

**For information
on 22 April 2002**

LegCo Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene

Anti-mosquito Campaign 2002

Purpose

This paper briefs Members on the Anti-mosquito Campaign 2002 launched in early April by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (“FEHD”) to prevent and control mosquito problems.

Background

2. Mosquitoes cause great nuisance to human beings. Some species of mosquitoes additionally pose threats to public health as vectors of diseases like dengue fever, malaria, Japanese encephalitis and yellow fever. As the pest control authority in Hong Kong, FEHD is responsible for formulating strategies and implementing measures to prevent and control problems relating to mosquitoes. Apart from carrying out regular inspection and disinfestation actions throughout the year, anti-mosquito campaigns are organised annually on a territory-wide basis to encourage and promote Government and community participation in mosquito prevention and control work.

Dengue Fever

3. Dengue fever is a severe mosquito-borne disease that has re-emerged as a global threat during the past 30 years. It is an endemic disease in tropical and subtropical regions including Southeast Asia, South Asia, the

Pacific area, Africa and Central America. Dengue virus is transmitted by infective mosquitoes, but is not transmitted directly from person to person. The symptoms of the disease include high fever, headache, rash, joint and muscular pain.

4. The recent dengue fever outbreak in Macau has sparked off local community's concern about the potential threat that might be posed by this disease to Hong Kong. In 2001, a total of 17 imported cases of dengue fever were recorded in Hong Kong. Although there has been no locally infected case so far, given the geographical location of Hong Kong, we are receptive to the spread of the disease. It is well documented that once dengue fever establishes its foothold in a territory, it will be very difficult to eliminate it. We must therefore always remain vigilant against dengue fever as it is endemic in our neighbouring places and our weather is favourable to the breeding of *Aedes albopictus*, a mosquito vector that is capable of transmitting dengue vector virus.

Effectiveness of the Anti-mosquito Campaign 2001

5. At the Panel meeting held in October 2001, we briefed Members on the implementation details of the Anti-mosquito Campaign 2001, which was organised to tackle mosquito problems in general and to prevent the spread of dengue fever in particular. The campaign, conducted in two phases, was completed in November 2001 with encouraging results. There was a significant decline in the annual average ovitrap index¹ from 24.1% in 2000 to 12.4% in 2001 (detail at Annex), indicating that the breeding rate of mosquitoes decreased substantially compared with the same period in the preceding year. In addition, some 116,800 breeding places or potential breeding places of mosquitoes were identified and eliminated by our pest control staff during the campaign period. A total of 355 warning letters, statutory notices and summonses were issued in relation to these breeding places. We also organised a variety of publicity and educational activities on mosquito prevention and control, which were well received by the target

¹ Ovitrap index is the percentage of ovitraps that are found to have positive larval breeding result.

audience, including management staff of construction sites and housing estate, social services institutions, teachers and private pest control practitioners.

Anti-mosquito Campaign 2002

Objectives

6. As effective mosquito control requires sustained effort, we have launched a new Anti-mosquito Campaign in 2002 in collaboration with other relevant government departments in order to maintain the momentum established last year. We aim to achieve the following objectives in this year's Anti-mosquito Campaign -

- (a) Promote community participation and collaboration among government departments in preventing and controlling mosquito problems;
- (b) Eliminate breeding sites of mosquitoes; and
- (c) Heighten community awareness of the potential risk posed by dengue fever.

Implementation Plan

7. Under the theme "Let's Remove Stagnant Water, Eliminate Mosquito for Healthy Living", Anti-mosquito Campaign 2002 is to be conducted in three phases on a territory-wide basis -

- Phase 1: 2 April 2002 - 27 April 2002
- Phase 2: 15 July 2002 - 10 August 2002
- Phase 3: 23 September 2002 - 11 October 2002

8. Our pest control staff will step up inspection and disinfestation

actions during the above periods. With experience gained in 2001, it is considered appropriate that anti-mosquito effort should also be enhanced between the two phases of the campaign. An additional phase will thus be introduced in July-August to reduce mosquito population when mosquito activity is most rampant. Surveillance and control work will be maintained during the periods between the phases. Other relevant government departments such as the Department of Health, the Housing Department, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, the Lands Department and the Home Affairs Department, which are members of the Pest Control Co-ordinating Committee, will take collaborative actions to monitor and eliminate mosquito breeding sites in areas under their respective responsibilities. They will also help disseminate the message of the campaign to the community through their networks.

Target Areas

9. Areas favouring the harbourage of mosquitoes or in close proximity to human activities such as schools, construction sites, public housing estates and hospitals will be identified as areas for target control. We will also direct our efforts towards waterfront public and private cargo working areas, as well as piers for Macau ferries in light of the dengue fever outbreak in Macau. By keeping track of the ovitrap indices detected at various locations, we will monitor closely any change in the breeding rate of mosquito vector over the campaign period and adjust our mosquito control strategy accordingly.

