

Letterhead of Hong Kong Housing Authority

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10 July 2001

Hon Fred LI Wah-ming, JP
Chairman of the joint meeting of the
Panel on Food Safety and
Environmental Hygiene and
Panel on Housing
Legislative Council Building
8 Jackson Road
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Mr. Li,

**LegCo Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene and
LegCo Panel on Housing**

Improving the ventilation of public markets

Thank you for your letter of 22 June 2001.

I fully appreciate LegCo Members' concern regarding ventilation in markets, as expressed at the recent joint meeting of the LegCo Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene and the LegCo Panel on Housing. As you may be aware, it has been the Housing Authority's policy since 1994 that all new markets be air-conditioned, and markets opened since 1997 have all been so equipped. You may also be interested to note that in all markets built since 1997, self-contained scalding rooms have been provided behind the poultry stalls, with separated mechanical ventilation.

Older Housing Authority markets were designed without air-conditioning. For some of these, the installation of central air-conditioning is problematic due to site constraints, or unnecessary as natural ventilation is good. However, for others the Authority accepts the desirability of introducing central air-conditioning. Retrofitting of central air-conditioning has in fact been undertaken as part of the shopping centre rolling improvement programme, or in accordance with ad-hoc requests. You will appreciate, however, given the large number of older markets, that tackling this task is likely to take some time. I would add that in some cases it has been difficult to obtain the agreement of a majority of stallholders to pay air-conditioning charges.

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Notwithstanding the above, the Housing Department has already been tasked to study, as a matter of priority, how action for retrofitting of central air-conditioning and other improvement measures could be expedited, with a view to making recommendations to the Authority in two to three months. I would like to assure you and Members of the two LegCo Panels that the Authority remains committed to the upgrading of commercial facilities, where necessary to ensure a healthy and safe shopping environment.

With best regards,

Yours sincerely,

(CHENG Hon-kwan)
Chairman, Housing Authority