CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 0400)

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:

In recent years, the Government has been proactively applying technologies to enhance the effectiveness of rodent prevention and control. The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department has fully adopted thermal imaging cameras and artificial intelligence technology in conducting the Rodent Activity Survey since 2024, and has deployed overnight rodent control teams to conduct targeted operations for capturing rodents in the small hours. Regarding the Estimates of Expenditure 2026-27 and the latest progress of the related anti-rodent work, please advise this Committee of the following:

(1) What are the estimated expenditure of the Department on rodent prevention and control in 2026-27, the increase/decrease rate as compared with the revised estimate for 2025-26 and the reasons for increase/decrease?

(2) What are the annual staff establishment and estimated expenditure of the Department on overnight rodent control teams in 2026-27? Is there any change in the manpower and expenditure as compared with those of 2025-26?

(3) Does the Department have plans to increase the use of new technologies and applications for rodent prevention and control? If yes, what are the details and the estimated expenditure involved?

(4) What were the numbers of live rodents caught and complaints received by the Department, and the number of locations with active rodent activities where improvements have been made in different districts (in particular the Sha Tin and Tai Po Districts) across the territory in each of the past 3 financial years (from 2023-24 to 2025-26).

Asked by: Hon LEE Tsz-king, Dominic (LegCo internal reference no.: 18)

Reply:

(1) The overall estimated expenditure of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department on pest control services, including rodent and mosquito prevention and control, for 2026-27 is $754 million, representing a decrease of $57 million as compared with the overall revised estimated expenditure of $811 million in 2025-26. The Department is implementing new rodent prevention and control strategies which are data-driven. By

leveraging the data obtained from the Rodent Activity Survey (RAS), more targeted actions can be taken to enhance the effectiveness of rodent control work. In recent years, the number of live rodents caught by the Department has increased, while the number of locations with active rodent activities has decreased. Meanwhile, the expenditure on pest control services has dropped, reflecting the effectiveness of the strategies and the enhancement in efficiency.

(2) The manpower of overnight rodent control teams and rodent inspection officers as well as the expenditure involved in 2025-26 and 2026-27 are provided in **Annex 1**.

(3) The new rodent control technologies and tools adopted by the Department, their effectiveness and the estimated expenditure involved in 2026-27 are provided in **Annex 2**. The Department will continue to keep track of the new rodent control technologies and tools in the market and introduce them for use at locations with higher rodent activities when appropriate.

(4) The number of live rodents caught, the number of rodent infestation complaints received and the number of priority rodent blackspots eliminated in the past 3 years, with a breakdown by District Council district, are provided in **Annex 3**.

2025-26

Team/Post	Number of teams	Number of staff	Revised estimated expenditure ($ million)
Overnight rodent control team	85[Note 1]	255[Note 1]	55
Rodent inspection officer	N.A.	16	9
Total	85[Note 1]	271[Note 1]	64

Note 1: The Department had progressively increased the number of overnight rodent control teams to 62 (186 staff in total) since May 2025. Besides, an additional 23 teams (69 staff in total) were temporarily deployed from December 2025 to February 2026 to support the Year-end Clean-up Campaign.

2026-27

Team/Post	Number of teams	Number of staff	Estimated expenditure ($ million)
Overnight rodent control team	61[Note 2]	183[Note 2]	56
Rodent inspection officer	N.A.	16	10
Total	61[Note 2]	199[Note 2]	66

Note 2: The Department will adjust the number of overnight rodent control teams according to actual needs and availability of resources.

Annex 2

New technologies and tools for rodent control, their effectiveness and the expenditure involved

Rodent control technology and tool	Effectiveness	Estimated expenditure in 2026-27
Thermal imaging camera surveillance system	The Department has fully adopted thermal imaging cameras for conducting the RAS as a replacement for the Rodent Infestation Survey from 2024 onwards to enhance rodent surveillance in districts and deploy more effective anti-rodent actions at locations where the rodent problem is more serious.	About $5.77 million
Placing poisonous baits in a T-shaped bait box	The bait box was tested in 2020. Test results showed that the T-shaped bait box was more effective than ordinary rectangular bait boxes in attracting rodents to enter and consume the baits. The equipment has been widely employed.	About $130,000
Alcohol rodent trapping device	The Department has conducted trials progressively on alcohol rodent trapping devices in public markets and refuse collection points since October 2022. The results are positive. The equipment will be used in suitable places as necessary.	About $640,000

The Department will continue to keep track of the new rodent control technologies and tools in the market and introduce them for use at locations with higher rodent activities when appropriate.

Annex 3

Number of live rodents caught
by the Department (with a breakdown by District Council district)

District	2023	2024	2025
Central and Western	2 261	4 268	6 188
Eastern	4 004	5 819	8 568
Southern	1 268	1 562	1 723
Wan Chai	4 402	6 360	7 553
Kowloon City	3 458	5 356	9 832
Kwun Tong	4 277	5 016	7 142
Wong Tai Sin	4 592	6 566	8 301
Sham Shui Po	6 133	8 530	14 290
Yau Tsim Mong	9 342	14 550	20 215
Sha Tin	2 598	4 111	6 666
Tai Po	1 465	2 025	2 713
North	2 414	3 209	4 819
Kwai Tsing	2 052	3 917	5 001
Tsuen Wan	2 491	3 290	7 088
Tuen Mun	4 521	4 934	5 797
Yuen Long	4 843	5 528	8 233
Sai Kung	1 087	1 571	1 513
Islands	2 136	3 017	3 441
Whole Territory	63 344	89 629	129 083

Number of rodent infestation complaints received by the Department (with a breakdown by District Council district)

District	2023	2024	2025
Central and Western	640	642	740
Eastern	729	1 016	1 003
Southern	138	167	139
Wan Chai	705	605	666
Kowloon City	872	900	891
Kwun Tong	319	323	304
Wong Tai Sin	283	610	430
Sham Shui Po	1 151	892	767
Yau Tsim Mong	1 946	1 677	1 433
Sha Tin	501	368	498
Tai Po	319	412	348
North	245	339	394
Kwai Tsing	624	405	274
Tsuen Wan	429	267	253
Tuen Mun	588	607	547
Yuen Long	966	944	740
Sai Kung	423	386	560
Islands	197	200	276
Whole Territory	11 075	10 760	10 263

Number of priority rodent blackspots eliminated
(with a breakdown by District Council district)

District	2023	2024	2025
Central and Western	3	3	4
Eastern	2	1	5
Southern	2	1	2
Wan Chai	5	3	3
Kowloon City	6	6	3
Kwun Tong	6	6	2
Wong Tai Sin	2	4	4
Sham Shui Po	7	4	6
Yau Tsim Mong	7	6	9
Sha Tin	4	2	4
Tai Po	1	3	2
North	3	4	2
Kwai Tsing	3	3	3
Tsuen Wan	5	5	6
Tuen Mun	2	3	3
Yuen Long	7	4	5
Sai Kung	2	2	2
Islands	3	3	2
Whole Territory	70	63	67

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