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the Administration)

Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene

**Minutes of special meeting
held on Tuesday, 16 September 2003 at 2:30 pm
in Conference Room A of the Legislative Council Building**

Members present : Hon Fred LI Wah-ming, JP (Chairman)
Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, JP (Deputy Chairman)
Hon James TO Kun-sun
Hon WONG Yung-kan
Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo
Hon Michael MAK Kwok-fung
Dr Hon LO Wing-lok, JP

Members absent : Dr Hon David CHU Yu-lin, JP
Hon CHAN Yuen-han, JP
Hon LEUNG Fu-wah, MH, JP
Hon WONG Sing-chi

Public officers attending : Mr Eddy CHAN
Deputy Secretary (Food & Environmental Hygiene)
Health, Welfare and Food Bureau

Mr Edward LAW
Principal Assistant Secretary (Food & Environmental Hygiene)2
Health, Welfare and Food Bureau

Ms Rhonda LO
Acting Deputy Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene
(Environmental Hygiene)

Mr HUNG Chi-pai
Assistant Director (Operations)1
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Dr Y Y HO
Consultant (Community Medicine)
(Risk Assessment and Communication)
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Mr M K CHEUNG
Assistant Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
(Fisheries)

Dr Patsy WONG
Senior Fisheries Officer (Aquaculture)
Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Clerk in attendance : Mrs Constance LI
Chief Assistant Secretary (2)5

Staff in attendance : Mr Stephen LAM
Assistant Legal Adviser 4

Ms Joanne MAK
Senior Assistant Secretary (2)2

Action

I Discovery of Vibrio Cholerae in retail fish stalls and the quality of fish tank water
[LC Paper Nos. CB(2) 3054/02-03(01) & (02)]

The Chairman said that the Panel had held a special meeting two years ago on 5 September 2001 to discuss ways to improve control of the quality of fish tank water, following the discovery of Vibrio Cholerae in fish tanks in food premises at that time. He said that the problem revealed last time was that while it was a licensing/tenancy condition that seafood vendors and seafood market stall operators must use an effective disinfection and filtration equipment for their fish tank water, no specific standards had been set to measure their effectiveness. The Administration had subsequently reviewed the effectiveness of the filtration and disinfection systems used by the trade and made recommendations for improvement.

2. The Chairman further said that this time the problem was that the Administration's quality monitoring programme for fish tank water had not covered wholesale live seafood stalls, such as the wholesale market at Aberdeen promenade. The Chairman considered that this had revealed the lack of coordination between the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) and Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD), and that there were also grey areas in existing legislation and regulatory measures in respect of surveillance of seafood and monitoring of fish tank water.

Action

3. Deputy Secretary (Food & Environmental Hygiene) (DS(FEH)) responded that the two recent cases of presence of *Vibrio Cholerae* in retail fish stalls had been discovered by FEHD through its routine sample testing of seawater from market stalls and supermarkets for examination of *E. Coli* and *Vibrio Cholerae*. He said that this demonstrated that the existing monitoring and surveillance system adopted by FEHD was effective in detecting *Vibrio Cholerae* in fish tank water.

4. DS(FEH) further said that following a comprehensive review on the control of fish tank water for keeping live seafood in 2002, FEHD had issued detailed guidelines to seafood operators. FEHD staff had also inspected all seafood retail outlets and advised the operators on the proper installation and maintenance of filtration and disinfection systems. DS(FEH) said that in the wake of the recent discovery of *Vibrio Cholerae* in two retail fish stalls, the Administration had reviewed its surveillance programme and control measures. It would also review the adequacy of the existing legislative framework and regulatory measures concerning surveillance, the examination and sampling of seafood in the food distribution chain.

5. As regards the wholesale market at Aberdeen promenade, DS(FEH) said that the Health, Welfare and Food Bureau had convened an inter-departmental meeting to work out practicable means of regularisation. He said that details of the regularisation scheme for the wholesale market would be provided to the Panel once they were ready. The Southern District Council and concerned parties would also be consulted.

6. On the existing control and monitoring system, DS(FEH) said that under section 10A of the Food Business Regulation (Cap132 sub leg X), no person should in the course of any food business keep any live fish or shell fish intended for human consumption in water of a quality below the standard specified by the Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene (DFEH) by notice published in the Gazette. Anyone in breach of the provision was liable to a maximum fine of \$10,000 and imprisonment for three months upon conviction.

