

**Replies to initial written questions raised by Finance Committee Members
in examining the Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08**

**Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food
Session No. : 15**

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**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)001

Question Serial No.

0104

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Under this programme, there will be a net deletion of 51 posts in 2007-08. With regard to the posts to be deleted, what are their respective ranks and relevant duties?

Asked by : Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply :

The posts to be deleted under this programme are Workman I and Workman II vacancies. The main duties of these posts are to provide environmental hygiene services.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 14.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)002

Question Serial No.

0105

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (4) Public Education and Community Involvement

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Under matters requiring special attention in 2007-08, the Department will enhance the outreaching efforts in promoting public health and environmental hygiene through the use of the publicity vehicle. In this connection, please advise on:

1. the relevant details;
2. the estimated expenditure so involved;
3. whether the Administration has assessed the nuisance the publicity vehicle may cause to the environment, and whether the Administration has considered other ways to promote outreaching activities besides using the publicity vehicle.

Asked by : Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply :

1. The publicity vehicle will enable the Department to enhance its outreaching efforts in promoting public health and environmental hygiene messages to the general public. We will arrange the publicity vehicle to visit mainly schools and housing estates. Students and members of the public will have better knowledge about food safety and environmental hygiene through exhibits, publications and various interactive games on the vehicle.
2. It is estimated that the expenditure involved in the running of the vehicle in 2007-08 will be \$0.7 million.
3. Publicity vehicle visits are mainly arranged by appointment. The vehicle is fuelled by Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) and does not use a loud-hailer. The operation of the vehicle would not cause unnecessary nuisance to the public and the environment. Apart from the

use of the publicity vehicle, officers from the Health Education Exhibition and Resource Centre also pay regular visits to schools, elderly centres and local organisations to deliver talks/seminars on public health, hold exhibitions and organise outreaching activities to disseminate messages on food safety and environmental hygiene to the public.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
_____ Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 14.3.2007 _____

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)003

Question Serial No.

0123

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Subhead (No. &
Conservation Department title):

Programme: (3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services

Controlling Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Officer:

Director of Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Bureau:

Question:

Under this programme, the provision for 2007-08 is \$185.5 million higher than the revised estimate for 2006-07, representing a significant increase. Will the Government provide the breakdown figures of estimated expenditures for the work items under this programme, justifications for the expenditures and the expected results?

Asked by: Hon. TAM Heung-man

Reply:

The 2007-08 Estimate for Programme (3) is \$662.3 million, which is \$185.5 million over the 2006-07 Revised Estimate of \$476.8 million. The increase is mainly attributable to \$21.5 million earmarked under this Programme for enhancing avian influenza (AI) surveillance programme, including the collection of dead wild birds for AI testing, enforcement of the ban on the keeping of backyard poultry, regulatory control of keeping poultry for exhibition and for establishing detector dog teams to combat animal smuggling, \$2.0 million for strengthening law enforcement action against cruelty to animals and promoting animal welfare, \$1.2 million for enhancing veterinary care of animals caught and detained at animal management centres, \$27.4 million for the enhancement of import control and inspection of non-food live animals and birds; and the remainder of \$133.4 million is to meet more cash payment expected in 2007-08 for ex-gratia payment to pig farm licencees and one-off grant to assist affected pig farm and live pig transport workers under the voluntary surrender scheme (VSS).

The VSS is a one-year scheme which started on 1 June 2006 for pig farmers to receive an ex-gratia payment in return for surrendering their livestock keeping licences, and for local live pig transporters to receive a loan for switching to other transport business.

Signature _____

Name in block
letters _____ MRS STELLA HUNG _____

Post Title _____ Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and
Conservation _____

Date _____ 16 March 2007 _____

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)004

Question Serial No.

0124

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Subhead (No. &
Conservation Department title):

Programme: (3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services

Controlling Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Officer:

Director of Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Bureau:

Question:

Under this programme, 55 posts will be created in 2007-08. Will the Government provide the breakdown figures of these posts and the justifications for each category of these additional posts?

Asked by: Hon. TAM Heung-man

Reply:

(Please see attached sheet)

Signature _____

Name in block
letters _____ MRS STELLA HUNG

Post Title _____ Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and
Conservation

Date _____ 16 March 2007

New posts for 2007/08: 55 posts

Rank of Post	No. of Post	Main Duties/Justifications/Work Arrangements
I. Animal Management and Welfare		
Veterinary Officer Senior Field Officer	2 2 [Personnel Emolument (PE) expenditure: \$2.2M]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To step up veterinary inspection and law enforcement actions such as surprise checks and decoy operations against animal cruelty and illegal animal breeding, boarding, trading and exhibition under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Ordinance, Cap. 169 which was amended in 2006. • To organize educational, publicity and promotional campaigns on animal welfare and to deal with complaints against animal cruelty. • To strengthen veterinary care/treatment of abandoned/to be rehomed animals. • To step up anti-rabies vaccination in dogs and responsible pet ownership in villages.
II. Veterinary Laboratory		
Veterinary Technologist Veterinary Laboratory Technician I Veterinary Laboratory Technician II	1 1 4 [PE expenditure: \$1.5M]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To cope with increased demand for testing of dead birds for the avian influenza. • To expand the range of tests for diseases of birds and mammals, e.g. West Nile Fever, Japanese Encephalitis, Equine Herpesvirus.
III. Import Control and Inspection		
Senior Veterinary Officer Veterinary Officer Senior Field Officer Field Officer I Field Officer II	1 1 1 13 16 [PE expenditure: \$9.3M]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide professional input for on-site inspection, risk assessment, and trade certification services on animals at control points (2 shifts) in order to meet requirements arising from the tightening up of export of live animals in overseas countries. • To step up inspection and enforcement actions to detect non-compliance of import requirements and illegal import activities. • To strengthen the manpower of each work shift to provide year round services to cope with operation needs arising from the opening of new border control points as well as rapidly increased passenger and cargo flows at existing border control points, including land borders, airport and seaports:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Airport (3 shifts, round the clock service); staff are required for inspection work of 2 cargo terminals and 1 passenger terminal - Man Kam To Border (2 shifts); staff are required for inspection work of 5 control points, including Man Kam To, Lo Wu, Lok Ma Chau, Sha Tau Kok

		<p>and the new Lok Ma Chau Spur Line scheduled for opening in 2007</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The new Shenzhen Western Corridor scheduled for opening in 2007 (3 shifts, round the clock service)
IV. Avian Influenza Surveillance Programme		
<p>Senior Executive Officer</p> <p>Senior Field Officer</p> <p>Field Officer I</p> <p>Field Officer II</p>	<p>1</p> <p>2</p> <p>7</p> <p>3</p> <p>[PE expenditure: \$4.7M]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To implement the following measures in relation to the avian influenza surveillance programme:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - contract administration of the service of collecting dead wild birds for testing; - enforcement of the ban on keeping of backyard poultry; - issue of exhibition licences and exemption permits for keeping racing pigeon and pet poultry; - setting up detector dog teams to combat animal smuggling at border control points. • A Senior Executive Officer unit head is required for organizing and supervising the work of the programme, as well as co-ordinating the manpower and resource deployment within the department to tackle emergency situations under avian influenza threats.
Total	<p>55</p> <p>[PE expenditure: \$17.7M]</p>	

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)005

Question Serial No.

0065

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Subhead (No. &
Conservation Department title):

Programme: (3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services

Controlling Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Officer:

Director of Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Bureau:

Question:

A number of chicken and pig farmers have already surrendered their licenses to the authorities under the voluntary surrender schemes. In this connection, does the Administration have any plans to provide assistance for alternative employment to them? What is the amount of expenditure involved?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Yung-kan

Reply:

We are assisting affected livestock farmers to switch to other farming operations. The Assistance provided includes the provision of training and demonstration on mushroom production, intensive greenhouse production and indoor fish fry rearing. We have also established a one-stop service to assist livestock farmers in seeking the necessary approvals for converting their livestock sheds for the new operations. An expenditure of \$5.5 million has been earmarked for providing these services.

Signature _____

Name in block
letters _____ MRS STELLA HUNG

Post Title _____ Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and
Conservation

Date _____ 16 March 2007

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)006

Question Serial No.

0066

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Subhead (No. &
Conservation Department title):

Programme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets

Controlling Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Officer:

Director of Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Bureau:

Question:

What plans does the Government have for the promotion of local agricultural and fisheries products in 2007-08? What is the amount of expenditure involved?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Yung-kan

Reply:

In 2007-08, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department will promote local agricultural produce emphasizing on quality and food safety, the key characteristics of produce coming out from accredited farms, organic farms and intensive greenhouse production. New or improved vegetable species and varieties will also be introduced to stimulate market demand and help capture high end markets for better economic returns. In addition, the Department will organize promotional activities and exhibitions to promote local produce to consumers.

As regards fisheries, we will continue helping fish farmers to raise production and quality control standards as well as the competitiveness of their products through organizing training workshops, implementing the Accredited Fish Farm Scheme and introducing new fish species such as Jade Perch for culture. We will also help fishermen and fish farmers to promote their products through the development of local brand names and marketing network as well as organizing promotional activities for local fisheries products, emphasizing good quality to capture high-value market niches.

A total of \$20.3 million has been earmarked for these tasks in 2007-08.

Signature _____

Name in block
letters _____
MRS STELLA HUNG

Post Title _____
Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and
Conservation

Date _____
15 March 2007

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)007

Question Serial No.

0067

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Subhead (No. &
Conservation Department title):

Programme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets

Controlling Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Officer:

Director of Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Bureau:

Question:

What plans does the Government have to promote organic farming? What is the amount of expenditure involved?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Yung-kan

Reply:

In 2007-08, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department will continue helping local organic farmers capture high-value market niches by providing technical advice and conducting promotion. The Department will help promote local organic produce, emphasizing on quality, food safety and environmental protection. The Department will also introduce new or improved vegetable varieties to stimulate market demand and capture high end markets. In addition, the Department will organize promotional activities and exhibitions.

A total of \$11.8 million has been earmarked for these tasks in 2007-08.

Signature _____

Name in block
letters _____ MRS STELLA HUNG

Post Title _____ Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and
Conservation

Date _____ 15 March 2007

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)008

Question Serial No.

0068

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Subhead (No. &
Conservation Department title):

Programme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets

Controlling Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
Officer:

Director of

Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Bureau:

Question:

There is a substantial decline in the productivity of the livestock industry as a result of government policy and the composite productivity index for agriculture drops rapidly. In this connection, what will the Government do to promote the sustainable development of agriculture, including programmes such as leisure farming? What is the amount of expenditure involved?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Yung-kan

Reply:

The Government promotes the sustainable development of agriculture through the provision of infrastructural support, technical assistance and advice, credit facilities and vocational training to local farmers.

In 2007-08, we will assist farmers to capture high-value market niches by promoting the development of organic farming and intensive greenhouse production, implementation of the Accredited Farm Scheme, as well as development of brand names and marketing network for local agricultural products emphasizing on good quality and food safety. We shall also devise programmes to assist livestock farmers to convert to other modes of farming.

A total of \$19.8 million has been earmarked for these tasks in 2007-08.

Signature _____

Name in block
letters _____ MRS STELLA HUNG

Post Title _____ Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and
Conservation

Date _____ 15 March 2007

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)009

Question Serial No.

0069

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Subhead (No. &
Conservation Department title):

Programme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets

Controlling Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Officer:

Director of Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Bureau:

Question:

For the 7 new posts created under this programme, what are the ranks, duties and work arrangement involved?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Yung-kan

Reply:

The 7 posts include 1 Veterinary Officer, 1 Veterinary Technologist, 2 Veterinary Laboratory Technician I and 3 Veterinary Laboratory Technician II for enhancing the capacity for testing of livestock and fish diseases and chemical residues in food animals.

The Veterinary Officer is to develop, implement, review and manage the method of testing, types and number of samples collected, and ensuring the quality of testing.

The Veterinary Technologist is to oversee laboratory testing procedures, design quality assurance programme and provide training to technicians.

The Veterinary Laboratory Technician I is to undertake routine laboratory testing, results reporting and conduct quality assurance tests.

The Veterinary Laboratory Technician II is to undertake routine laboratory testing, preparation of testing reagents and equipments.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____
MRS STELLA HUNG

Post Title _____
Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date _____
16.3.2007

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)010

Question Serial No.

0070

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Subhead (No. &
Conservation Department title):

Programme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets

Controlling Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Officer:

Director of Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Bureau:

Question:

What is the amount of resources earmarked for helping fishermen develop offshore fishing and other sustainable fisheries?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Yung-kan

Reply:

A provision of \$4.5 million has been earmarked in 2007-08 for providing technical support, liaison services and training, and administering of credit facilities to help fishermen develop offshore fishing and other sustainable fisheries. Low interest loans under the Fisheries Development Loan Fund with an approved commitment of \$250 million are made available for application by local fishermen for the purpose. Moreover, fishermen may apply to the Marine Fish Scholarship Fund for sponsorships to attend the relevant training courses.

Signature _____

Name in block
letters _____
MRS STELLA HUNG

Post Title _____
Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and
Conservation

Date _____
16 March 2007

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)011

Question Serial No.

0071

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Subhead (No. &
Conservation Department title):

Programme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets

Controlling Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Officer:

Director of Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Bureau:

Question:

What is the amount of resources earmarked for conserving the local fisheries resources?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Yung-kan

Reply:

A provision of \$13.9 million has been earmarked in 2007-08 for the management and conservation of fisheries resources through conducting regular patrols and taking enforcement actions to combat destructive fishing practices, deployment and monitoring of artificial reefs, monitoring of local fisheries resources, and implementation of relevant educational and publicity activities. In addition, we will continue the exercise to formulate a suitable framework for regulating fishing activities in Hong Kong waters with a view to conserving local fisheries resources.

Signature _____

Name in block
letters _____
MRS STELLA HUNG

Post Title _____
Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and
Conservation

Date _____
16 March 2007

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)012

Question Serial No.

0357

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Subhead (No. &
Conservation Department title):

Programme: (3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services

Controlling Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Officer:

Director of Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Bureau:

Question:

The estimate for 2007-08 is 38.9% (\$185.5 million) higher than the revised estimate for 2006-07. What are the amounts of provision earmarked for the prevention and control of avian influenza, combating animal smuggling and enhancing veterinary care of animals caught and detained at animal management centres respectively?

Asked by: Hon. EU Yuet-mee, Audrey

Reply:

Of the additional provision of \$185.5 million for 2007-08:

- (i) \$21.5 million is earmarked for enhancing the avian influenza (AI) surveillance programme, including the collection of dead wild birds for AI testing, enforcement of the ban on the keeping of backyard poultry, regulatory control of keeping poultry for exhibition and for establishing detector dog teams to combat animal smuggling, and
- (ii) \$1.2 million is earmarked for enhancing veterinary care of animals caught and detained at animal management centres; besides, to strengthen law enforcement action against cruelty to animals and to further promote animal welfare, we have earmarked another \$2 million for these tasks.

Signature _____

Name in block
letters _____ MRS STELLA HUNG

Post Title _____ Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and
Conservation

Date _____ 16 May 2007

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)013

Question Serial No.

0073

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Subhead (No. &
Conservation Department title):

Programme: (3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services

Controlling Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Officer:

Director of Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Bureau:

Question:

For the 55 new posts to be created under this programme, what are the ranks, duties and work arrangement involved?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Yung-kan

Reply:

(Please see attached sheet)

Signature _____

Name in block
letters _____ MRS STELLA HUNG

Post Title _____ Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and
Conservation

Date _____ 16 March 2007

New posts for 2007/08: 55 posts

Rank of Post	No. of Post	Main Duties/Justifications/Work Arrangements
I. Animal Management and Welfare		
Veterinary Officer	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To step up veterinary inspection and law enforcement actions such as surprise checks and decoy operations against animal cruelty and illegal animal breeding, boarding, trading and exhibition under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Ordinance, Cap. 169 which was amended in 2006. To organize educational, publicity and promotional campaigns on animal welfare and to deal with complaints against animal cruelty. To strengthen veterinary care/treatment of abandoned/to be rehomed animals. To step up anti-rabies vaccination in dogs and responsible pet ownership in villages.
Senior Field Officer	2	
	[Personnel Emolument (PE) expenditure: \$2.2M]	
II. Veterinary Laboratory		
Veterinary Technologist	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To cope with increased demand for testing of dead birds for the avian influenza. To expand the range of tests for diseases of birds and mammals, e.g. West Nile Fever, Japanese Encephalitis, Equine Herpesvirus.
Veterinary Laboratory Technician I	1	
Veterinary Laboratory Technician II	4	
	[PE expenditure: \$1.5M]	
III. Import Control and Inspection		
Senior Veterinary Officer	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide professional input for on-site inspection, risk assessment, and trade certification services on animals at control points (2 shifts) in order to meet requirements arising from the tightening up of export of live animals in overseas countries. To step up inspection and enforcement actions to detect non-compliance of import requirements and illegal import activities. To strengthen the manpower of each work shift to provide year round services to cope with operation needs arising from the opening of new border control points as well as rapidly increased passenger and cargo flows at existing border control points, including land borders, airport and seaports:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Airport (3 shifts, round the clock service); staff are required for inspection work of 2 cargo terminals and 1 passenger terminal - Man Kam To Border (2 shifts); staff are required for inspection work of 5 control points, including Man Kam To, Lo Wu, Lok Ma Chau, Sha Tau Kok
Veterinary Officer	1	
Senior Field Officer	1	
Field Officer I	13	
Field Officer II	16	
	[PE expenditure: \$9.3M]	

		<p>and the new Lok Ma Chau Spur Line scheduled for opening in 2007</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The new Shenzhen Western Corridor scheduled for opening in 2007 (3 shifts, round the clock service)
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IV. Avian Influenza Surveillance Programme

<p>Senior Executive Officer</p> <p>Senior Field Officer</p> <p>Field Officer I</p> <p>Field Officer II</p>	<p>1</p> <p>2</p> <p>7</p> <p>3</p> <p>[PE expenditure: \$4.7M]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To implement the following measures in relation to the avian influenza surveillance programme:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - contract administration of the service of collecting dead wild birds for testing; - enforcement of the ban on keeping of backyard poultry; - issue of exhibition licences and exemption permits for keeping racing pigeon and pet poultry; - setting up detector dog teams to combat animal smuggling at border control points. • A Senior Executive Officer unit head is required for organizing and supervising the work of the programme, as well as co-ordinating the manpower and resource deployment within the department to tackle emergency situations under avian influenza threats.
Total	<p>55</p> <p>[PE expenditure: \$17.7M]</p>	

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)014

Question Serial No.

0074

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Subhead (No. &
Conservation Department title):

Programme: (3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services

Controlling Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Officer:

Director of Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Bureau:

Question:

What are the amounts of resources earmarked for the inspection of animals and plants imported into the territory, the inspection of local farms and fish farms, the monitoring of drug residues in food animals, and the regulation of feeding food animals with chemicals?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Yung-kan

Reply:

For the year 2007-08, a provision of \$24.6 million has been earmarked for the inspection of animals and plants imported into the territory, \$3.7 million for the inspection of local livestock farms and the regulation of feeding food animals with chemicals; \$4.4 million for the inspection of fish farms and \$12.7 million for the monitoring of drug residues in food animals.

Signature _____

Name in block
letters _____ MRS STELLA HUNG

Post Title _____ Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and
Conservation

Date _____ 16 March 2007

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 22 - Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Question Serial No.

0075

Programme : (3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

What are the plans for promoting animal welfare in 2007-08? What are the amounts of expenditure and manpower involved?

Asked by : Hon. WONG Yung-kan

Reply :

In 2007-08, efforts will be made to strengthen law enforcement action against cruelty to animals and promote animal welfare through publicity and education. For this plan, an additional \$2 million is earmarked, and 1 Senior Veterinary Officer, 4 Veterinary Officers, 4 Field Officer Is and 8 Field Officer IIs are involved among their other duties.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ MRS STELLA HUNG _____

Post Title _____ Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation _____

Date _____ 16 March 2007 _____

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)016

Question Serial No.

0017

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. &
Health, Welfare and Food Bureau title):
(Food and Environmental Hygiene
Branch)

Programme: (2) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

On continuing to review and update the existing standards on food safety having regard to international practice and local needs under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2007-08, please advise:

1. the projected expenditure required; and
2. whether the standards are reviewed and updated regularly. If so, the interval between each review and update. If not, please state the reasons.

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

The information sought is provided as follows:

1. The detailed work is undertaken by the Centre for Food Safety at Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD). The Health, Welfare and Food Bureau (HWFB) provides a steer on the policy direction and coordination as necessary. The work is absorbed by existing resources in HWFB and the expenditure required cannot be separately identified.
2. The FEHD has been conducting regular review and update of food safety standards. The frequency of such reviews will depend on the need to meet with the objective of protecting consumers' interest in food safety and enhancing public health.

Signature _____

Name in block
letters _____

Mrs Carrie YAU

Permanent Secretary

for Health, Welfare and Food

Post Title (Food and Environmental Hygiene)

Date _____

14.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)017

Question Serial No.

0018

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Health, Subhead (No. & title):
Welfare and Food Bureau (Food and
Environmental Hygiene Branch)

Programme: (2) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

On continuing to develop proposals to prevent avian influenza outbreak under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2007-08, please advise the projected expenditure required and details of the proposals.

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

To prevent avian influenza outbreak, we will introduce legislative amendments in 2007-08 to control the importation of poultry eggs by requiring that they be accompanied with a health certificate and come from avian influenza free areas. We will also work closely with the Mainland, local and international experts to monitor the avian influenza outbreaks and possible mutation of the viruses in other parts of the world with a view to enhancing our preventive and control measures. We have earmarked a total of \$19.5 million as contingency funding to meet the expenditure for controlling avian influenza.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Carrie YAU

Post Title _____
Permanent Secretary
for Health, Welfare and Food
(Food and Environmental Hygiene)

Date _____ 12.3.2007

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)018

Question Serial No.

0019

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. &
Health, Welfare and Food Bureau title):
(Food and Environmental Hygiene
Branch)

Programme: (2) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

On introducing legislation to strengthen control over imported poultry eggs and farmed aquatic products under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2007-08, please advise:

1. the legislative timetable;
2. the projected expenditure required; and
3. whether the Administration will also consider introducing legislation for recall of problem food.

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

1. We plan to introduce legislation to regulate imported poultry eggs within 2007, to be followed by the regulation of imported farmed aquatic products. Consultation on farmed aquatic live and frozen products with our trading partners is underway and we hope to introduce new legislation in the 2007-08 legislative session.
2. The work is absorbed by existing resources and the expenditure cannot be separately provided.
3. We put forward a legislative proposal on the recall/prohibition of sale of unsafe food to the LegCo Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene in February 2007. We hope to introduce new legislation in 2008, subject to the progress of legal drafting and consultation with the trade.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____

Mrs Carrie YAU

Permanent Secretary

for Health, Welfare and Food

(Food and Environmental Hygiene)

Post Title _____

Date _____

14.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)019

Question Serial No.

0020

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title):
Health, Welfare and Food Bureau (Food and
Environmental Hygiene Branch

Programme: (2) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

On collaboration with the Mainland authorities to explore the feasibility of applying information technology to enhance the traceability of food under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2007-08, please advise:

1. the timetable for the study;
2. the projected expenditure required;
3. how the study will help strengthen protection of food safety.

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

1. We are in collaboration with the Mainland authorities in using Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology to enhance the traceability of food supplied by the Mainland to Hong Kong. This is a pilot programme to apply RFID in tracing live pigs imported from Guangdong. We aim to complete it within 2007 and we will assess the outcome of the pilot programme with a view to exploring the feasibility of applying such information technology (IT) to other food.
2. We are using existing manpower and resources to cover the pilot project on live pigs. So far, we committed about \$100,000 for purchasing hand-held detectors, gate-type readers, etc. for the pilot project.
3. The use of IT in food tracing is a worldwide trend, although it is also acknowledged that it is not a panacea for preventing all food incidents. However, enhancing food traceability will facilitate producers to take rectification action on the production line and relevant authorities to render more focused response in respect of food incidents targeted at specific problem areas in the supply chain.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Carrie YAU

Post Title _____
Permanent Secretary
for Health, Welfare and Food
(Food and Environmental Hygiene)

Date _____ 12.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)020

Question Serial No.

0021

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Health, Subhead (No. & title):
Welfare and Food Bureau (Food and
Environmental Hygiene Branch

Programme: (2) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

On continuing to promote the sustainable development of local agriculture and fisheries industry under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2007-08, please advise:

1. the details of the related measures or plans;
2. the projected expenditure required;
3. whether the Administration will step up assistance to the trade in respect of promotion and distribution network. If so, please advise details of the measures. If not, please state the reasons.
4. whether the Administration will set up a fund to finance or offer loan facilities to the trade to develop their business.

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

1. The Government promotes the sustainable development of agriculture and fisheries through the provision of infrastructural support, technical assistance and advice, credit facilities and vocational training to local farmers and fishermen. The support measures are chiefly provided by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD). In relation to agriculture, the AFCD assists farmers to capture high-value market niches by promoting the development of organic farming and intensive greenhouse production, implementing the Accredited Farm Scheme, as well as developing brand names and marketing network for local agricultural products emphasizing good quality and food safety. In relation to fisheries, it has set up a Committee on Sustainable Fisheries to study the overall direction and long term goals for the fisheries industry and the viable strategies and options for the sustainable development of the industry.
2. A total of \$52.7 million has been earmarked under Head 22 for these tasks in 2007-08. Another \$3 million has been earmarked under Head 139 for conducting studies on measures to promote the sustainable development of the fisheries industry.
3. The AFCD will assist farmers marketing their produce to high end markets like hotels, health institutions, supermarket chains and specialty health food stores through the sales network of the Vegetable Marketing Organization. The department also promotes direct sale by farmers through agro-tourism and weekend farmer markets. In addition, the AFCD organizes regular promotional activities and exhibitions to promote local produce to consumers.

As regards fisheries, the AFCD helps fishermen and fish farmers to promote their products in conjunction with the Fish Marketing Organization through development of local brand names and marketing network as well as organizing promotional activities, emphasizing good quality to capture high-value market niches.

4. Low interest loans under various loan funds administered by the AFCD are made available to local farmers and fishermen for the development of sustainable operations. For instance, the Fisheries Development Loan Fund, with an approved commitment of \$290 million, is available for application by local fishermen and fish farmers for developing sustainable fisheries and aquaculture operations.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs. Carrie YAU _____

Post Title _____ Permanent Secretary for Health,
Welfare and Food (Food and
Environmental Hygiene) _____

Date _____ 14.3.2007 _____

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)021

Question Serial No.

0022

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. &
Health, Welfare and Food Bureau title):
(Food and Environmental Hygiene
Branch

Programme: (2) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and
Environmental Hygiene)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

On the introduction of a nutrition labelling scheme for prepackaged food under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2007-08, please advise:

1. the legislative timetable for the scheme;
2. the projected expenditure required for the scheme.

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

1. We plan to introduce the legislation relating to the Labelling Scheme on Nutrition Information for prepackaged food in 2007-08.
2. There is no separate breakdown on the financial provision required for introducing the nutrition labelling scheme. The work is absorbed by existing resources in HWFB.

Signature _____

Name in block
letters _____ Mrs Carrie YAU

Post Title _____
Permanent Secretary
for Health, Welfare and Food (Food
and Environmental Hygiene)

Date _____ 14.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)022

Question Serial No.

0023

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Health, Subhead (No. & title):
Welfare and Food Bureau (Food and
Environmental Hygiene Branch

Programme: (2) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

Regarding the total financial provision:

Compared with the revised provision of \$15.3 million for 2006-07, the total provision for 2007-08 has surged to \$63.4 million, representing an increase of 314.4%, which will be used mainly in strengthening food safety protection, prevention of zoonotic diseases and promoting the sustainable development of local fisheries industry. What are details of these initiatives? What are the respective expenditures of these three major initiatives? Please provide detailed projected expenditures for the measures under these three major initiatives.

