

Legislative Council Finance Committee

Follow-up Actions to meeting on 17 July 2018

At the request of the Finance Committee at its meeting on 17 July 2018 when FCR(2018-19)48 was discussed, the supplementary information is provided below.

(a) The amount of allowance or compensation (such as crop compensation) offered by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department to farmers and fishermen in respect of land resumption exercise

2. Under the existing policy, the Lands Department (LandsD) will offer various forms of ex-gratia allowances (EGAs) for eligible operators of farms and fisheries affected by government land resumption and clearance exercises. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) is responsible for providing technical support to LandsD and assisting in the assessment of relevant EGAs, such as EGA for crops (also known as crop compensation), disturbance allowance for cultivators (also known as compensation for “open plowing”) and EGAs for pond fish farmers rearing edible fish and fish fry, red worm pond operators and oyster farmers at Deep Bay.

3. The total amount of EGAs granted to farmers, fishermen and mariculturists affected by government projects over the past three financial years (from 2015-16 to 2017-18, up to end February 2018) were \$26.7 million, \$26.58 million and \$2.26 million respectively.

(b) Please set out the Government’s policy in the handling of rural animals and the handling procedures for animals affected by land resumption exercises for government developments, including the details of cooperation and coordination with different community groups

4. The Government attaches importance to animal welfare. Our policy objective is to ensure that people and animals co-exist harmoniously, be it in rural or urban areas. We also take appropriate measures to deal with possible public health problems caused by stray animals in various districts across the territory, with a view to striking a balance between safeguarding public hygiene and safety and animal welfare.

5. We have been adopting a multi-pronged approach in the management of stray animals, including promoting through public education the concept of giving due consideration to the long-term commitment in pet keeping; disseminating messages of responsible pet ownership and proper caring for animals; promoting animal rehoming, and locating and catching stray animals in order to transfer them to animal welfare organisations (AWOs) as far as possible for adoption by members of the public; and neutering animals being re-homed, etc..

6. We understand that some pet owners may need to be relocated because of government development projects and would no longer keep their pets. In order to reduce the number of animals so surrendered, AFCD will closely liaise with LandsD to make publicity efforts and appeal to those affected by government land resumption and clearance exercises to make appropriate arrangements for their pets as soon as practicable (such as handing their pets over for adoption by relatives or friends); and make the necessary preparation to facilitate early notification of pet-surrendering plans to AFCD so as to enable AFCD and AWOs to prepare early for reception of these animals. Generally speaking, for animals received which are considered suitable for re-homing, AFCD will transfer them to AWOs for adoption by members of the public. The AWOs will assess the suitability of a prospective adopter, in order to ensure that the adopter will take proper care of the animal in the future. Members of the public may call the Government hotline 1823 to inquire about the animal receiving arrangement. If necessary, AFCD may request the dispatch of an animal control team to assist in catching stray animals so as to properly tackle the possible nuisances and public health problems caused by stray animals, with a view to safeguarding public hygiene and safety in Hong Kong.

Development Bureau
Food and Health Bureau
Lands Department
Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department
October 2018