7. DS(FEH) further briefed members on the following arrangements made for inspecting retail fish stalls under the existing monitoring system -

- (a) the licensing requirements/conditions and market tenancy conditions of FEHD had specified that licensed food premises and market stalls were required to install proper filtration and disinfection facilities to filter and disinfect water used for keeping live marine fish or shell fish intended for human consumption;
- (b) licensees/stallholders were prohibited from using flushing water for keeping live marine fish or shell fish;

Action

- (c) FEHD officers inspected market fish stalls once every eight weeks to ensure that their operations were in compliance with the requirements. As for supermarkets, fresh provision shops and restaurants, the inspection frequency would depend on the risk classification of the premises concerned, ranging from once every four weeks to once every 12 weeks; and
- (d) in addition to routine inspections, FEHD collected water samples from all licensed food premises, including supermarkets and seafood stalls for E. Coli testing once every eight weeks. Separately, two samples were collected for Vibrio Cholerae testing every year.

8. Referring to the recent discovery of Vibrio Cholerae in two retail fish stalls, DS(FEH) said that it was found that the ultra-violet disinfection system in the fish stall in Tokwawan Market was not functioning properly. Preliminary investigation revealed that the presence of Vibrio Cholerae in the water sample might have been caused by the malfunctioning of the ultra-violet disinfection system. Prosecution had already been instituted against the operator concerned.

9. Regarding the case of the supermarket fish stall in Pok Fu Lam, DS(FEH) said that FEHD was still in the course of investigation. The fish stall would not be allowed to re-open until FEHD was completely satisfied that the hygienic conditions there would not pose any risk to public health. Prosecution had also been instituted against the licensee concerned.

10. DS(FEH) said that the Administration would introduce further measures to improve fish tank water quality and seafood safety. He said that the Administration's surveillance and enforcement in respect of seafood safety had all along placed emphasis on the retail level. To enhance seafood safety, the Administration was actively considering introducing a licensing scheme to cover fish wholesalers by requiring them to install sanitary fittings, drainage and disinfection facilities in accordance with the standards set by FEHD. The licensing scheme would apply to both wholesale fish stalls managed by the Fish Marketing Organisation (FMO) and those outside its purview. DS(FEH) further said that the Administration would also review the existing legislation to bring it up-to-date and to improve the regulatory control of live fish.

Discussion

11. The Chairman sought the Administration's clarification on two points -

- (a) whether water samples were taken from retail fish stalls but not wholesale markets for testing; and
- (b) whether the Administration had any statistics on the unlicensed and unregulated live fish wholesale outlets.

Action

12. DS(FEH) responded that the existing legislation on the control of live fish was not clear. The Administration had therefore relied on section 10A of the Food Business Regulation under Cap. 132 to monitor the quality of seawater in fish tanks used for keeping live seafood, as a measure to ensure that live fish on sale was safe for consumption. DS(FEH) said that fish (except for shell fish and coral reef fish) was not regarded as high-risk food. He added that under Cap. 132, "live fish" was not included in the definition of "food". If the water in the fish tank was of a quality below the prescribed standard, prosecution could be taken against the licensee/operator. He further said that the enforcement strategy of FEHD had focused on the retail level because all fish would be distributed to retail outlets before they could reach the consumers. Such strategy had worked well all along.

13. DS(FEH) advised that each year, the number of fish tank water samples found to contain *Vibrio Cholerae* was actually small. He pointed out that the best safeguard against cholera was to practise good personal hygiene and to cook the food thoroughly before eating.

14. The Chairman considered it unacceptable that the Administration's monitoring of fish tank water did not cover wholesale stalls. He pointed out that it was also possible for some live fish wholesale outlets to conduct retail sale of live fish. DS(FEH) responded that the Administration now planned to introduce a licensing scheme for live fish wholesalers requiring them to install proper sanitary fittings, drainage and disinfection facilities. In the meantime, FEHD would step up water sampling from wholesale fish stalls.

15. As regards the number of existing live fish wholesale outlets, Acting Deputy Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene (Environmental Hygiene) (DD(EH)(Ag)) said that apart from the wholesale market at Aberdeen promenade, there were two other such markets located respectively in Lei Yue Mun and Lau Fau Shan providing a total of some 30 fish stalls. The wholesale market at Aberdeen promenade was the largest one amongst them.