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

The increase in funding provides for all the major initiatives as listed in the section "Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2007-08". In brief, the major initiatives are to provide for expenditure under the Voluntary Surrender Scheme for pig farmers (\$20 million), provision of posts such as Senior Executive Officer, Senior Information Officer, etc. to strengthen food safety functions (\$5.59 million); consultancy study to promote sustainable development of local agricultural and fisheries industries (\$3 million) and contingency funding to meet expenditure for controlling avian influenza (\$19.5 million).

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Carrie YAU

Post Title _____
Permanent Secretary
for Health, Welfare and Food (Food
and Environmental Hygiene)

Date _____ 13.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)023

Question Serial No.

0024

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. &
Health, Welfare and Food Bureau title):
(Food and Environmental Hygiene
Branch

Programme: (2) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and
Environmental Hygiene)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

Regarding the total financial provision:

The total provision for 2006-07 has been revised up to \$15.3 million, representing an increase of 15% from the original estimate of \$13.3 million. Please explain.

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

The increase mainly provides for expenses incurred in work related to the application of technology to enhance food traceability, promotion of prevention of cruelty to animals, consultancy work on quarantine issues, and organization of a major conference planned for June 2007 on port health, animal and plant quarantine and food safety participated by the relevant authorities from Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao. The increased provision also covers the salary expenditure of a newly created post in the Bureau.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Carrie YAU

Post Title _____
Permanent Secretary
for Health, Welfare and Food (Food
and Environmental Hygiene)

Date _____ 14.3.2007

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)024

Question Serial No.

0025

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. &
Health, Welfare and Food Bureau title):
(Food and Environmental Hygiene
Branch

Programme: (3) Environmental Hygiene

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and
Environmental Hygiene)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

Regarding the total financial provision:

1. Compared with the revised provision of \$13 million for 2006-07, the total provision for 2007-08 has surged to \$20.6 million, representing an increase of 58.5%, which is used mainly for preparing the development of a Poultry Slaughtering and Processing Plant and strengthening support for other environmental hygiene-related initiatives. Please provide details of these measures.
2. Please provide the projected expenditures of these measures in detail.

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

The increase in funding under Programme (3) "Environmental Hygiene" is for engaging a consultant to prepare for the tender documents for developing a Poultry Slaughtering and Processing Plant, stepping up education and publicity activities relating to vector-borne diseases, street/market cleansing, and meeting unexpected contingencies.

Signature _____

Name in block
letters _____ Mrs. Carrie YAU

Post Title _____
Permanent Secretary for Health,
Welfare and Food (Food and
Environmental Hygiene)

Date _____ 13.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)025

Question Serial No.

0026

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. &
Health, Welfare and Food Bureau title):
(Food and Environmental Hygiene
Branch

Programme: (3) Environmental Hygiene

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and
Environmental Hygiene)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

On invitation for tender to develop a Poultry Slaughtering and Processing Plant under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2007-08, please advise:

1. the details and timetable of the project;
2. the projected expenditure required;
3. when the Poultry Slaughtering and Processing Plant will come into operation and how the Administration will ensure its compliance with environmental hygiene standards.

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

1. The Government has identified a site in Sheung Shui for the development of the Poultry Slaughtering and Processing Plant (the Plant) under a "Build, Own, Operate and Transfer" approach. It is intended that the Plant would be run by a private operator on commercial principles. The Government intends to invite open tenders for developing the Plant from the private sector in end 2007 and to have the Plant coming into operation in 2009/10. The Government will appoint a consultant to prepare the tender documents soon.

2. As we have yet to appoint the consultant to prepare the tender documents, the information sought is not available.

3. To regulate the operation of the Plant, the Government plans to introduce a legislation in 2007 to provide for the licensing and operation of the Plant. The environmental hygiene standards that need to be complied by the Plant will be stipulated in the licensing conditions.

Signature	_____
Name in block	
letters	<u>Mrs. Carrie YAU</u>
Post Title	<u>Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene)</u>
Date	<u>13.3.2007</u>

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)026

Question Serial No.

0027

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Health, Welfare and Food Bureau (Food and Environmental Hygiene Branch)
Subhead (No. & title):
Programme: (3) Environmental Hygiene

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

On implementation of measures to meet the increasing demand for columbarium and crematorium facilities under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2007-08, please advise:

1. the projected expenditure required;
2. the details of these measures;
3. whether the Administration will purchase niches from private columbaria;
4. the measures may meet the projected demand for how many years.

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

The information sought is provided as follows -

1. Policy work undertaken by the Health, Welfare and Food Bureau on issues related to columbarium and crematoria facilities will be absorbed by existing resources. The expenditure for the reprovisioning of 6 existing cremators in Diamond Hill and the construction of 22 700 new niches in Cheung Chau, Diamond Hill and Kwai Chung is estimated to be \$ 363.6 million.
2. In addition to the reprovisioning of cremators and provision of niches, the other measures include encouraging the public to scatter cremated human ashes in Gardens of Remembrance and promoting the greater use of scattering human ashes at sea.
3. The Administration has no plan to purchase niches from private columbaria. However, the Government will encourage the non-Government sector including private organizations to play a more active role in providing private columbaria for use by the public.
4. The cremators and niches in public columbaria will likely meet public demand for the next two years.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Mrs. Carrie YAU
	Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene)
Post Title	_____
Date	13.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)027

Question Serial No.

0028

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Health, Welfare and Food Bureau (Food and Environmental Hygiene Branch)

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (3) Environmental Hygiene

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

On considering ways to improve the occupancy and viability of public markets under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2007-08, please advise:

1. the projected expenditure required;
2. the current occupancy rate of public markets;
3. whether the Administration has set any targets for the occupancy rate. If so, what are the targets? If not, why not?
4. whether the Administration plans to commission a consultancy study on the subject. If so, what is the projected expenditure?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

1. To improve the occupancy and viability of public markets, the government plans to spend around \$3 million (under Head 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department) on market promotion and \$103 million (under Capital Works Reserve Fund) on general improvement works in 10 markets in 2007-08.
2. The occupancy rate of public markets as at 31.1.2007 is 76.3%.
3. The Administration has set the target for the occupancy rate at 76%.
4. The Administration has no plan to commission a consultancy study on the subject.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Mrs. Carrie YAU
	Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene)
Post Title	_____
Date	13.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)028

Question Serial No.

0157

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Under the indicator "blood samples taken from poultry for testing of avian influenza H5 antibodies", the number of samples fell from 87 452 in 2006 to the estimated figure of 82 000 in 2007. What are the reasons for the decrease?

Asked by : Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply :

The number of blood samples estimated to be taken in 2007 is based on the current number of live poultry supplied from the Mainland. The total number of samples taken in 2006 was greater because the number of imported chicken during the period January to March 2006 was 30 000 per day. Since April 2006, the number has been adjusted to 20 000 per day.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 14.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)029

Question Serial No.

0158

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

With regard to the 125 posts to be created under this programme in 2007-08, please advise on:

1. the estimated expenditure involved;
2. whether these 125 posts are permanent posts, their respective ranks and relevant duties.

Asked by : Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply :

In 2007-08, there will be a net increase of 125 posts under this programme. This involves the creation of 127 posts and the deletion of 2 posts. The overall annual salary is \$37.2 million. The posts to be created are permanent posts relating to the grades of Chemist, Field Officer, Health Inspector, Pest Control Assistant, Pest Control Officer, Science Laboratory Technician, Scientific Officer (Medical), Veterinary Officer and administrative support posts. The main duties of these posts are to perform food safety regulatory functions and provide pest control services.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 14.3.2007 _____

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)030

Question Serial No.

0197

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

Will the Administration inform this Committee of the details on the measures to prevent the incursion of avian influenza in 2007-08 and the expenditure involved?

Asked by: Hon. LEUNG Yiu-chung

Reply:

The measures implemented by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department to prevent the incursion of avian influenza (AI) include: monitoring and surveillance of local poultry farms, vaccination of chickens against AI, biosecurity requirements in local poultry farms, enforcement of the ban on keeping of backyard poultry, collection of dead wild birds for AI testing, inspection of pet bird shops, regulating the keeping of poultry for exhibition, import control of birds, and public education and publicity on AI preventive measures. The estimated expenditure on AI control for 2007-2008 is \$44.8 M.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ MRS STELLA HUNG

Post Title _____ Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date _____ 16 March 2007

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

HWFB(FE)031

Head : 22 - Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Question Serial No.

Programme : (3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services

0198

Controlling Officer : Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Will the Administration inform this Committee of the details on the measures to strengthen the facilities and ability to provide screening tests for chemical residues in food animals in 2007-08 and the expenditure involved?

Asked by : Hon. LEUNG Yiu-chung

Reply :

To strengthen screening tests for chemical residues in food animals in 2007-08, \$6 million will be spent on testing equipments and reagents. Two additional posts of Veterinary Laboratory Technician I (\$0.73 million) are provided to increase the existing testing capacity on prohibited and restricted chemicals from 113 000 to 120 000 tests.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ MRS STELLA HUNG

Post Title _____ Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date _____ 16 March 2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)032

Question Serial No.

0225

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

FEHD estimates that 125 posts will be created in 2007-08 under this programme. Please list the posts to be created, highlighting the grades, relevant duties and annual staff remuneration involved. Please also indicate what services will be improved following the creation of these posts?

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply :

The grades and duties of and the salaries involved for the net 125 posts to be created in 2007-08 are listed below –

<u>Grades</u>	<u>Duties</u>	<u>Annual salary</u>
Chemist Field Officer Health Inspector Pest Control Assistant Pest Control Officer Science Laboratory Technician Scientific Officer (Medical) Veterinary Officer Administrative support staff	To perform food safety regulatory and pest control duties.	The estimated annual salary is \$37 million.

These posts are created for enhancing food safety regulatory functions and pest control services.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 14.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)033

Question Serial No.

0226

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

There will be a net deletion of 51 posts under this programme in 2007-08. What are the reasons for the deletion? Please list the posts to be deleted, highlighting the grades and the services involved. Also, how will the Administration ensure that the services will not be affected by the deletion?

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply :

The net deletion of 51 posts in 2007-08 involves the following grades and services –

<u>Grades</u>	<u>Service involved</u>
Workman I Workman II	Environmental hygiene services.

All these posts are vacant and there is no operational need to keep them. Environmental hygiene and related services will not be affected as a result of the deletion.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 14.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)034

Question Serial No.

0231

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

In view of the spate of food incidents in recent years, please advise if the Administration will make use of the additional provision under this programme (an increase of \$85.1 million over 2006-07) to increase the number of food samples taken for testing in its regular food surveillance programme?

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply :

The original estimated number of food samples to be taken for testing in 2006 as shown in the 2006-07 Estimate was 63 000. For 2007, the Administration will enhance its food surveillance work, including taking 65 000 samples for testing under the food surveillance programme, as well as taking additional samples in response to food complaints and food incidents; and strengthen the existing food safety functions, including import control, veterinary input in the management of local slaughterhouses and risk communication capabilities.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 14.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)035

Question Serial No.

0232

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

The Administration has planned to establish a Food Safety Testing Laboratory in 2007-08 to provide support to the work of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department. As such, there should be a sharp increase in the number of food samples to be taken for testing. However, under this programme, the indicator for food samples taken for testing is 65 000, which is similar to the actual number for 2006. Please explain why there is no corresponding significant increase in the number.

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply :

The Food Safety Testing Laboratory planned to be established under the Government Laboratory in 2007-08 will provide enhanced and timely laboratory support for the increasing number of food samples tested in relation to food complaints, food incidents and food surveillance. The original estimated number of food samples to be taken for testing under the food surveillance programme in 2006 as shown in the 2006-07 Estimate was 63 000. A total of 65 000 samples is planned for testing in 2007. Additional samples will also be taken in response to food complaints and food incidents.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date _____ 15.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)036

Question Serial No.

0233

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Health, Subhead (No. & title):
Welfare and Food Bureau (Food and
Environmental Hygiene Branch)

Programme:

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

Please explain why the number of directorate post will rise from six at 31 March 2007 to seven at 31 March 2008 and advise the rank and duties of the newly created directorate post.

Asked by: Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply:

At present there is only one Administrative Officer Staff Grade C (AOSGC) post responsible for food safety matters in the Food and Environmental Hygiene Branch of Health, Welfare and Food Bureau. With the increased workload due to rise in food incidents and need to develop new policy and legislative proposals, there is a need to create an additional AOSGC post in 2007-08 to strengthen policy support and coordination work. We intend to create the post to review the set-up and work of the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) under the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department with a view to further improving its structure and strategies for safeguarding food safety (including the launching of new legislation, communication with the trade and public etc). It is also expected that new policy initiatives on food safety will need to be launched and more coordination work within Government and with the Mainland is required.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Carrie YAU

Post Title _____
Permanent Secretary for Health,
Welfare and Food (Food and
Environmental Hygiene)

Date _____ 14.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)037

Question Serial No.

0227

Head: 48 Government Laboratory
Programme: (1) Statutory Testing

Subhead (No. & title):

Controlling Officer: Government Chemist

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

As stated in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2007-08, the Administration will establish a Food Safety Testing Laboratory. In this connection, will the Administration inform this Committee of the provision required, the annual estimated expenditure, scope of work, staffing establishment and the additional staff involved?

Asked by: Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply:

The Food Safety Testing Laboratory (FSTL) is expected to commence operation in July 2007 and the estimated recurrent provision in 2007-08 is \$49.9 million. The annual expenditure for subsequent years is estimated at \$44.9 million.

The Food Safety Testing Laboratory will perform a wide range of chemical analysis of food products, ranging from major components to additives, contaminants, agricultural and veterinary residues, and genetically modified ingredients.

The staffing establishment of the FSTL consists of 23 professional and 60 technical posts. Of these, 12 professional and 26 technical posts are additional.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Dr T L TING

Post Title _____ Government Chemist

Date _____ 14.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)038

Question Serial No.

0228

Head: 48 Government Laboratory
Programme: (1) Statutory Testing

Subhead (No. & title):

Controlling Officer: Government Chemist

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

As stated in Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2007-08, the Administration will establish a Food Safety Testing Laboratory. In this connection, will the Administration inform this Committee whether provision would be earmarked for introducing advanced and practical testing methods? Please elaborate with examples.

Asked by: Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply:

In connection with the setting up of the Food Safety Testing Laboratory in 2007-08, a provision of \$17 million has been earmarked for the laboratory to acquire additional instruments to strengthen the analytical capability for food samples. These include:

- (a) an integrated liquid chromatograph – tandem mass spectrometer (LC-MS/MS) system to provide extended analytical support to the Centre for Food Safety on the testing of veterinary drugs / chemical residues in fish tissues and aquaculture products at trace levels;
- (b) additional LC-MS/MS systems to facilitate the affirmative determination of low levels of food additives such as artificial sweeteners and colouring matters;
- (c) a scanning electron microscope for the testing of food complaint samples; and
- (d) a computerised microplate spectrophotometer will also been acquired for conducting high throughput detection of food allergens. Other new equipment include a high resolution inductively coupled plasma – mass spectrometer for the testing of trace element and an automated liquid handling system to provide a precise and labour saving platform for setting up real-time Polymerase Chain Reactions for the detection of genetically modified food.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Dr T L TING

Post Title _____ Government Chemist

Date _____ 14.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)039

Question Serial No.

0229

Head: 48 Government Laboratory
Programme: (1) Statutory Testing

Subhead (No. & title):

Controlling Officer: Government Chemist

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

As stated in Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2007-08, the Administration will establish a Food Safety Testing Laboratory. In this connection, will the Administration inform this Committee of the estimated annual capacity of the Laboratory in testing food samples; the increase in testing capacity as compared with the level before the Laboratory is established; and the estimated percentages of samples originating respectively from complaint cases, regular surveillance programme, emergency cases and imported foodstuffs?

Asked by: Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply:

The estimated number of tests to be performed by the Food Safety Testing Laboratory in 2007 is 142 000, for the testing of 36 200 food samples collected by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department. This represents an increase of 11.8% from 2006. The percentage of samples originating from complaint cases and regulatory compliance in 2006 was 11.5% and 88.5% respectively, and the estimation for 2007 is respectively 8.5% and 91.5%. The percentages attributable to emergency cases and imported foodstuff are included in the percentage for regulatory compliance and cannot be separately identified.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Dr T L TING

Post Title Government Chemist

Date 14.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)040

Question Serial No.

0230

Head: 48 Government Laboratory
Programme: (1) Statutory Testing

Subhead (No. & title):

Controlling Officer: Government Chemist

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

As stated in Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2007-08, the Administration will establish a Food Safety Testing Laboratory. In this connection, will the Administration inform this Committee to what extent it is estimated that testing can be speeded up upon the setting up of the laboratory? Why are the indicators for the reporting of tests performed on food poisoning samples and food complaint samples under this programme not raised accordingly?

Asked by: Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply:

The target completion/reporting time of one working day for all tests relating to food poisoning cases is already 100% met and cannot be raised.

The performance pledge for all tests relating to food complaints is that 80% of these cases should be completed/reported within 25 working days. Due to the increasing workload on food complaint cases and the higher level of complexity of these cases, the actual performance in 2006 only reached 75%. The setting up of the Food Safety Testing Laboratory would help achieve the 80% performance pledge in 2007-08.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ **Dr T L TING**

Post Title _____ **Government Chemist**

Date _____ **14.3.2007**

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)041

Question Serial No.

0244

Head: 48 Government Laboratory
Programme: (1) Statutory Testing

Subhead (No. & title):

Controlling Officer: Government Chemist

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

As shown in the indicators for statutory testing regarding the performance measures in paragraph 5 under the Brief Description of Programme (1), the number of tests performed on food samples is estimated at 130 000 in 2007, representing an increase of 17 579 or 15.6% over the actual number of tests performed in 2006. In this connection, please advise this Committee of the numbers of tests performed in the past five years on food samples and the costs to be incurred.

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Number of tests performed on food samples					
Total costs incurred					

Asked by: Hon. KWOK Ka-ki

Reply:

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Actual no. of tests performed on food samples for regulatory compliance purposes	80 201	92 052	115 473	136 053	127 025
	2002-03 (Actual)	2003-04 (Actual)	2004-05 (Actual)	2005-06 (Actual)	2006-07 (Revised Estimate)
Total costs incurred (Financial Provision) (\$ million)	27.9	28.9	27.5	26.0	26.0

Signature _____

Name in block letters Dr T L TING

Post Title Government Chemist

Date 16.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)042

Question Serial No.

0245

Head: 48 Government Laboratory
Programme: (1) Statutory Testing

Subhead (No. & title):

Controlling Officer: Government Chemist

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

Please advise this Committee of the estimated expenditure on the testing of food samples in 2007.

Asked by: Hon. KWOK Ka-ki

Reply:

For 2007-08, the total financial provision is \$49.9 million for the analysis of (a) food samples for regulatory compliance purposes and (b) food complaint samples.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Dr T L TING

Post Title Government Chemist

Date 14.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)043

Question Serial No.

0246

Head: 48 Government Laboratory
Programme: (1) Statutory Testing

Subhead (No. & title):

Controlling Officer: Government Chemist

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

As mentioned in Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2007-08, the Administration is planning to establish a Food Safety Testing Laboratory to cope with the increasing demand for analytical services from the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department. In this connection, please list in the table the number (with total strength of the Laboratory), rank, job title, spectrum of duties and annual payroll cost of staff to be employed.

Number of staff	Rank / Job Title	Spectrum of Duties	Annual Payroll

Asked by: Hon. KWOK Ka-ki

Reply:

In addition to the deployment of 45 existing posts, 38 additional posts will be created in 2007-08 for staffing the Food Safety Testing Laboratory. The breakdown of the 38 new posts is as follows-

Number of staff	Rank	Duties	Emoluments
2	Senior Chemist	To administer the Section that provides analytical and advisory services pertaining to the analysis of food samples.	1,858,440
10	Chemist	To take charge of the Unit of the Section and be responsible for the examination of food samples. To supervise Science Laboratory Technician Is and IIs.	5,680,200
6	Science Laboratory Technician I	To assist the Chemist in the management of the Unit, to check test results submitted by Science Laboratory Technician IIs, and to undertake the regular maintenance of laboratory equipment. To carry out analysis of routine and non-routine samples.	2,190,960
20	Science Laboratory Technician II	To carry out analysis of routine samples under the supervision of the Chemist.	4,322,400

Signature _____

Name in block letters Dr T L TING

Post Title Government Chemist

Date 16.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)044

Question Serial No.

0247

Head: 48 Government Laboratory
Programme: (1) Statutory Testing

Subhead (No. & title):

Controlling Officer: Government Chemist

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

As mentioned in Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2007-08, the Administration is planning to establish a Food Safety Testing Laboratory to cope with the increasing demand for analytical services from the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department. In this connection, please list in the table the categories of samples and number of tests to be performed by the Testing Laboratory, the estimated unit cost and time required for testing.

Category of Samples	Number of Tests to be Performed Each Year	Unit Cost	Time Required for Testing

Asked by: Hon. KWOK Ka-ki

Reply:

Category of Samples	Number of Tests to be Performed Each Year	Unit Cost (on average)	Time Required for Testing
Food samples for regulatory compliance purposes	130 000 (for 2007)	About \$480 per test	19 working days on average
Food complaint sample	12 000 (for 2007)	About \$1,010 per test	25 working days on average

Signature _____

Name in block letters Dr T L TING

Post Title Government Chemist

Date 15.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)045

Question Serial No.

0248

Head: 48 Government Laboratory
Programme: (1) Statutory Testing

Subhead (No. & title):

Controlling Officer: Government Chemist

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

Under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2007-08, it is mentioned that a Food Safety Testing Laboratory will be established to cope with the increasing demand for analytical services from the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department. In this regard, please inform this Committee upon the establishment of the Food Safety Testing Laboratory, how will its task of testing food samples be delineated from that of the Government Laboratory and the Centre for Food Safety of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department in terms of manpower deployment, category and number?

Asked by: Hon. KWOK Ka-ki

Reply:

The Food Safety Testing Laboratory (FSTL) will be established in 2007-08 under the Government Laboratory (GL) to primarily support the Centre for Food Safety's general requirement for chemical analysis of food products for regulatory compliance/surveillance purposes and investigation of food complaints. The estimated number of tests to be performed in 2007 is 142 000.

On the other hand, the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) is responsible for conducting chemical tests at Man Kam To Food Control Office (MKTFCO), to assess the safety of imported fresh produce (mainly vegetables) from the Mainland. It also operates a Food Research Laboratory to support its food risk assessment and standard setting work on project basis. The estimated number of samples to be taken for these purposes is over 15 000 in 2007.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Dr T L TING

Post Title _____ Government Chemist

Date _____ 16.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)046

Question Serial No.

0401

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Please explain why there is no reduction in the number of hawker blackspots, which remains at 51 for both 2006 and 2007.

Asked by : Hon. LI Wah-ming, Fred

Reply :

The figure of 51 for 2007 is an estimated number and is based on the observation of the district staff that the number of hawker blackspots for 2007 would remain more or less the same as that for 2006.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 15.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)047

Question Serial No.

0402

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Please advise if the locations of hawker blackspots for 2006 and 2007 are the same?

Asked by : Hon. LI Wah-ming, Fred

Reply :

The locations of hawker blackspots in 2007 may not be the same as those in 2006 as unlicensed hawkers change their hawking locations from time to time to avoid arrest by hawker control staff.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 15.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)048

Question Serial No.

0403

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Please list the locations of the 51 hawker blackspots in 2007.

Asked by : Hon. LI Wah-ming, Fred

Reply :

The figure of 51 for 2007 is an estimated number. A list of the locations of the 51 hawker blackspots in December 2006 is provided at Annex.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 15.3.2007 _____

District	Hawker Blackspots
Central/Western	Vicinity of Statue Square and Legislative Council Building
	Vicinity of Chater Garden and Murray Road
	Footbridge along Connaught Road Central and vicinity
Wan Chai	Wan Chai MTR Station Exits
	Tai Yuen Street, Cross Street and Stone Nullah Lane
	Bowrington Road and Wan Chai Road (between Canal Road West and Tin Lok Lane)
	Causeway Bay Area (Sugar Street, public place outside Sogo), Lockhart Road (between Percival Street and East Point Road), East Point Road, Great George Street and Paterson Street (between Great George Street and Yee Wo Street)
Eastern	Area near Chai Wan Market including open space outside Walton Estate, Yee Shun Street, Yee Tai Street, Yee Fung Street and lane in front of Winner Centre
	Kam Wa Street area including Mong Lung Street and Tai Tak Street
	Marble Road area including North Point MTR Exits, Kam Hong Street, Shu Kuk Street, section of King's Road between Kam Hong Street and Tin Chiu Street and vicinity of Java Road Market
	Chun Yeung Street area including North Point Road, Tong Shui Road, section of King's Road around Kam Hong Street, and Fortress Hill MTR Exits
	Siu Sai Wan area along Siu Sai Wan Road from bus terminus up to Fullview Garden
	Kut Shing Street and Chai Wan footbridge outside Chai Wan MTR Station
	Streets around Sai Wan Ho Market including Tai On Street and section of Shaukeiwan Road in front of Tai On Building, vicinity of Quarry Bay Market including Quarry Bay footbridge, section of King's Road between Finnie Street and Hong On Street and outside Jusco area
Southern	Jumbo Pier, Aberdeen
Islands	Areas in vicinity of Cheung Chau Ferry Pier and Praya Street, Cheung Chau

District	Hawker Blackspots
	Areas at junction of Yat Tung Street and Chung Yan Road, Tung Chung, Lantau Island
Yau Tsim	Portland Street J/O Pitt Street
	Temple Street J/O Kansu Street
	Cameron Lane, Granville Road, Carnavon Road, Haiphong Road and Hankow Road
Mong Kok	Nathan Road section between Argyle Street and Dundas Street
	Sai Yeung Choi Street South section between Argyle Street and Dundas Street
	Vicinity of FEHD Mong Kok Market bounded by Nelson Street, Canton Road, Argyle Street and Tong Mei Road
	Fa Yuen Street section between Nullah Road and Dundas Street
	Sai Yee Street section between Argyle Street and Soy Street
	Portland Street section between Argyle Street and Dundas Street
Sham Shui Po	Tung Chau Street
	Pei Ho Street
	Kwelin Street (between Apliu Street and Yu Chau Street)
Kowloon City	Bulkeley Street (between Gillies Ave South and Dock Street)
Wong Tai Sin	Tai Shing Street, Tai Tung Street and vicinity
	Ngau Chi Wan Village and vicinity
	Lung Cheung Road and Shatin Pass Road
	Lok Fu MTR Station area near Wang Tau Hom East Road and vicinity
	Ching Tak Street and vicinity
	Tai Yau Street and vicinity in San Po Kong Industrial Area
Kwun Tong	Tsun Yip Street/ How Ming Street / Hip Wo Street / Shui Wo Street / Hoi Yuen Road

District	Hawker Blackspots
	Footbridges of Telford Plaza linking Kowloon Bay MTR / Ngau Tau Kok Road of Amoy Plaza / Wang Hoi Road Lam Tin Estate passage way between Tak Tin Street & Ping Tin Street at side of Lam Tin Estate Bus Terminus On Wah Street / On Tak Road / Jordan Valley Road North / Ngau Tau Kok Road adjacent to Lower Ngau Tau Kok Estate
Kwai Tsing	Sheung Ko Tan Street, Chung Mei Village, Tsing Yi
Tuen Mun	Vicinity of Sam Shing Estate Kai Man Path Mei Lok Lane
Yuen Long	Hop Choi Street
North	Sheung Shui KCR Station and vicinity Fanling KCR Station and vicinity
Tai Po	Po Heung Street (outside Rural Committee)
Sha Tin	Under flyover between Lung Hang and Sun Chui Estates Near Fun City, Lek Yuen Street Mei Tin Road
Total	51 (no. of blackspots)

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)049

Question Serial No.

