

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**EEB(E)182**

**(Question Serial No. 2743)**

Head: (168) Hong Kong Observatory

Subhead (No. & title): (-)

Programme: (1) Weather Services

Controlling Officer: Director of the Hong Kong Observatory (Dr CHAN Pak-wai)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding the Cold Weather Warning, please advise on the respective numbers of Cold Weather Warnings issued by the Hong Kong Observatory in the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25), and the numbers of those involving reported death of or damage to vegetables and fish. Please also provide the respective dates of warnings issued and reports received.

Asked by: Hon HO Chun-yin, Steven (LegCo internal reference no.: 39)

Reply:

The respective numbers and dates of Cold Weather Warnings issued by the Hong Kong Observatory and reports involving losses of crops or deaths of fish in the past 3 years (2022-23 to 2024-25 (as at 9 March 2025)) are as follows:

	Number of Cold Weather Warnings issued and relevant dates	Number of reports involving losses of crops or deaths of fish <sup>#</sup>	Dates of reports <sup>#</sup>
2022-23	7 (13 to 15 December 2022) (16 to 20 December 2022) (31 December 2022) (15 to 18 January 2023) (24 to 26 January 2023) (27 to 30 January 2023) (14 to 15 February 2023)	Crops: 3	19 December 2022 30 January 2023 31 January 2023
		Fish: 1	28 December 2022

	Number of Cold Weather Warnings issued and relevant dates	Number of reports involving losses of crops or deaths of fish <sup>#</sup>	Dates of reports <sup>#</sup>
2023-24	6 (16 to 18 December 2023) (19 to 25 December 2023) (22 to 26 January 2024) (27 to 28 January 2024) (7 to 11 February 2024) (29 February 2024 to 3 March 2024)	Crops: 2	27 December 2023 25 January 2024
		Fish: 3	26 December 2023 29 December 2023 22 January 2024
2024-25 (up to 9 March 2025)	9 (19 to 20 December 2024) (20 to 21 December 2024) (21 to 22 December 2024) (9 to 13 January 2025) (26 to 29 January 2025) (3 to 4 February 2025) (7 to 10 February 2025) (23 to 24 February 2025) (6 to 8 March 2025)	Crops: 1	13 January 2025
		Fish: 0	-

<sup>#</sup> Figures provided by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department.

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**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**EEB(E)183**

**(Question Serial No. 2119)**

Head: (168) Hong Kong Observatory

Subhead (No. & title): (-)

Programme: (1) Weather Services

Controlling Officer: Director of the Hong Kong Observatory (Dr CHAN Pak-wai)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding the provision of weather information to the public, will the Government advise this Committee:

1. of the operating expenditure and manpower involved in the Dial-a-Weather system;
2. of the operating expenditure and manpower involved in the Observatory's website;
3. of the number of downloads and regular usage of the mobile application "MyObservatory" as well as the expenditure involved over the past three years;
4. whether it has reviewed the effectiveness of the Dial-a-Weather system; if yes, of the details; If no, the reasons for that?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Hei, Edward (LegCo internal reference no.: 135)

Reply:

1. The Dial-a-Weather service of the Hong Kong Observatory (HKO) is an interactive voice response system which provides automatic telephone answering service on weather information. The system runs automatically and no manual operation is required. As the expenditure on system maintenance has been subsumed under the regular provision for the HKO, a breakdown in this respect is not available.
2. The HKO operates its website with the existing manpower and resources, including routine system maintenance as well as content and function updates. The relevant manpower and expenditure have been subsumed under the establishment of and regular provision for the HKO. No relevant breakdown is available.
3. The numbers of downloads and visits (page views) of "MyObservatory" over the past 3 years (2022-2024) are as follows:

Year	“MyObservatory”	
	No. of downloads ('000)	No. of visits (billion)
2022	560	126
2023	920	135
2024	640	141

The HKO operates the mobile application “MyObservatory” with its existing manpower and resources, including routine system maintenance as well as content and function updates. The relevant manpower and expenditure have been subsumed under the establishment of and regular provision for the HKO. No relevant breakdown is available.

4. The Dial-a-Weather system handled 4.1 million and 3.8 million telephone enquires in 2023 and 2024 respectively. With the popularization of smartphones in recent years, members of the public can obtain weather information by phone through the mobile application “MyObservatory” in addition to the Dial-a-Weather service. While it has become a trend in recent years to access weather information through mobile applications, the HKO appreciates that many users still use the Dial-a-Weather service. For example, it is more convenient for some elderly people or those with visual impairment to use the Dial-a-Weather service than mobile applications to check weather information. To optimise the service, the HKO plans to upgrade the automated system by incorporating smart features such as speech recognition function.

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**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**EEB(E)184**

**(Question Serial No. 2008)**

Head: (168) Hong Kong Observatory

Subhead (No. & title): (-)

Programme: (1) Weather Services

Controlling Officer: Director of the Hong Kong Observatory (Dr CHAN Pak-wai)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

- a) What are the findings or outcomes of the study conducted by the Government on the use of small unmanned aircraft in meteorological measurements?
- b) What are the details of operating the virtual Meteorological Training Centre for Belt and Road Countries and organising training courses in collaboration with other international organisations? What are the responses of the participants? What are the direct or indirect benefits to the Hong Kong Observatory?