16. Dr LO Wing-lok expressed support for introducing a licensing scheme to wholesale fish stalls to regulate the quality of their fish tank waters. He said that it was important to control the source of fish tank water, as there were still contamination at retail outlets despite their installation of filtration and disinfection systems for fish tank water. Dr LO pointed out that it was still inadequate to regulate the water quality at the wholesale and retail levels because contamination could take place in the delivery process of live seafood. It was therefore necessary to impose control on the water used in the seafood delivery process. He suggested that the proposed licensing system should cover distributors/transporters of live seafood so that enforcement could be taken against them if the water used for delivery of seafood was found to contain *E. Coli* or *Vibrio Cholerae*. He said that this could deter operators from drawing seawater at contaminated locations. Dr LO asked whether the Administration would require the transporters to install disinfection systems in their trucks.

Action

17. DS(FEH) responded that the Administration had considered the suggestion of regulating the quality of fish tank water from the source. However, the trades had expressed reservation about the cost effectiveness of such proposal. He explained that seawater was subject to climatic change. The Administration was unable to designate supply spots for these operators to abstract water because it would be difficult to guarantee that the water quality at any location would be safe and suitable at all times. He added that given the long shoreline of Hong Kong, it would be very difficult to enforce a control system whereby workers in the seafood trade were only allowed to draw seawater at designated locations for keeping live seafood. Nevertheless, DS(FEH) agreed that the Administration would give further consideration to Dr LO's suggestion in the course of reviewing its surveillance programme and control measures in relation to quality control of fish tank water.

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18. Dr LO Wing-lok clarified that he had not proposed that the Administration should designate locations for drawing seawater for keeping live fish. His suggestion was to include the delivery/distribution operators in the proposed licensing system. He considered that a licensing system covering the wholesalers, distributors and retailers should provide sufficient regulatory control of the water used for keeping live seafood. DS(FEH) agreed to consider Dr LO's suggestion and would provide concrete details of the proposed licensing system to the Panel as soon as possible.

19. Mr Michael MAK expressed support for the Administration reviewing the legislation to plug any loophole in the existing regulatory control for live fish and the quality of fish tank water at wholesale markets. He asked whether it was an offence, under existing legislation, for a seafood shop/stall operator to draw seawater from locations such as typhoon shelters and use it to keep live seafood for sale. Assistant Legal Adviser 4 said that section 10A of the Food Business Regulation provided that the quality of water used for keeping live fish or live shell fish in the course of any food business must comply with the standard set by DFEH. He said that the provision only made reference to water quality but not the source of the water. He added that, as the Administration had explained, a fish stall vendor would be considered to have breached this provision only if the testing results of the water sample taken from his fish tank was found exceeding the prescribed standard.

20. Mr Michael MAK asked how FEHD and consumers could tell the quality of water in a fish tank was good and hygienic. He also asked how FEHD could ensure the fitness of seawater used in the keeping of live seafood at fish stalls/shops.

21. DS(FEH) responded that given limited resources, the frequency of inspections on fish stalls/shops depended on the risk classification of the premises concerned. He explained that other than resources considerations, the Administration also had to consider whether the inspections, if made too frequent, would pose a nuisance to the trade.

Action

22. Consultant (Community Medicine) (C(CM)) supplemented that under the current quality monitoring programme for fish tank water, samples were taken regularly for E. Coli testing, as E. Coli was a widely accepted indicator of hygienic quality. He said that the standard specified for fish tank water was "E Coli: less than 610 per 100ml and absence of pathogenic organisms". When samples were found to exceed the prescribed standard, it meant that the water being tested had been contaminated by faeces to an unacceptable degree and investigations at the premises or stalls would be conducted immediately. Follow-up samples would also be collected. C(CM) further said that the monitoring programme included surveillance for the presence of Vibrio Cholerae as it could give rise to epidemic. C(CM) advised that the monitoring programme only sought to minimise the risks, and the best safeguard against cholera was to cook food thoroughly before eating.

23. DD(EH)(Ag) said that it was difficult for ordinary people to judge whether or not the quality of any fish tank water was good and hygienic as they lacked the knowledge and experience of FEHD staff in this respect. She added that FEHD had distributed pamphlets to operators of seafood shops/stalls to guide them how to ensure proper installation and maintenance of filtration and disinfection systems. For example, the filtration system had to be cleansed every week and the UV light of the disinfection system had to be replaced every six to nine months. C(CM) said that the most common disinfection methods used by the trade included UV radiation, ozonation and copper-silver ionization, all of which were effective for disinfection of fish tank water provided that proper maintenance of these systems was carried out.