0404

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Are there any effective measures to eradicate the hawker blackspots?

Asked by : Hon. LI Wah-ming, Fred

Reply :

Hawker Control Team (HCT) staff adopt the operational strategies of mobile patrol and/or raiding to deter unlicensed hawking. In mobile patrol, the HCT deploy the tactics of constantly disrupting the target hawkers from trading at their favourite spots and to prevent the hawkers from taking root . If the hawkers persist in trading and do not disperse, arrest action would follow.

HCT staff also mount raiding operations at target blackspots to arrest hawkers and seize their goods and equipment to increase the deterrent effect.

Signature _____

Name in block letters **EDDY CHAN** _____

Post Title **Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene** _____

Date **15.3.2007** _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)050

Question Serial No.

0405

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

With regard to the “target” of “dealing with complaints of illegal hawking in built-up areas within 30 minutes”, how many complaints were received in 2006? What are the criteria to evaluate whether the dispersal was successful? Based on those criteria, how many complaints for which dispersal of illegal hawkers was successful?

Asked by : Hon. LI Wah-ming, Fred

Reply :

A total of 12,565 complaints of illegal hawking in built-up areas were received in 2006. The Hawker Control Team (HCT) staff take stringent enforcement action against those hawkers found selling prohibited/restricted food or cooked food or trading at main thoroughfares and areas with high pedestrian flow causing obstruction. If the hawking activity does not fall under the above circumstances, the HCT staff normally issue verbal warning and disperse the hawkers. If the warning is not heeded, arrest and prosecution action would follow.

Under normal circumstances, the illegal hawkers would be dispersed upon the arrival of the HCT staff in dealing with the complaints.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ **EDDY CHAN** _____

Post Title _____ **Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene** _____

Date _____ **15.3.2007** _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)051

Question Serial No.

0406

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Regarding the indicator for “vehicles carrying poultry inspected at Man Kam To”, the number of inspections falls year by year. What are the reasons for the decrease?

Asked by : Hon. LI Wah-ming, Fred

Reply :

The estimated number of vehicles carrying poultry inspected at Man Kam To in 2007 is based on the current number of live poultry supplied from the Mainland which is set at 20 000 live chickens per day. The number of imported live poultry has been decreasing as a result of the Government's measures to minimize the occurrence of avian influenza in Hong Kong.

Signature _____

Name in block letters EDDY CHAN

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 14.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)052

Question Serial No.

0407

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

With regard to the “indicator” for poison treatment of rodent infestation in building blocks, what yardstick is used by FEHD to ascertain that poison treatment is an effective way to reduce rodent infestation?

Asked by : Hon. LI Wah-ming, Fred

Reply :

Poison treatment is used in building blocks under a systematic programme. Staff of the Department conduct surveys regularly in the area to assess the degree of rodent problem. Rodent signs such as droppings, smears, footprints and gnawing marks found are useful indicators to show the effectiveness of the control work. The treatment will be concluded when fresh sign of rodent activities no longer exists.

Signature _____

Name in block letters EDDY CHAN

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 14.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)053

Question Serial No.

0396

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Subhead (No. & title):
Department

Programme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

Please inform this Committee why the agriculture composite productivity index will drop from 210 (actual) in 2006 to 160 (estimate) in 2007.

Asked by: Hon. LI Wah-ming, Fred

Reply:

The significant drop is to take into account the anticipated contraction of the local livestock industry as many pig and poultry farmers will stop production in 2007 after opting for the respective voluntary surrender schemes of livestock keeping licences.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ MRS STELLA HUNG _____

Post Title _____ Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation _____

Date _____ 16 March 2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)054

Question Serial No.

0397

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Subhead (No. & title):
Department

Programme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

Please inform this Committee of the measures formulated to promote sustainable development of the fisheries industry.

Asked by: Hon. LI Wah-ming, Fred

Reply:

Apart from continuing with our existing efforts to promote the sustainable development of the fisheries industry through the provision of infrastructural support, technical assistance and advice, credit facilities and vocational training to local farmers and fishermen, we have set up a Committee on Sustainable Fisheries to study the overall direction and long term goals for our fisheries industry as well as the viable strategies and options for the sustainable development of the industry. The latter may include measures for the management and conservation of local fisheries resources as well as promoting the development of sustainable modes of fisheries and related operations.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ MRS STELLA HUNG

Post Title _____ Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date _____ 15 March 2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)056

Question Serial No.

0399

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Subhead (No. & title):
Department

Programme: (3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

Please inform this Committee of the following: in connection with the setting up of dog teams to combat animal smuggling at control points, what are the figures for animal smuggling cases in the past three years? What is the establishment of the dog teams? What is the amount of estimated expenditure in 2007-08?

Asked by: Hon. LI Wah-ming, Fred

Reply:

The figures on illegal import of animals in the past three years are as below:

	2004		2005		2006	
	No. of Cases	Head	No. of Cases	Head	No. of Cases	Head
Birds	43	90	20	46	9	5,447
Dogs	15	42	14	30	14	16
Cats	5	5	4	5	3	4
Reptiles	28	5,099	22	6,231	26	3,763
Other mammals	2	30	10	10	5	8
Total	93	5,266	70	6,322	57	9,238

The Quarantine Detector Dogs team comprises of three Field Officer I and three dogs. The provision for 2007-08 is \$2.6 million.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ **MRS STELLA HUNG**

Post Title _____ Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date _____ 16 March 2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)057

Question Serial No.

0400

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

Please inform this Committee of the expected rise in successful detection rate following the setting up of dog teams. What is the basis for this estimation?

Asked by: Hon. LI Wah-ming, Fred

Reply:

According to overseas experience, quarantine detector dogs are very useful in combating smuggling of animals. Detector dogs can screen a large number of passengers or cargos. Information data from overseas quarantine authorities such as the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Services (AQIS) indicates that each dog can practically screen 300 passengers per hour.

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department will launch a pilot quarantine detector dog programme comprising 3 handlers and 3 dogs. According to the Australian experience, the performance of a quarantine detector dog program can be assessed using the number of inspection of passengers or cargos, the accuracy of the detection by the quarantine detector dogs and the awareness of the programme in the community.

Since the dogs would act as a visual deterrent against smuggling and also serve an educational role regarding the importance of quarantine, this should lead to a decrease in smuggling activity. In this connection, we do not have an expected successful detection rate because the number of seizures would just be one of the indicators for assessing the effectiveness of the programme.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ MRS STELLA HUNG

Post Title _____ Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date _____ 16 March 2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)058

Question Serial No.

0381

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Health, Welfare and Food Bureau (Food and Environmental Hygiene Branch)
Programme: (3) Environmental Hygiene

Subhead (No. & title):

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

On inviting tender to develop a Poultry Slaughtering and Processing Plant under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2007-08, please inform this Committee:

1. details of the project, including tender conditions and projected expenditure. Will the tender conditions include preferential recruitment for live poultry traders who have applied to surrender their licences voluntarily and their workers? Will there be a condition for opening a production line for freshly slaughtered warm chickens?
2. What is the background of the consultant commissioned to prepare the tender documents? How much does the consultant fee cost?
3. How many Submission of Expressions of Interest have the authorities received?
4. When will the tender process commence?
5. Is there any provision for setting up an assistance fund or paying compensation to poultry traders who are still in the trade at present and their workers after the tendered construction works commences?

Asked by: Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply:

1. The Government has identified a site in Sheung Shui for the development of the Poultry Slaughtering and Processing Plant (the Plant) under a "Build, Own, Operate and Transfer" approach. We have yet to prepare the tender documents and the tender conditions are therefore not available.
2. We have yet to appoint the consultant and the information sought is not available.
3. The Government has received six submissions of Expression of Interest.
4. The Government intends to invite open tenders from the private sector to develop the Poultry Slaughtering and Processing Plant in end 2007.
5. We will give consideration in due course to making arrangements relating to ex-gratia payments for the parties affected.

Signature

Name in block letters

Mrs. Carrie YAU

Post Title

Permanent Secretary for Health,
Welfare and Food (Food and
Environmental Hygiene)

Date

13.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)059

Question Serial No.

0382

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Health, Subhead (No. & title):
Welfare and Food Bureau (Food and
Environmental Hygiene Branch

Programme: (2) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

Compared with 2006-07, the provision for this programme in 2007-08 has tripled and increased by \$48.1 million, which is mainly due to additional provision for strengthening food safety, preventing zoonotic diseases and promoting sustainable development of local fisheries industry. What are the respective provisions for these three items? And what are the respective salary provisions under each of these items?

Asked by: Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply:

The increase in funding provides for all the major initiatives as listed in the section "Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2007-08". In brief, the major initiatives are to provide for expenditure under the Voluntary Surrender Scheme for pig farmers (\$20 million), provision of posts to strengthen food safety functions (\$5.59 million); consultancy study to promote sustainable development of local agricultural and fisheries industries (\$3 million) and contingency funding to meet expenditure for controlling avian influenza (\$19.5 million).

A total provision of \$5.59 million has been made to pay for the post of the Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene) as well as five new posts required to launch the initiatives in this Programme and Programme (3) Environmental Hygiene. We intend to create an additional AOSGC responsible for reviewing the set-up and work of the Centre for Food Safety under the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department with a view to further improving its structure and strategies for safeguarding food safety (including the launching of new legislation, communication with the trade and public etc.) It is also expected that new policy initiatives on food safety will need to be launched and more coordination work within Government and with the Mainland is required. An additional SEO will provide the necessary executive support to the Bureau in particular the management of resources deployed to the food safety front while an additional SIO is responsible for handling publicity and media initiatives to address public concerns relating to food incidents and food safety policies. The new posts of PA and the Chauffeur will respectively provide secretarial support and transport service to the Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene).

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Mrs Carrie YAU
	Permanent Secretary
	for Health, Welfare and Food
Post Title	(Food and Environmental Hygiene)
Date	13.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)060

Question Serial No.

0383

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Health, Subhead (No. & title):
Welfare and Food Bureau (Food and
Environmental Hygiene Branch)

Programme: (2) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

Please advise the Committee on the following:

Additional provision is made for this Programme in 2007-08 to prevent zoonotic diseases. What are the diseases covered under this item? Do they include avian influenza, porcine streptococcus and clostridium chauvoei recently discovered in livestock in Japan? What are the prevention measures prescribed for individual diseases? Furthermore, if avian influenza is included, why is it necessary to make additional provision to strengthen work in this respect in 2007-08, given that we have already achieved zero infection in local farms and markets after years of efforts and continual increase in resources provision. How will the Administration assess the cost effectiveness of such measures?

Asked by: Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply:

The major zoonotic diseases covered under this Programme are Avian Influenza, West Nile Virus, Streptococcus Suis, Japanese encephalitis, Food and Mouth Disease and Rabies. We are also working with the relevant Departments to monitor any new and emerging zoonotic diseases, including streptococcus, etc. The Health, Welfare and Food Bureau will provide policy steer to the relevant Departments on the implementation of monitoring and preventive measures for these diseases, including surveillance on local farms, import control protocol for importation of live animals and animals products, anti-smuggling measures for live animals and meat, inspection of live poultry stores, pet shops and animal breeders, etc.

As for the prevention of avian influenza, the continuous outbreaks of avian influenza in our neighbouring areas point to the continued need to provide sufficient resources, including contingency funding, for making timely responses to any outbreak of avian influenza in Hong Kong.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Carrie YAU

Post Title _____
Permanent Secretary
for Health, Welfare and Food (Food
and Environmental Hygiene)

Date _____ 13.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)061

Question Serial No.

0482

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

In 2007-08, the Administration will continue to enhance various efforts in safeguarding food safety following the establishment of the Centre for Food Safety in 2006. Please advise on the details and the expenditure so involved.

Asked by : Hon. CHAN Wai-yip, Albert

Reply :

A financial provision of \$38.3 million has been included in the 2007-08 Estimate for the creation of 75 posts and related departmental expenses, including Veterinary Officers, Field Officers, Scientific Officers, Health Inspectors and administrative support staff for enhancing food import control, strengthening veterinary input in the management of local slaughterhouses as well as enhancing food safety risk communication capabilities.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 14.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)062

Question Serial No.

0472

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Subhead (No. & title):
Department
Programme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

The revised estimate for 2006-07 is 36.7% less than the original estimate. Please inform this Committee of the reasons for the substantial decrease in the estimate.

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Wai-yip, Albert

Reply:

The 2006-07 Revised Estimate for Programme (1) is \$238.1 million, which is \$138 million (or 36.7%) lower than the 2006-07 Original Estimate of \$376.1 million. The decrease is mainly due to a lower cash payment estimated for ex-gratia payment for the voluntary licence surrender scheme for local live poultry farmers. The application period of the scheme ended in August 2006 and the approved participants would all vacate their farms and collect payment towards end April and early May 2007.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ MRS STELLA HUNG

Post Title _____ Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date _____ 16 March 2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)063

Question Serial No.

0473

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Subhead (No. & title):
Department

Programme: (3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

The revised estimate for 2006-07 is 189% more than the original estimate. Please inform this Committee of the reasons for the substantial increase in the estimate.

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Wai-yip, Albert

Reply:

The 2006-07 Revised Estimate for Programme (3) is \$476.8 million, which is \$311.8 million (or 189% increase) over the 2006-07 Original Estimate of \$165 million. The increase is mainly attributable to the non-recurrent expenditure amounting to \$308.4 million for ex-gratia payment to pig farm licencees and one-off grant to assist affected pig farms and live pig transport workers under the Voluntary Surrender Scheme (VSS). The VSS is a one-year scheme which started on 1 June 2006 for pig farmers to receive an ex-gratia payment in return for surrendering their livestock keeping licences, and for local live pig transporters to receive a loan for switching to other transport business.

The remainder of \$3.4 million is mainly to meet increased expenditure for the collection service of dead birds referred from the general public.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ MRS STELLA HUNG

Post Title _____ Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date _____ 16 March 2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)064

Question Serial No.

0542

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

As the many food poisoning cases occurred in recent years which pose health hazards to the public involved improper handling of food during food preparation in food premises, please advise on whether briefings and training on proper food handling process are provided for food handlers, and if so, the financial provision for 2007-08 and the estimated number of food handlers who will be benefited.

Asked by : Hon. HO Chung-tai, Raymond

Reply :

Under the Hygiene Manager and Hygiene Supervisor (HS) Scheme launched in May 2005, the Department has provided free HS training courses for food handlers of licensed food premises and will continue to do so in 2007-08. The financial provision for the HS courses in 2007-08 is estimated to be \$0.7 million and the estimated number of food handlers who will attend the training is 6 000.

Signature _____

Name in block letters EDDY CHAN

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 15.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)065

Question Serial No.

0543

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Please advise on whether considerations have been given by the Administration to require handlers of high-risk foods to receive compulsory training so as to minimise the risk of food poisoning for the public.

Asked by : Hon. HO Chung-tai, Raymond

Reply :

Since May 2005, it is compulsory for licensed food premises producing high-risk food to appoint both a Hygiene Manager and a Hygiene Supervisor (HS) who have completed the training courses recognized by the Department to supervise the safe and hygienic operation of the food business. The Department has been providing free HS training courses to food handlers and will continue to do so in 2007-08.

Signature _____

Name in block letters EDDY CHAN

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 15.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)066

Question Serial No.

0588

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Provision for 2007-08 is \$85.1 million (13.7%) higher than the revised estimate for 2006-07. This is mainly due to additional provision for enhancing food safety and public health efforts. There will be a net creation of 125 posts in 2007-08. In this connection, please advise on the post titles, functions and the estimated expenditure of these 125 posts, as well as the expenditure for enhancing food safety and public health efforts.

Asked by : Hon. CHAN Wai-yip, Albert

Reply :

In 2007-08, there will be a net increase of 125 posts under this programme. The posts to be created are Chemist, Field Officer, Health Inspector, Pest Control Assistant, Pest Control Officer, Science Laboratory Technician, Scientific Officer (Medical), Veterinary Officer and other administrative support grades. The main duties of these posts are to perform food safety regulatory functions and pest control services. The net annual salary is \$37.2 million.

The increase in 2007-08 estimated expenditure under this programme is mainly to cater for the following –

- (a) enhancing food safety regulatory functions such as food import control, food safety risk communication capabilities and strengthening veterinary input in the management of local slaughterhouses;
- (b) increased capital expenditure such as population-based food consumption survey, integrated mass spectrometer system;
- (c) upgrading equipment for operation in slaughterhouse; and
- (d) enhancing pest control services and surveillance.

Signature

Name in block letters

EDDY CHAN

Director of

Post Title

Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date

15.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)067

Question Serial No.

0734

Head: 48 Government Laboratory
Programme: (1) Statutory Testing

Subhead (No. & title):

Controlling Officer: Government Chemist

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

In view of the frequent food problems found recently, please advise this Committee how many food complaint cases were received in 2006-07; in that connection, how many food samples on which tests were successfully performed; and how much the cost involved was. Also, would the Administration explain why the indicator for the number of tests performed on food complaint samples in the 2007-08 Estimates is lowered by 2 604 to 12 000, as compared with the actual figure in 2006?

Asked by: Hon. EU Yuet-mee, Audrey

Reply:

In 2006, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department received about 5 860 food complaints and the Government laboratory conducted 14 600 tests on 2 880 food complaint samples.

In projecting the number of test to be 12 000 for 2007, we have taken into account the estimated workload of 10 000 for 2006. Regardless of the estimation, we will cope with the actual test requirement, even if they exceed the amount estimated.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Dr T L TING

Post Title _____ Government Chemist

Date _____ 15.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)068

Question Serial No.

0735

Head: 48 Government Laboratory
Programme: (1) Statutory Testing

Subhead (No. & title):

Controlling Officer: Government Chemist

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

In view of the frequent food problems found recently, please advise this Committee the number of staff involved in food testing and the related staff cost in 2006-07. Under the 2007-08 Estimates, will the Administration recruit additional staff for the enhancement of food testing? If yes, how many will be recruited? In this regard, how much will the expenditure be?

Asked by: Hon. EU Yuet-mee, Audrey

Reply:

The 2006-07 staffing establishment relating to food safety consists of 11 professional staff and 34 technical staff. The revised estimate of recurrent expenditure in 2006-07 for food safety is \$26 million. 38 additional new posts, which include 12 professional staff posts and 26 technical staff posts, will be created in 2007-08 for enhancement of food safety. The additional recurrent provision required for the creation of these 38 new posts in 2007-08 is \$13.5 million.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Dr T L TING

Post Title _____ Government Chemist

Date _____ 15.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)069

Question Serial No.

0737

Head: 48 Government Laboratory
Programme: (1) Statutory Testing

Subhead (No. & title):

Controlling Officer: Government Chemist

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

In connection with the total financial provision, the provision for 2007-08 has been significantly increased to \$119.4 million, 58.4% higher than the revised provision of \$75.4 million for 2006-07. It is mainly due to the additional provision for creating 48 posts for enhancement of food safety and meeting other operational needs. Would the Administration advise whether the 48 posts are permanent ones and provide information on their respective ranks and work portfolios?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

A total of 48 permanent posts will be created in 2007-08 under this Programme. The breakdown of these 48 civil service posts is as follows :-

Number of staff	Rank	Work portfolios
2	Senior Chemist	To administer the Section that provides analytical and advisory services pertaining to the analysis of food samples.
14	Chemist	To take charge of the Unit of the Section and be responsible for the examination of food/ drug/ Chinese medicine samples. To supervise Science Laboratory Technician Is and IIs.
6	Science Laboratory Technician I	To assist the Chemist in the management of the Unit, to check test results submitted by Science Laboratory Technician IIs, and to undertake the regular maintenance of laboratory equipment. To carry out analysis of routine and non-routine samples.
26	Science Laboratory Technician II	To carry out analysis of routine samples under the supervision of the Chemist.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Dr T L TING

Post Title _____ Government Chemist

Date _____ 14.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)070

Question Serial No.

0738

Head: 48 Government Laboratory
Programme: (1) Statutory Testing

Subhead (No. & title):

Controlling Officer: Government Chemist

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

In connection with the total financial provision, would the Administration provide a breakdown of the estimated expenditure?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kowk-hing

Reply:

The breakdown of the 2007-08 estimated expenditure of \$119.4 million under Programme (1) Statutory Testing is as follows :-

Policy Area (PA)	2007-08 Estimated Expenditure (\$ million)
PA 15: Health	31.7
PA 2: Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety	87.7*
Total:	119.4

* Includes \$5.8 million for supporting the enforcement of the updated Toys and Children's Products Safety Ordinance.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Dr T L TING

Post Title Government Chemist

Date 14.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)071

Question Serial No.

0739

Head: 48 Government Laboratory
Programme: (1) Statutory Testing

Subhead (No. & title):

Controlling Officer: Government Chemist

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

48 posts will be created in 2007-08 under this head. What are these posts and what will be their duties? How many of these posts will be in the establishment of the Food Safety Testing Laboratory to be formed?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Yung-kan

Reply:

The breakdown of the 48 posts is as follows -

No.	Rank	Duties
2	Senior Chemist	To administer the Section that provides analytical and advisory services for food samples.
14	Chemist	To take charge of the Unit of the Section and be responsible for the examination of food/ drug/ Chinese medicine samples. To supervise Science Laboratory Technician Is and IIs
6	Science Laboratory Technician I	To assist the Chemist in the management of the Unit, to check test results submitted by Science Laboratory Technician IIs, and to undertake the regular maintenance of laboratory equipment. To carry out analysis of routine and non-routine samples.
26	Science Laboratory Technician II	To carry out analysis of routine samples under the supervision of the Chemist

Of the 48 posts, 38 will be on the establishment of the Food Safety Testing Laboratory.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Dr T L TING

Post Title Government Chemist

Date 15.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)072

Question Serial No.

0740

Head: 48 Government Laboratory
Programme: (1) Statutory Testing

Subhead (No. & title):

Controlling Officer: Government Chemist

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

What will be the amount of resources reserved by the Government for establishing the Food Safety Testing Laboratory? How will the new formation make substantive improvement to the area of food safety?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Yung-kan

Reply:

The estimated recurrent provision required in 2007-08 for the Food Safety Testing Laboratory (FSTL) is \$49.9 million, which will be used for coping with the increase in the number of tests performed and to widen the testing scope under the food surveillance programme. The estimated number of tests to be performed by the FSTL in 2007 is 142 000 for the testing of 36 200 food samples collected by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department, which represents an increase of 11.8% compared with that in 2006.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Dr T L TING

Post Title Government Chemist

Date 14.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)073

Question Serial No.

0741

Head: 48 Government Laboratory
Programme:

Subhead (No. & title):

Controlling Officer: Government Chemist

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

The Government Laboratory will create 56 non-directorate posts in 2007-08. Please provide information on the divisions and policy areas involved, the ranks and responsibilities of these posts, and a breakdown by responsibility of the numbers of staff at each rank and their emoluments.

Asked by: Hon. LI Kwok-ying

Reply:

56 additional permanent civil service posts will be created in 2007-08 under Programme (1) Statutory Testing and Programme (3) Forensic Science Service. Of these 56 posts, 38 posts (2 Senior Chemists, 10 Chemists, 6 Science Laboratory Technician Is and 20 Science Laboratory Technician IIs) will contribute to Policy Area 2: Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety under Programme (1); 10 posts (4 Chemists and 6 Science Laboratory Technician IIs) will contribute to Policy Area 15: Health under the same Programme while 8 posts (3 Chemists, 3 Science Laboratory Technician IIs and 2 Clerical Assistants) will contribute to Policy Area 9: Internal Security under Programme 3.

The duties and payroll of the respective ranks concerned are set out as follows :-

Number of staff	Rank	Duties	Emoluments
2	Senior Chemist	To administer the Section that provides analytical and advisory services to the analysis of food samples.	1,858,440
17	Chemist	To take charge of the Unit of the Section and be responsible for the examination of food/ drug/ Chinese medicine/ parentage testing samples. To supervise Science Laboratory Technician Is and IIs.	9,656,340
6	Science Laboratory Technician I	To assist the Chemist in the management of the Unit, to check test results submitted by Science Laboratory Technician IIs, and to undertake the regular maintenance of laboratory equipment. To carry out analysis of routine and non-routine samples.	2,190,960
29	Science Laboratory Technician II	To carry out analysis of routine samples under the supervision of the Chemist.	6,267,480

2	Clerical Assistant	To provide clerical support to the Forensic Science Division.	268,080
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Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Dr T L TING

Post Title _____ Government Chemist

Date _____ 14.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)074

Question Serial No.

0890

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Health, Subhead (No. & title):
Welfare and Food Bureau (Food and
Environmental Hygiene Branch)

Programme: (2) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

The Administration will increase provision for promoting sustainable development of local fisheries industry. Please provide the details, including means of promotion and benchmarks against which their effectiveness may be gauged.

Asked by: Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply:

The Government promotes the sustainable development of the local fisheries industry through the provision of infrastructural support, technical assistance and advice, credit facilities and vocational training to local fishermen. The support measures are chiefly provided by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD). A total of \$34.4 million has been earmarked under Head 22 for these tasks in 2007-08. Another \$3 million has been earmarked under Head 139 for conducting studies on measures to promote the sustainable development of the fisheries industry. The AFCD has set up a Committee on Sustainable Fisheries to study the overall direction and long term goals for the fisheries industry and the viable strategies and options for the sustainable development of the industry. The AFCD also helps fishermen and fish farmers to promote their products in conjunction with the Fish Marketing Organization through development of local brand names and marketing network as well as organizing promotional activities, emphasizing good quality to capture high-value market niches. AFCD would closely monitor the response and views of the trade in assessing the effectiveness of the measures.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs. Carrie YAU

Post Title _____
Permanent Secretary for Health,
Welfare and Food (Food and
Environmental Hygiene)

Date _____ 14.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)075

Question Serial No.

0891

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Health, Welfare and Food Bureau (Food and Environmental Hygiene Branch)

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (3) Environmental Hygiene

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

The Administration will review its liquor licensing policy in 2007-08. Please advise details of the review (including the timetable, manpower and expenditure involved).

Asked by: Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply:

The review on liquor licensing policy will be conducted through the redeployment of existing resources. We will study overseas experience on liquor licensing and take into account the views expressed by the various stakeholders in the review. It is expected that the review would be completed within 2007.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Carrie YAU

Post Title _____ Permanent Secretary for Health
Welfare and Food (Food and
Environmental Hygiene)

Date _____ 14.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)076

Question Serial No.

0984

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

During 2007-08, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department will extend the scheme on contracting out market management to two additional districts, namely Southern and Tuen Mun districts. In this connection, please advise on:

1. the estimated expenditure involved;
2. the date the scheme commences;
3. the manpower savings, if any;
4. the selection criteria for these two districts.

Asked by : Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply :

- (1) Contracts for market management services are awarded through open tender. The tender exercise has yet to commence and information on estimated expenditure will only be available after its completion.
- (2) The scheme on contracting out market management of Southern and Tuen Mun districts is scheduled to commence in October 2007.
- (3) We expect manpower savings of around 43 staff when the scheme has been extended to Southern and Tuen Mun districts. The incumbent staff will be gainfully redeployed.