Asked by: Hon LUK Hon-man, Benson (LegCo internal reference no.: 32)

Reply:

- (a) Preliminary results of tests using small unmanned aircraft (SUA) in meteorological measurements by the Hong Kong Observatory (HKO) show that the meteorological data measured such as temperature, humidity, wind speed and wind direction are similar to those observed by traditional instruments. The HKO plans to deploy SUAs for operation use to support low-altitude weather monitoring.
- (b) The Meteorological Training Centre for Belt and Road Countries was officially established on 3 December 2024. It organised in collaboration with the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) its first training workshop with the theme of aviation meteorological science and service development. Over 90 meteorological personnel from more than 45 WMO members and ICAO Asia Pacific States attended the workshop. Participants were satisfied with the content and overall arrangement of the workshop and spoke highly of it. The establishment of the Training Centre helps foster international meteorological co-operation between the HKO and various Belt and Road regions, further consolidating Hong Kong's position as a regional centre for meteorological advancements.

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**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**EEB(E)209**

**(Question Serial No. 3495)**

Head: (168) Hong Kong Observatory

Subhead (No. & title): (-)

Programme: (1) Weather Services

Controlling Officer: Director of the Hong Kong Observatory (Dr CHAN Pak-wai)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Environment and Ecology

Question:

Regarding the organisation of educational events and outreach activities to engage the public, will the Government provide this Committee with the following information:

1. the expenditure and manpower involved in organising the “Working Together for a Better Climate” Open Day, and the number of public participants in the event;
2. a breakdown of the numbers of participants in the workshops, scientific talks, practicals, day camps, quiz competitions and guided tours to the Hong Kong Observatory facilities over the past 3 years;
3. the manpower and expenditure set aside for organising the aforementioned education events this year; and
4. whether it will strengthen publicity and organise education events for schools to promote STEM education; if so, the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Hei, Edward (LegCo internal reference no.: 136)

Reply:

The “Working Together for a Better Climate” Open Day organised by the Hong Kong Observatory (HKO) on 30 November and 1 December 2024 attracted nearly 10 000 visitors. Apart from the HKO staff, about 60 volunteers from the Friends of the Observatory also assisted in receiving members of the public.

Over the past 3 years (2022 to 2024), the HKO organised various educational events and outreach activities with STEM elements, including workshops, scientific talks, day camps, quiz competitions and guided tours to the HKO facilities. The number of participants was about 1 600, 36 000, 70, 2 600 and 7 200 respectively. The HKO will continue to step up its efforts in promoting relevant programmes for schools to help advance STEM education in the future.

The HKO carries out the above work with existing manpower and resources, and a breakdown in this respect is not available.

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**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**SB228**

**(Question Serial No. 3919)**

Head: (168) Hong Kong Observatory

Subhead (No. & title): (-)

Programme: (2) Radiation Monitoring and Assessment

Controlling Officer: Director of the Hong Kong Observatory (Dr CHAN Pak-wai)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

- a) In response to the discharge of nuclear-contaminated water from Fukushima of Japan, the Hong Kong Observatory (HKO) stated that it would continuously monitor the radiation level of sea water samples in local waters. However, the estimate for radiation monitoring and assessment in 2025-26 decreases by 4.6%. What are the reasons for that? Will it affect the accuracy of radiation monitoring?
- b) Given the colourless, tasteless and odourless nature of radiation, the HKO organises the Gamma-Go programme to enhance public education on radiation, as part of the safety plan in preparation for major emergencies. What are the details of and number of participants in the Gamma-Go programme? Has the HKO considered expanding the scale of the Gamma-Go programme to engage the general public for popularising science and addressing extreme incidents, thereby enhancing public awareness and reducing the potential spread of panic in the event of an incident? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LUK Hon-man, Benson (LegCo internal reference no.: 32)

Reply:

- a) The total estimated expenditure for 2025-26 under the "Radiation Monitoring and Assessment" programme is slightly lower than that for last year. This is mainly attributed to the difference in instruments requiring replacement compared with last year, leading to a decrease in the corresponding one-off expenditure. As for the monitoring of sea water samples in local waters, there is no reduction in the estimated expenditure and the accuracy of radiation monitoring will not be affected.
- b) The Gamma-Go workshop is a STEM activity organised for schools by the Hong Kong Observatory (HKO), aiming to enhance students' understanding of radiation through lectures and practical activities. Since its launch in 2021, an average of about 25 workshops have been held annually, with the participation of about 550 students each year.

Apart from Gamma-Go, the HKO has also made other efforts in popular science education to enhance public awareness on radiation. These include setting up booths at various public events (such as the HKO Open Day) to display the portable measurement device used in Gamma-Go and explain its principle and application to the public. The HKO also publishes on its website popular science articles and educational videos on topics such as radiation basics and radiation monitoring and protection.

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