

For information

LegCo Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene

**Extension of the Voluntary Surrender Scheme
for Itinerant Hawker Licences**

Purpose

This paper informs Members of the extension of the voluntary surrender scheme for itinerant hawker licences (IHLs) by one year to 31 December 2008.

Background

2. The voluntary surrender scheme for IHLs was introduced in 2002 and is valid for five years from 1 January 2003 to 31 December 2007. Under the scheme, an IHL holder who voluntarily surrenders his licence may choose any one of the following options –

- (a) to select a vacant fixed pitch and be regarded as a fixed pitch licensed hawker;
- (b) to select a vacant stall in public markets and enjoy certain concessionary rental arrangements; or
- (c) to receive an ex gratia payment (EGP) of \$30,000.

3. As at 31 October 2007, a total of 339 IHL holders have voluntarily surrendered their licences under the scheme. 287 of them opted for EGP, 37 selected vacant fixed pitches and 15 selected vacant public market stalls. At present, there are about 630 IHL holders remaining.

Considerations

4. In view of the requests of several hawker associations to extend the validity of the voluntary surrender scheme for IHLs and the fact that we are conducting a review on hawker licensing policy which may have implications to IHL operations, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department has decided to extend the validity of the voluntary surrender scheme for IHLs by one year to 31 December 2008.

5. Any IHL holder who wishes to carry on business after the expiry of the voluntary surrender scheme will continue to be issued with IHL licences. They would have, however, forfeited the opportunity to take up the options as set out in paragraph 2 above when they eventually surrender their licences.

Advice Sought

6. Members are invited to note the contents of this paper.

Food and Health Bureau
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
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