- (4) In outsourcing market management services, we aim to minimize disruption to the on-going operations in the markets. The cleansing contracts for the current markets/cooked food centres in Southern and Tuen Mun districts will expire in 2007-08, thereby offering an opportunity to outsource the management services in these markets/cooked food centres.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 15.3.2007 _____

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 22 - Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Question Serial No.

1205

Programme : (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets

Controlling Officer : Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

The total financial provision will increase substantially by \$120.2 million (50.5%) to \$358.3 million in 2007-08 from \$238.1 million in 2006-07. Please inform this Committee of the reasons for the increase and provide details on the estimated expenditures involved.

Asked by : Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply :

The increase is mainly due to: the provision of \$5.7 million for enhancing the testing capacity of the veterinary laboratory, \$9.6 million for setting up a voluntary registration scheme for local pond fish farms and carrying out surveillance of chemical residues in fish cultured in local fish farms, \$18.0 million for strengthening the management of government wholesale food markets and \$96.9 million more cash payment in the year for ex-gratia payment to live poultry farmers, wholesalers and related transporters and one-off grants to the affected live poultry farm, wholesale and transport workers under the Voluntary Surrender Scheme for the live poultry industry. The increase is partly offset by decrease of non-recurrent expenditure of \$8.9 million as a result of the completion of the Entry Registration Trial in Government Wholesale Markets and of \$1.1 million for the disbursement of the initial enforcement action for the banning of backyard poultry.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ MRS STELLA HUNG _____

Post Title _____ Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation _____

Date _____ 16 March 2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)078

Question Serial No.

1206

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Subhead (No. & title):
Department

Programme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

Regarding "production/vegetables" under the Indicators, please inform this Committee of the basis for the estimated decrease of vegetable production from 21 000 tonnes in 2006 to 19 000 tonnes in 2007.

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

The drop is attributed to anticipated loss of cultivated land to other development in 2007.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ MRS STELLA HUNG

Post Title _____ Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date _____ 15 March 2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)079

Question Serial No.

1207

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Subhead (No. & title):
Department

Programme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

Regarding "production/livestock" under the Indicators, please inform this Committee of the basis for the estimated decrease of livestock production from 57 000 tonnes in 2006 to 36 000 tonnes in 2007.

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

The significant drop is attributed to anticipated contraction of the local livestock industry as pig and poultry farmers stop production in 2007 after opting for the relevant voluntary surrender schemes under which they will stop production permanently.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ MRS STELLA HUNG

Post Title _____ Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date _____ 15 March 2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)080

Question Serial No.

1208

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Subhead (No. & title):
Department

Programme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

In connection with assisting farmers to capture high-value-market niches by providing technical advice on organic cultivation and intensive greenhouse production under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2007-08, please answer these questions:

- (1) Apart from technical support in farming, will assistance be provided to farmers in expanding the sales network, marketing, wholesaling etc? If yes, what are the details? If no, what are the reasons?
- (2) Apart from technical advice, will financial assistance or loans be offered to them for their development in these areas? If yes, what is the amount of estimated expenditure involved? What are the details? If no, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

- (1) The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department will continue helping local farmers market their produce to high end markets through the sale network of Vegetable Marketing Organization, encouraging direct sale by farmers through agro-tourism and weekend farmer markets and organizing promotional activities and exhibitions. In addition, the Department will also provide local farmers with training on sales and marketing skills and techniques.
- (2) The Department operates the Kadoorie Agricultural Aid Loan Fund, the J.E. Joseph Trust Fund and the Vegetable Marketing Organization Loan Fund to meet the credit needs of local farmers. A total sum of \$23 million is available at present.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ MRS STELLA HUNG

Post Title _____ Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date _____ 15 March 2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)081

Question Serial No.

1244

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Subhead (No. & title):
Department

Programme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

The total target number of "accredited vegetable farms" in 2007-08 is 222. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the following.

The contaminated vegetable incidents in 2006 have led to public concern about the origin of vegetable and the growing process. The public demand for accredited farms, therefore, has been on the rise. But why is the estimated total number of accredited farms in 2007-08 less than the actual figure in 2005?

Asked by: Hon. CHEUNG Chiu-hung, Fernando

Reply:

The drop in the number of local accredited vegetable farms is attributed to the loss of cultivated land to development since 2005.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ MRS STELLA HUNG

Post Title _____ Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date _____ 15 March 2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)082

Question Serial No.

1245

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Subhead (No. & title):
Department

Programme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

In 2007-08, the Administration will formulate measures to promote sustainable development of the fisheries industry and to conserve fisheries resources in Hong Kong waters. What is the amount of resources earmarked for the conduct of environmental assessment so as to ensure the water quality and the quality of fishery catch?

Asked by: Hon. CHEUNG Chiu-hung, Fernando

Reply:

A provision of \$0.7 million has been earmarked in 2007-08 for provision of technical advice on environmental impact assessment studies and development proposals that may have impact on local fisheries resources and fishing operations. This service would help ensure that the quality of fishery catch would not be significantly affected by development works.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ MRS STELLA HUNG

Post Title _____ Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date _____ 15 March 2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)083

Question Serial No.

1302

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Regarding the indicator for “blood samples taken from poultry for testing of avian influenza H5 antibodies”, the 2007-08 estimate number is 82 000 and the 2006 actual number is 87 452, showing a drop of 31 413 (27.69%) and 25 961 (22.9%) respectively as compared with the actual number of 113 413 in 2005. Please advise on the reasons for the decrease.

Asked by : Hon. CHAN Wai-yip, Albert

Reply :

The number of blood samples estimated to be taken in 2007 is based on the current number of live poultry supplied from the Mainland. The number of samples taken in 2005 was greater because the average number of imported chickens per day was 30 000 or more. Since April 2006, the number has been adjusted to 20 000 per day.

Signature _____

Name in block letters EDDY CHAN

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 15.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)084

Question Serial No.

1303

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Regarding the performance indicator for “blood samples taken from poultry for testing of avian influenza H5 antibodies”, the number of samples taken fell from 113 413 in 2005 to 87 452 in 2006. What are the reasons for the decrease? How will the Administration ensure that food safety is not affected?

Asked by : Hon. LAU Wai-hing, Emily

Reply :

The decrease in the number of blood samples taken in 2006 when compared with 2005 was due to the decrease in the number of imported chickens from the Mainland. Food safety and public health will not be compromised because each consignment of chicken will be tested using the same testing protocol.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 15.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)085

Question Serial No.

1304

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) : 000 Operational Expenses

Programme :

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

In 2007-08, there will be a net creation of 74 non-directorate posts. Please list their respective post titles and ranks; the branches/divisions under which they will be created, their annual emoluments as well as the reasons for their creation.

Asked by : Hon. LAU Wai-hing, Emily

Reply :

In 2007-08, there will be a net increase of 74 non-directorate posts in the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department. The grades/post titles, offices and annual salary of all the posts to be created as well as the reasons for their creation are listed below –

<u>Programme</u>	<u>Grades/Post titles</u>	<u>Branches/ Centre</u>	<u>Annual salary \$ million</u>	<u>Reasons for creation</u>
Programme (1) Food Safety and Public Health	Chemist Field Officer Health Inspector Science Laboratory Technician Scientific Officer (Medical) Veterinary Officer Administrative support staff	Centre for Food Safety	37.2	To enhance food safety regulatory functions, including food surveillance, handling of food incidents and food complaints, risk assessment and risk communication

<u>Programme</u>	<u>Grades/Post titles</u>	<u>Branches/ Centre</u>	<u>Annual salary \$ million</u>	<u>Reasons for creation</u>
	Pest Control Assistant Pest Control Officer Administrative support staff	Environmental Hygiene Branch, and Administration and Development Branch		To provide pest control services, conduct risk assessment for pest control and prevention as well as to provide administrative and clerical support
Programme (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services	Health Inspector Administrative support staff	Environmental Hygiene Branch, and Administration and Development Branch	39.6	To abate environmental nuisances and take law enforcement action as well as to provide administrative support and information services
Total:			76.8	

Signature _____

Name in block letters EDDY CHAN

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 15.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)086

Question Serial No.

1307

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Please advise on the following:

What is the current establishment of the Centre for Food Safety? How many posts are still vacant? Filling of how many posts is arranged by other government departments?

Asked by : Hon. WONG Yung-kan

Reply :

As at 1.3.2007, there were 469 posts in the Centre for Food Safety and 21 of them were vacant. 201 of the 469 posts belong to grades under the management of other departments.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 15.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)087

Question Serial No.

1308

Head: 48 Government Laboratory
Programme: (1) Statutory Testing

Subhead (No. & title):

Controlling Officer: Government Chemist

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

Please inform this Committee of the new initiatives (in terms of hardware, software and technical staffing) to be taken by the Administration to enhance the testing ability for food safety. What is the expenditure involved?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Yung-kan

Reply:

To strengthen the analytical capability relating to food safety, the Food Safety Testing Laboratory (FSTL) will be established in 2007-08 under the Government Laboratory (GL). The FSTL will perform a wide range of chemical analysis of food products for surveillance and verification of compliance with the statutory standards. It also provides analytical services related to food complaint cases.

A total of 38 posts will be created in 2007-08 for enhancement of food safety and a recurrent financial provision of \$49.9 million has been included in the 2007-08 Estimate for this purpose. A number of major instruments will be acquired by GL in 2007-08. These include an integrated liquid chromatograph – tandem mass spectrometer system to provide extended analytical support on the testing of veterinary drugs/chemical residues at trace levels, a scanning electron microscope for testing of food complaint samples and a high resolution inductively coupled plasma – mass spectrometer for testing of trace element.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Dr T L TING

Post Title Government Chemist

Date 16.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)088

Question Serial No.

1309

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Please advise on the following:

The Expert Committee on Food Safety was established by the Administration to review the existing food safety standards in Hong Kong. In this connection, how much resources and manpower have been earmarked to support the work of the Committee? Will additional resources be provided for the Committee to speed up its review work? If so, what is the expenditure involved? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by : Hon. WONG Yung-kan

Reply :

There is no separate breakdown on the financial provision specially reserved for the operation of the Expert Committee on Food Safety. The Committee is advisory in nature and the present secretarial support provided to the Expert Committee is considered adequate to meet its operation needs.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 15.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)089

Question Serial No.

1310

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) : 603 Plant, vehicles and equipment

Programme :

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Under this Subhead, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department will purchase one integrated high resolution inductively coupled mass spectrometer system. Please advise on how this equipment will actually help with the laboratory work.

Asked by : Hon. WONG Yung-kan

Reply :

The Integrated High Resolution Inductively Coupled Plasma Mass Spectrometer System (HR-ICP-MS) is designed for accurate and precise measurement of chemicals such as cadmium and arsenic in foodstuffs, at very low level of chemical concentration. The addition of HR-ICP-MS will strengthen the existing analytical systems in FEHD for the purpose of supporting food risk assessment and standard setting work.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 15.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)090

Question Serial No.

1311

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

In 2007-08 how many in-house professional training will be organized by the Centre for Food Safety (CFS)? What will be included in the training? What is the expenditure involved? How many professionals of CFS will be trained?

Asked by : Hon. WONG Yung-kan

Reply :

In 2007-08, a total of about 52 training programmes will be provided for in-house staff of the Centre for Food Safety. These programmes will cover topics such as Food Safety Risk Analysis, Assessment and Communication, Food Safety Management, Food Import and Export Inspection, Food Additives, Food Labelling, Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods, Toxins and Food Allergens, Microbiological Control on Food of Animal Origin, Control of Vegetable Poisoning and Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point. The expenditure involved is about \$2.1 million. The total number of trainees is around 370, including Medical Officers, Chemists, Veterinary Officers, Scientific Officers, Health Inspectors, Field Officers and Registered Nurses.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 15.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)091

Question Serial No.

1312

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

In view of the increase in myiasis cases in recent years, what initiatives will be put in place by the Administration in 2007-08 to strengthen its fly disinfestation work? What is the expenditure involved?

Asked by : Hon. WONG Yung-kan

Reply :

The Department works closely with the Department of Health in following up myiasis cases. This includes prompt investigation and control measures around the premises concerned for each reported case. Besides, the Department will continue to carry out inspections at potential fly-breeding grounds such as refuse collection points and lanes and, in particular, in the vicinity of homes for the elderly.

There is no separate breakdown on expenditure for this programme.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ **EDDY CHAN** _____

Post Title _____ **Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene** _____

Date _____ **15.3.2007** _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)092

Question Serial No.

1313

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

In 2007-08, will the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department conduct thematic studies on the risk of food safety? If so, what are the details and expenditure involved?

Asked by : Hon. WONG Yung-kan

Reply :

In 2007-08, in addition to ad-hoc studies on topical issues of food safety and public health concern, the Centre for Food Safety will conduct seven major thematic risk assessment studies, topics of which include benzoates in prepackaged beverages, mercury in various fish species, microbiological quality of poached chicken, and trans fat in indigenous foods. There is no separate breakdown on the financial provision specially reserved for the thematic risk assessment studies.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ **EDDY CHAN** _____

Post Title _____ **Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene** _____

Date _____ **15.3.2007** _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)093

Question Serial No.

1314

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Please advise on the details and expenditure involved in converting designated aqua privies into flushing toilets by phases in 2006-07, and the details and expenditure involved in this area in 2007-08.

Asked by : Hon. LEUNG Yiu-chung

Reply :

The conversion project covers 100 aqua privies in the New Territories and outlying islands and is being implemented by phases starting from early 2005. In 2006-07, 44 aqua privies were converted into flushing toilets. Conversion works for the last batch of 37 aqua privies are targeted for completion in 2007-08. The total estimated cost for the entire project is \$92.8 million.

Signature _____

Name in block letters EDDY CHAN

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 15.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)094

Question Serial No.

1315

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Please advise on the details and expenditure involved in safeguarding food safety in 2006-07 as well as the details and expenditure involved in this area in 2007-08.

Asked by : Hon. LEUNG Yiu-chung

Reply :

A financial provision of \$182 million has been included in the 2006-07 Revised Estimate for the Centre for Food Safety (CFS), including the creation of 71 additional posts for strengthening food surveillance and control at import, wholesale and retail levels, improving efficiency in handling the growing number of food incidents and food complaints, increasing liaison with Mainland and overseas food authorities and enhancing risk assessment capabilities.

A financial provision of \$255.9 million has been included in the 2007-08 Estimate for CFS, including the creation of 75 additional posts for enhancing food import control, strengthening veterinary input in the management of local slaughterhouses as well as enhancing food safety risk communication capabilities.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 15.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)095

Question Serial No.

1316

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Regarding the matters requiring special attention in 2007-08, please advise on the details and expenditure involved in market improvement works and market promotion carried out in 2006-07 as well as the details and expenditure for such works and promotion in 2007-08.

Asked by : Hon. LEUNG Yiu-chung

Reply :

In 2006-07, the Department carried out general improvement works in six markets. The estimated total project cost of these items added up to \$130.8 million. In 2007-08, the Department will carry out general improvement works in another 10 markets, at an estimated total cost of about \$103 million. These market improvement works include mainly upgrading of drainage, lighting, ventilation, signage and fire services provisions.

In 2006-07, the Department organized a range of promotional activities in public markets such as roving exhibitions, thematic workshops, festive decorations and promotions. Special promotional activities were held for four renovated/new markets. The Department also published quarterly newsletters to publicize the promotional activities. The total estimated expenditure involved in market promotion in 2006-07 is around \$3.3 million. In 2007-08, the Department will continue to carry out similar promotional activities in public markets and special programmes for renovated/new markets. The resources required can only be determined after consulting market tenants on the programme details and the expenditure incurred will be absorbed within the Department's allocation.

Signature _____

Name in block letters EDDY CHAN

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 15.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)096

Question Serial No.

1317

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Regarding the matters requiring special attention in 2007-08, please advise on the details and expenditure involved in contracting out market management in 2006-07 as well as the details and expenditure in this area in 2007-08.

Asked by : Hon. LEUNG Yiu-chung

Reply :

In 2006-07, the management services for public markets in Kowloon City, Wong Tai Sin and Mong Kok are being contracted out at a total contract sum of \$41.7 million for a period of 2 years. The services include overall management, cleansing services, minor repairs and maintenance and security services as appropriate.

The Department plans to extend the scheme to all the public markets/cooked food centres in Southern District and Tuen Mun District in 2007-08. We will award the service contracts by open tender. Information on expenditure will only be available after completion of the tender exercise.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 15.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)097

Question Serial No.

1662

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Health, Subhead (No. & title):
Welfare and Food Bureau (Food and
Environmental Hygiene Branch)

Programme: (2) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

On collaborating with the Mainland authorities to explore the feasibility of applying information technology to enhance the traceability of food under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2007-08, please provide the details, including timetable for the study, expenditure and manpower required and the scope of application.

Asked by: Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply:

We are in collaboration with the Mainland authorities in using Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology to enhance the traceability of food supplied by the Mainland to Hong Kong. This is a pilot programme to apply RFID in tracing live pigs imported from Guangdong. We aim to complete it within 2007 and we will assess the outcome of the pilot programme with a view to exploring the feasibility of applying such information technology to other food. The expenditure and manpower required will be assessed at a later stage.

So far, we are using existing manpower and resources to cover the pilot project on live pigs. We have committed about \$100,000 for purchasing hand-held detectors, gate-type readers, etc. and other equipment for the pilot project.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Carrie YAU

Post Title _____
Permanent Secretary
for Health, Welfare and Food
(Food and Environmental Hygiene)

Date _____ 12.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)098

Question Serial No.

1671

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

In 2007-08, the Administration will implement measures to prevent the incursion of avian influenza. Please inform this Committee of the details of these measures and the amount of expenditure involved.

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Wai-yip, Albert

Reply:

The measures taken by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department to prevent the incursion of avian influenza (AI) include monitoring and surveillance of local poultry farms, vaccination of chickens against AI, biosecurity requirements in local poultry farms, enforcement of the ban on keeping of backyard poultry, collection of dead wild birds for AI testing, inspection of pet bird shops, regulating the keeping of poultry for exhibition, import control of birds, and public education and publicity on AI preventive measures. The estimated expenditure on AI control for 2007-08 is \$44.8 million.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ MRS STELLA HUNG

Post Title _____ Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date _____ 16 March 2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)099

Question Serial No.

1692

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department
Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

Regarding "animals vaccinated and quarantined" under the Indicators, please inform this Committee of the basis for the estimated decrease from 57 557 in 2006 to 41 140 in 2007.

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

A dog will be vaccinated against rabies when it is licensed or relicensed. A dog licence is valid for three years. The increase in rabies vaccination in 2006 was mainly because a compulsory registration scheme was introduced in 2003 by the Housing Authority and a large number of dogs in the public housing estates were required to be re-licensed after three years.

The number of rabies vaccination in 2007 is estimated on the basis of the figure in 2005.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ MRS STELLA HUNG _____

Post Title _____ Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation _____

Date _____ 16 March 2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)100

Question Serial No.

1693

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Subhead (No. & title):
Department

Programme: (3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

In connection with the 55 posts to be created in 2007-08 under Programme (3), please answer these questions:

- (1) What is the estimated amount of expenditure involved?
- (2) Are these 55 posts permanent posts? What are the ranks and work areas of these posts?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

(Please see attached sheet)

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ MRS STELLA HUNG

Post Title _____ Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date _____ 16 March 2007

New posts for 2007/08: 55 posts

Rank of Post	No. of Post	Main Duties/Justifications/Work Arrangements
I. Animal Management and Welfare		
Veterinary Officer	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To step up veterinary inspection and law enforcement actions such as surprise checks and decoy operations against animal cruelty and illegal animal breeding, boarding, trading and exhibition under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Ordinance, Cap. 169 which was amended in 2006. To organize educational, publicity and promotional campaigns on animal welfare and to deal with complaints against animal cruelty. To strengthen veterinary care/treatment of abandoned/to be rehomed animals. To step up anti-rabies vaccination in dogs and responsible pet ownership in villages.
Senior Field Officer	2	
	[Personnel Emolument (PE) expenditure: \$2.2M]	
II. Veterinary Laboratory		
Veterinary Technologist	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To cope with increased demand for testing of dead birds for the avian influenza. To expand the range of tests for diseases of birds and mammals, e.g. West Nile Fever, Japanese Encephalitis, Equine Herpesvirus.
Veterinary Laboratory Technician I	1	
Veterinary Laboratory Technician II	4	
	[PE expenditure: \$1.5M]	
III. Import Control and Inspection		
Senior Veterinary Officer	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide professional input for on-site inspection, risk assessment, and trade certification services on animals at control points (2 shifts) in order to meet requirements arising from the tightening up of export of live animals in overseas countries. To step up inspection and enforcement actions to detect non-compliance of import requirements and illegal import activities. To strengthen the manpower of each work shift to provide year round services to cope with operation needs arising from the opening of new border control points as well as rapidly increased passenger and cargo flows at existing border control points, including land borders, airport and seaports:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Airport (3 shifts, round the clock service); staff are required for inspection work of 2 cargo terminals and 1 passenger terminal - Man Kam To Border (2 shifts); staff are required for inspection work of 5 control points, including Man Kam To, Lo Wu, Lok Ma Chau, Sha Tau Kok and the new Lok Ma Chau Spur Line scheduled for opening in 2007 - The new Shenzhen Western Corridor scheduled for opening in 2007 (3 shifts, round the clock service)
Veterinary Officer	1	
Senior Field Officer	1	
Field Officer I	13	
Field Officer II	16	
	[PE expenditure: \$9.3M]	
IV. Avian Influenza Surveillance Programme		
Senior Executive Officer	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To implement the following measures in relation to the avian influenza surveillance programme:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - contract administration of the service of collecting dead wild birds for testing; - enforcement of the ban on keeping of backyard poultry; - issue of exhibition licences and exemption permits for keeping racing pigeon and pet poultry; - setting up a detector dog team to combat animal smuggling at border control points.
Senior Field Officer	2	
Field Officer I	7	
Field Officer II	3	
	[PE expenditure: \$4.7M]	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Senior Executive Officer unit head is required for organizing and supervising the work of the programme, as well as co-ordinating the manpower and resource deployment within the department to tackle emergency situations under avian influenza threats.
Total	55 [PE expenditure: \$17.7M]	

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)101

Question Serial No.

1694

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department
Subhead (No. & title):

Programme:

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

It is expected that 64 non-directorate posts will be created in the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department in 2007-08. Please give a breakdown of the posts in table form by grades, duties and annual emolument expenses. Please also explain which services will be improved by creating such posts.

Asked by: Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply:

(Please see attached sheet)

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ MRS STELLA HUNG

Post Title _____ Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date _____ 16 March 2007

New posts for 2007/08: 64 posts

Rank of Post	No. of Post	Main Duties/Justifications/Work Arrangements
I. Animal Management and Welfare		
Veterinary Officer	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To step up veterinary inspection and law enforcement actions such as surprise checks and decoy operations against animal cruelty and illegal animal breeding, boarding, trading and exhibition under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Ordinance, Cap. 169 which was amended in 2006. ■ To organize educational, publicity and promotional campaigns on animal welfare and to deal with complaints against animal cruelty. ■ To strengthen veterinary care/treatment of abandoned/to be rehomed animals. ■ To step up anti-rabies vaccination in dogs and responsible pet ownership in villages.
Senior Field Officer	2	
Personnel Emoluments expenditure: \$2.1M		
II. Veterinary Laboratory		
Veterinary Officer	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To enhance capacity in the range and number of sampling tests for livestock and fish diseases and chemical residues in food animals. ■ To cope with increased demand for testing of dead birds for the avian influenza. ■ To expand the range of tests for diseases of birds and mammals, e.g. West Nile Fever, Japanese Encephalitis, Equine Herpesvirus.
Veterinary Technologist	2	
Veterinary Laboratory Technician I	3	
Veterinary Laboratory Technician II	7	
Personnel Emoluments expenditure: \$3.8M		
III. Import Control and Inspection		
Senior Veterinary Officer	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To provide professional input for on-site inspection, risk assessment, and trade certification services on animals at control points (2 shifts) in order to meet requirements arising from the tightening up of export of live animals in overseas countries. ■ To step up inspection and enforcement actions to detect non-compliance of import requirements and illegal import activities. ■ To strengthen the manpower of each work shift to provide year round services to cope with operation needs arising from the opening of new border control points as well as rapidly increased passenger and cargo flows at existing border control points, including land borders, airport and seaports: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Airport (3 shifts, round the clock service); staff are required for inspection work of 2 cargo terminals and 1 passenger terminal - Man Kam To Border (2 shifts); staff are required for inspection work of 5 control points, including Man Kam To, Lo Wu, Lok Ma Chau, Sha Tau Kok and the new Lok Ma Chau Spur Line scheduled for opening in 2007 - The new Shenzhen Western Corridor scheduled for opening in 2007 (3 shifts, round the clock service)
Veterinary Officer	1	
Senior Field Officer	1	
Field Officer I	13	
Field Officer II	16	
[PE expenditure: \$9.3M]		

IV. Avian Influenza Surveillance Programme		
Senior Executive Officer Senior Field Officer Field Officer I Field Officer II	1 2 7 3 [PE expenditure: \$4.7M]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To implement the following measures in relation to the avian influenza surveillance programme:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - contract administration of the service of collecting dead wild birds for testing; - enforcement of the ban on keeping of backyard poultry; - issue of exhibition licences and exemption permits for keeping racing pigeon and pet poultry; - setting up a detector dog team to combat animal smuggling at border control points. ■ A Senior Executive Officer unit head is required for organizing and supervising the work of the programme, as well as co-ordinating the manpower and resource deployment within the department to tackle emergency situations under avian influenza threats.
V. Nature Conservation		
Forestry Officer	2 [PE expenditure: \$0.8M]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To provide professional advice on ecological aspects of environmental impact assessment (EIA) studies under the EIA Ordinance and on other nature conservation matters to government departments.
Total	64 [PE expenditure: \$20.8M]	

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)102

Question Serial No.

1695

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

Following the implementation of the Voluntary Surrender Schemes for poultry and pig farms, the workload on farm inspection and farm licensing of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department should decrease significantly. In this connection, please inform this Committee whether the Department has made any predictions on the decrease in inspections and the number of licences to be issued, as well as the amount of expenditure and manpower saved. Are there any plans to redeploy the manpower for enhancing other services? The livestock farm licences to be issued are expected to drop from 168 in 2006 to 58 in 2007, representing a significant decrease of 65%. What types of farms are involved? Please also give similar figures for pig farms.

Asked by: Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply:

The estimated number of livestock keeping licences to be issued in 2007-08 includes both pig and poultry farms.

Farm type	Pigs	Chickens	Pigeons	Total
Licensed in 2006-07	133	35	0	168
To be licenced in 2007-08	28	29	1	58

The drop in the number of license renewal/issuing in 2007-08 as a result of the implementation of the Voluntary Surrender Schemes (VSS) for livestock farms is, however, more than offset by the corresponding increase in workload arising from processing ex-gratia payment and one-off-grant applications under the VSS. We shall review the workload and resources requirement concerned by end 2007 upon conclusion of the VSS with a view to redeploying savings, if any, for enhancing other services.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ MRS STELLA HUNG

Post Title _____ Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date _____ 15 March 2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)103

Question Serial No.

1696

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department
Subhead (No. & title): 700 General non-recurrent

Programme:

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

Please inform this Committee of how many applications under the Voluntary Surrender Scheme for pig farms have been received and the amounts of ex-gratia payment involved since the scheme was introduced in 2006. Please provide figures of affected pig farms and live pig transport workers who have applied and the amounts of ex-gratia payment involved.

Asked by: Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply:

As at end February 2007, we received 122 applications from pig farmers for ex-gratia payment totalling \$386.9 million, and 34 applications from pig farm workers for one-off grant totalling \$612,000. There has been no application from pig transport workers.

