

Advisory Council on Food and Environmental Hygiene

**Minutes of the 70th Meeting
held at 2:30 p.m. on Thursday, 21 March 2019,
in Room 1801, 18/F, Central Government
Offices, 2 Tim Mei Avenue, Tamar, Hong Kong**

Prof LO Yuk-lam (Chairman)

Prof Felix CHAN Hon-wai, JP

Mr David CHAN Wai-ming, MH, JP

Prof CHIU Siu-wai

Dr CHUNG Shan-shan

Mrs Jenny LAM WAN Mei-fong

Mr Stephen LEUNG Kwok-keung

Prof Leo POON Lit-man

Mr Simon TAM Hop-sing

Mr Richard TSANG Lap-ki

Prof WONG Wing-tak

Prof Samuel WONG Yeung-shan

Mr Philip YUNG Wai-hung, 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 Rita HO Ka-wai Consultant Community Medicine (Non-
Communicable Disease)

Mr Bill WONG Kwok-piu Principal Assistant Secretary for Food and
Health (Food)³
(Secretary to ACFEH)

Absent with Apologies

Dr Doris AU Wai-ting

Mr Abraham CHAN Yu-ling

Mrs Vivien CHEN CHOU Mei-mei

Ms Josephine KEA Chi-shun

Prof Kenneth LEUNG Mei-yee

In Attendance

Food and Health Bureau (FHB)

Mr Daniel CHENG Chung-wai, JP Deputy Secretary for Food and Health (Food)1

Mr Eugene FUNG Kin-yip, JP Deputy Secretary for Food and Health (Food)2

Mr Gilford LAW Sun-on Principal Assistant Secretary (Food)2

Ms Teresa CHEUNG Shuk-kau Senior Principal Executive Officer (Food)

Mr GURUNG Marco Ben Assistant Secretary (Food)4

Ms Cherry WONG Pui-sum Assistant Secretary (Food)9

Miss Nicole LEE Tsz-yu Assistant Secretary (Food)10

Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD)

Mr FORK Ping-lam Assistant Director (Operations)3

Opening Remarks

The Chairman welcomed members and Government representatives to the last meeting of the current term of the Advisory Council on Food and Environmental Hygiene (ACFEH). Mr Philip YUNG on behalf of the Government thanked the Chairman for his leadership and members for their advice on a wide range of important issues including food safety and environmental hygiene as well as the promotion of green burial.

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

2. The minutes of the last meeting on 16 November 2018 were confirmed without any comment raised by members.

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

3. Members were briefed at the last meeting by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) on measures on mosquito and rodent control as set out in ACFEH Paper 6/2018. Application of new technologies in enhancing environmental hygiene and pest control would be further reported under Agenda Item 4 below.

Agenda Item 3: Initiatives on the Reduction of Salt and Sugar in Food (ACFEH Paper 1/2019)

4. Ms Teresa CHEUNG briefed the meeting on the multi-pronged approach adopted by the Government in promoting salt and sugar reduction in food, the targets relating to salt and sugar reduction in “Towards 2025: Strategy and Action Plan to Prevent and Control Non-communicable Diseases in Hong Kong”, and the measures to promote a gradual change towards a low-salt-low-sugar diet.

5. Regarding the initiative in providing sodium-reduced lunch options in schools, Dr CHUNG enquired about the effectiveness of the measures as reflected by the actual consumption of the lunchboxes by students. Mrs Jenny LAM shared her company’s experience that there was considerable food wastage as many of the students did not finish their lunchboxes properly, and remarked that more promotion (e.g. with the aid of a mascot) would be needed to encourage students to consume less salt. Dr Rita Ho informed that the Department of Health (DH) had launched the “Salt Reduction Scheme for School Lunches” in the school year 2017/18, and conducted “Nutrient Testing of School Lunches” in Primary Schools in Hong Kong in 2018. The testing results revealed that there was a decrease in the average sodium content of primary school lunches by 14% as compared with that of 2013. Prof Leo POON remarked that the Government should provide guidance to teachers in managing students’ intake of salt and sugar.

