

**Advisory Council on Food and Environmental Hygiene**

**Minutes of the 66<sup>th</sup> Meeting  
held at 2:30 p.m. on Friday, 15 December 2017,  
in Room 1801, 18/F, Central Government Offices,  
2 Tim Mei Avenue, Tamar, Hong Kong.**

Prof LO Yuk-lam	(Chairman)
Dr Felix CHAN Hon-wai, JP	
Mr David CHAN Wai-ming, MH, JP	
Mrs Vivien CHEN CHOU Mei-mei	
Prof CHIU Siu-wai	
Dr CHUNG Shan-shan	
Ms Josephine KEA Chi-shun	
Mrs Jenny LAM WEN Mei-fong	
Mr Stephen LEUNG Kwok-keung	
Prof Kenneth LEUNG Mei-yee	
Prof Leo POON Lit-man	
Mr Simon TAM Hop-sing	
Mr Richard TSANG Lap-ki	
Prof WONG Wing-tak	
Mrs Cherry TSE LING Kit-ching, JP	Permanent Secretary for Food and Health (Food)
Dr LEUNG Siu-fai, JP	Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
Ms Vivian LAU Lee-kwan, JP	Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene
Dr Regina CHING Cheuk-tuen, JP	Head, Surveillance & Epidemiology Branch, Department of Health
Mr Bill WONG Kwok-piu	Principal Assistant Secretary for Food and Health (Food) <sup>3</sup> (Secretary to ACFEH)

### **Absent with Apologies**

Dr Doris AU Wai-ting

Mr Abraham CHAN Yu-ling

Prof Samuel WONG Yeung-shan

### **In Attendance**

#### **Food and Health Bureau (FHB)**

Mr Eugene FUNG Kin-yip, JP

Deputy Secretary for Food and Health  
(Food)2

Mr Kenneth CHAN Siu-yum

Principal Assistant Secretary (Food)1

Mr Ricky CHENG Wing-kei

Assistant Secretary (Food)2

Miss Irene CHEUNG Hoi-ying

Assistant Secretary (Food)7

Miss Fanny YEUNG Pou-ian

Assistant Secretary (Food)4

#### **Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD)**

Dr Samuel YEUNG Tze-kiu

Consultant (Community Medicine)(Risk  
Assessment & Communication),  
Centre for Food Safety

Mr LI Ka-kei

Assistant Director (Operations)1

Mr FORK Ping-lam

Assistant Director (Operations)3

Mr LEE Ming-wai

Pest Control Officer

#### **Hong Kong Polytechnic University**

Dr LEUNG Ka-sing

Associate Director, Food Safety and  
Technology Research Centre

Dr WONG Ka-hing

Associate Director, Food Safety and  
Technology Research Centre

Dr YAO Zhongping

Associate Professor, Department of Applied  
Biology and Chemical Technology

Dr Maggie TANG

Scientific Officer, Department of Applied  
Biology and Chemical Technology

Mr Eugene LI

Research Assistant, Department of Applied  
Biology and Chemical Technology

## **Opening Remarks**

The Chairman welcomed members and Government representatives to the 66<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Advisory Council on Food and Environmental Hygiene (ACFEH).

### **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. As members were briefed at the last meeting, the Working Group on Green Burial and Related Matters met on 7 November 2017 to discuss the introduction of time limit for newly allocated public niches and arrangements of advance allocation of new public niches. Dr Felix CHAN would share on a matter related to green burial under Any Other Business.

### **Agenda Item 3 : The Food Hygiene Standard Certification System for the Catering Industry Developed by the Hong Kong Polytechnic University**

4. Dr WONG Ka-hing and Dr LEUNG Ka-sing briefed the meeting on the Food Hygiene Standard Certification System for the catering industry (the system) developed by the Hong Kong Polytechnic University.
5. Members in general supported the concept and direction of the system. Mrs Jenny LAM added that the system would be useful in equipping the catering industry, especially those in smaller scale, with basic understanding on standards of food processing hygiene such as for the storage of food.
6. In response to Mr Stephen LEUNG's enquiry on whether the system had drawn reference from those in other countries, Dr LEUNG Ka-sing replied that in deciding the frequency of assessment reference was drawn from ISO 17001. He noted that some countries relied on ISO 22000 which specified the requirements of a food safety management system. Dr CHUNG Shan-shan opined that ISO 22000 might be difficult to apply in Hong Kong and supported using a simpler certification system that could cater for the need of the Hong Kong market. While there were many different food types used by eateries in Hong Kong, Dr CHUNG Shan-shan enquired how the system would cater for this phenomenon. Mr David CHAN also added that the requirements for food factories and restaurants might be different. Dr LEUNG Ka-sing explained that priority would be given to high

risk food items.