Signature _____

Name in block letters MRS STELLA HUNG

Post Title Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date 15 March 2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)105

Question Serial No.

1698

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department Subhead (No. & title): 700 General non-recurrent

Programme:

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

As the Voluntary Surrender Scheme for live poultry farmers, wholesalers and related transporters ended in August 2006, please inform this Committee of the balance of the respective ex-gratia payments after assessing all the applications. Has the effectiveness of the Scheme been reviewed? If yes, please give the details.

Asked by: Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply:

The take-up rate and estimated expenditure on ex-gratia payment of the Scheme are provided below-

	Ex-gratia Payment (\$'million)		
	Farmer	Wholesaler	Transporter
Approved commitment	293	45.5	6
Estimated expenditure up to the conclusion of the scheme	203	9	0
Estimated balance	90	36.5	6
Take up rate in terms of number of operators (%)	73	18	0

The Scheme has led to a reduction of on-farm poultry population from some 3.7 million to 1.7 million, which has achieved our target and will in turn help in the prevention of avian influenza outbreak in Hong Kong.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ MRS STELLA HUNG

Post Title _____ Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date _____ 15 March 2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)107

Question Serial No.

1700

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Subhead (No. & title):
Department

Programme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

The Administration has considered building a poultry slaughterhouse in Sheung Shui. As the Western Wholesale Food Market (WWFM) has had serious vacancy problem for years, what plans does the Administration have to reduce the loss? Will WWFM be reserved as one of the regional poultry slaughterhouses in view of the operation of the Sheung Shui slaughterhouse?

Asked by: Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply:

We are now planning to renovate the vacant poultry stalls in WWFM for other fresh food wholesale uses. There is no further plan to use WWFM for slaughtering poultry.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ MRS STELLA HUNG

Post Title _____ Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date _____ 15 March 2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)108

Question Serial No.

1701

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Subhead (No. & title):
Department

Programme: (3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

The provision for 2007-08 under this programme is higher than the revised estimate for 2006-07. This is due to a number of reasons, including implementation of new avian influenza control measures and enhancement of the testing capacity on avian influenza. Please provide details on the new measures and targets, including the expenditure and manpower involved.

Asked by: Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply:

The additional provision under this Programme for new avian influenza (AI) control measures is \$21.5 million which provides for 13 new posts and other operational expenses for the enforcement of the ban on the keeping of backyard poultry, collection of dead wild birds for AI testing, and regulating the keeping of poultry for exhibition and setting up of detector dog teams to combat animal smuggling.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ MRS STELLA HUNG

Post Title _____ Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date _____ 16 March 2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)109

Question Serial No.

1713

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Subhead (No. & title):
Department

Programme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

In connection with assisting fishermen to switch to sustainable fisheries operations and fish farmers to develop sustainable aquaculture through technical support services and credit facilities under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2007-08, please answer these questions:

- (1) What are the details of the plan?
- (2) What is the estimated amount of expenditure involved? What are the amounts of expenditure for technical support services and credit facilities respectively?
- (3) What are the application criteria for credit facilities? What is the implementation date? What are the details?
- (4) Are there indicators for reviewing the results of the plan? How many fishermen/fish farmers are expected to be provided with loans?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

- (1) We assist fishermen to switch to sustainable fisheries operations and fish farmers to develop sustainable aquaculture through provision of technical advice, liaison services and training to help fishermen and fish farmers upgrade their skills and knowledge, draw up and assess the feasibility of their development plans. Loans at concessionary interest rates under the Fisheries Development Loan Fund (with an approved commitment of \$290 million) are made available for application by local fishermen and fish farmers for the purpose. Moreover, fishermen and fish farmers may also apply to the Marine Fish Scholarship Fund for sponsorships to attend relevant training courses.
- (2) A total of \$6.8 million has been earmarked for these tasks in 2007-08, including \$5.3 million for provision of technical support services and \$1.5 million for administration of the credit facilities.
- (3) Local fishermen who are interested to switch to other sustainable fisheries and local fish farmers who plan to develop sustainable aquaculture operations may apply to the Fisheries Development Loan Fund. Each application will be assessed on its individual merit according to vetting criteria including the technical feasibility and financial viability of the development proposal, loan security, credit history and repayment ability of the applicant. Upon the endorsement of the vetting criteria by the Fisheries Development Loan Fund Advisory Committee, we will invite applications from the fisheries industry.

- (4) We have not drawn up any indicator for this activity as whether local fishermen and fish farmers will pursue sustainable fisheries or aquaculture operations is a business decision of their own. This department will continue to assist them through provision of the above services and review these services as necessary to cope with the needs of the industry.

Signature _____

Name in block letters MRS STELLA HUNG

Post Title Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date 16 March 2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)110

Question Serial No.

1714

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Subhead (No. & title):
Department

Programme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

In connection with promoting environmentally-friendly culture practices under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2007-08, please answer these questions:

- (1) What are the details of the plan?
- (2) What is the estimated amount of expenditure involved?
- (3) Are there indicators for reviewing the results of the plan?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

(1) This department promotes environmentally-friendly culture practices including the use of dry pellet feeds and proper waste and refuse disposal measures to reduce water pollution in fish culture zones. We provide technical advice and assistance in the selection and purchase of suitable feeds, and organize educational and publicity activities for fish farmers. We will also continue to implement the Accredited Fish Farm Scheme to help fish farmers raise production and quality control standards through the adoption of proper farm management and good aquaculture practices.

(2) A provision of \$5.6 million is earmarked under Head 22 for these tasks in 2007-08.

(3) The indicators include the total raft area of mariculture farms adopting environmentally-friendly practices, and the total number and area of farms participating in the Accredited Fish Farm Scheme.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ MRS STELLA HUNG _____

Post Title _____ Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation _____

Date _____ 16 March 2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)111

Question Serial No.

0802

Head : 703 Buildings

Subhead : 3023NM General improvement
to Ngau Tau Kok Market and
Cooked Food Centre

Programme :

Controlling Officer : Director of Architectural Services

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question : Please inform this Committee of :

- (a) the progress of the works in 2006-07 and the percentage of works completed;
- (b) the progress of the works in 2007-08; and
- (c) the expected completion date of the works.

Asked by : Hon. CHAN Yuen-han

Reply : The general improvement works to Ngau Tau Kok Market and Cooked Food Centre was completed in January 2006.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ C. H. YUE

Post Title _____ Director of Architectural Services

Date _____ 15 March 2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)112

Question Serial No.

1645

Head: 48 Government Laboratory
Programme: (1) Statutory Testing

Subhead (No. & title):

Controlling Officer: Government Chemist

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

Under "Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2007-08", it is mentioned that there was plan to establish a Food Safety Testing Laboratory to cope with the increasing demand for analytical services from the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department. Please advise this Committee of the progress of the project, as well as the proposed establishment of the new Laboratory and the money involved.

Asked by: Hon. LI Kwok-ying

Reply:

The Food Safety Testing Laboratory is expected to commence operation in July 2007.

The staffing establishment of the Laboratory consists of 23 professional and 60 technical staff. The estimated recurrent provision required in 2007-08 for food safety is \$49.9 million.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Dr T L TING

Post Title _____ Government Chemist

Date _____ 16.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)113

Question Serial No.

1650

Head: 48 Government Laboratory
Programme: (1) Statutory Testing

Subhead (No. & title):

Controlling Officer: Government Chemist

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

Regarding the establishment of a Food Safety Testing Laboratory, please provide the following information:

1. the timetable for its establishment;
2. its structure, terms of reference and functions, and how it performs the role of enhancing food safety; and
3. the estimated expenditure to be incurred.

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

1. The Food Safety Testing Laboratory (FSTL) is expected to commence operation in July 2007.
2. The staffing establishment of the FSTL consists of 23 professional staff and 60 technical staff. The FSTL will perform a wide range of chemical analysis of food products ranging from major components to additives, contaminants, agricultural and veterinary residues, and genetically modified ingredients for surveillance and verification of compliance with the statutory standards. It also provides analytical services related to food complaint cases. The estimated number of tests performed in 2007 is 142 000, including the testing of samples for regulatory compliance and food complaint.
3. The estimated recurrent provision required in 2007-08 for food safety is \$49.9 million.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Dr T L TING

Post Title _____ Government Chemist

Date _____ 16.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)114

Question Serial No.

1654

Head: 48 Government Laboratory
Programme: (1) Statutory Testing

Subhead (No. & title):

Controlling Officer: Government Chemist

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

What are the expenditure and staff establishment required for setting up the Food Safety Testing Laboratory?

Asked by: Hon. LI Wah-ming, Fred

Reply:

The staffing establishment of Food Safety Testing Laboratory consists of 23 professional staff and 60 technical staff. The estimated recurrent provision required in 2007-08 is \$49.9 million.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Dr T L TING

Post Title _____ Government Chemist

Date _____ 15.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)115

Question Serial No.

1655

Head: 48 Government Laboratory

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Statutory Testing

Controlling Officer: Government Chemist

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

How many times is the Food Safety Testing Laboratory expected to test food samples in 2007-08?

Asked by: Hon. LI Wah-ming, Fred

Reply:

The estimated number of tests performed by the Food Safety Testing Laboratory in 2007 is 142 000.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____
Dr T L TING

Post Title _____
Government Chemist

Date _____
15.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)116

Question Serial No.

1656

Head: 48 Government Laboratory
Programme: (1) Statutory Testing

Subhead (No. & title):

Controlling Officer: Government Chemist

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

Regarding Subhead 000, why is there an increase in Allowances under Personal Emoluments every year? How are these allowances called?

Asked by: Hon. LI Wah-ming, Fred

Reply:

The increase in allowances under Personal Emoluments is to meet the requirement for overtime allowance, acting allowance and on-call duty allowance, to meet operational needs.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Dr T L TING

Post Title _____ Government Chemist

Date _____ 14.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)117

Question Serial No.

1651

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

There will be a deletion of 51 posts in 2007-08. Please advise on the details of these posts and the reasons for the deletion, as well as the total estimated expenditure that can be saved.

Asked by : Hon. LEUNG Yiu-chung

Reply :

The net deletion of 51 posts in 2007-08 involves the Workman I and Workman II grades. The posts involved are vacant and there is no operational need to keep them. Their deletion does not involve any reduction in salary expenditure.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 15.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)118

Question Serial No.

1665

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Under Programme (2), the Administration will continue to convert designated aqua privies into flushing toilets by phases in 2007-08. Please advise on the aqua privies that will be converted into flushing toilets in 2007-08, their locations, and the expenditure involved.

Asked by : Hon. CHAN Wai-yip, Albert

Reply :

The conversion project covers 100 aqua privies in the New Territories and outlying islands and is being implemented by phases starting from early 2005. The total estimated cost for the entire project is \$92.8 million. The last batch of 37 aqua privies in Cheung Chau, Ping Chau, Tsuen Wan, Yuen Long, North, Tai Po and Sai Kung will be converted in 2007-08.

Signature _____

Name in block letters EDDY CHAN

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 15.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)119

Question Serial No.

1670

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Provision for 2007-08 is \$187.1 million (9.8%) higher than the revised estimate for 2006-07. This is mainly due to increased operating expenses for cleansing services. However, there will be a net deletion of 51 posts in 2007-08. In this regard, please advise on the post titles and functions of these 51 posts and the estimated expenditure that can be saved, as well as the reasons for the increased operating expenses for cleansing services and the amount involved.

Asked by : Hon. CHAN Wai-yip, Albert

Reply :

The posts to be deleted under this programme are Workman I and Workman II vacancies involved in environmental hygiene and related services. Their deletion does not involve any reduction in salary expenditure.

The increase in 2007-08 estimated expenditure of \$187.1 million under Programme (2) is mainly to cater for the following –

- (a) managing and operating new facilities, such as public toilets and refuse collection points; and providing cleansing services for new development areas (\$16.1 million);
- (b) increased expenditure on managing cemeteries and crematoria such as maintenance for new cremators (\$30.7 million);
- (c) enhancing hygiene in aqua privies (\$17.4 million); and
- (d) coping with increases in utility charges, contract expenses, maintenance and training requirements (\$122.9 million).

Signature	
Name in block letters	EDDY CHAN
	Director of
Post Title	Food and Environmental Hygiene
Date	15.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)120

Question Serial No.

1765

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

In 2006, the Administration implemented the new "removal when found" measure to tackle the problem of on-street used clothes collection cages. How many staff members have been deployed for this purpose? What is the expenditure for this new initiative in 2007-08?

Asked by : Hon. CHOY So-yuk

Reply :

The Department deploys existing manpower to implement this measure. Usually, at least three to four staff members will be deployed on an operation.

There is no separate breakdown of expenditure incurred for such duties.

Signature _____

Name in block letters EDDY CHAN

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 15.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)121

Question Serial No.

1766

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

What is the estimated expenditure, detailed plan and time table of the Administration for the year 2007-08 on the study for the introduction of "paper coffin"?

Asked by : Hon. CHOY So-yuk

Reply :

To promote the use of eco-coffins, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) has put up notices at its cremation booking offices, and disseminated relevant information via its website. Publicity leaflets have been distributed to the public at public mortuaries, hospitals, elderly homes and non-government organizations providing care services for senior citizens. The resources required for the above measures will be absorbed from within the Department's allocation.

FEHD will take the lead in using eco-coffins for cremating unclaimed bodies, and has invited contractors to supply eco-coffins by open tender. The actual amount of expenditure will only be available upon completion of the open tendering exercise.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ **EDDY CHAN** _____

Post Title _____ **Director of**
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ **15.3.2007** _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)122

Question Serial No.

1767

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Please advise on the expenditure in handling water seepage problems in private buildings in 2005 and 2006 and the estimated expenditure in this area in 2007-08.

Asked by : Hon. CHOY So-yuk

Reply :

The Buildings Department and the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department set up a Joint Office scheme to handle water seepage cases in private buildings. The scheme has been implemented by phases since 31.12.2004 and extended to all the districts since 1.7.2006. The expenditure required is absorbed from within existing resources.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date _____ 15.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)123

Question Serial No.

1768

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

In 2006, 148 food business licences were suspended/cancelled. What is the breakdown by the number of food business licences suspended and cancelled?

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply :

Among the 148 cases in 2006, 143 food business licences were suspended and five food business licences were cancelled.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 15.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)124

Question Serial No.

1769

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

The number of food business licences suspended/cancelled in 2006 was 23 more than the number in 2005, representing an increase of about 20%. What are the reasons?

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply :

The major offences leading to suspension / cancellation of licence include improper storage of open food; use of open space for storage / scullery / food preparation; and unauthorized extension of food business beyond the licensed area. There was an increase in the number of prosecutions against unauthorized extension of food business beyond the licensed area in 2006 compared to 2005. The increase in the number of suspension / cancellation of licence in 2006 could be attributable to this factor.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ **EDDY CHAN** _____

Post Title _____ **Director of**
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ **15.3.2007** _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)125

Question Serial No.

1770

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Among the food business licences suspended in 2006, how many licensees had lodged appeals and how many were allowed? What is the maximum, minimum and average time of suspension of these licences?

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply :

In 2006, there were nine appeal cases against the suspension of licence. Eight cases were heard and the remaining one will be heard in late March 2007. Of the cases heard, five were upheld, one was allowed and the decision of the Appeals Board on two cases is pending. The suspension imposed ranged from seven days to 14 days.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ **EDDY CHAN** _____

Post Title _____ **Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene** _____

Date _____ **15.3.2007** _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)126

Question Serial No.

1771

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

In view of the increasing importance of implementing food control measures at sources, did the Administration, after introducing the registration system for Mainland freshwater fish farms for supply to Hong Kong, allocate additional resources and manpower for inspecting the registered fish farms? If so, please provide details. What are the anticipated indicators for the number of inspections and the number of fish farms to be inspected in 2007-08?

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply :

Financial provision has been included in the 2007-08 Estimate for the creation of 8 additional posts including 2 Veterinary Officers and 6 Field Officers to enhance farm inspections in the Mainland, including some 20 visits to the registered fish farms. The amount of financial provision for the above activity is not separately identifiable.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 15.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)127

Question Serial No.

1772

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

The Administration will take step to introduce legislative amendments to regulate the import of poultry eggs in 2007-08. In this connection, please advise on the timetable for the legislative amendments as well as the estimated expenditure and manpower involved in the implementation and monitoring of the regulation (including poultry egg suppliers are required to register and to obtain import licences, etc).

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply :

The Government aims to submit the legislative proposal within the 2006-07 legislative session. The expenditure involved for regulating poultry eggs after enactment of the new legislation will be absorbed from within existing resources of the Centre for Food Safety.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ **EDDY CHAN** _____

Post Title _____ **Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene** _____

Date _____ **15.3.2007** _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)128

Question Serial No.

1773

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

With the growing public concern over the safety of imported food, and as chilled pork and poultry are imported to our local market, please advise on whether resources and manpower have been reserved for inspecting the slaughtering/processing plants of the chilled pork and poultry that are imported to Hong Kong. If so, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply :

The Food Import and Export Section (FIES) and the Compliance and Investigation Unit (CIU) under the Centre for Food Safety are responsible for the control of import of food, including chilled pork and poultry, and inspections to farms exporting live food animals to Hong Kong and food processing plants in the Mainland and overseas.

Financial provisions of \$69 million and \$6.7 million have been earmarked in 2007-08 for the work of the FIES and CIU respectively. Separate breakdown on resources and manpower provided for inspection to slaughtering /processing plants of chilled pork and poultry is not readily available.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 15.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)129

Question Serial No.

1774

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Given our long coastline, a large amount of live fish without health certificates can still be smuggled into Hong Kong for human consumption. Please advise on whether resources and manpower will be increased for the sampling of live fish taken from vessels and vehicles importing fish to Hong Kong, wholesale fish markets and retail outlets. If so, what are the details? If not, what are reasons?

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply :

In 2007-08, 28 additional Health Inspector grade posts will be created to strengthen food import control work at various sea, land and airport border points, including inspection and enforcement of importation of live freshwater fish through improper channels.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 15.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)130

Question Serial No.

1775

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) : 700 General non-recurrent

Programme :

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

With regard to item 012 "population-based food consumption survey", please advise on its objective, content, methodology, the manpower required, the anticipated dates of completion and announcement of results as well as the expenditure (including salary) involved.

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply :

The Chinese University of Hong Kong has been commissioned to conduct the population-based food consumption survey. The survey aims to collect up-to-date food consumption information of the people of Hong Kong. A database will be constructed and used in risk assessment studies on food hazards. A financial provision of \$4.2 million has been earmarked for the survey. The survey is expected to be completed in late 2007. The results of the survey will be released in 2008.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ **EDDY CHAN** _____

Post Title _____ **Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene** _____

Date _____ **15.3.2007** _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)131

Question Serial No.

1776

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Regarding the matters requiring special attention in 2007-08, the Department will extend the scheme on contracting out market management to two additional districts, namely Southern and Tuen Mun districts. Please advise on the details of the scheme (including the monitoring of service quality and performance indicator) and the estimated savings in manpower and expenditure.

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply :

The Department plans to extend the scheme on contracting out market management to all the public markets/cooked food centres in Southern District and Tuen Mun District in 2007-08. The service contractor will provide overall management, cleansing services, minor repairs and maintenance services in those markets/cooked food centres. District staff will closely monitor the performance of the contractors. We will assess their performance with reference to the cleanliness and general conditions in the markets, as well as feedback from customers, market tenants and the Market Management Consultative Committees as appropriate.

The extension of the scheme to Southern and Tuen Mun Districts will lead to manpower saving of around 43 staff. The incumbent staff will be gainfully redeployed. Information on actual savings in expenditure will only be available after completion of the open tendering exercise.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 15.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)132

Question Serial No.

1777

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

The estimated stall let-out rate of public markets is 76% in 2007. What is the rental loss incurred by vacant stalls? Are there any solutions to the increasingly keen competition from retail outlets? Will there be rental reduction or change in the use of markets?

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply :

Discounting designated stalls that are not made available for leasing due to designated purposes (such as re-development, impending renovation works, resiting commitment), the vacant stalls could bring rental earnings of about \$5.95 million per month if they could all be leased out at the current open market rental.

To enhance the competitiveness of public markets, the Department will continue to implement general improvement works (e.g. upgrading of drainage, lighting, ventilation, signage, fire services provisions), and carry out a range of other measures to improve the markets' trading environment and their attraction to customers, such as -

- (a) maintaining a high standard of cleanliness in the markets and the enforcement of monthly market cleansing day;
- (b) maintaining flexibility in determining and changing the trade of individual stalls, and where feasible, the stall size;
- (c) merging of selected vacant small stalls to form larger stalls and lowering, in selected markets, the upset auction prices of long-standing vacant stalls to attract potential bidders; and

- (d) conducting promotional activities (such as lucky draws, talks and exhibitions) and distributing regular market newsletters to attract customers.

The Administration has extended the rental freeze for all public markets until 30 June 2008 and will consider the possibility of closing down markets with serious viability problems.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 15.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)133

Question Serial No.

1778

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

In view of the many food safety problems occurred last year, will more resources be allocated in order to increase the types of food samples taken for testing?

Asked by : Hon. TAM Heung-man

Reply :

The original estimated number of food samples to be taken for testing under the regular food surveillance programme in 2006 was 63 000 as shown in the 2006-07 Estimate. In response to the occurrence of various food incidents in 2006, additional samples were taken for testing. For 2007, 65 000 samples are planned for testing. Additional samples will also be taken in response to food complaints and food incidents during the year.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 15.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)134

Question Serial No.

1779

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Please provide details of the 125 posts to be created under this programme in 2007-08, including the number of posts for various ranks, the need for their creation and their respective duties.

Asked by : Hon. TAM Heung-man

Reply :

Details of the net 125 posts to be created in 2007-08 are listed below –

<u>Grades</u>	<u>No. of posts</u>	<u>Duties</u>
Chemist	1	To perform food safety regulatory duties
Field Officer	29	
Health Inspector	31	
Science Laboratory Technician	7	
Scientific Officer (Medical)	6	
Veterinary Officer	5	
Pest Control Assistant	27	To perform pest control duties
Pest Control Officer	8	
Administrative support staff	11	To provide administrative support

It is necessary to create these posts to enhance food safety regulatory functions and pest control services.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 15.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)135

Question Serial No.

1780

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

There is no mention of pest control work under "Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2007-08". Please provide details of the work plan and the allocation of resources in this area.

Asked by : Hon. TAM Heung-man

Reply :

The Department will continue to provide effective pest control service. The work plan for 2007-08 is to enhance: (a) risk assessment and communication on pests affecting public health; (b) publicity and community participation; and (c) control and prevention of disease-borne vectors. The work includes the continuation of the territory-wide dengue vector surveillance programme which provides useful information on the distribution, prevalence and the seasonal fluctuation of the dengue vector in Hong Kong; the launching of anti-mosquito and anti-rodent campaigns which aim at heightening public awareness on the potential risk of vector-borne diseases and encouraging community participation. Besides, the Department will continue to enforce relevant legislation to prevent pest problems in private premises.

The direct expenditure on pest control work for 2007-08 is about \$365.6 million.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ **EDDY CHAN** _____

Post Title _____ **Director of**
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ **15.3.2007** _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)136

Question Serial No.

1781

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Under this programme, the estimated expenditure for 2007-08 is \$187 million higher than the revised estimate for 2006-07. This is mainly due to increased operating expenses for cleansing services. Please advise in detail on the specific reasons for the increase in the operating expenses and the work plan involved.

Asked by : Hon. TAM Heung-man

Reply :

The increase in 2007-08 estimated expenditure of \$187.1 million under Programme (2) is mainly to cater for the following –

- (a) managing and operating new facilities, such as public toilets and refuse collection points; and providing cleansing services for new development areas;
- (b) increased expenditure on managing cemeteries and crematoria such as maintenance for new cremators;
- (c) enhancing hygiene in aqua privies; and
- (d) coping with increases in utility charges, contract expenses, maintenance and training requirements.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ **EDDY CHAN** _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 15.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)137

Question Serial No.

1905

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

One of the matters requiring special attention in 2007-08 under this programme is the continuation of the streamlining of the food business licensing regime. Please advise on the details of the work involved and the proposals for improvement.

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply :

In 2007-08, this Department will work under the "Be the Smart Regulator" Action Plan jointly prepared by the Economic Analysis and Business Facilitation Unit under the Financial Secretary's Office and the Efficiency Unit under the Chief Secretary for Administration's Office to : review the licensing guides; collect comments from the trades on existing licensing operations; review the existing licensing operations; and establish performance pledges for major licensing activities. This Department will also take steps to implement the recommendations of the "Study on the Business-Friendliness of the Regulatory Regime for Outside Seating Accommodation of Restaurants". We will also continue to work on the proposed composite licence to cover the sale of various types of ready-to-eat food for consumption off the premises.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date _____ 15.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)138

Question Serial No.

1906

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

One of the matters requiring special attention in 2007-08 under this programme is the continuation of the streamlining of the food business licensing regime. Please advise on the following:

As this issue was included as a matter requiring special attention in 2006-07, what improvements have been made and what results have been achieved so far? Please provide the number of completed cases on food business licences in 2005-06 and 2006-07 as well as the average time required for processing the applications.

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply :

Trade facilitation measures introduced include issue of Letter of Requirements to the applicant prior to the Application Vetting Panel (AVP) meeting to facilitate discussion; involving the applicant's consultant and / or contractor at the AVP meeting to ensure all persons concerned have a clear understanding of the licensing requirements and conditions; deleting the requirement for movable appliances, facilities and furniture not of a substantial and permanent nature to be shown on the layout plan of food premises; lowering or cancelling the licensing requirements and conditions with minimal hygiene impact; and allowing operators of restaurants and food factories to conduct take-away food service and food delivery service without prior approval from this Department provided that they observe a set of additional conditions to ensure food hygiene when conducting such services. In addition, the Department will continue to work on the proposed composite licence to cover the sale of various types of ready-to-eat food for consumption off the premises.

In 2005, 2 117 restaurant licences and 1 730 other food licences were issued. In 2006, the numbers were 1 881 and 1 529 respectively. This Department has no ready information on the average time required for processing these applications.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 15.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)139

Question Serial No.

1907

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Regarding outside seating accommodation, the Subgroup on Business Facilitation has put forward recommendations to improve the application procedures as well as the licensing requirements and conditions. Has the Administration worked out a timetable for their implementation?

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply :

We will work closely with departments concerned to take forward the recommendations in accordance with the timetable as set out in the "Study on the Business-Friendliness of the Regulatory Regime for Outside Seating Accommodation of Restaurants" as endorsed by the Food Business Task Force of the Business Facilitation Advisory Committee which has replaced the above Subgroup.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 15.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)140

Question Serial No.

1782

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Under this programme, the estimated expenditure for 2007-08 is higher than that for 2006-07, showing that there is a greater workload. However, there will be a deletion of 51 posts. In this regard, please provide details of the posts to be deleted and reasons for the deletion.

Asked by : Hon. TAM Heung-man

Reply :

The net deletion of 51 posts in 2007-08 involves the Workman I and Workman II grades. The posts involved are vacant and there is no operational need to keep them.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ **EDDY CHAN** _____

Post Title _____ **Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene** _____

Date _____ **15.3.2007** _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)141

Question Serial No.