6. Mr Eugene FUNG said that reduction of salt in school lunchboxes was

only part of the overall campaign in changing the dietary habit of children. The success in implementing salt and sugar reduction initiatives required the concerted efforts of all stakeholders in the community. Mrs Jenny LAM, Mr David CHAN, Mr Stephen LEUNG and Dr CHIU Siu-wai agreed that enhancing public awareness was crucial for promoting a healthy diet culture in the community.

7. On the publicity of reducing salt/sugar, Prof Leo POON suggested introducing a Salt/Sugar Label Scheme for Prepackaged Food Products. Mr FUNG explained that a voluntary label scheme had already been implemented in October 2017.

8. Mr Stephen LEUNG and Mr Simon TAM suggested that the Government consider providing incentives to the commercial sector to supply more low-salt-low-sugar food products. Mr Richard TSANG suggested that the Government should invite large food chains to provide options of reduced salt/sugar in their menus. Mr FUNG explained that the Government and the Committee on the Reduction of Salt and Sugar in Food had mobilised restaurants to offer consumers with less salt and sugar options or specific less salt and sugar dishes, and would continue to solicit the support of more restaurants to do so.

9. The Chairman and Dr CHIU suggested that FHB consider collaborating with the Hospital Authority (HA) to supply healthy meals in hospitals' canteens. Mr FUNG responded that FHB had collaborated with hospital canteens to show the calorie contents of their foods and DH had been doing a lot in promoting healthy diet. As to the way forward, FHB was not only focusing on public education and promotion, but also on reaching out and encouraging the catering and food manufacturers to provide reduced salt/sugar food options and products to the public.

Agenda Item 4: Application of New Technologies in Enhancing Environmental Hygiene and Pest Control (ACFEH Paper 2/2019)

10. Mr FORK briefed members on various initiatives implemented by FEHD using modern technologies to enhance environmental hygiene and pest control.

Environmental Hygiene

11. Dr CHUNG appreciated the work of installing IP cameras and enquired about its usage in private properties. Mr FORK said that the initiative was well received at district levels in curbing illegal deposits of waste at black spots and remarked that the usage and storage of footage captured by IP cameras needed to comply with the personal data protection requirements under the law e.g. transmission of footage has to be encrypted and handled by authorized persons only.

12. On the Chairman's enquiry on the source of the technology introduced by FEHD, Mr FORK said that in addition to conducting online search for new technologies for environmental hygiene and pest control, FEHD had approached the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation and Hong Kong Productivity Council for advice.

13. Mr FORK said that FEHD sometimes faced difficulties in sourcing new technologies into Hong Kong due to its relative small market size, and adaptations of the technology for local use were sometimes necessary.

14. In response to Mr David CHAN's enquiry on 360 degrees cameras, Mr FORK explained that the Marine Department and FEHD were responsible for floating marine refuse and marine refuse washed ashore respectively. In addition to tackling marine refuse in blackspots by past experience and public referral, Mr FORK said that the use of 360 degrees cameras could further enhance the efficiency in manpower deployment having regard to the actual circumstances. FEHD also had increased its manpower deployed for clearance of marine refuse.

15. Regarding the solar-powered aluminum refuse collection points, the Chairman and Dr Samuel WONG were concerned about the effectiveness of the solar energy under inclement weather. Mr FORK replied that the technology was mature and found to be effective for application in Hong Kong. The problem was more on sourcing, given the limited number of suppliers.

Pest Control

16. As for mosquito control, Prof Leo POON and Mr Stephen LEUNG were concerned as to whether the effects of fungi being adopted currently for mosquito control would impact on the environment. Mr FORK replied that the fungi used by FEHD was mosquito-specific and widely used overseas, and thus it would pose no threats to the environment.

Agenda Item 5: Any Other Business

17. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:30 pm.

Secretariat

Advisory Council on Food and Environmental Hygiene

May 2019