24. Mr Michael MAK considered that the Administration should take measures against people who drew water at contaminated locations (e.g. typhoon shelters and locations where untreated waste was discharged) and used the water for keeping live seafood. The Chairman asked if it was possible to introduce legislation to prohibit people from abstracting water in specified contaminated areas.

25. DS(FEH) said that SHWF was concerned about the quality of fish tank water and had appointed C(CM) to set up an expert team to look into problems related to Hong Kong seawater. He said that the Administration was determined to devise measures to enhance the quality control of fish tank water. As to the suggestion of introducing legislation to control the locations for the trade to draw seawater, DS(FEH) reiterated that the Administration had reservations about the enforceability and cost-effectiveness of such a regulatory scheme.

26. DD(EH)(Ag) said that members of the public had also reported cases to FEHD regarding people suspected to be seawater suppliers found abstracting water from unsuitable sources. She informed members that there was a special task force under FEHD which carried out investigations into such cases. The task force would track down those people who were found delivering the seawater to a seafood stall/shop, and water samples would be taken from these premises for testing. She said that in the past year, none of the water samples so collected had been found to exceed the specified standard.

Action

27. Mr Andrew CHENG commented that the problems in the control of fish tank water remained to be solved despite discussion between the Panel and the Administration two years ago. He said that it was not adequate for the Administration just to put up signs to advise people not to draw seawater at locations where the quality of seawater was doubtful. He considered that the Administration should introduce legislation to provide for penalties against people who committed such acts. He suggested that the Administration should identify these locations and conduct testing of the quality of seawater there. If the test results in respect of water samples taken at any locations were found to exceed the standard (i.e. "E Coli: less than 610 per 100ml and absence of pathogenic organisms"), people should be forbidden from abstracting water at those locations. Mr CHENG urged the Administration to introduce control of the sources of fish tank water in order to effectively tackle the problem of fish tank water. He said that if the Administration also saw the need to impose such control, it should introduce it as soon as possible instead of giving the excuse that there would be enforcement problems.

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28. DS(FEH) explained that other than enforcement problems, the Administration had also considered other factors, for example, the effectiveness of introducing control on the sources of fish tank water. He said that contamination of fish tank water could occur at different stages from abstraction of seawater and transportation, storage to delivery of seafood. The Administration had to consider at which of these stages resources for enhancing the monitoring could be put to optimal use. He said that the Administration would take Mr CHENG's views into consideration.

29. The Chairman asked when the Administration would work out some viable options on enhancing the quality of fish tank water and consult the Panel on these options. DS(FEH) said that he was not in the position to give a timeframe as the expert team led by C(CM) to look into problems related to Hong Kong seawater had not held its first meeting yet. C(CM) said that the expert team would study the circumstances of growth of Vibrio Cholerae in Hong Kong waters (including marine fish culture zones), and climatic impact on the growth. He added that the Environmental Protection Department all along monitored and gathered data only on the level of E. Coli in Hong Kong waters. He said that the expert team would explore what could be done to enhance monitoring of the level of Vibrio Cholerae in Hong Kong waters.

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30. The Chairman said that the Panel would follow up the findings of the study conducted by the expert team as well as the measures to be recommended by the Administration to enhance the quality of fish tank water. He advised that the Administration should revert to the Panel in three months' time.

31. Mr WONG Yung-kan considered that the discovery of Vibrio Cholerae in the supermarket fish stall in Pok Fu Lam gave a warning signal that the Administration should step up monitoring of the operation and hygiene standards of supermarkets. He considered it unfair that the Administration was conducting more frequent inspections to fish stalls in markets than those in supermarkets. Mr WONG

Action

considered that the Administration should improve communication with the trade in exploring ways to enhance the quality of fish tank water. He commented that the Administration was willing to explore for improvement measures only after food incidents had occurred. He further suggested that it was more appropriate for AFCD to assume the responsibility of monitoring the quality of water for keeping live fish.

32. Mr WONG Yung-kan also expressed concern about the lack of regulatory control of live fish, especially shell fish imported from other places. He said that the Administration should implement safety control of seafood at source and conduct inspection and random sampling of live fish at points of import. He stressed that contaminated shell fish could give rise to serious food poisoning and the import control of seafood delivered to Hong Kong by air was loose. He further suggested that the Administration should make reference to overseas experience such as Japan where health inspectors conducted inspection and random sampling of live fish when it was just delivered to fish marketing organisations. He suggested that the Administration should review the Marine Fish (Marketing) Ordinance (Cap.291) and empower FMO to conduct inspection and random sampling of live fish.