7. Dr CHUNG Shan-shan suggested using a marking scheme for assessing the performance of caterers which would be comprehensive and meet the public's expectation of such a certification system. Dr LEUNG Ka-sing replied that certification was an audit system, citing international standards like ISO 9000 or 22000 also did not use marking scheme for measurement of compliance.

8. As for the timing of reviewing the caterers' compliance of system requirements, Dr LEUNG added that two surveillance would be conducted during the first year, followed by an annual surveillance in the next two years. On Mrs Cherry TSE's suggestion of hiring mystery customers to help with the assessment process, Mr Richard TSANG shared that the Q-Mark Schemes were also adopting the same approach. In response to Prof Kenneth LEUNG's enquiry on whether any action would be taken under the system in case of food poisoning incident, Dr LEUNG clarified that the system aimed at certifying qualified caterers by assessing their food safety management system, and whether the caterers had taken any investigation or remedial measures to prevent recurrence would serve as a reference for granting the certification.

9. Dr Felix CHAN noted that participants of the Residential Aged Care Accreditation Scheme were mainly large scale aged care homes, since those in smaller scale had difficulty in securing the funding and resources required for accreditation. In addition, some employees were also resistant to accreditation. As some caterers might have already set up a designated team or hired a Hygiene Manager to help follow up on matters related to food hygiene, Dr LEUNG Ka-sing believed that the additional work might not be significant. Dr WONG Ka-hing added that many caterers even hired a consultant to ensure their compliance with accreditation schemes, and some would seek funding support from SME Funding Schemes to support the relevant work of the accreditation schemes.

10. Drawing reference from the organic certification system developed by the Hong Kong Baptist University, Dr CHIU Siu-wai was of the view that at the initial stage it was most important to lay down the key principles of maintaining food hygiene standard which would serve the purpose of educating the industry and the public, and details of implementation could be gradually enhanced. Dr WONG Ka-hing concurred, and added that with the general support of stakeholders during consultation, it was hoped that with the participation of more caterers especially the medium-sized ones, a culture of maintaining food processing hygiene could be developed. Mrs Cherry TSE said that the key of success would depend on how to internalise the system, say through a system of training and specification of the caterers' hardware (e.g. provision of enabling equipment or design of the kitchen and the workflow) to help frontline staff to comply with requirements of the system.

11. As regards the interface of the system with FEHD's existing licensing system over food premises, the Chairman commented that the two systems should not overlap with each other. Ms Vivian LAU and Mr LI Ka-kei shared that the food premises which obtained the ISO 22000 certification<sup>1</sup> would be excluded from FEHD's demerit points system and be subject to an alternative inspection regime. Acknowledging the different purposes of the system and FEHD's licensing system, Mr LI Ka-kei said that the interface could be explored at a later stage of the implementation of the system.

#### **Agenda Item 4 : Study on "Cooking Oils in Use" (ACFEH Paper 10/2017)**

12. Following Mrs Cherry TSE's brief introduction on the background of the consultancy study, Dr YAO Zhongping briefed members on the progress of the study on "cooking oils in use" and the formulation of the guidelines on good practice of using frying oils.

13. On Mrs Vivien CHEN's enquiry on why the study only focused on seafood and vegetables, Dr YAO Zhongping explained that the release of arsenic and lead from such foods into cooking oils during frying might be of greater concern and thus were chosen as the focus of the study. Mr Eugene FUNG added that the applicability of the study findings to other food types would be examined in the process. If needed, the Government would consider commissioning studies on other food types, having regard to the study findings, inter alia.

14. The Chairman shared that some overseas jurisdictions had developed standard procedures for the use of cooking oils, and enquired whether the study had benchmarked any jurisdictions' standards. Dr YAO Zhongping replied that the study would draw reference from the standards established by relevant jurisdictions, where appropriate.