1106

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Health, Subhead (No. & title):
Welfare and Food Bureau (Food and
Environmental Hygiene Branch)

Programme: (2) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

On collaboration with the Mainland authorities to explore the feasibility of applying information technology to enhance traceability of food:

1. Apart from Radio Frequency Identification technique, what other technology does the Government plan to explore to enhance the identification and traceability of food sources? Please provide details of the plan as well as the expenditure and manpower involved.
2. Given the vast expanse of the Mainland, introduction of any technology and related operation would require collaboration between Hong Kong and a number of customs authorities in the Mainland. What is the scope of the study as conceived by the Government? When will the study be completed?

Asked by: Hon. LEE Kok-long, Joseph

Reply:

We are currently exploring the use of Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology with the Guangdong Exit-entry Inspection and Quarantine Bureau to enhance the traceability of live pigs exporting from Guangdong to Hong Kong. In parallel, as part of our planned registration scheme for food importers, we are examining the use of information technology to assist in the management of the database and enhance traceability of food in general.

We aim to complete the pilot project on RFID for tracing live pigs from Guangdong within 2007 and will assess the outcome of the pilot programme with a view to exploring the feasibility of applying appropriate IT identification techniques to food from other areas and other types of food. So far, we are using existing manpower and resources to cover the pilot project on live pigs and have committed about \$100,000 for purchasing hand-held detectors, gate-type readers, etc. and other equipment for the pilot project.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____
Mrs Carrie YAU

Post Title _____
Permanent Secretary
for Health, Welfare and Food
(Food and Environmental Hygiene)

Date _____
13.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)142

Question Serial No.

1107

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Health, Welfare and Food Bureau (Food and Environmental Hygiene Branch)

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (2) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

The provision for 2007-08 has increased by nearly \$50 million, representing a triple increase over the revised estimates for 2006-07. Please set out specific items of work and provide the following information to enable Committee to assess whether the provision is being used properly: a breakdown of their respective allocation and funding percentages, their performance targets and expected efficacy as well as the manpower involved.

Asked by: Hon. LEE Kok-long, Joseph

Reply:

The increase in funding provides for all the major initiatives as listed in the section "Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2007-08". In brief, the major initiatives are to provide for expenditure under the Voluntary Surrender Scheme for pig farmers (\$20 million or 41.6%), provision of posts to strengthen food safety functions (\$5.59 million or 11.6%); consultancy study to promote sustainable development of local agricultural and fisheries industries (\$3 million or 6.2%) and contingency funding to meet expenditure for controlling avian influenza (\$19.5 million or 40.5%). It is not practicable to set performance targets and expected efficacy given the nature of these initiatives. The existing manpower of the Health, Welfare and Food Bureau will implement all the initiatives under Programme (2) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Mrs Carrie YAU
Post Title	Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene)
Date	15.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)143

Question Serial No.

2000

Head : 703 Buildings

Subhead : 3003NB Additional
columbarium at Diamond Hill

Programme :

Controlling Officer : Director of Architectural Services

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question : For the improvement project under the Subhead, would the Administration advise on the following :

- (a) its progress and percentage of work done in 2006-07;
- (b) its progress in 2007-08;
- (c) its anticipated date of completion; and
- (d) is it feasible to expedite the works in the light of robust demand for columbarium niches?

Asked by : Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

- Reply :
- (a) In 2006-07, we commenced the piling works (which is about 20% of the whole project) in July 2006 for completion by end March 2007.
 - (b) In 2007-08, we plan to commence superstructure construction in end March/early April 2007, immediately after the completion of the piling works.
 - (c) The anticipated completion date of the project is December 2008.
 - (d) The works are being carried out under a tight programme. There is little room to further expedite the construction works.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ C. H. YUE

Post Title _____ Director of Architectural Services

Date _____ 15 March 2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)144

Question Serial No.

2381

Head : 703 Buildings

Subhead : 3009NT Conversion of aqua privies into
flushing toilets – phase 3

Programme :

Controlling Officer : Director of Architectural Services

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question : What are the locations of the aqua privies to be involved in the Conversion of aqua privies into flushing toilets – phase 3? What are the construction schedule and the details of the relevant works?

Asked by : Hon. LAU Chin-shek

Reply : The Phase 3 conversion programme being planned includes the conversion of 30 aqua privies (APs). The location of these APs are listed below :

District	<u>Location</u>
North District	Sheung Shui Wai Sheung Pak Tsuen San Uk Tsuen Tan Chuk Hang Queen's Hill, Fanling
Sai Kung District	Nam Wai Village Sun On Tsuen
Island District	Ngong Ping Camp Site, Lantau Hau Wong Temple, Tung Chung Mo Tat Village, Lamma
Tai Po District	Liu Au Village San Tong Village
Sha Tin District	To Tau Village Fo Tan Village

District	Location
Yuen Long District	San Wai (beside Sze Wang), Ha Tsuen Tong Fong Tsuen Kam Hing Wai North, Kam Tin Tai Shu Ha Ngau Hom Tsuen Fung Kut Heung, Kam Tin Nam Hang Pai, Tai Tong Road Sha Kong Miu, Lau Fau Shan Kat Hing Wai, Kam Tin Tseung Kong Wai, Ha Tsuen Wing Hing Wai, near Wing Hing School Tai Shu Ha West Shek Wu Tong, Pat Heung Tai Tseng Wai, Wan Chau Pak Nai near Vegetable Market Office, Lau Fau Shan Hung Uk Tsuen, Ping Shan Shui Mei Tsuen, Kam Tin

Subject to funding approval, the works for Phase 3 will start in late 2007 for completion in early 2009.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ C. H. YUE

Post Title _____ Director of Architectural Services

Date _____ 16 March 2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)145

Question Serial No.

2382

Head : 703 Buildings

Subhead : 3010NT Conversion of aqua privies
into flushing toilets – phase 4

Programme :

Controlling Officer : Director of Architectural Services

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question : Please advise this Committee of the locations of the aqua privies that are included in the conversion of aqua privies into flushing toilets – phase 4 and the detailed schedule for the works.

Asked by : Hon. LAU Chin-shek

Reply : The Phase 4 conversion programme being planned includes the conversion of 20 aqua privies (APs). The locations of these APs are listed below :

District	Location
North	Tam Shui Hang Village Tong Hang Tsuen Lin Tong Mei Residential Area Kam Tsin Tsuen (South) Ling Shan Tsuen
Sai Kung	Nam Shan Village
Tai Po	Wai Tau Village Hang Ha Po
Yuen Long	Shek Wu Wai Fan Tin Tsuen (2), San Tin San Sang Tsuen Fung Chi Tsuen, Ping Shan Tin Sum Tsuen, Pat Heung Pau Wai, Ha Tsuen Lam Hau Tsuen
Tuen Mun	Tuen Tsz Wai Tuen Tsz Wai Vegetable Market Office, Lam Tei
Island	Nam Chung, Tai O, Lantau Shan Tau, Tung Chung, Lantau Yung Shue Ha, Sok Kwu Wan, Lamma

Subject to funding approval, the works for Phase 4 will start in late 2007 for completion in early 2009.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ C. H. YUE

Post Title _____ Director of Architectural Services

Date _____ 16 March 2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)146

Question Serial No.

2383

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Upon completion of the conversion of aqua privies (APs) into flushing toilets—phase 4, are there any aqua privies which have not yet been converted into flushing toilets? If so, please advise on their locations and the conversion plans, if any.

Asked by : Hon. LAU Chin-shek

Reply :

Subject to funding approval, FEHD will complete phase 4 of the AP conversion programme in late 2008, by which time a total of about 150 APs will have been upgraded to flushing toilets. By then, there will still be 369 APs in nine districts yet to be converted into flushing toilets. Distribution of these APs are as follows –

<u>District</u>	<u>No. of APs</u>
Islands	29
Kwai Tsing	6
Sha Tin	5
Sai Kung	43
Tuen Mun	30
Tai Po	33
Tsuen Wan	14
Yuen Long	112
North	97

FEHD continues to review the need and timing for converting more APs into flushing toilets. The Department is working on plans to convert 50 more APs into flushing toilets after completion of phase 4.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 15.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)147

Question Serial No.

2196

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Health, Subhead (No. & title):
Welfare and Food Bureau (Food and
Environmental Hygiene Branch)

Programme: (2) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

Compared with the revised estimates for 2006-07, the provision for 2007-08 has more than tripled. Can the Government provide specific plans, activities and studies as well as projected expenditures of these items of work?

Asked by: Hon. TAM Heung-man

Reply:

The increase in funding provides for all the major initiatives as listed in the section "Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2007-08". In brief, the major initiatives are to provide for expenditure under the Voluntary Surrender Scheme for pig farmers (\$20 million), provision of posts such as Senior Executive Officer, Senior Information Officer, etc. to strengthen food safety functions (\$5.59 million), consultancy study to promote sustainable development of local agricultural and fisheries industries (\$3 million) and contingency funding to meet expenditure for controlling avian influenza (\$19.5 million).

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Carrie YAU

Post Title _____
Permanent Secretary for Health,
Welfare and Food (Food and
Environmental Hygiene)

Date _____ 13.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)148

Question Serial No.

2197

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Health, Subhead (No. & title):
Welfare and Food Bureau (Food and
Environmental Hygiene Branch)

Programme: (2) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

On the net creation of five posts, please provide detailed information on the posts to be created and deleted, including their ranks, numbers and duties as well as the reasons for their creation and deletion.

Asked by: Hon. TAM Heung-man

Reply:

There will be no deletion of posts under Programme (2) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety in 2007-08. The reason for the creation of the five posts under the Programme, namely, one Administrative Officer Staff Grade C (AOSGC), one Senior Executive Officer (SEO), one Senior Information Officer (SIO), one Personal Assistant (PA) and one Chauffeur, is to strengthen the support in the Bureau to handle additional workload in relation to food safety matters.

The AOSGC is responsible for reviewing the set-up and work of the Centre for Food Safety under the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department with a view to further improving its structure and strategies for safeguarding food safety (including the launching of new legislation, communication with the trade and public etc). It is also expected that new policy initiatives on food safety will need to be launched and more coordination work within Government and with the Mainland is required. The SEO will provide the necessary executive support to the Bureau in particular the management of resources deployed to the food safety front while the SIO is responsible for handling publicity and media initiatives to address public concerns relating to food incidents and food safety policies. The PA and the Chauffeur will respectively provide dedicated secretarial support and transport service to the Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene).

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Carrie YAU

Post Title _____
Permanent Secretary for Health,
Welfare and Food (Food and
Environmental Hygiene)

Date _____ 14.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)149

Question Serial No.

2190

Head: 48 Government Laboratory
Programme: (1) Statutory Testing

Subhead (No. & title):

Controlling Officer: Government Chemist

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

In 2007-08, the Government Laboratory will recruit 48 non-directorate officers for setting up a Food Safety Testing Laboratory. Please advise on:

(1) the deployment, ranks and salaries of the new recruits and how they will work with the existing staff to enhance the testing and analytical output of the Government.

(2) the time when the new Food Safety Testing Laboratory will come into operation, the anticipated number of food samples to be tested annually and the target time for completing the test reports.

Asked by: Hon. SHEK Lai-him, Abraham

Reply:

1. Of the 48 posts proposed to be created under Programme (1) Statutory Testing, 38 posts will be on the establishment of the Food Safety Testing Laboratory. Details about these 38 posts are as follows -

Number of staff	Rank / Job Title	Emolument
2	Senior Chemist	1,858,440
10	Chemist	5,680,200
6	Science Laboratory Technician I	2,190,960
20	Science Laboratory Technician II	4,322,400

The new recruits will work together with existing staff to perform chemical analysis of food products for surveillance and verification of compliance with the statutory standards. They will also provide analytical services for food complaint cases.

2. The Food Safety Testing Laboratory is scheduled for opening in July 2007. The total number of tests performed in 2007 is estimated to be 142 000. The target time for completing the food samples tests varied with the types and methodologies of the tests.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Dr T L TING

Post Title Government Chemist

Date 15.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)150

Question Serial No.

1108

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

There will be a net creation of 125 posts and an additional provision of \$85.1 million (13.7% increase) under this programme in 2007-08 for enhancing food safety and public health efforts. In this connection, please advise on:

1. the ranks, functions and responsibilities of these new posts; and
2. how the new resources will be allocated. Please quantify the additional work or services, list the relevant performance indicators and the percentage of the allocation.

Asked by : Hon. LEE Kok-long, Joseph

Reply :

1. The net 125 posts to be created in 2007-08 are posts relating to the grades of Chemist, Field Officer, Health Inspector, Pest Control Assistant, Pest Control Officer, Science Laboratory Technician, Scientific Officer (Medical) and Veterinary Officer as well as administrative support posts. Their functions/ responsibilities are to perform food safety regulatory functions and provide pest control services.
2. The increase in 2007-08 estimated expenditure under this programme is mainly to cater for the following –
 - (a) creation of posts and departmental expenses in relation to enhancement of food safety regulatory functions and pest control services (\$67.2 million);
 - (b) increased capital expenditure such as population-based food consumption survey, integrated mass spectrometer system (\$8.7 million); and

—
— (c) upgrading equipment for operation in slaughterhouse (\$9.2 million).

The new posts are to enhance existing services under this Programme. There are no separate performance indicators for the enhanced activities.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 15.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)151

Question Serial No.

1109

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Under this programme, provision for 2007-08 is \$85.10 million (13.7%) higher than the revised estimate for 2006-07. The work targets include conducting food surveillance at various points of the food chain, as well as investigating and managing food incidents. In 2006-07, the Administration failed to respond swiftly to Mainland food safety incidents. It was slow in source-tracing, investigation, and affirmation of food problems. The media identified the problems before the Administration and even tracked down the smuggling channel and proces. In this regard, please advise on how the increased provision will be allocated to carry out source-tracing as well as investigation and disclosure of food incidents in order to improve food surveillance and the related work as well as expedite the investigation process.

Asked by : Hon. LEE Kok-long, Joseph

Reply :

A financial provision of \$37.2 million has been included in the 2007-08 Estimate for the creation of 75 posts and related departmental expenses, including Veterinary Officers, Field Officers, Scientific Officers, Health Inspectors and administrative support staff for enhancing food import control, strengthening veterinary input in the management of local slaughterhouses as well as enhancing food safety risk communication capabilities.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 15.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)152

Question Serial No.

1110

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Under this programme, the number of food samples to be taken for testing in 2007-08 is 65 000, only 85 more than the actual number in 2006. What is the difference between the 65 000 food samples under this programme and the 130 000 food samples to be taken by the Government Laboratory for regulatory compliance purposes?

Asked by : Hon. LEE Kok-long, Joseph

Reply :

The Food Safety Testing Laboratory planned to be established under the Government Laboratory in 2007-08 will provide enhanced and timely laboratory support for the increasing number of food samples taken for chemical testing in relation to food complaints, food incidents and food surveillance. The original estimated number of food samples to be taken for testing under the food surveillance programme in 2006 as shown in the 2006-07 Estimate was 63 000. For 2007, 65 000 samples are planned for testing. Additional samples will also be taken in response to food complaints and food incidents for microbiological and/or chemical tests. The number 130 000 refers to the number of chemical tests performed by the Government Laboratory. Usually, one food sample is subject to more than one chemical tests.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 15.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)153

Question Serial No.

1111

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Under this programme, provision for 2007-08 is \$187.1 million (9.8%) higher than the revised estimate for 2006-07 to meet operating expenses for cleansing services. However, there will be a deletion of 51 posts. Please specify the items with increased operating expenses and the provision involved; the ranks, functions and relevant duties of the posts to be deleted; the reasons for the deletion and the impact on the related services or work.

Asked by : Hon. LEE Kok-long, Joseph

Reply :

The increase in 2007-08 estimated expenditure of \$187.1 million under Programme (2) is mainly to cater for the following –

- (a) managing and operating new facilities, such as public toilets and refuse collection points; and providing cleansing services for new development areas (\$16.1 million);
- (b) increased expenditure on managing cemeteries and crematoria such as maintenance for new cremators (\$30.7 million);
- (c) enhancing hygiene in aqua privies (\$17.4 million); and
- (d) coping with increases in utility charges, contract expenses, maintenance and training requirements (\$122.9 million).

The posts to be deleted under this programme are Workman I and Workman II vacancies involved in environmental hygiene and related services. There is no operational need to keep them. Environmental hygiene and related services will not be affected as a result of the deletion of these posts.

Signature	
Name in block letters	EDDY CHAN
	Director of
Post Title	Food and Environmental Hygiene
Date	15.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)154

Question Serial No.

1112

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Under this programme, the estimated number of inspections to food premises in 2007-08 is 235 000, 425 less than the actual number in 2006. In this connection, please advise on:

1. whether the inspections to shops to check the compliance of separation of the sale of chilled and fresh pork after the implementation of "one licence for one shop" regulatory arrangement for pork retailers in 2006 have been included in the number of inspections under this indicator; and
2. the reasons for the decrease of 425 inspections and the impact on food safety surveillance.

Asked by : Hon. LEE Kok-long, Joseph

Reply :

- (a) The number of inspections has included the regular inspections to fresh provision shops, during which checking will be made to ensure compliance with the separation of the sale of chilled and fresh pork under the "one licence for one shop" requirement.
- (b) The number of inspections for 2007-08 at 235 000 is an estimated number based on the actual number of inspections in 2006 rounded off to the nearest thousand.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ **EDDY CHAN** _____

Post Title _____ **Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene** _____

Date _____ **15.3.2007** _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)155

Question Serial No.

1179

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Regarding Programme (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services, please advise on the following:

- (1) The reasons why the revised expenditure for 2006-07 is 7.9% lower than the original estimated expenditure for 2006-07;
- (2) The number of public cleansing services contracts that have been awarded each year from 2000 to 2007, highlighting the value, the number of staff employed, the wages and the total working hours of workers of these contracts;
- (3) Details of the changes in the actual expenditure on the outsourced public cleansing services in 2005-06 and 2006-07 as well as the reasons for the changes, and details of the estimated expenditure on public cleansing services to be outsourced in 2007-08; and
- (4) The changes, if any, in the terms of the new contracts to be outsourced in 2007-08 as compared with the previous contracts, for example, any downward or upward adjustment in the number of staff, wages and total working hours. What is the estimated expenditure saved or increased as a result of such changes?

Asked by : Hon. LEUNG Kwok-hung

Reply :

- (1) For 2006-07 the revised estimate under this programme is lower than the original estimate by 7.9%. This is mainly due to the lower than expected expenditure under personal emoluments arising from natural wastage of officers, general departmental expenses and capital account items.
- (2) The information of public cleansing services contracts awarded in 2000-2002 is kept in manual records and will take time to compile. For 2003-2007, the requested information is as follows –

<u>Year</u>	<u>No. of public cleansing contracts</u>	<u>Contract period</u>	<u>Total contract value</u> (as at 1 st December)	<u>Number of workers employed</u>	<u>Range of wages</u>	<u>Daily maximum working hours of workers</u>
2003-04	71	6 months to 5 years (majority are 2 years)	\$1,377 million	6 799	\$4,368 -\$8,028	Not more than 10 working hours daily
2004-05	68		\$1,149 million	5 680	\$4,381 -\$8,028	
2005-06	65		\$1,148 million	5 243	\$4,381 -\$8,028	
2006-07	55		\$1,172 million	4 737	\$4,442 -\$8,200	

- (3) The actual and estimated expenditure for 2005-06 and 2006-07 are \$492 million and \$495 million respectively. The difference is due to changes in service requirements and contract prices. Expenditure for 2007-08 will be subject to the tender results of contracts to be renewed and changes in service requirements.
- (4) The terms of the new contracts to be outsourced in 2007-08 will depend on the service requirements as compared with previous contracts. Wages of workers are subject to adjustments in the wages level of the relevant trade as published in the latest Census and Statistics Department's Quarterly Report of Wage and Payroll Statistics. We do not anticipate major change to the overall working hours. Information on estimated expenditure or savings for 2007-08 will only be available after completion of the tendering exercise.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 15.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)156

Question Serial No.

1160

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Many markets in Hong Kong, particularly those constructed in earlier years, have poor ventilation and temperature control. In summer, these markets are hot and stuffy, affecting the health of those who work long hours there, and the fresh meat sold in the markets is prone to deterioration that endangers public health.

It is noted that the Administration has started relevant improvement works. Please advise if such works was completed in all substandard markets. If not, has provision been reserved in 2007-08 for such works to be done in markets that required improvements? Please also advise on the details of the improvement works and names of the markets involved.

Asked by : Hon. HO Chung-tai, Raymond

Reply :

The Department is continuing general improvement works in public markets. The works include mainly upgrading of drainage, lighting, ventilation, signage and fire services provisions.

In 2007-08, the Department will continue to carry out general improvement works in 10 markets at an estimated total project cost of \$103 million. The markets involved are Sheung Wan Market, Tsuen Wan Market, Yeung Uk Road Market, North Kwai Chung Market, Wing Fong Street Market, Haiphong Road Temporary Market, Plover Cove Road Market, Hung Shui Kiu Temporary Market, Shau Kei Wan Market and Choi Hung Road Market. In addition, the Department is working on plans to carry out general improvement works in another 12 markets and 2 cooked food centres.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 15.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)157

Question Serial No.

1957

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Since the implementation of the risk-based categorization scheme for restaurants, inspections to food premises kept decreasing in 2006-07. In this connection, please advise on whether food hygiene education for food handler was stepped up correspondingly during inspections subsequent to the decrease in food premises inspections, the duration of each inspection, and the proportion of time spent on disseminating food safety knowledge to food handlers during each inspection.

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply :

Health education is disseminated to food handlers during the course of inspection to food premises. To enhance health education, inspecting officers have since January 2007 given a short briefing at the end of the inspection on an appropriate topic or to summarise the findings and important lessons to learn. The inspection time for restaurants ranges from 15 to 25 minutes on average but can be longer if considered necessary.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 15.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)158

Question Serial No.

1958

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Since the implementation of the risk-based categorization scheme for restaurants, inspections to food premises kept decreasing in 2006-07. In this connection, please advise on whether health inspectorate posts will be deleted subsequent to the decrease in food premises inspections, or will health inspectors charged with such duties be redeployed to other posts in 2007-08? If so, what are the respective numbers involved? How much savings will be achieved?

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply :

The frequency of inspection of low risk and medium risk food premises has been reduced, in order that more efforts and resources could be targetted at high risk food premises, including those food premises which have operated without a licence. There is therefore no plan to delete health inspector posts.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ **EDDY CHAN** _____

Post Title _____ **Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene** _____

Date _____ **15.3.2007** _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)159

Question Serial No.

2186

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) : 000 Operational Expenses

Programme :

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department has stated that the number of non-directorate posts would be increased by 74 to 11 112 posts as at 31 March 2008. Please inform this Committee of the nature of work, ranks and salaries of these posts.

Asked by : Hon. SHEK Lai-him, Abraham

Reply :

In 2007-08, there will be a net increase of 74 non-directorate posts in the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department. The posts to be created involve Chemist, Field Officer, Health Inspector, Pest Control Assistant, Pest Control Officer, Science Laboratory Technician, Scientific Officer (Medical) and Veterinary Officer as well as administrative support posts. Their nature of work includes food safety, pest control as well as environmental hygiene and related services. The annual salary for the creation of all posts is \$ 76.8 million.

Signature _____

Name in block letters EDDY CHAN

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 15.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)160

Question Serial No.

2200

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

In 2007-08, there will be a net creation of 125 posts. Please list their respective ranks, terms of appointment and main duties.

Asked by : Hon. LI Fung-ying

Reply :

The net 125 posts to be created in 2007-08 under this programme are civil service posts. Their grades and main duties are listed below –

<u>Grades</u>	<u>Main duties</u>
Chemist Field Officer Health Inspector Science Laboratory Technician Scientific Officer (Medical) Veterinary Officer	To perform food safety regulatory duties.
Pest Control Assistant Pest Control Officer	To perform pest control duties.
Administrative support staff	To provide administrative support.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ **EDDY CHAN** _____

Post Title _____ **Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene** _____

Date _____ **15.3.2007** _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)161

Question Serial No.

2201

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

There will be a net deletion of 51 posts in 2007-08. In this regard, please advise on:

1. The respective ranks, terms of employment and the main duties of the posts to be deleted;
2. Whether the work involved has been outsourced to private companies. If so, whether the staff laid off will have priority in employment by contractors;
3. The reasons for the deletion of the posts concerned even though the provision for 2007-08 has been increased by \$187.1 million (9.8%). How will the additional provision be used?

Asked by : Hon. LI Fung-ying

Reply :

1. The net 51 posts to be deleted in 2007-08 involves the Workman I and Workman II grades. They are civil service posts for providing environmental hygiene and related services.
2. No staff are laid off as all these are vacant posts.
3. The increase in 2007-08 estimated expenditure of \$187.1 million under Programme (2) is mainly to cater for the following –
 - (a) managing and operating new facilities, such as public toilets and refuse collection points; and providing cleansing services for new development areas;
 - (b) increased expenditure on managing cemeteries and crematoria, such as maintenance for new cremators;

- (c) enhancing hygiene in aqua privies; and
- (d) coping with increases in utility charges, contract expenses, maintenance and training requirements.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 15.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)162

Question Serial No.

2299

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

As the Administration will continue to enhance various efforts in safeguarding food safety following the establishment of the Centre for Food Safety in 2006, please advise on the establishment and the estimated expenditure of the Centre in 2007-08.

Asked by : Hon. LEONG Kah-kit, Alan

Reply :

A financial provision of \$255.9 million with 559 posts has been included in the 2007-08 Estimate for the Centre for Food Safety.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 15.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)163

Question Serial No.

2300

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) : 000 Operational Expenses

Programme : (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

The Administration will continue the market improvement works in 2007-08. Please advise on the details and the estimated expenditure involved.

Asked by : Hon. LEONG Kah-kit, Alan

Reply :

In 2007-08, the Department will continue the general improvement works in 10 markets, the estimated total cost of which amounts to \$103 million. In addition, the Department is working on plans to carry out general improvement works in another 12 markets and 2 cooked food centres. These market improvement works include mainly upgrading of drainage, lighting, ventilation, signage and fire services provisions.

Signature _____

Name in block letters EDDY CHAN

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 15.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)164

Question Serial No.

2301

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) : 000 Operational Expenses

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

In 2007-08, there will be a net creation of 125 posts. Please list the establishment of the posts to be created and deleted as well as the estimated emoluments involved.

Asked by : Hon. LEONG Kah-kit, Alan

Reply :

In 2007-08, there will be a net increase of 125 posts under this programme. This involves the creation of 127 posts and the deletion of 2 posts. The overall annual salary is \$37.2 million.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date _____ 15.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)165

Question Serial No.

2302

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) : 000 Operational Expenses

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

In 2007-08, there will be a net deletion of 51 posts. Please list the establishment of the posts to be created and deleted as well as the estimated emoluments involved.

Asked by : Hon. LEONG Kah-kit, Alan

Reply :

The net deletion of 51 posts in 2007-08 involves the creation of 157 posts and deletion of 208 posts. The overall annual salary for creating the 157 posts is \$39.6 million. The 208 posts to be deleted are vacant posts and the deletion does not involve any reduction in salary expenditure.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ **EDDY CHAN** _____

Post Title _____ **Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene** _____

Date _____ **15.3.2007** _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)166

Question Serial No.

2403

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Health, Welfare and Food Bureau (Food and Environmental Hygiene Branch)

Programme: (3) Environmental Hygiene

Subhead (No. & title):

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

Regarding the additional provision of \$7.6 million for Programme (3) in 2007-08, how much will be used to prepare the development of the Poultry Slaughtering and Processing Plant? Apart from this provision, will it be necessary to make further provision for the Poultry Slaughtering and Processing Plant in future? If so, please advise the projected amount and its uses. Furthermore, has any assessment been conducted to evaluate the economic benefits and employment opportunities to be generated by the development of the Poultry Slaughtering and Processing Plant for benefit of the Government and the community at large?

