Programmes (1) to (3) are about 97%, 2% and 1% respectively. The posts deleted were mainly providing operational and logistical support for the work under the relevant Programmes. The government expenditure saved by streamlining the civil service establishment has been counted towards the 2% savings of the recurrent expenditure of the respective bureaux/departments for the respective financial years under the Government's PEP.

2. The numbers of posts under Programmes (1) to (3) of the Department in the past 3 years are as follows:

Programme	Year		
	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
	Number of posts		
Programme (1): Food Safety and Public Health	1 940	1 902	1 884
Programme (2): Environmental Hygiene and Related Services	6 026	5 966	5 924
Programme (3): Market Management and Hawker Control	3 491	3 486	3 483

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