Community Participation

10. Community support is vital to the successful implementation of the campaign. We will therefore make use of a wide range of promotional channels such as FEHD's website, posters, leaflets, announcements in the public interest, videotapes and letters to target groups to encourage community participation in our campaign. Additionally, activities including roving exhibitions at major shopping malls of housing estates,

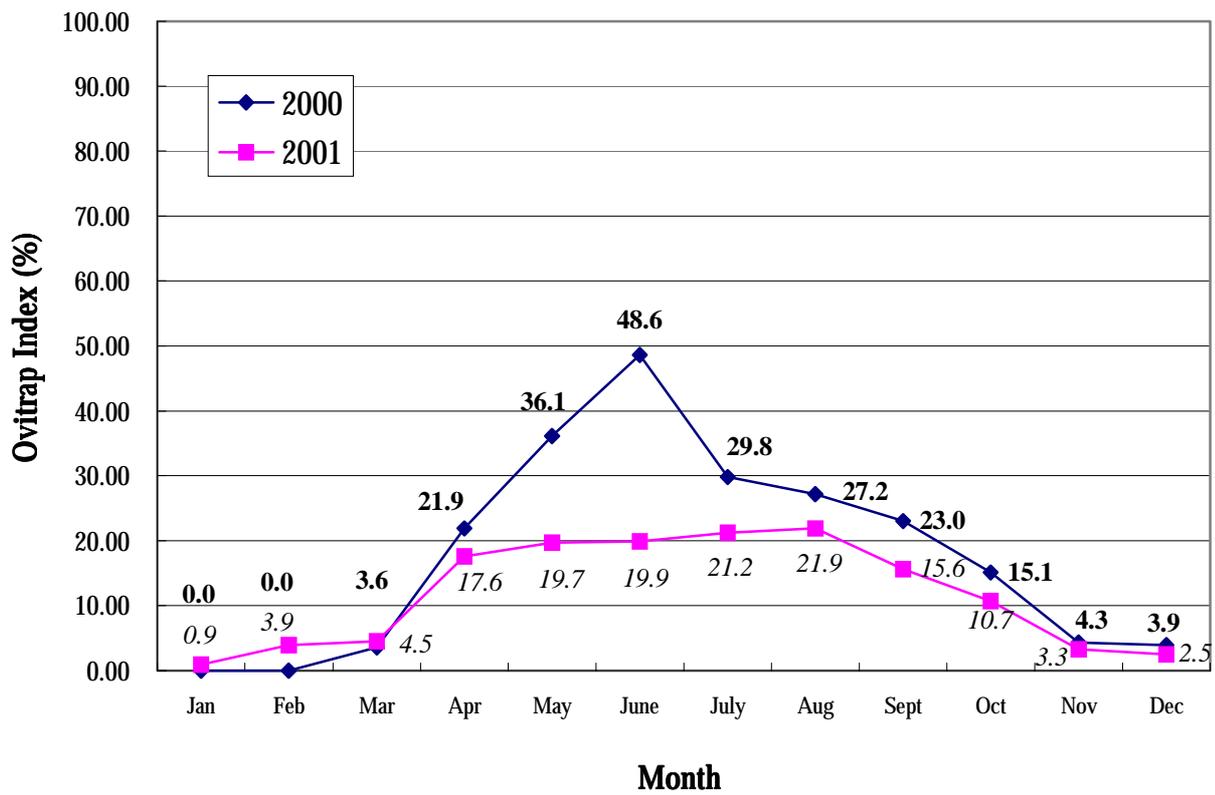
outreaching health talks for students and construction workers, and theme exhibition at the Health Education Exhibition and Resource Centre, will be held to arouse public awareness towards the importance of mosquito control work and to give them useful advice on how to prevent mosquito problems. To mobilise the participation of the younger generation in our campaign, a number of competitions will be held in primary and secondary schools to promote the message of the campaign. These include a photo-taking competition organised for secondary schools students, a poster-design competition organised for senior primary school students and a colouring competition organised for junior primary school students. We will also solicit assistance from the District Councils and Area Committees in organising mosquito control activities at the district level.

Way forward

11. With the collaborated efforts of various government departments and community support, we aim to sustain the effectiveness of our campaign efforts, thereby addressing and controlling the mosquito problem.

Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
April 2002

Monthly Average Ovitrap Indices for the Years 2000 and 2001



Average Ovitrap Index for the year 2000 : 24.1%

Average Ovitrap Index for the year 2001 : 12.4%