33. Mr WONG Yung-kan said that the Administration had all along recommended the use of synthetic seawater. He pointed out that synthetic seawater made in the Mainland was cheaper but poor in quality. Mr Tommy CHEUNG commented that the use of synthetic water also had its problem. From his experience, a lot of fish died in fish tanks which used synthetic seawater.

34. DS(FEH) responded that FEHD was conducting a detailed investigation into the operation of the supermarket fish stall in Pok Fu Lam to find out why *Vibrio Cholerae* was found in the fish tank water there. He stressed that there was no preferential treatment to supermarket chains, as demonstrated by the fact that prosecution action had already been taken against the licensee of the supermarket chain concerned. DS(FEH) said that given limited resources, the frequency of inspections to different seafood retail outlets was based on their risk classification.

35. DS(FEH) said that the Administration would review whether it was necessary to introduce legislative amendments to extend the regulatory measures in respect of chilled fish to live fish. For example, consideration could be given to requiring live fish to be landed only at designated locations to facilitate regulatory control of it.

36. Mr WONG Yung-kan said that the Administration should strengthen the monitoring not only of live fish but also of chilled fish. He said that it was common for large-scale supermarkets to import fish direct from the Mainland without going through the wholesale fish markets operated by FMO. He urged the Administration to strengthen its regulatory control in this respect.

Action

37. DS(FEH) said that the import of fish, including fish transported by air, had to be accompanied by official health certificates issued by recognised overseas authorities. He explained that under its food surveillance programme, the Administration conducted inspection and random sampling of chilled and frozen fish at points of import. As for live fish, the Administration also took samples for testing whether they were ciguatoxin-free.

38. Mr Tommy CHEUNG said that the problem concerning control of fish tank water had existed for a long time. He believed that FEHD had not given preferential treatment to any particular kind of fish retail outlets. He pointed out that under the existing surveillance programme, it took at least a few days for the test results of samples of fish tank water to be available. By the time the test results were available, the fish tank water of premises concerned probably had been changed, and it could not be ascertained whether the problem actually laid with the fish tank water or it was due to other reasons. In these circumstances, the shop/stall operators could only conduct disinfection for their fish tanks. Mr CHEUNG further said that he did not support imposing excessive control on the seafood trade. He pointed out that, for example, the detainment of shell fish for sample testing might result in bacterial growth in the shell fish, although it was originally in good conditions.

39. Mr Tommy CHEUNG criticised that the surveillance programme for fish tank water seemed to have put the responsibility solely on retail outlets and food premises, and they were subject to prosecution if the quality of fish tank water was below the specified standard. He said that this was most unfair if the operators concerned had fully complied with FEHD's guidelines, and the causes of contamination were beyond the control of the operators. He added that he had previously suggested regulating the source of seawater. The seawater suppliers had proposed establishing a centralised seawater treatment plant for filtration and disinfection of seawater for supply to food premises and retail outlets. If the Administration could provide the land for construction of the plant, the trade would be willing to pay for the costs of construction and operation. Mr CHEUNG considered this more effective in ensuring the quality of fish tank water. He asked the Administration why it did not consider the suggestion since there was much vacant land.

40. DS(FEH) said that the existing monitoring and surveillance system adopted by FEHD was effective in detecting *Vibrio Cholerae* in fish tank water, as the two recent cases were discovered through this mechanism. He said that the Administration would need to evaluate the cost-effectiveness of any measure proposed to solve the problem, as it involved public resources and allocation of land. He added that the Administration was obliged to consider alternative options which were more cost-effective and could also achieve the objective. He said that, after all, there was no regulatory measure that could completely eliminate the risks. The Administration considered that the additional measures introduced or being contemplated, namely, implementing a water quality surveillance programme for all live fish wholesale stalls, introducing a licensing scheme for fish wholesalers and amending legislation to improve safety control of live fish, would also enhance fish tank water quality and seafood safety.

Action

41. Mr Tommy CHEUNG was dissatisfied with the Administration's reply. He requested the Administration to provide information on the actual cost involved in providing land for construction of a centralised seawater treatment plant. He said that without providing such a facility to ensure the quality of fish tank water, the quality of fish tank water at the wholesale and retail levels could not be safeguarded. He also considered that the Administration had failed to address his concern about the long time required for obtaining test results in respect of water samples.