Asked by: Hon. FANG Kang, Vincent

Reply:

A consultant will be commissioned to prepare the tender documents for developing the Poultry Slaughtering and Processing Plant (the Plant). As we have yet to appoint the consultant, information on the relevant projected expenditure is not available. The Government's intention is to invite open tenders from the private sector for developing the Plant under a "Build, Own, Operate and Transfer" model. The Plant operator will be responsible for the construction cost of the Plant.

Like other modern poultry slaughtering and processing plants, employment within the plant is unlikely to be high since the objective is to reduce direct contact between human and live poultry. However, the stable, efficient and safe production and processing of poultry products will provide the same if not more employment opportunities for workers responsible for transportation, distribution and sale, etc. In overall terms, we expect the proposal to generate net economic benefits to the community by reducing the risk and associated economic losses of avian influenza outbreaks in Hong Kong.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Mrs. Carrie YAU
	Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene)
Post Title	_____
Date	13.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)167

Question Serial No.

2404

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Health, Welfare and Food Bureau (Food and Environmental Hygiene Branch)

Programme: (3) Environmental Hygiene

Subhead (No. & title):

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

What is the timetable for enacting the legislation to regulate the Poultry Slaughtering and Processing Plant?

Asked by: Hon. FANG Kang, Vincent

Reply:

The Government plans to introduce the legislation to regulate the Poultry Slaughtering and Processing Plant into LegCo within 2007.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs. Carrie YAU

Post Title _____ Permanent Secretary for Health,
Welfare and Food (Food and
Environmental Hygiene)

Date _____ 13.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)168

Question Serial No.

2405

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Health, Welfare and Food Bureau (Food and Environmental Hygiene Branch)

Programme: (3) Environmental Hygiene

Subhead (No. & title):

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

On considering ways to improve the occupancy and viability of public markets under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2007-08, please advise what approach would the Administration adopt in conducting the study and if any special provision would be required? The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department has made an addition allocation of \$21.2 million in the year to manage new public markets and implement market improvement programmes. Have the assessments for the markets under this programme been completed? Or are these markets excluded from the study?

Asked by: Hon. FANG Kang, Vincent

Reply:

We will provide steer to the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) on improving the occupancy and viability of public markets. The measures already adopted include improving the facilities of markets and launching promotional programme to attract more trades and patronage. In 2007-08, a financial provision of \$3 million has been earmarked under Head 49 FEHD for the proposed market promotion measures. An amount of \$103 million has also been earmarked under the Capital Works Reserve Fund for general improvement works in 10 markets in 2007-08. We have not conducted any assessment for the markets under this programme.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____

Mrs. Carrie YAU

Post Title _____

Permanent Secretary for Health,
Welfare and Food (Food and
Environmental Hygiene)

Date _____

14.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)169

Question Serial No.

1959

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department
Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

In connection with the ban on backyard poultry keeping mentioned under Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2007-08, please inform this Committee of the number of relevant exhibition licences issued and the number of inspections conducted since the commencement of the Public Health (Animals and Birds)(Exhibitions)(Amendment) Regulations 2006. Are there estimated figures for exhibition licences to be issued and inspections conducted in 2007? Is the expenditure less than expected?

Asked by: Hon. CHEUNG Yu-yan, Tommy

Reply:

Following the ban on keeping of backyard poultry in Feb 2006, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department has issued 60 exhibition licences and conducted around 200 inspections, involving an expenditure of \$0.17 million. Each exhibition licence is required to be renewed annually and the licensed premises inspected regularly. In 2007-08, with about 10 more new applications under processing, the estimated number of licences to be issued is at least 70 and the estimated number of inspection is expected to be 240 involving an estimated expenditure of about \$0.2 million.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ MRS STELLA HUNG

Post Title _____ Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date _____ 16 March 2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)170

Question Serial No.

2295

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

In 2007-08, the Government will provide technical advice on organic cultivation to farmers.

- (i) What are the amounts of expenditure involved for 2006-07 and 2007-08 respectively?
- (ii) What is the target number set by the government for farms converting to organic farms with the support provided by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department?

Asked by: Hon. EU Yuet-mee, Audrey

Reply:

- (i) The Government's spending on the promotion of organic farming in 2006-07 is \$11.8 million. Same financial resources have been earmarked for these tasks in 2007-08.
- (ii) The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department is presently providing technical support to some 80 local organic farms. The development of local organic farming is totally market driven and the Government does not set a target on the number of local organic farms.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ MRS STELLA HUNG

Post Title _____ Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date _____ 16 March 2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)171

Question Serial No.

2485

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (4) Public Education and Community Involvement

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

The estimated financial provision for 2007-08 is 8.2% less than the 2006-07 original. In this regard, please advise on the following:

1. The series of food incidents in 2006-07 have raised the concern of the public and the media over food safety. How will the Administration enhance public awareness of the importance of food safety and empower customers to make informed choices with the reduced provision?
2. Recently, there have been discussions about trans fat and calls for government regulation or self-regulation by the food trade over the use of trans fat, revealing the public's aspiration for informed choices. However, the Administration has not yet indicated its stance, not to mention educating the public on this issue and implementing regulatory measures to include trans fat in nutrition labels to facilitate the public to make informed choices. Has the Administration considered increasing the provision for 2007-08 in this regard?

Asked by : Hon. LEE Kok-long, Joseph

Reply :

1. The estimated financial provision for 2007-08 under Programme (4) remains at approximately the same level as the revised estimated expenditure for 2006-07. In addition to the promotional activities on environmental hygiene and general food safety for the public and schools provided under Programme (4), a financial provision of \$21.5 million has been included in the 2007-08 Estimate under Programme (1) to strengthen food safety promotion activities, representing an increase of 19.4%. A comprehensive publicity and education programme covering various aspects of food safety will be delivered in 2007-08 through workshops, seminars, website, Food Safety Day, press conferences, press releases, announcements in the public interest, telephone hotlines, media interviews, newsletters, leaflets, posters and audio-visual productions.

2. In response to public health concerns over trans fat, the Department will introduce a series of activities to raise awareness of the community on trans fat and health. These activities include education leaflets, newsletters, talks and a study to examine the levels of trans fat in various indigenous foods. The feasibility of including trans fat as one of the core nutrients in the proposed labelling scheme on nutrition information would also be explored. The resources required for the above activities in 2007-08 will be absorbed from within the allocated resources of the Department.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 15.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)172

Question Serial No.

2491

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

There is no expenditure for "population-based food consumption survey" under this subhead in 2006-07. Please advise on the progress of the survey and whether it can be completed in 2007-08 as scheduled.

Asked by : Hon. LEE Kok-long, Joseph

Reply :

A financial provision of \$4.2 million has been earmarked under Head 49 subhead 700 for the "population-based food consumption survey". The survey is expected to be completed in late 2007 and the results will be released in 2008.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 15.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)173

Question Serial No.

2530

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

There has been a continuous decline in the number of inspections to food premises in recent years. The 2005 figure was 10% less than the that of 2004 and the 2006 figure was 6% less than that of 2005. There will be a further drop of 2% in the 2007 estimated figure. What are the reasons?

Asked by : Hon. TAM Yiu-chung

Reply :

Under the Risk-based Inspection System, licensed food premises are classified into Type I (low risk), Type II (medium risk) and Type III (high risk) for the determination of inspection frequency by health inspectors. The frequency of inspection of low risk and medium risk food premises has been reduced, resulting in a lower number of inspections in total since 2005 in order to better target the Department's resources at high risk food premises, including those food premises which have operated without a licence. The number of inspections for 2007 at 235 000 is an estimated number based on the actual number of inspections in 2006 rounded off to the nearest thousand.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ **EDDY CHAN** _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 15.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)174

Question Serial No.

2531

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

What is FEHD's estimated expenditure on cleansing services for 2007? What is the proportion of the services to be contracted out? What is the number of staff employed by the cleansing contractors in 2005? How is it compared to that in 2006?

Asked by : Hon. TAM Yiu-chung

Reply :

In 2007-08, FEHD's estimated expenditure on public cleansing services under Programme (2) is \$1,597 million. The proportion of the services to be contracted out under Programme (2) is about 63%. The number of workers employed by the contractors on public cleansing services in 2005-06 was 5 243 as compared with 4 737 in 2006-07.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 15.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)175

Question Serial No.

2535

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Including the additional provision of \$21.2 million in 2007-08, what is the provision for the management of new public markets and the implementation of market improvement works for the year? How many new markets will come into operation and how many stalls will they provide? How many on-street hawkers will be resited in 2007-08 and will there be enough public market stalls to resite them?

Asked by : Hon. FANG Kang, Vincent

Reply :

Additional provision of \$12.5 million has been earmarked in 2007-08 under Programme 3 for the management of new public markets and implementation of market improvement works. Two new markets, namely the new Wan Chai Market and Aldrich Bay Market with a provision of about 200 stalls in total are scheduled for commissioning in 2007-08.

About 80 licensed fixed pitch hawkers are planned to be resited into the new Wan Chai Market. We are still considering the leasing and occupation arrangements for the Aldrich Bay Market and will consult the relevant District Council and other concerned parties when the proposals are ready.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 15.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)176

Question Serial No.

2536

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

How many public markets and stalls are there to date and how many of them have their management contracted out? Are there any comparisons between markets managed by the Department and those contracted out in terms of the stall let-out rate and customer flow? What is the number of markets planned for contracting out management in 2007-08 and how many stalls are involved? What is the current stall let-out rate of these markets? What is the estimated savings achieved by the contracting out? Is there a long-term policy for contracting out market management?

Asked by : Hon. FANG Kang, Vincent

Reply :

Currently, the Department operates a total of 104 public markets/cooked food centres (CFC) with 14 960 stalls. The management of 12 of these markets/CFC in three districts with a total of 2 625 stalls has been contracted out. The occupancy rate of public markets/CFC managed by the Department is 75.8% while that of the 12 markets/CFC with management contracted out is 78.8%. We do not have any statistics on the customer flow of the individual markets/CFC.

The Department plans to extend the contracting-out scheme to Southern and Tuen Mun districts in 2007-08, involving 13 public markets/CFC with 1 387 stalls. The current stall let-out rate of the markets/CFC in these two districts is 78.3%. We will award the service contracts by open tender. We expect manpower savings of around 43 staff. Information on actual expenditure and savings will only be available after completion of the tendering exercise. In the light of experience gained, the Department will consider whether the scheme should be further extended to public markets/CFC in other districts.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 15.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)177

Question Serial No.

2537

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Is there any plan to redesignate the use of public markets with low stall let-out rate?

Is there any plan to build new markets?

Asked by : Hon. FANG Kang, Vincent

Reply :

For market(s) with serious viability problem, the Administration will consider closing down part of or the entire market and use the space for other purposes. We will consult the relevant stakeholders including the affected stall tenants and District Councils before finalization.

Two new public markets, namely the new Wan Chai Market and Aldrich Bay Market, are scheduled for commissioning in 2007-08.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date _____ 15.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)178

Question Serial No.

2538

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Will there be any rental review for public markets in 2007-08?

Asked by : Hon. FANG Kang, Vincent

Reply :

The current market rental freeze will expire in mid-2008. The Administration plans to review the market rentals before the freeze expires and will consult the Panel when proposals are ready.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 15.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)179

Question Serial No.

2539

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Please account for the revenue and expenditure in respect of public market operation in 2006-07.

Asked by : Hon. FANG Kang, Vincent

Reply :

In 2006-07, the Department collected rental revenue of \$338.6 million from the tenants of public markets and incurred a cost of \$500.6 million in operating the markets. There is a deficit of \$162 million for market management in 2006-07.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 15.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)180

Question Serial No.

2540

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

In 2007, the estimated number of licensed hawkers, including fixed pitch hawkers and itinerant hawkers, is 7200, representing a decrease of 284 hawkers over the actual figure in 2006. What measures will be taken to reduce the number of licensed hawkers?

Asked by : Hon. FANG Kang, Vincent

Reply :

The number of licensed fixed-pitch hawkers and itinerant hawkers is estimated to continue to decrease as a result of voluntary non-renewal of the fixed-pitch hawker licence by the licensees themselves and voluntary surrender of itinerant hawker licence for ex-gratia payment.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 15.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)181

Question Serial No.

2566

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Regarding the key performance measures of “inspecting vehicles carrying poultry at Man Kam To” under Brief Description 4, the actual number of vehicles inspected reduced substantially by 1 391 to 4 688 in 2006 as compared with 2005. What are the reasons? Please explain why there is a further reduction of 388 vehicles in the estimated figure of 2007.

Asked by : Hon. FANG Kang, Vincent

Reply :

The estimated number of vehicles carrying poultry inspected at Man Kam To in 2007 is based on the current number of live poultry supplied from the Mainland, which is set at 20 000 live chickens per day. The number of imported live poultry has been decreasing since 2005 as a result of the Government's measures to minimize the occurrence of avian influenza in Hong Kong.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date _____ 15.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)182

Question Serial No.

2567

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Regarding "blood samples taken from poultry for testing of avian influenza H5 antibodies", the actual figure in 2006 reduced substantially by 25 961 as compared with 2005 and the estimated figure in 2007 is further reduced by 5 452. What are the reasons?

Asked by : Hon. FANG Kang, Vincent

Reply :

The number of blood samples estimated to be taken in 2007 is based on the current number of live poultry supplied from the Mainland, which is set at 20 000 live chickens per day. As one of the Government's measures to minimize the occurrence of avian influenza in Hong Kong, the number of imported live poultry has been decreased from 30 000 chickens or more per day for 2005, to 20 000 per day since April 2006.

Signature _____

Name in block letters EDDY CHAN

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 15.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)183

Question Serial No.

2568

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Including the additional provision of \$85.1 million under Programme (1) in 2007-08, what is the total estimate under this programme for the year? Please give a breakdown of the allocation of the additional provision as well as the ranks of the net 125 posts to be created in 2007-08.

Asked by : Hon. FANG Kang, Vincent

Reply :

The estimate under this programme for 2007-08 is \$705.4 million, representing an increase of \$85.1 million over the 2006-07 revised estimate. It is mainly to cater for the following –

- (a) creation of posts and departmental expenses in relation to enhancement of food safety regulatory functions and pest control services (\$67.2 million);
- (b) increased capital expenditure such as population-based food consumption survey, integrated mass spectrometer system (\$8.7 million); and
- (c) upgrading equipment for operation in slaughterhouse (\$9.2 million).

In 2007-08, there will be a net increase of 125 posts under this programme. The posts to be created relate to the grades of Chemist, Field Officer, Health Inspector, Pest Control Assistant, Pest Control Officer, Science Laboratory Technician, Scientific Officer (Medical), Veterinary Officer and other administrative support grades.

Signature	
Name in block letters	EDDY CHAN
Post Title	Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene
Date	15.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)184

Question Serial No.

2569

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

The Chief Executive indicated earlier that a licensing scheme for imported foods would be implemented in full scale. Please advise on whether manpower and resources are earmarked in 2007-08 for implementation of the scheme. Apart from taking steps to introduce legislative amendments to regulate the import of poultry eggs, will the Administration introduce more legislations to regulate imported foods in 2007-08?

Asked by : Hon. FANG Kang, Vincent

Reply :

In 2007-08, the Administration aims to enact legislation to regulate the import of poultry eggs. At the same time, the Administration is drawing up a Food Safety Bill to extend regulatory control to all imported food items by phases. The Food Safety Bill will also provide statutory power to the Administration in respect of the mandatory registration scheme for food importers and prohibition of sale of problem food. The resources required for the implementation of the food importer registration scheme and other legislative proposals will be considered at a later stage.

Signature _____

Name in block letters EDDY CHAN

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 15.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)185

Question Serial No.

2634

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

With regard to the target of 76% for “stalls let”, please list out the markets where the stall let-out rate fell below target in 2006-07, their respective areas and let-out percentages.

Asked by : Hon. WONG Yung-kan

Reply :

The list of markets/cooked food centres where the occupancy rates fell below the target of 76% in 2006-07, their respective areas and let-out percentages is provided at Annex.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 15.3.2007 _____

**FEHD Markets/Cooked Food Centres with Occupancy Rate less than 76%
(as at 28.2.2007)**

Serial No.	Name	Total Market Stall Area (sq. m.)	Stall Occupancy Rate %
1.	Java Road Market	982	73
2.	Electric Road Market	553	71
3.	Sai Wan Ho Market	1 447	75
4.	Quarry Bay Market	639	66
5.	Shau Kei Wan Market	565	64
6.	Tang Lung Chau Market	562	30*
7.	Wan Chai Market	757	60*
8.	Bridges Street Market	470	37*
9.	Centre Street Market	201	40*
10.	Shek Tong Tsui Market	842	62
11.	Queen Street Cooked Food Market	197	62
12.	Nam Long Shan Road Cooked Food Market	408	64
13.	Stanley Waterfront Mart	191	65
14.	Peng Chau Market	339	39
15.	Yee On Street Market	325	71
16.	On Ching Road Flower Market	39	62
17.	Ngau Chi Wan Market	2 634	75
18.	Sheung Fung Street Market	484	69
19.	Mong Kok Market	1 017	38*
20.	Tai Kok Tsui Market	1 429	67
21.	Po On Road Market	3 308	72*
22.	Tung Chau Street Temporary Market	1 600	53*
23.	Cheung Sha Wan Cooked Food Market	420	43*
24.	Haiphong Road Temporary Market	743	50*
25.	Kwun Chung Market	1 401	67
26.	Yau Ma Tei Market	1 509	67
27.	Wing Fong Street Market	619	74
28.	Ka Ting Cooked Food	255	71

	Market		
29.	Tai Yuen Street Cooked Food Market	276	35
30.	Sham Tseng Temporary Market	288	61
31.	Tsuen King Circuit Market	1 167	47
32.	Lam Tei Market	176	44*
33.	Hung Cheung Cooked Food Market	165	73
34.	Kin Wing Cooked Food Market	300	50
35.	Kwong Choi Market	480	30*
36.	San Hui Market	1 690	68
37.	Tsing Yeung Cooked Food Market	246	72
38.	Tai Kiu Market	1 967	69
39.	Hung Shui Kiu Temporary Market	1 329	57*
40.	Tung Yick Market	2 544	49*
41.	Plover Cove Road Market	1 289	50*
42.	Fo Tan Cooked Food Market (West)	225	27

* Vacant stalls in these markets have been frozen due to impending market consolidation/improvement, re-development, etc.

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)186

Question Serial No.

2635

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Is there any assessment of any tendency of reducing occupancy rate of market stalls? Any measures to enhance the competitiveness of public market and how much expenditure will be involved?

Asked by : Hon. WONG Yung-kan

Reply :

We expect that changes in shopping habits of the community and increasing competition from private retail outlets will continue to adversely affect the occupancy rate of public markets.

To enhance the competitiveness of public markets, the Department has been carrying out general improvement works (including upgrading of drainage, lighting, ventilation, signage and fire services provision) in the markets. In 2007-08, improvement works will be carried out in 10 markets at a cost of about \$103 million. To improve the shopping environment and atmosphere in public markets, the Department will continue to implement the following measures:

- (a) maintaining a high standard of cleanliness in markets and the enforcement of the monthly market cleansing day;
- (b) maintaining flexibility in determining and changing the trade of individual stalls, and where feasible, the stall size;
- (c) merging of selected vacant small stalls to form larger stalls and lowering, in selected markets, the upset auction prices of long-standing vacant stalls to attract potential bidders; and

(d) conducting promotional activities (such as lucky draws, talks and exhibitions) and distributing regular market newsletters to attract customers.

The resources required for the above measures will be absorbed within the Department's allocation.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 15.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)187

Question Serial No.

2636

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Please use a table to illustrate the number of live poultry stalls in various public markets currently and before the voluntary surrender scheme? How will FEHD deal with the vacant stalls due to surrender of tenancy agreement?

Asked by : Hon. WONG Yung-kan

Reply :

The total number of occupied live poultry stalls in the public markets before the commencement of the voluntary surrender scheme in July 2004 is 449. The number of occupied live poultry market stalls as at end-February 2007 is 263. Please refer to Annex for details.

The Department will review the position in individual markets and consider the most beneficial use of these vacant stalls. The decision for each market may vary, having regard to the types of business being conducted and the internal environment in the market.

Signature _____

Name in block letters EDDY CHAN

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 15.3.2007

Name of market	Number of Occupied Live Poultry Stalls	
	as at 30.6.2004	as at 28.2.2007
<u>Eastern</u>		
Yue Wan	4	2
Chai Wan	5	3
Java Road	5	3
Causeway Bay	2	2
Electric Road	3	1
Sai Wan Ho	4	3
Quarry Bay	5	3
Shaukeiwan	5	3
North Point	2	1
Sub-total	35	21
<u>Wan Chai</u>		
Bowrington Road	8	2
Tang Lung Chau	5	2
Wong Nai Chung	2	1
Lockhart Road	10	8
Wan Chai	8	1
Sub-total	33	14
<u>Central</u>		
Bridges Street	9	5
Sub-total	9	5
<u>Western</u>		
Sheung Wan	18	16
Sai Ying Pun	8	5
Smithfield	10	7
Shek Tong Tsui	3	2
Sub-total	39	30
<u>Southern</u>		
Aberdeen	7	4
Tin Wan	5	1
Yue Kwong Road	5	3
Apleichau	4	3
Sub-total	21	11
<u>Islands</u>		
Peng Chau	1	0
Mui Wo	2	1
Cheung Chau	3	1
Sub-total	6	2

<u>Kwun Tong</u>		
Ngau Tau Kok	9	8
Shui Wo Street	3	2
Yee On Street	2	0
Lei Yue Mun	2	0
Sub-total	16	10
<u>Kowloon City</u>		
To Kwa Wan	8	6
Kowloon City	9	7
Hung Hom	8	5
Sub-total	25	18
<u>Wong Tai Sin</u>		
Ngau Chi Wan	8	6
Choi Hung Road	4	3
Tai Shing Street	19	10
Sheung Fung Street	5	3
Sub-total	36	22
<u>Mong Kok</u>		
Fa Yuen street	4	1
Mong Kok	8	3
Tai Kok Tsui Temporary (decommissioned in December 2005)	3	N.A.
Boundary Street (decommissioned in December 2005)	2	N.A.
Tai Kok Tsui (commissioned in December 2005)	N.A.	2
Sub-total	17	6
<u>Sham Shui Po</u>		
Po On Road	12	9
Pei Ho Street	16	8
Tung Chau Street Temporary	16	10
Lai Wan	3	3
Sub-total	47	30
<u>Yau Tsim</u>		
Haiphong Road Temporary	3	3
Kwun Chung	4	2
Yau Ma Tei	19	12
Sub-total	26	17
<u>Kwai Tsing</u>		
Wing Fong Street	5	4
North Kwai Chung	2	1
Tsing Yi	2	2
Sub-total	9	7

<u>Tsuen Wan</u>		
Yeung Uk Road	24	14
Heung Che Street	4	2
Tsuen Wan	14	7
Sham Tseng Temporary	1	0
Tsuen King Circuit	6	0
Sub-total	49	23
<u>Tuen Mun</u>		
Kwong Choi	3	1
San Hui	11	4
Yan Oi	4	4
Sub-total	18	9
<u>Yuen Long</u>		
Tai Kiu	6	6
Hung Shui Kiu Temporary	3	0
Tung Yick	6	4
Sub-total	15	10
<u>North</u>		
Sha Tau Kok	1	0
Shek Wu Hui	8	7
Kwu Tung Market Shopping Centre	1	1
Luen Wo Hui	7	3
Sub-total	17	11
<u>Tai Po</u>		
Tai Po Temporary (decommissioned in September 2004)	17	N.A.
Tai Po Hui (commissioned in September 2004))	N.A.	7
Plover Cove Road	2	2
Sub-total	19	9
<u>Sai Kung</u>		
Sai Kung	3	2
Tui Min Hoi	1	1
Sub-total	4	3
<u>Sha Tin</u>		
Sha Tin	4	3
Tai Wai	4	2
Sub-total	8	5
Total	449	263

Remark:

N.A.= Not applicable

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)188

Question Serial No.

2637

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (3) Market Management and Hawker Control

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

What was the expenditure on subsidizing public market management for the past three years (i.e. 2004-05, 2005-06 and 2006-07)?

Asked by : Hon. WONG Yung-kan

Reply :

The Department provided a subsidy of \$193 million, \$145 million and \$162 million on the management of public markets in 2004-05, 2005-06 and 2006-07 respectively.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 15.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)189

Question Serial No.

2638

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Regarding the target for “inspecting vehicles carrying vegetables at Man Kam To Food Control Office”, please advise on whether additional resources and manpower will be deployed to various control points for inspection of imported vegetables to combat smuggling of vegetables from the Mainland. If so, what are the manpower and resources involved?

Asked by : Hon. LEE Kok-long, Joseph

Reply :

Financial provision has been included in the 2007-08 Estimate for the creation of 28 additional Health Inspector grade posts to reinforce staff deployment at frontier control points with a view to enhancing imported food inspection services, including checking importation of vegetables not coming from registered farms in the Mainland. The amount of financial provision allocated for inspection of imported vegetables to combat smuggling of vegetables from the Mainland is not separately identifiable.

Signature _____

Name in block letters EDDY CHAN

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 15.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)190

Question Serial No.

2642

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Despite the establishment of the Centre for Food Safety in 2006-07 and the 13.7% increase in the provision for food safety and public health for 2007-08 over 2006-07, the target for “food surveillance through testing of food samples” is not enhanced with the planned figure similar to the 2006 actual figure. What are the reasons?

Asked by : Hon. TAM Yiu-chung

Reply :

The original estimated number of food samples to be taken for testing under the routine food surveillance programme in 2006 was 63 000. In response to the occurrence of various food related incidents in 2006, about 2 000 additional samples were taken for testing during the year. The 2007-08 Estimate, which is based on the actual number of samples taken in 2006, has already provided for an increase of 2 000 additional food samples under the regular food surveillance programme, as compared with that as shown in the 2006-07 Estimate (i.e. 63 000 samples). Furthermore, additional samples will also be taken during the year in response to food complaints and food incidents.

The increase in financial provision for food safety in the 2007-08 Estimate is for enhancing import control, strengthening veterinary input in local slaughterhouses as well as enhancing risk communication capabilities.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ **EDDY CHAN** _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 15.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)191

Question Serial No.

2643

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

What is the estimated expenditure for taking food samples for testing in 2007-08? How is it compared to the revised estimate in 2006-07?

Asked by : Hon. TAM Yiu-chung

Reply :

Financial provisions for food surveillance and related work in 2006-07 and 2007-08 are \$29 million and \$37 million respectively. Separate breakdown of expenditure for taking food samples for analysis is not readily available.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ EDDY CHAN _____

Post Title _____ Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ 15.3.2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)192

Question Serial No.

2644

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

What are the specific plans for prevention of avian influenza in 2007-08? What is the expenditure involved in taking blood samples from poultry?

Asked by : Hon. TAM Yiu-chung

Reply :

The control measures taken to prevent the introduction of avian influenza into Hong Kong include poultry farm inspections and liaison with the Mainland authorities to ensure that requirements on animal health, quarantine and farm conditions are complied with; inspection of every consignment of imported poultry including verifying Animal Health Certificates, and collecting blood samples and cloacal swabs for laboratory testing of avian influenza H5.

A financial provision of \$6.8 million has been included in the 2007-08 Estimate for inspection and blood sampling at the border control point.

Signature _____

Name in block letters EDDY CHAN

Post Title Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene

Date 15.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)193

Question Serial No.

