

LCQ17: A Waste Reduction Guidebook for Large Scale Event Organisers

Following is a question by the Dr Hon Kwok Ka-ki and a written reply by the Secretary for the Environment, Mr Wong Kam-sing, in the Legislative Council today (July 11):

Question:

In 2017, the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) released A Waste Reduction Guidebook for Large Scale Event Organisers (the Guidebook), to assist event organisers in formulating waste management measures so as to achieve waste reduction and promote clean recycling. EPD indicated that it had appealed to the organisers of quite a number of events (including the Lunar New Year fairs, the Hong Kong Flower Show and the Hong Kong Sevens) to implement the waste management measures recommended in the Guidebook. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) how EPD assists organisers of large scale events in implementing the measures recommended in the Guidebook;
- (2) of the number of large scale events in respect of which EPD has, since the release of the Guidebook, assisted their organisers in implementing the measures recommended in the Guidebook, as well as the names of such events and their organisers;
- (3) whether EPD has compiled statistics on the quantity of waste generated in the events mentioned in (2), so as to gauge the effectiveness of the waste reduction initiatives; if so, set out the relevant statistics in a table; if not, how EPD monitors the effectiveness of the Guidebook; and
- (4) given that some organisations organised festive activities in the bamboo theatres at Tsing Luk Street, Tsing Yi in April and May this year, whether EPD assisted the organisers of such activities in implementing waste management measures; if so, of the details and the effectiveness; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

The Government has maintained liaison with organisers of a variety of events to encourage and assist them in adopting more green measures. The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) published A Waste Reduction Guidebook for Large Scale Event Organisers (the Guidebook) in December 2017, which provides clear and practical information as well as examples to help event organisers and related stakeholders develop strategies on waste reduction and recycling, with a view to enhancing the environmental performance of their events. My responses to the various parts of the question raised by the Dr Hon Kwok Ka-ki are as follows:

(1) To facilitate the drafting of the Guidebook, the EPD has co-operated with 11 large-scale event organisers of varied nature to implement various green measures (details at the Annex) since April 2017. Our collaboration experience of practising green measures in event organisation at early stages also facilitated the drafting of the Guidebook. Professional consultants and/or green groups have been engaged by the EPD to give advice to the event organisers under the collaboration, so that various waste management measures have been implemented at different stages of their events; promotion efforts on waste reduction and recycling targeting the public, event participants and stakeholders (including exhibitors and food stall operators) have been enhanced; and waste audits have been conducted. Having regard to the actual circumstances of individual events, the EPD has also provided on-site support in many aspects. They included co-ordinating with the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department to enhance street cleansing services during the events; lending information display boards and waste recovery facilities to the event organisers for the promotion of clean recycling; liaising with the District Offices concerned, local bodies and business establishments to recruit and train up volunteers to become environmental protection ambassadors of the events, whose main duty is to educate event participants to practise waste separation at source and clean recycling; and assisting the event organisers in collecting, recovering and donating the recovered or reusable materials generated from their events. For example, the EPD has made use of its Pilot Composting Plant in Kowloon Bay to recycle food waste. Joint efforts in recycling waste plastics among the event organisers, Community Green Stations and the community recycling centres funded by the Environment and Conservation Fund have been encouraged. For the recycling of glass containers and wooden pallets generated from the events, event organisers have also been encouraged to cooperate with the glass management contractors hired by the EPD and the recyclers in the EcoPark respectively. The event organisers may also make use of the Environment Bureau's social media platform in promoting relevant green measures and to enhance public participation.

Looking ahead, the EPD will continue to motivate district organisations, the business sector, schools and youth groups, etc. to make reference to the Guidebook and implement relevant recommendations when organising events, with the aim of producing less waste while boosting event participants' sense of participation and achieving green branding for their events. The EPD will also closely monitor the efforts of various international and local events in promoting waste reduction and recycling to update the content of the Guidebook in a timely manner and provide more useful information and training to stakeholders.

(2) and (3) The EPD has assisted a number of event organisers in formulating and implementing measures on waste reduction and recycling for their events. The names of these organisers and their events, as well as the statistics on the waste and recyclables generated from these events, are set out at the Annex. Event organisers are welcome to refer to their relevant experience when organising similar events in the future so as to carry out more measures on waste reduction and recycling and better achieve waste reduction at source and the sustainable use of resources, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of waste management.

(4) Regarding the Tsing Yi Bamboo Theatre 2018 held between April and May 2018, the EPD, the Kwai Tsing District Office, certain green groups and the organiser of Tsing Yi Bamboo Theatre met before the event to discuss ways to improve the management of waste and recyclables for the event. They included providing more on-site recycling facilities, recruiting and training secondary school students in Kwai Tsing as environmental protection ambassadors to help promote clean recycling, enhancing publicity through social media and encouraging the public to bring their own dining utensils and food containers. Among the 114 participating food stall operators in the event, over two-thirds of them responded to the appeal and signed a green charter pledging to encourage and facilitate the public to use less disposal tableware.