

Hygiene 'top priority'

400 unlicensed food traders before courts soon—Urbco

THE Government is expected to bring 400 unlicensed restaurant operators before the courts next month for operating without a licence.

Disclosing this yesterday the Chairman of the Urban Council's Food Hygiene Select Committee, Edmund Chow, said a top priority had been given to deal with the problem of illegal restaurants.

He said that at present there are 727 restaurants operating without a licence, 400 of which had never applied for a licence.

Mr Chow said many restaurant operators had ignored summonses.

He said that new measures to be taken next month will speed up prosecutions.

Mr Chow said if the new measures failed to control illegal operators, the Urban Council will move to introduce a heavier penalties.

The Council may urge a penalty increase from the present \$2,000 or three months' imprisonment, to \$20,000 and one year's imprisonment.

Mr Chow said the alleged delays in issuing licences was often due to the premises failing to comply with the Fire Services and Public Works Department's safety requirements.