

Application for Access to Information

(Application Number: 17317)

Q1 — Machine-readable data and 2024+ results

Background: FEHD publishes annual Rodent Infestation Rate data from 2013-2023 as PDFs, broken down by district, survey location, and area type (residential, industrial, recreational, rear lanes). This is excellent data but is only available as scanned/non-machine-readable PDFs. The 2024 Rodent Activity Survey is available as a single PDF without the detailed breakdowns of the 2023 format.

Request: (a) Can the RIR data for 2013-2023 be provided in machine-readable format (CSV or XLSX) with columns for year, district, survey location, area type, phase, number of infested points, and total survey points? (b) Will the 2024 and 2025 RIR data be published in the same detailed format as 2023 (Phase 1/Phase 2, per area type)? (c) Is there a schedule for transitioning from PDF-only publication to machine-readable open data?

Why this matters: FEHD clearly invests in systematic data collection. Making this data machine-readable would allow citizens, District Councils, and researchers to conduct independent analysis without manual data entry from PDFs. The data exists — the format is the barrier.

Reply:

(a) Rodent Infestation Survey (RIS) was ended in 2023, and the survey has been replaced by Rodent Activity Survey (RAS) since 2024. For Rodent Infestation Rate (RIR) that was obtained from the RIS, Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) does not maintain a complete set of records of RIR data in machine-readable format for the period earlier than 2019. The available RIR data in Excel format from 2019 to 2023 are provided at Annexes B to F.

(b) There is no 2024 and 2025 RIR data, as RIS ceased in 2023.

- (c) The latest RAS results are uploaded on the FEHD website in the form of a table, enabling members of the public to readily view the figures. Reports of earlier survey phases are uploaded in PDF format, which preserves the integrity and formatting of the published record. At present, there is currently no schedule for transitioning the RAS results to machine-readable open data.

Q2 — Complaint data linkage

Background: FEHD's public guidance directs citizens to 1823 and the FEHD hotline (2868 0000) for rodent issues including collection of live trapped rodents. The RIR survey captures infestation at designated survey points, but it is unclear whether citizen complaints correlate with survey findings.

Request: (a) Are rodent-related complaints (via 1823 and FEHD hotline) tracked by district and linked to RIR survey locations? (b) For 2020-2025, what is the annual number of rodent complaints by district? (c) Does FEHD use complaint data to identify emerging hotspots between survey cycles, or to adjust survey locations?

Why this matters: The RIR survey provides periodic snapshots. Complaint data could provide continuous monitoring. If these datasets are linked, the public health response could be more responsive. If they are NOT linked, that is a significant data governance gap.

Reply:

(a) Rodent-related complaints (via 1823 and FEHD hotline) were not linked to RIR survey locations.

(b) The number of rodent-related complaints received from Years 2020 to 2025 by 19 districts are set out below.

District	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Central and Western	826	822	655	640	642	740
Wan Chai	881	986	829	705	605	666

District	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Eastern	872	810	682	729	1 016	1 003
Southern	172	206	134	138	167	139
Islands	198	222	191	197	200	276
Yau Tsim	563	696	1 046	1 094	740	613
Mong Kok	525	519	695	852	937	820
Sham Shui Po	844	846	1 014	1 151	892	767
Kowloon City	929	1 064	823	872	900	891
Wong Tai Sin	245	365	243	283	610	430
Kwun Tong	517	349	346	319	323	304
Kwai Tsing	384	520	632	624	405	274
Tsuen Wan	383	403	423	429	267	253
Tuen Mun	380	508	496	588	607	547
Yuen Long	928	860	887	966	944	740
North	394	356	310	245	339	394
Tai Po	384	409	384	319	412	348
Sha Tin	506	473	499	501	368	498
Sai Kung	400	688	474	423	386	560
Whole territory	10 331	11 102	10 763	11 075	10 760	10 263

- (c) When conducting the RAS, the FEHD will take into account a basket of factors, such as rodent-related complaint figures which have been confirmed upon investigation, the number of live and dead rodents caught, inspection results, the views from local communities, etc., to identify locations with potential rodent problems in each district to form a sampling frame. During each survey, based on factors such as geographical distribution and relevant data, approximately 120 locations will be selected from the sampling frame for installation of thermal imaging cameras to measure rodent activities, so as to ensure the representativeness of the sampled locations.

Q3 — Species-level data

Background: FEHD's rodent information page identifies three species (sewer rat, roof rat, house mouse) with different behaviours, food preferences, and control strategies. FEHD even provides species-specific baiting recommendations. This implies species-level identification during surveys.

Request: (a) Does the RIR survey record which rodent species are found at each survey location? (b) If so, can species-level data be provided by district and year alongside the infestation rates? (c) Are control strategies (baiting, trapping) tailored based on which species is dominant in a given area?

Why this matters: FEHD's own guidance demonstrates that species identification matters for effective control. If species data is collected during surveys but not published, a key dimension of the public health picture is missing.

Reply:

- (a) The RIS was conducted by setting baits in designated survey locations to monitor rodent infestation. The ratio of the baits gnawed by rodents to the number of baits collected from the survey location generates the RIR. Based on this methodology, it was unable to determine the rodent species that gnawed the bait.
- (b) Further to (a) above, no species-level data was collected during the RIS.

- (c) Our district pest control staff would identify rodent species during their field inspections by examining various signs of rodents, including examining the live or dead rodents caught or collected. They would then devise appropriate targeted control method including the use of rodenticides and / or trapping to control the rodent species that is causing the infestation.