2645

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (1) Food Safety and Public Health

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

Regarding the number of vehicles carrying poultry inspected at Man Kam To, the 2005 actual figure was 30% less than the figure for 2004. There is a further 23% reduction in the 2006 actual figure and another 8.2% reduction in the 2007 estimated figure. What are the reasons? What are the plans in 2007-08 to ensure poultry imported to Hong Kong are safe for consumption?

Asked by : Hon. TAM Yiu-chung

Reply :

The estimated number of vehicles carrying poultry inspected at Man Kam To in 2007 is based on the current number of live poultry supplied from the Mainland which is set at 20 000 live chickens per day. The decreasing number of imported live poultry is a result of the Government's measures to minimize the occurrence of avian influenza in Hong Kong.

Measures to ensure safety of imported live poultry include poultry farm inspections and liaison with the Mainland authorities to ensure that requirements on animal health, quarantine and farm conditions are complied with, import inspection on every consignment of live poultry including verifying Animal Health Certificates, and collecting blood samples and cloacal swabs for laboratory testing of avian influenza H5.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ **EDDY CHAN** _____

Post Title _____ **Director of**
Food and Environmental Hygiene _____

Date _____ **15.3.2007** _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)194

Question Serial No.

2646

Head : 49 Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question :

The Administration will continue to convert designated aqua privies into flushing toilets by phases in 2007-08. Please advise on the details, projected timetable, manpower, expenditure and anticipated progress of the conversion works.

Asked by : Hon. LEONG Kah-kit, Alan

Reply :

The approved conversion project covers the upgrading of 100 aqua privies in the New Territories and outlying islands into flushing toilets. It has been implemented by phases starting from early 2005, at a total estimated cost of \$92.8 million. The last batch of 37 aqua privies will be converted by end 2007. The manpower for planning and implementation of the conversion works is met by existing resources and is not separately identifiable.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ **EDDY CHAN** _____

Post Title _____ **Director of
Food and Environmental Hygiene** _____

Date _____ **15.3.2007** _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)195

Question Serial No.

2486

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Subhead (No. & title):
Department

Programme: (3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

The Administration will implement new legislative provision to ban backyard poultry keeping in 2007-08. Will additional provision and manpower be deployed in combating the smuggling of poultry and birds across the border? What are the estimated expenditure and manpower involved in 2007-08 as compared with 2006-07?

Asked by: Hon. LEE Kok-long, Joseph

Reply:

An additional provision of \$2.6 million has been allocated for 3 new posts and quarantine detector dogs to combat smuggling of birds.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ MRS STELLA HUNG

Post Title _____ Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date _____ 16 March 2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)198

Question Serial No.

2572

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Subhead (No. & title):
Department

Programme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

The estimate for Programme (1) will increase by \$120.2 million in 2007-08. It appears that a substantial part of the increase will be used in helping the development of the local fish farming industry. Please specify the areas in which the provision will be used and explain why such huge support is offered to the fish farming industry. Apart from the fish farming industry, are there plans to help other agricultural sectors such as poultry keeping?

Asked by: Hon. FANG Kang, Vincent

Reply:

Of the additional provision of \$120.2 million earmarked in 2007-08, about \$9.6 million would be allocated for setting up a voluntary registration scheme for local pond fish farms and carrying out a baseline survey on local fish farms to gather information on the environmental conditions and management practices of the farms as well as the food safety conditions of cultured fish. This new initiative is mainly aimed to facilitate the planning and implementation of suitable measures for the food safety control of locally cultured fish in future. The other increase in the provision is mainly due to the higher cashflow requirement for the ex-gratia payment to live poultry operators and one-off grants to affected workers under the Voluntary Surrender Scheme for the live poultry industry.

Apart from fisheries, the Government also promotes the sustainable development of agriculture through the provision of infrastructural support, technical assistance and advice, credit facilities and vocational training to local farmers. In 2007-08, we will assist farmers to capture high-value market niches by promoting the development of organic farming and intensive greenhouse production, implementing the Accredited Farm Scheme, as well as developing brand names and marketing network for local agricultural products emphasizing on good quality.

The department will also assist livestock farmers who have joined the voluntary surrender scheme to switch to other farming operations. Assistance provided includes the provision of training and demonstration on mushroom production, intensive greenhouse production and indoor fish fry rearing. We have also established a one-stop service assisting livestock farmers seeking the necessary approvals for converting their livestock sheds for these purposes.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ MRS STELLA HUNG

Post Title _____ Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date _____ 16 March 2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)199

Question Serial No.

2573

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Subhead (No. & title):
Department

Programme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

Under Analysis of Financial Provision, it is mentioned that there will be increase in non-recurrent expenditure for the financial support schemes for live poultry farmers, wholesalers and related transporters. Does the Administration expect increase in licence surrender this year? In the year ending 31 March 2007, how many farmers and traders have surrendered their licences and what is the amount of expenditure involved?

Asked by: Hon. FANG Kang, Vincent

Reply:

In 2006-07, 57 poultry farmers (including 33 chicken, 23 pigeon and 1 duck farmers) have surrendered their livestock keeping licences, and 4 poultry wholesalers have surrendered their market stall tenancies, involving a total ex-gratia payment of \$75.8 million. We expect 56 more poultry farmers (including 52 chicken and 4 pigeon farmers) will surrender their livestock keeping licences in 2007-08.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ MRS STELLA HUNG _____

Post Title _____ Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation _____

Date _____ 16 March 2007 _____

New posts for 2007/08: 55 posts

Rank of Post	No. of Post	Main Duties/Justifications/Work Arrangements
I. Animal Management and Welfare		
Veterinary Officer Senior Field Officer	2 2 [Personnel Emolument (PE) expenditure: \$2.2M]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To step up veterinary inspection and law enforcement actions such as surprise checks and decoy operations against animal cruelty and illegal animal breeding, boarding, trading and exhibition under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Ordinance, Cap. 169 which was amended in 2006. To organize educational, publicity and promotional campaigns on animal welfare and to deal with complaints against animal cruelty. To strengthen veterinary care/treatment of abandoned/to be rehomed animals. To step up anti-rabies vaccination in dogs and responsible pet ownership in villages.
II. Veterinary Laboratory		
Veterinary Technologist Veterinary Laboratory Technician I Veterinary Laboratory Technician II	1 1 4 [PE expenditure: \$1.5M]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To cope with increased demand for testing of dead birds for the avian influenza. To expand the range of tests for diseases of birds and mammals, e.g. West Nile Fever, Japanese Encephalitis, Equine Herpesvirus.
III. Import Control and Inspection		
Senior Veterinary Officer Veterinary Officer Senior Field Officer Field Officer I Field Officer II	1 1 1 13 16 [PE expenditure: \$9.3M]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide professional input for on-site inspection, risk assessment, and trade certification services on animals at control points (2 shifts) in order to meet requirements arising from the tightening up of export of live animals in overseas countries. To step up inspection and enforcement actions to detect non-compliance of import requirements and illegal import activities. To strengthen the manpower of each work shift to provide year round services to cope with operation needs arising from the opening of new border control points as well as rapidly increased passenger and cargo flows at existing border control points, including land borders, airport and seaports:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Airport (3 shifts, round the clock service); staff are required for inspection work of 2 cargo terminals and 1 passenger terminal - Man Kam To Border (2 shifts); staff are required for inspection work of 5 control points, including Man Kam To, Lo Wu, Lok Ma Chau, Sha Tau Kok and the new Lok Ma Chau Spur Line scheduled for opening in 2007 - The new Shenzhen Western Corridor scheduled for opening in 2007 (3 shifts, round the clock service)
IV. Avian Influenza Surveillance Programme		
Senior Executive Officer Senior Field Officer Field Officer I Field Officer II	1 2 7 3 [PE expenditure: \$4.7M]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To implement the following measures in relation to the avian influenza surveillance programme:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - contract administration of the service of collecting dead wild birds for testing; - enforcement of the ban on keeping of backyard poultry; - issue of exhibition licences and exemption permits for keeping racing pigeon and pet poultry; - setting up a detector dog team to combat animal

		<p>smuggling at border control points.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Senior Executive Officer unit head is required for organizing and supervising the work of the programme, as well as co-ordinating the manpower and resource deployment within the department to tackle emergency situations under avian influenza threats.
Total	55 [PE expenditure: \$17.7M]	

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)201

Question Serial No.

2580

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Subhead (No. & title):
Department

Programme: (3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

The number of staff as at 31 March 2008 for “Programme (3) Animal, Plant and Fisheries Regulation and Technical Services” is 475 while those for “Programme (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets” and “Programme (2) Nature Conservation and Country Parks” are 310 and 1 109 respectively. However, Programme (3) accounts for 46% in the allocation of provision for 2007-08. Please explain the reasons for this.

Asked by: Hon. WONG Ting-kwong

Reply:

The 2007-08 Estimate for Programme (3) is \$662.3 million which accounts for 46% of the total provision of \$1,439.4 million. Among the \$662.3 million, about \$446.8 million is provided for the estimated cash payment in the year for ex-gratia payment to pig farm licencees and one-off grant to pig farm and live pig transport workers under the Voluntary Surrender Scheme of livestock keeping licences for the live pig industry. These non-recurrent payments do not have any relation to the number of staff.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ MRS STELLA HUNG

Post Title _____ Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date _____ 16 March 2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)202

Question Serial No.

2581

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

How many farms are currently participating in organic cultivation and greenhouse production? Among the accredited farms, how many are participating in organic cultivation? Will the technical input offered by the Government also help reduce the cultivation expenditure, which in turn leads to lower product price to the benefit of the general public?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Ting-kwong

Reply:

At present, there are 80 organic farms, of which four also practise greenhouse production, and 13 are accredited farms. There are eight other greenhouse farms producing cut flowers. The technical support provided by Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department can help farmers acquire the necessary knowledge and skills, and employ improved farm inputs for production. This in turn can bring about increased productivity, improved produce quality and effective control on production cost. Consumers at large are benefited with increased choices and better value for money.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ MRS STELLA HUNG

Post Title _____ Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Date _____ 16 March 2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)203

Question Serial No.

2582

Head: 22 Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Subhead (No. & title):
Department
Programme: (1) Agriculture, Fisheries and Fresh Food Wholesale Markets

Controlling Officer: Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

The target for mariculture farms adopting environmentally-friendly practices is 14.2 hectares (total area) in 2007-08, which is exactly the same as that in 2005 and 2006. What is the reason for no upward adjustment for the figure? Does the Administration have any plans to offer measures to mariculturists so as to encourage them to build more environmentally-friendly fish culture farms?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Ting-kwong

Reply:

The low profit margin of mariculture operations due to increase in operating costs in recent years has rendered local mariculturists less willing to adopt environmentally-friendly culture practices. As a result, the small increase in the number of farms switching to environmentally-friendly practices has been offset by the number of farms dropping out. The target remains unchanged. In 2007-08, this department will continue to promote environmentally-friendly culture practices including the use of dry pellet feeds and proper waste and refuse disposal measures to reduce water pollution in fish culture zones. We provide technical advice and assistance in the selection and purchase of suitable feeds, and organize educational and publicity activities for fish farmers. We will also continue to implement the Accredited Fish Farm Scheme to help fish farmers raise production and quality control standards through the adoption of proper farm management and good aquaculture practices.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ MRS STELLA HUNG _____

Post Title _____ Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation _____

Date _____ 16 March 2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)204

Question Serial No.

2493

Head: 48 Government Laboratory
Programme: (1) Statutory Testing

Subhead (No. & title):

Controlling Officer: Government Chemist

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

Regarding "food samples for regulatory compliance purposes", 112 421 tests were performed in 2006 and the estimate for 2007 is 130 000. The Laboratory also plans to establish a Food Safety Testing Laboratory for enhancement of food safety testing in Hong Kong:

1. What are the types and quantities of food to be added for testing?
2. Will the Government step up sample laboratory tests on vegetables and fruits imported from the Mainland? If so, what are the details of the tests as well as the sampling spots and levels (retailers, wholesalers and importers)?
3. Can the Government Laboratory make use of the additional provision to enhance its rapid test services to initially identify as early as possible any major food problem, so that the Administration can trace the source as soon as possible and provide to members of the public first hand and correct information on food safety? If so, please give the details. If not, how will the Administration guarantee that it can meet the aspiration of the community be resolving a food safety crisis more swiftly?
4. What are the estimated expenditure and establishment for setting up a food safety and quarantine office, the expected implementation date and timetable for public consultation?

Asked by: Hon. LEE Kok-long, Joseph

Reply:

1. The Food Safety Testing Laboratory (FSTL) will perform a wide range of chemical analysis of food products ranging from major components to additives, contaminants, agricultural and veterinary residues, and genetically modified ingredients for surveillance and verification of compliance with the statutory standards. It also provides analytical services related to food complaint cases. The estimated number of tests performed in 2007 is 142 000, including the testing of samples for regulatory compliance and food complaint.
2. Tests for fruits and vegetables have already been included in the surveillance programme of the Centre for Food Safety. Samples will be taken at the import, wholesale and retail levels for testing of pesticides residues and heavy metals under a risk based approach.
3. With the additional resources, GL will help to manage food safety problem by providing development and testing services to widen the scope of food monitoring as well as urgent testing services for topical food safety issues. New and fast testing methods will be developed to speed up the time for analysis whenever feasible. GL will also acquire additional instruments to strengthen the analytical capability for testing of food samples.
4. There is no plan to set up a food safety and quarantine office. The staffing establishment of the Laboratory consists of 23 professional and 60 technical staff. The estimated recurrent provision required in 2007-08 for food safety is \$49.9 million.

Signature _____

Name in block letters Dr T L TING

Post Title Government Chemist

Date 16.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)205

Question Serial No.

2483

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Health, Subhead (No. & title):
Welfare and Food Bureau (Food and
Environmental Hygiene Branch)

Programme: (2) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

Provision of 2007-08 has increased by nearly \$50 million when compared with the revised estimates for 2006-07. The targets to be achieved includes promoting sustainable development of local agriculture by promoting organic farming. Please provide and explain the following:

1. a comparison of the allocation for promoting organic farming, details of the plans and staff establishment for 2006-07 and 2007-08;
2. the efficacy of the plans in 2006-07 and the projected targets for 2007-08;
3. the number of existing farms engaged in organic farming and the projected increment in acreage and number of farms dedicated to organic farming;
4. projected increment in market share of organic farm products in 2007-08;
5. whether additional resources will be made available to increase technical support to the sector. If yes, please provide details and the expenditure involved; and
6. whether additional resources will be provided to assist more District Councils to collaborate with the agricultural sector to organize farmers' market or urban farms.

Asked by: Hon. LEE Kok-long, Joseph

Reply:

1. The Government promotes the sustainable development of agriculture through the provision of infrastructural support, technical assistance and advice, credit facilities and technical training to local farmers and most of these support are provided by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD). AFCD has allocated a total of \$11.8 million (under Head 22) to provide for 27 staff and other operational expenses for promoting organic farming in 2006-07. The same manpower and financial resources are earmarked in 2007-08 to continue the promotion of local organic produce emphasizing qualities, safety and environmental protection. New or improved vegetable varieties will be introduced to stimulate market demand and capture high end markets for better economic returns. In addition, AFCD will organize promotional activities and exhibitions to promote local organic produce.
- 2-4. During the year, there has been marked improvement in the quantity, variety and quality of local organic vegetables. The number of local organic farms also increased from 53 in 2006 to 80 in 2007, producing some 3-4 tonnes of organic vegetables a day. The technical support provided by AFCD helped farmers acquire the necessary knowledge and skills, and employ improved farm inputs for production. This in turn can bring about increased productivity, improved produce quality and effective control on production cost. Consumers at large are benefited with increased choices and better value for money. The development of local organic farming is totally market driven and the Government does not project the increase in the market share of organic farm products in 2007-08.
- 5-6. AFCD will continue to deploy the current level of resources to provide technical support to local farmers. In

addition, the department will assist farmers to market their produce to high end markets through the sales network of the Vegetable Marketing Organization, encourage direct sale through agro-tourism and weekend farmer markets, and organize regular promotional activities and exhibition to promote local produce to consumers.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Carrie YAU

Post Title _____
Permanent Secretary
for Health, Welfare and Food
(Food and Environmental Hygiene)

Date _____ 15.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)206

Question Serial No.

2484

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Health, Subhead (No. & title):
Welfare and Food Bureau (Food and
Environmental Hygiene Branch)

Programme: (2) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

On introduction of a nutrition labelling scheme for prepackaged food, the authorities concerned has said that an amended legislation would be tabled in 2006-07 but, to date, there has not been any progress. Please advise:

1. the current progress of the plan, the completion date for the amendments as well as details of the work, expenditure and staff involved in 2006-07?
2. Many international food chains have given up using trans fat in food preparation. There is also documentary evidence that indicates that transfat increases the risks of developing chronic diseases in humans. Some organizations have demanded strengthening public education and incorporation of transfat acids in Phase I of the labeling scheme. Please advise whether the work for 2007-08 includes studying the above proposals and actively promoting public discussion on the subject? If yes, please provide specific details of the plan, resources required and manpower involved? If not, please state the reasons.

Asked by: Hon. LEE Kok-long, Joseph

Reply:

1. We are now working out our proposal having regard to the latest developments of nutrition labelling schemes in different jurisdictions, including the Mainland. We are consulting the relevant stakeholders on the proposal to ensure that the labelling requirements would be able to balance the requests from different parties. We intend to submit the draft legislation within the legislative session in 2007-08. In 2006-07, the work concerned was undertaken by the existing staff at the Health, Welfare and Food Bureau and the Centre for Food Safety but the time devoted to related activities on nutrition labelling cannot be separately quantified.
2. In response to public health concerns over trans fat, the Administration will introduce a series of activities to raise the awareness of the community on the health effects of consuming trans fat. These activities include the dissemination of education leaflets, newsletters, organizing talks, as well as a study to examine the levels of trans fat in various indigenous foods. The feasibility of including trans fat as one of the core nutrients in the proposed labelling scheme on nutrition information will also be explored. The resources required to introduce the above activities in 2007-08 will continue to be absorbed by the Health, Welfare and Food Bureau and the Centre for Food Safety but the resources devoted to such activities cannot be separately quantified.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Mrs Carrie YAU
	Permanent Secretary
	for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and
	Environmental Hygiene)
Post Title	_____
Date	15.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)207

Question Serial No.

2517

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Health, Subhead (No. & title):
Welfare and Food Bureau (Food and
Environmental Hygiene Branch)

Programme: (2) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

1. On "introduce[tion] of a nutrition labelling scheme for prepackaged food" under Matters Requiring Special Attention, please inform the Committee: the latest progress on implementing the said scheme; and whether the schedule for mandatory implementation of the scheme will be advanced in view of the growing public concern for healthy diet?

Asked by: Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply:

1. We are now working out our proposal having regard to the latest developments of nutrition labelling schemes for prepackaged food in different jurisdictions, including the Mainland. We intend to submit the draft legislation within the legislative session in 2007/08. We will further consult relevant stakeholders on the nutrition labelling proposal to ensure that the labelling requirements would be able to balance the requests from different parties. We will advise the public to maintain a balanced diet in order to stay healthy through various promotional programmes since nutrition labelling only covers pre-packaged food and is one of the many factors under the 'holistic' healthy eating programme.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Carrie YAU

Post Title _____
Permanent Secretary
for Health, Welfare and Food
(Food and Environmental Hygiene)

Date _____ 15.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)208

Question Serial No.

2518

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Health, Subhead (No. & title):
Welfare and Food Bureau (Food and
Environmental Hygiene Branch)

Programme: (2) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

Please explain why the revised estimates for this programme in 2006-07 has increased by 15% over the original estimates.

Asked by: Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply:

The increase mainly provides for expenses incurred in work related to the application of technology to enhance food traceability, promotion of prevention of cruelty to animals, consultancy work on quarantine issues, and organization of a major conference planned for June 2007 on port health, animal and plant quarantine and food safety participated by the relevant authorities from Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao. The increased provision also covers the salary expenditure of a newly created post in the Bureau.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Carrie YAU

Post Title _____
Permanent Secretary
for Health, Welfare and Food (Food
and Environmental Hygiene)

Date _____ 14.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)209

Question Serial No.

2520

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Health, Subhead (No. & title):
Welfare and Food Bureau (Food and
Environmental Hygiene Branch)

Programme: (2) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

On review of long term goals and direction for the sustainable development of the Hong Kong fishing industry under Matters Requiring Special Attention, please advise on the latest progress of the review and the approach being considered by the Government to facilitate sustainable development of the fishing industry.

Asked by: Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply:

We have established in December 2006 a Committee on Sustainable Fisheries (the Committee) comprising members of the trade, academics and experts of the relevant subject areas. The Committee will study and recommend the long term goals and direction for the sustainable development of Hong Kong's fisheries industry, as well as the implementation strategy. The Committee will submit a report to the Government for consideration in 18 months.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs. Carrie YAU

Post Title _____ Permanent Secretary for Health,
Welfare and Food (Food and
Environmental Hygiene)

Date _____ 12.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)210

Question Serial No.

2521

Head: 139 Government Secretariat : Health,
Welfare and Food Bureau (Food and
Environmental Hygiene Branch)

Programme: (3) Environmental Hygiene

Subhead (No. & title):

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

Please explain why the revised estimate for 2006-07 was 13% higher than the original estimate and which item under the programme has increased in expenditure.

Asked by: Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply:

The increase of \$1.5 million (13%) in 2006-07 revised estimate for Programme (3) : Environmental Hygiene, as compared with the 2006-07 original estimate, is mainly due to the increase in operating expenses to strengthen support to environmental hygiene-related activities and the salary for the post of Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene) created since May 2006 for which no provision had been made in the original estimate.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Carrie YAU

Post Title _____
Permanent Secretary for Health,
Welfare and Food (Food and
Environmental Hygiene)

Date _____ 14.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)211

Question Serial No.

2525

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Health, Subhead (No. & title):
Welfare and Food Bureau (Food and
Environmental Hygiene Branch)

Programme: (2) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

The provision for agriculture, fisheries and food safety for 2007-08 has more than tripled, when compared with the previous year, and increased to 48.1 million. The Bureau indicated that the provision would be used to strengthen food safety, prevent zoonotic diseases and promote the sustainable development of local fisheries industry. Please provide details of the allocation as well as the net creation of the five posts in the coming year, including their ranks and salary expenditure.

Asked by: Hon. FANG Kang, Vincent

Reply:

The increase in funding provides for all the major initiatives as listed in the section "Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2007-08". In brief, the major initiatives are to provide for expenditure under the Voluntary Surrender Scheme for pig farmers (\$20 million), provision of posts to strengthen food safety functions (\$5.59 million); consultancy study to promote sustainable development of local agricultural and fisheries industries (\$3 million); and contingency funding to meet expenditure for controlling avian influenza (\$19.5 million).

A total provision of \$5.59 million has been made to pay for the post of the Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene) as well as five new posts required to launch the initiatives in this Programme and Programme (3) Environmental Hygiene. The ranking and notional mid-point salary of the new posts are as follows -

Rank	<u>Annual Salary</u> (Notional annual mid-point salary)
Administrative Officer Staff Grade C	\$1,360,800
Senior Executive Officer	\$681,180
Senior Information Officer	\$622,440
Personal Assistant	\$481,020
Chauffeur	\$152,280

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs. Carrie YAU

Post Title _____
Permanent Secretary for Health,
Welfare and Food (Food and
Environmental Hygiene)

Date _____ 14.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)212

Question Serial No.

2526

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Health, Welfare and Food Bureau (Food and Environmental Hygiene Branch) Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (2) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

The Bureau will make special provision to promote the sustainable development of local agriculture and fisheries industries in 2007-08. However, the Government has been gradually phasing out live poultry and poultry keeping in Hong Kong in recent years. Does the Government have any specific strategy and support provision for the long-term development of agriculture and fisheries industries? Does the Government have any specific target for the local market share of local agriculture and fisheries products?

Asked by: Hon. FANG Kang, Vincent

Reply:

The Government promotes the sustainable development of agriculture and fisheries through the provision of infrastructural support, technical assistance and advice, credit facilities and vocational training to local farmers and fishermen. In 2007-08, we have earmarked \$3 million under Head 139 for conducting studies on measures to promote the sustainable development of local fisheries industry. The support measures are chiefly provided by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD). In relation to agriculture, the AFCD assists farmers to capture high-value market niches by promoting the development of organic farming and intensive greenhouse production, implementing the Accredited Farm Scheme, as well as developing brand names and marketing network for local agricultural products emphasizing good quality and food safety. AFCD also devises programmes to assist livestock farmers who choose to exit their trade and take up other modes of farming. In relation to fisheries, the AFCD has set up a Committee on Sustainable Fisheries to study the overall direction and long term goals for the fisheries industry and on the viable strategies and options for the sustainable development of the industry. We do not set a target market share for locally produced agricultural and fisheries produce.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Mrs. Carrie YAU
	Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene)
Post Title	_____
Date	13.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)213

Question Serial No.

2527

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Health, Subhead (No. & title):
Welfare and Food Bureau (Food and
Environmental Hygiene Branch)

Programme: (2) Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Safety

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

The Bureau has said it would introduce legislation to strengthen control over imported poultry eggs and farmed aquatic products in 2007-08. However, whenever there is an incident involving imported food at the supply level, the livelihood of local operators is hard hit. Please advise whether the Bureau will set up an emergency assistance fund to help tide over the food industries when they encounter problems in this respect?

Asked by: Hon. FANG Kang, Vincent

Reply:

As a matter of principle, the Government does not provide funds to help individual trade to tide over short periods of business interruption. We do not see a strong case for deviating from this principle in respect of food trade

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Carrie YAU

Post Title _____
Permanent Secretary for Health,
Welfare and Food (Food and
Environmental Hygiene)

Date _____ 14.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)214

Question Serial No.

2658

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Health, Welfare and Food Bureau (Food and Environmental Hygiene Branch)

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (3) Environmental Hygiene

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

On considering ways to improve the occupancy and viability of public markets under Matters Requiring Special Attention, please inform this Committee: the latest progress of the above study; the ways of improvement being explored by the Government; and whether the Government has assessed the expenditure to be saved upon the implementation of these improvement measures. If yes, please provide the amount. If not, please state the reasons.

Asked by: Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply:

We will provide steer to the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) on improving the occupancy and viability of public markets. The measures already adopted include improving the facilities of markets and launching promotional programme to attract more trades and patronage. In 2007-08, a financial provision of \$3 million has been earmarked under Head 49 FEHD for the proposed market promotion measures. An amount of \$103 million has also been earmarked under the Capital Works Reserve Fund for general improvement works in 10 markets in 2007-08. The improvement measures do not generate savings for Government.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs. Carrie YAU

Post Title _____ Permanent Secretary for Health,
Welfare and Food (Food and
Environmental Hygiene)

Date _____ 13.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HWFB(FE)215

Question Serial No.

2519

Head: 139 Government Secretariat: Health, Welfare and Food Bureau (Food and Environmental Hygiene Branch)

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Director of Bureau's Office

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

On the inauguration of the third Chief Executive on 1 July, please inform this Committee: whether any assessment has been made for the expenditure required in case the new Administration wishes to reorganize the Bureau in the coming year 2007-08, including restructuring the organization and splitting the functions of the Bureau; or whether any reserve provisions has been made for such purpose. If yes, please provide the details. If no, please state the reasons.

Asked by: Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply:

The provision under this programme is for salaries and expenses for the operation of the office of the Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food. Expenses for the review of the structure and organization of the Bureau has not been included.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Carrie YAU

Post Title _____ Permanent Secretary for Health,
Welfare and Food (Food and
Environmental Hygiene)

Date _____ 13.3.2007