

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

EEB(F)074

(Question Serial No. 2855)

Head: (49) Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

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

Programme: (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:

It is stated in Programme (3) that the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department is responsible for the day-to-day management of licensed hawker operations. In this connection, please advise this Committee:

- (a) of the respective costs and manpower required by the Department for managing licensed hawker pitches, hawker permitted places and hawker bazaars in each of the past 3 years;
- (b) of the respective costs for issuing and managing fixed pitch hawker licences and itinerant hawker licences in the past 3 years; and
- (c) whether the Department plans to issue hawker licences in countryside areas; if yes, the details; if no, the reason(s).

Asked by: Hon CHAN Wing-yan, JoePHY (LegCo internal reference no.: 33)

Reply:

(a) and (b) Staff of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department managing licensed hawker pitches, hawker permitted places, hawker bazaars, as well as handling the surrender and issue of hawker licences, also perform other duties such as combating shopfront extension, unlicensed hawkers and taking law enforcement actions against cleanliness offences. The Department does not keep a separate breakdown of the manpower for managing licensed hawkers. The overall expenditure and staff establishment for the above work in the past 3 years is as follows:

Financial year	Overall staff establishment ^{Note}	Overall expenditure (\$ billion)
2023-24	2 572	1.2610
2024-25	2 593	1.3624
2025-26 (Revised estimate)	2 598	1.3791

Note: Including staff from the Health Inspector and Hawker Control Officer grades, as well as Workmen I and II

- (c) Society has different views and expectations regarding hawkers and their hawking activities. The Government is committed to balancing the needs and views of various parties so that licensed hawkers can operate according to market demand while ensuring food safety, environmental hygiene and public safety, and avoiding nuisance to local residents. Under the prevailing policy, the Department will not issue new itinerant hawker licences. Currently, the Department has issued over 120 itinerant hawker licences in the New Territories (including countryside areas). Those licensees may hawk in a mobile nature in the New Territories and the Islands District. In addition, the Department has issued over 180 fixed pitch hawker licences in the New Territories and the Islands District. Licensees may hawk in the delineated areas. To promote normal turnover of fixed-pitch hawker licences and give new hawkers an opportunity to enter the hawker trade, the Department will proactively consider opening up fixed hawker pitches for application by eligible persons when appropriate.

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