

ACFEH Information Paper 14

Advisory Council on Food and Environmental Hygiene

Establishment of the Expert Committee on Food Safety

Purpose

This paper briefs Members on the establishment of an Expert Committee on Food Safety under the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) to strengthen the consultative framework on food safety issues.

Background

2. At present, the Advisory Council on Food and Environmental Hygiene (ACFEH) (食物及環境衛生諮詢委員會) formed under the Health, Welfare and Food Bureau advises the Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food on policies relating to food safety, environmental hygiene and veterinary public health. The Chairman and Members of the ACFEH are appointed by the Chief Executive for a term of two years. The terms of reference of the ACFEH are at **Annex A**.

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3. To strengthen the existing consultative framework on food safety issues, the Administration has undertaken to set up an Expert Committee on Food Safety (食物安全專家委員會), consisting of academics, professionals, food experts, members of the trade and consumer group and other experts, under the CFS in FEHD. The Chairman and Members of the Expert Committee will be appointed by the Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food for a term of two years and will advise the Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene (DFEH) on food safety operational strategies and measures to protect public health, standards / guidelines relating to food safety and food composition and their suitable adoption in Hong Kong. The Expert Committee will also advise DFEH on the implementation of food safety risk communication and public education programmes as well as new directions for research to be commissioned by the CFS. A copy of the terms of reference of the Expert Committee is at **Annex B**.

Relationship between the Advisory Council on Food and Environmental Hygiene and the Expert Committee on Food Safety

4. The formation of the Expert Committee on Food Safety will not affect the role and function of the ACFEH. Upon the establishment of the Expert Committee on Food Safety, the ACFEH will continue to advise SHWF on *policy matters* relating to food safety, veterinary public health and environmental hygiene. The Expert Committee on Food Safety will provide technical advice to DFEH on food safety *operational strategies* and measures.

Way Forward

5. Members of the Expert Committee on Food Safety will be appointed in mid-September 2006 for the first meeting to be held sometime in October 2006.

**Health, Welfare and Food Bureau
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
September 2006**

Advisory Council on Food and Environmental Hygiene

Terms of Reference

- To consider and advise the Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (SHWF) on policies relating to food safety, environmental hygiene and veterinary public health, and to monitor their implementation;
- To advise SHWF on the regulation of farms, food premises, food hazards and food composition;.
- To receive reports on the handling of major food and farm incidents; and
- To advise SHWF on community education and publicity programmes for promoting public understanding of food safety and public responsibility for environmental hygiene.

Expert Committee on Food Safety

Terms of Reference

To advise the Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene on

- existing or new food safety operational strategies and measures to protect public health;
- standards/guidelines relating to food safety and food composition and their suitable adoption in Hong Kong having regard to international practices, trends and developments;
- the strategies for risk communication to promote food safety and how best to implement relevant risk communication or public education programmes; and
- any new directions for any research to be commissioned by the Centre for Food Safety.