15. Prof Leo POON enquired whether the deliverables of the study would be in the form of some indicators or guidelines on the use of cooking oils. Dr CHIU Siu-wai commented that it might be difficult to generalise or establish standards for cooking practices. Dr YAO Zhongping, Mr Eugene FUNG and Dr Samuel Yeung explained that the study would provide the trade with some generic, objective guidelines and recommended best practices for the use of cooking oils. The Government would encourage and assist the trade in adopting and internalising the guidelines in their day-to-day operation. This might include providing support to the trade in staff training, publicity, education, etc. in a collaborative

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<sup>1</sup> ISO 22000 is the certification or registration by an accredited body in respect of a licensed food premises to plan, implement, operate, maintain and update a food safety management system aimed at providing products that are safe for the consumer and demonstrate compliance with applicable statutory and regulatory food safety requirements in accordance with the requirements specified by the International Organization for Standardization.

manner with relevant stakeholders where appropriate. Mrs Cherry TSE emphasised the importance of providing specific and easy-to-follow instructions to the frontline staff in the kitchens, designing an enabling and simple to operate workflow to alert them to dispose of the used oils after a specific round of cooking, and providing staff training in internalising good practices in food processing.

**Agenda Item 5 : Anti-Mosquito Campaign for 2018 and Prevention and Control of Biting Midges (ACFEH Paper 11/2017)**

16. Mr FORK Ping-lam briefed members on the Anti-mosquito Campaign 2018, including the concerted efforts made by various Government departments as well as the prevention and control work carried out on biting midges.

17. Members appreciated the Government's efforts in preventing and controlling mosquitoes and biting midges. Mr FORK Ping-lam thanked members, and added that the Government had all along been improving the relevant work. Mr Stephen LEUNG suggested promoting Hong Kong's efforts on this front through the Tourism Commission.

18. In response to Mrs Vivien CHEN's enquiry on whether the same measures would be used for controlling mosquitoes and biting midges, Mr LEE Ming-wai explained that the measures for controlling mosquitoes would also be useful for controlling biting midges.

19. Prof Leo POON asked about the potential diseases that biting midges might bring about, and whether the Government would have any measures at the port of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge (HZMB). Mr LEE Ming-wai replied that viruses might be brought by biting midges to animals as well as human, but those vector species are not found in Hong Kong. In general, only minor symptoms such as itchiness would occur. What was brought about by biting midges was more on nuisances. As for the HZMB, the Government had recently exchanged with other Mainland authorities on the surveillance methods with a view to better cooperating with each other on mosquitoes and biting midges control at port areas.

20. Mr David CHAN observed that the Leisure and Cultural Services Department usually used bark chips to cover the mud in vegetated areas, which might easily attract the breeding of biting midges. Mr LEE Ming-wai agreed that it was advisable to remove the bark chips to avoid breeding problems. While the Government had been promoting green, Ms Josephine KEA was of the view that it was difficult to strike a balance between plantation and biting midges prevention. Acknowledging that it was difficult to prevent biting midges, Mr LEE advised planting of high rise vegetation to expose soil surface to direct sunlight, etc. to help prevent the breeding of biting midges. FEHD would also make good use of Ah

Tak's Facebook page to promote and advise on the prevention measures.

21. Mr David CHAN enquired whether most of the complaints were received through the 1823 Hotline. Mr FORK Ping-lam and Ms Vivian LAU responded that around three quarters of the complaints were made through the 1823 Hotline.

#### **Agenda Item 6: Any Other Business**

22. Dr Felix CHAN shared that a new mortuary and farewell room at the Queen Mary Hospital was established, and there was some space which could be used for promoting green burials. He had been following up with FEHD and welcomed members' views on how to promote green burials there. As a related issue, Ms Josephine KEA commented that there was a lack of testing for dead bodies in Hong Kong, and suggested providing the public with an option to donate their bodies for testing purposes after death.

23. Mr Eugene FUNG reported that, in view of the scientific fact that the radionuclide of iodine-131 (I-131) would decay quickly after a nuclear event, having consulted the Expert Committee on Food Safety, the Centre for Food Safety no longer required the testing of I-131 for food products from the 5 prefectures of Japan which were required to be accompanied with radiation certificates upon import starting from 8 December 2017. On the other hand, the testing of caesium-134 (Cs-134) and caesium-137 (Cs-137) were still needed. We had informed the local trade and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan of the adjustment.

24. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

**Secretariat**  
**Advisory Council on Food and Environmental Hygiene**  
**May 2018**