

Advisory Council on Food and Environmental Hygiene

**Minutes of the 58th Meeting
held at 2:15 p.m. on Wednesday, 11 March 2015,
at Room 1801, 18/F, Central Government Offices,
2 Tim Mei Avenue, Tamar, Hong Kong.**

Mr. Felix FONG Wo, BBS, JP	(Chairman)
Prof. Paul CHAN Kay-sheung	Mr. Abraham CHAN Yu-ling
Ms. Phyllis CHEUK Fung-ting	Dr. CHUNG Shan-shan
Mr. Allen HO	Dr. HO Pak-leung
Prof. Kenneth LEUNG Mei-ye	Ms. Winnie LI Hiu-lee
Prof. LO Yuk-lam	Mr. Alan LEE Chi-keung, MH
Mrs. Cherry TSE LING Kit-ching, JP	Permanent Secretary for Food and Health (Food)
Mr. Alan WONG Chi-kong, JP	Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
Miss Vivian LAU Lee-kwan, JP	Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene
Dr. Regina CHING Cheuk-tuen, JP	Head, Surveillance & Epidemiology Branch, Department of Health
Miss Hanny LAM	Principal Assistant Secretary for Food and Health (Food) ³ (Secretary to ACFEH)

Absent with Apologies

Prof. Thomas CHAN Yan-keung, BBS, JP	Ms. Josephine KEA Chi-shun
Mrs. Sandra MAK	Dr. Lilian LEONG FUNG Ling-ye, BBS, JP
Prof. WONG Po-choi, MH	

In Attendance

Food and Health Bureau (FHB)

Mr. Christopher WONG, JP	Deputy Secretary for Food and Health (Food) 1
Mr. Philip CHAN, JP	Deputy Secretary for Food and Health (Food) 2
Mr. Desmond WONG	Assistant Secretary for Food and Health (Food)4

Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD)

Dr. LEUNG Siu-fai, JP	Deputy Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
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Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD)

Dr. LEE Siu-yuen, JP	Assistant Director (Food Surveillance & Control)
Dr. HO Lei-ming, Raymond	Principal Medical Officer (Risk Management)

Government Laboratory (GL)

Dr. Della SIN Wai-mei, JP	Assistant Government Chemist (Analytical & Advisory Services Division)
Mr. NG Chi-shing	Senior Chemist (Food Complaints Section)

Opening Remarks

1. The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting.

Agenda Item 1: Confirmation of the Minutes of the Last Meeting

2. The minutes were confirmed without amendments.

Agenda Item 2 : Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Last Meeting

3. There were no matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting.

Agenda Item 3 : Consultancy Study on the Way Forward of Live Poultry Trade in Hong Kong (ACFEH Paper No. 1/2015) – Restricted Item

4. The discussions are restricted.

Agenda Item 4 : Expansion of Food Safety Laboratory (ACFEH paper No. 2/2015) - Restricted Item

5. The discussions are restricted.

Agenda Item 5 : Report on the Food Surveillance Programme for 2014 (ACFEH Paper No. 3/2015)

6. Dr. Raymond HO introduced the paper.

7. Dr. CHUNG Shan-shan asked how samples on the vegetable trucks would be taken at the control points and whether the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) had devised any guidelines for front-line staff in this regard. Dr. Raymond HO replied that CFS adopted a risk-based approach in determining the types of samples to be collected, the frequency and number of samples taken for testing, and the types of laboratory analysis to be conducted. In general, CFS would randomly select trucks for inspection and collect vegetable samples from different parts of the trucks for testing. Dr. LEE Siu-yuen supplemented that due to resource constraints and operational difficulties, CFS would not be able to inspect all trucks and take samples from all consignments. This notwithstanding,

CFS had been working closely with the Customs and Excise Department (C&ED) and had tapped onto C&ED's enforcement efforts to enhance surveillance. About 18 trucks would be fully unloaded for inspection each day and samples would be collected therefrom randomly.

8. Dr. CHUNG took note of the strategy adopted by CFS and suggested taking samples from the pallets in the front and back of each consignment to enhance the integrity of the sampling strategy. Miss Vivian LAU supplemented that there were on average some 200 vegetable trucks passing by the control point each day. At the rate of 18 trucks being fully unloaded for inspection, the sampling ratio was quite high. CFS would continue to seek improvements in the sampling process.

9. In response to Prof. Kenneth LEUNG's enquiry about the track and trace mechanism, Dr. LEE Siu-yuen said that vegetable samples collected at the Man Kam To Food Control Office would be subject to a rapid test for certain specific pesticides that may cause acute toxic effect. Test results could be available in 10-15 minutes and CFS would be able to track down the concerned consignment and retrieve it before further distribution to the market.

10. Dr. HO Pak-leung referred to the two food contamination incidents involving bottled beverages produced locally and asked what follow-up actions had been taken by CFS. Dr. Raymond HO replied that the Environmental Hygiene Branch of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) responsible for the licensing of food factories had conducted inspection at the production plants concerned and improvement measures had been adopted. CFS had also stepped up surveillance of the products concerned at the retail level afterwards.

11. Prof. LO Yuk-lam asked whether CFS would consult and seek input from the food trade in drawing up the food surveillance plan. Dr. LEE Siu-yuen replied that the Food Surveillance Programme was a measure to ensure food safety at the downstream of the food supply chain. It might defeat the purpose if the plan was disclosed to the food trade beforehand. The programme was under regular review by CFS, taking into account factors such as past food surveillance results, local and overseas food incidents as well as the relevant risk analysis. In drawing up the Food Surveillance Plan, CFS had consulted the Expert Committee on Food Safety. Mrs. Cherry TSE commented that the Food Surveillance Programme was a key component of our strategy to ensure food safety in Hong Kong. She suggested that CFS might make use of the trade forum to enable the trade to get a better understanding of the surveillance strategy adopted by CFS

without disclosing the concrete details of the plan.

12. Mr. Alan LEE enquired about the incident of food imported from the five prefectures of Japan which were supposed to be banned from supplying Hong Kong, Dr. Raymond HO said that CFS had been working closely with C&ED to improve the surveillance. On the incident itself, CFS was in the process of considering possible prosecution action.

13. In response to Dr. CHUNG Shan-shan's question on the promotional efforts of CFS in publicizing food safety, Miss Vivian LAU replied that CFS had been carrying out targeted education programmes for consumers and students on the handling of food.

14. Prof. Kenneth LEUNG noted that there had been some studies in Taiwan on the impact of endocrine disrupter chemicals and asked whether CFS had covered these chemicals in its risk assessment and surveillance plan. Dr. LEE Siu-yuen responded that CFS had been monitoring food hazards identified as well as studies conducted in other places. CFS would cover those hazards in the surveillance plan where appropriate. Miss Vivian LAU suggested that the risk assessment team of CFS would approach Prof. Leung for further exchange.

15. On Ms Winnie LI's observation about the smuggling of barely cooked poultry carcass from the Mainland, DAFC advised that the import of raw meat was subject to control. To help tackle illegal smuggling of raw meat by travellers, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) had maintained a team of detection dogs and they were deployed to the boundary control points to assist in the surveillance work.

Agenda Item 6 : Any other business

16. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m. The Secretariat would inform members of the date of the next meeting in due course.

**Secretariat
Advisory Council on Food and Environmental Hygiene
June 2015**