



中華人民共和國香港特別行政區政府總部食物及衛生局
Food and Health Bureau, Government Secretariat
The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
The People's Republic of China

Our ref.: FH CR 8/3800/20
Your ref:

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20 October 2021

Clerk to the Legislative Council Finance Committee
(Attn: Miss Bowie LAM)
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Miss LAM,

**Finance Committee
Follow-up to the Meeting on 9 July 2021**

At the discussion of the agenda item FCR(2021-22)48 at the meeting of the Finance Committee (FC) held on 9 July 2021, Members requested the Food and Health Bureau (FHB) to provide supplementary information. FHB's response on the supplementary information is set out at **Annex** for Members' reference please.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Winnie C.'.

(Miss Winnie CHUI)
for Secretary for Food and Health

c.c. Ms Joan HUNG, Principal Assistant Secretary for Food and Health (Health) 6, FHB

**Finance Committee
Follow-up to the Meeting on 9 July 2021**

At the discussion of the agenda item FCR(2021-22)48 at the meeting of the Finance Committee (FC) held on 9 July 2021, Members requested the Food and Health Bureau to provide supplementary information. The reply of the Administration is set out below:

- (a) **the Administration sought for a supplementary provision of \$2,313.6 million under Head 140 Government Secretariat: Food and Health Bureau (Health Branch) Subhead 000 Operational expenses in 2021-2022 to meet the costs for extending the operation of Coronavirus Disease 2019 community testing centres and mobile specimen collection stations. For this proposed funding, please specify –**
- (i) **the number of tests, months concerned, and cost for tests already provided by test service contractors for which payment by the Administration was outstanding.**

According to our records, the test service contractors often took about two and a half months to provide invoices and related service records for testing services provided in early 2021. As a result, there was a certain time difference between providing testing services and reimbursing payment after verification. After verification of invoices issued by the test service contractors for the tests carried out from 1 March 1 2021 to 8 July 2021, the number of tests provided by the service contractors for which payment by the Administration outstanding was about 5,382,000, involving around \$1,288 million.

- (ii) **as from the date of FC's approval of the funding proposal, the remaining amount of supplementary provision available after discounting figures in (a)(i) above and the number of tests which the Administration estimated could be funded.**

As from the date of FC's approval of the funding proposal, the remaining amount of supplementary provision after

discounting figures in (a)(i) above could cover around 4 million tests.

- (b) the number of tests conducted by the Administration/test service contractors under the respective test categories since the outbreak of COVID-19 until now.**

Since the beginning of the 4th wave in mid-November 2020 and the stepping up of testing measures by the Administration, the Administration had conducted about 21 million tests as at 22 September 2021 –

- (i) Over 7 million tests for high-risk targeted groups under compulsory testing on a mandatory basis;
- (ii) Over 8.6 million tests under targeted testing on obligatory basis; and
- (iii) Over 5.3 million tests on a voluntary basis under the encouragement and facilitation of the Government.

- (c) at present, the Administration had engaged telecommunications service contractors to send relevant SMS notifications to COVID-19 testees, including one for confirmation of registration and another for test result. Please specify the procedures of the Administration for procurement of relevant services (including the means for the selection of contractors and the tendering arrangements).**

As the IT systems were implemented at different times by different parties (including Food and Health Bureau, Hospital Authority (HA) and Office of the Government Chief Information Officer), separate contracts have been arranged through different processes, including open tender and quotation procedures. To maintain competitiveness, the selection and procurement of SMS service have followed prevailing procurement regulations of the Government and HA, for example, sending Request for Quotation to multiple companies and gazetting/advertising to notify suppliers that contracts were being tendered. As a result, the quoted prices received were comparable with the level of the market.