42. DS(FEH) explained that it took time for the isolation of *Vibrio Cholerae* in laboratory, and so far no rapid test had been developed for testing of *Vibrio Cholerae* in water samples. He said that even with the provision of a centralised seawater treatment plant, the problem of lacking a method for rapid tests still remained. He reiterated that the existing monitoring and surveillance system in respect of fish tank water was well established and was proven to be effective in detecting *Vibrio Cholerae* in fish tank water. He considered that the provision of a centralised seawater treatment plant could not be justified when there were alternative options which seemed to be more viable and equally effective.

43. Dr LO Wing-lok agreed with the Administration that it would be very difficult to control the locations for the trade to draw seawater given the long shoreline and the natural fluctuation of water quality because of, for example, direction of water flow. Dr LO said that he would support the suggestion of providing a centralised seawater treatment plant, if the land capital cost involved was small, and if the trade was willing to pay for the costs of construction and operation. However, he pointed out that even with the provision of such a plant, it was still difficult to prevent people from abstracting seawater at unsuitable locations and used it for keeping live seafood.

44. Dr LO Wing-lok further said that based on the concept of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP), which had been promoted by the Administration, the Administration should actually impose control at three critical stages (i.e. wholesale, transport, and retail). He said that this approach would be most effective in ensuring the quality of fish tank water and would have the least enforcement problems. He requested the Administration to consider his suggestion and report its deliberations to the Panel further discussion.

45. Mr WONG Yung-kan said that some operators of seafood wholesale markets suggested that the Administration should designate locations suitable for abstraction of seawater and to construct water pipes to transfer seawater from those locations to them for keeping live seafood. DS(FEH) responded that the suggestion of constructing water pipes to transfer seawater for use by seafood stalls might not be viable, as it was uncertain whether the stall vendors would be willing to use the seawater if they were required to pay for it.

Action

46. Referring to paragraph 19 of the Administration's paper, Mr WONG requested the Administration to provide more details on the regularisation scheme for the wholesale market at Aberdeen promenade. DS(FEH) advised that the scheme would seek to safeguard public health and regulate the wholesaling operations there. The relevant inter-departmental working group would consult the Southern District Council on details of the scheme in due course.

47. In response to the Chairman, DD(EH)(Ag) provided the following information -

- (a) From January to August 2003, about 9 400 fish tank water samples had been taken, of which 2 930 had been tested of the presence of *Vibrio cholerae* and the remaining for *E. Coli* 140 samples were found to contain *E. Coli* exceeding the specified standard and two premises were prosecuted for samples containing *E. Coli* exceeding the specified standard in the follow-up samples. Prosecution against another two premises had also been taken for samples containing *Vibrio cholerae* in their follow-up samples.
- (b) In 2001, 211 fish tank water samples had been found to contain *E. Coli* exceeding the specified standard. 15 had been found to contain *E. Coli* exceeding the specified standard in their follow-up samples. Prosecution had been taken against the 15 premises concerned.
- (c) In 2002, 229 fish tank water samples had been found to contain *E. Coli* exceeding the specified standard. 18 had been found to contain *E. Coli* exceeding the specified standard in their follow-up samples. Prosecution had been taken against the 18 premises concerned.

48. In concluding the discussion, the Chairman requested the Administration to further consider the suggestions raised by members and report its deliberations to the Panel -

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- (a) introducing regulatory control of the quality of water in fish tanks during the transportation/delivery stage for supply of live seafood;
- (b) providing land for the construction of a centralised seawater treatment plant;
- (c) constructing water pipes to transfer seawater from designated locations to seafood wholesale markets; and
- (d) introducing legislation to require people to abstract seawater only at designated locations, or to prohibit people from abstracting seawater at locations known to be contaminated areas.

Action

Adm

49. In response to the Chairman, DS(FEH) agreed to provide a report on FEHD's investigation into the case of presence of *Vibrio Cholerae* in the supermarket fish stall in Pok Fu Lam on completion of the investigation. Also referring to this case, Mr Michael MAK expressed dissatisfaction with the statement made on the previous day by the spokesman of the supermarket chain concerned that the company was disappointed that FEHD had taken prosecution against it. Mr MAK considered that the statement was most inappropriate and seemed to be challenging the impartiality of the legal system.

II. Any other business

50. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 4:25 pm.

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
10 November 2003