


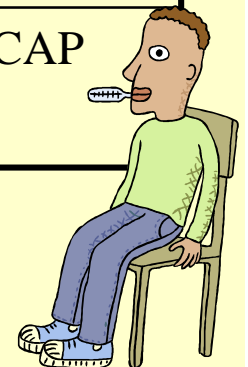
Chronology of Major Events of the SARS Incident in Hong Kong


Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food



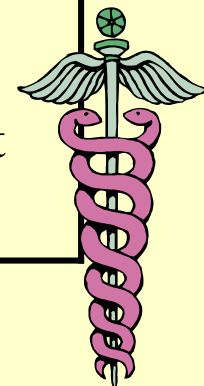
February 2003

11 Feb (Tue)	<p>WHO receives reports from Ministry of Health (MoH), China of an outbreak of acute respiratory syndrome in Guangdong province</p> <p>Hospital Authority (HA) sets up a Working Group on Severe Community Acquired Pneumonia (SCAP) to advise on the monitoring and approaches to be adopted on local cases. (Definition of SCAP: cases of community acquired pneumonia requiring assisted ventilation or ICU/HDU care)</p> <p>Department of Health (DH) issues press release on the situation in China</p>
19-20 Feb (Wed)	<p>DH alerts WHO of two cases of Influenza A H5N1 infection (Avian Flu) in a 9-year old boy and his 33-year old father with history of travel to Fujian, China</p>
22 Feb (Sat)	<p>A professor from Zhongshan in Guangdong province suspected of SCAP gets admitted to Kwong Wah Hospital</p>



March 2003

11 Mar (Tue)	<p>14 medical and nursing staff from Ward 8A and medical department of the Prince of Wales Hospital (PWH) report sick, with flu-like symptoms</p> <p>DH and HA work on control of outbreak</p>
12 Mar (Wed)	<p>DH alerts WHO of the PWH situation</p> <p>WHO (Geneva time) issues global alert of the cases of acute respiratory syndrome in Vietnam, Hong Kong (HK), and Guangdong with unknown aetiology that appeared to place health workers at high risk</p>



March 2003

14 Mar (Fri)	<p>At the HKSAR Chief Executive's (CE) weekly meeting with senior officials, it is agreed to -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">–disseminate information of the outbreak to the public on a daily basis–advise the public on precautionary measure–work closely with international organization <p>SHWF sets up and chairs the 1st meeting of Task Force on SARS. Membership comprises representatives from DH, HA and experts from University of Hong Kong (HKU) and Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK). Purpose is to speed up information exchange and coordinate preventive efforts</p>
16 Mar (Sun)	<p>SHWF chairs the first of a series of daily press briefings on the latest SARS situation and government measures</p>



March 2003

17 Mar (Mon)	SHWF chairs the 2 nd Task Force meeting to discuss the transmission mode, and review case definition, progress of PWH outbreak and infection control guidelines
19 Mar (Wed)	Closure of PWH A&E DH announces the results of epidemiological investigation for a cluster of cases related to ██████████-Hotel M.
20 Mar (Thu)	SHWF chairs the 3 rd Task Force meeting to discuss diagnostic guidelines, treatment protocol and infection control measures in schools
22 Mar (Sat)	HKU announces identification of coronavirus as the agent responsible for SARS



March 2003

22 Mar (Sat)	Interdepartmental Action Coordinating Committee chaired by PSHWF is set up to coordinate implementation efforts among 20 government departments and 4 bureaux
24 Mar (Mon)	SHWF chairs the 4 th Task Force meeting to review the evidence on causative agents and refine the treatment protocol. The Task Force agrees to launch a mass publicity campaign and develop sector-specific disease prevention guidelines.
25 Mar (Tue)	CE forms the SARS steering committee, involving the whole Government, to coordinate government measures to control SARS



March 2003

26 Mar (Wed)	SHWF chairs the 5 th Task Force meeting, to discuss the latest SARS situation including the outbreak in Amoy Gardens and a review of the public health measures
27 Mar (Thu)	CE announces measures to combat SARS, including <ul style="list-style-type: none">–making SARS statutory notifiable–health declaration for incoming visitors from 29 March–Designated medical centres from 31 March–suspension of classes in all schools from 29 March to 6 April



March 2003

28 Mar (Fri)	SHWF initiates the development of an electronic database (e-SARS) to capture on-line and real time patient information to be used by DH and HA for the management and control of SARS
30 Mar (Sun)	SHWF chairs the 6 th Task Force meeting to discuss the field investigation findings and agree on the isolation of block E of Amoy Gardens for 10 days starting on 31 Mar
31 Mar (Mon)	DH mandates all close contacts of SARS to report daily to the designated medical centres



April 2003

1 Apr (Tue)	New information regarding the possible environmental factors of the outbreak is reviewed. Decision is made to evacuate Block E Amoy Gardens residents to isolation camp and commence thorough cleansing of individual flats and whole building
2 Apr (Wed)	WHO issues travel advisory recommending that all non-essential travel to HK and Guangdong be postponed
3 Apr (Thu)	No-visiting policy extends to all acute wards in public hospitals



April 2003

4 Apr (Thu)	To strengthen contact tracing, the police is invited to assist, using its highly sophisticated computer system (MIIDSS)
8 Apr (Tue)	An online e-SARS database is launched to provide real time information of SARS cases
10 Apr (Thu)	The government announces the implementation of home quarantine measures of all household contacts of confirmed cases
10 - 11 Apr (Fri)	SHWF sends a delegation to Guangdong province and consensus has been reached on - <ul style="list-style-type: none">–exchange of information on SARS–medical cooperation–notification mechanism–border quarantine arrangement



April 2003

17 Apr (Thu)	<p>All passengers departing at airport are required to have their body temperature checked</p> <p>Experts from Guangdong and HK meet to discuss prevention and treatment of SARS on 17 – 18 April</p>
22 Apr (Tue)	<p>SHWF meets with the following to discuss research issues, management and control of SARS outbreak</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– [REDACTED] scientific director and chief executive officer of the Aaron Diamond AIDS Research Center– [REDACTED] former director of CDC, Atlanta, US– [REDACTED] director of the US Collaborating Center of WHO



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taking



香港衛生防護中心
Public Health Centre, Department of Health, Hong Kong SAR

April 2003

24 Apr (Thu)	<p>People arriving HK from land borders are required to undergo temperature check</p> <p>SHWF sends a delegation to participate in the ASEAN+3 Ministerial Meeting on SARS held in Kuala Lumpur. Measures to strengthen cross border control and international collaboration are discussed</p>
25 Apr (Fri)	<p>Home quarantine measures extend to close contacts of suspected SARS cases</p>



April 2003

26 Apr (Sat)	SHWF convenes meeting to review and enhance measures to prevent spread in residential care homes for the elderly
29 Apr (Tue)	<p>CE and SHWF participate in the ASEAN+3 SARS Conference held in Bangkok.</p> <p>SHWF also makes a detailed presentation regarding HK efforts in the control of SARS outbreak to [REDACTED] Executive Director, Communicable Diseases, WHO Geneva Head Office</p>

May 2003

2 May (Fri)	SHWF meets with [REDACTED], WHO SARS Expert Team member to Guangdong, to discuss the public health measures implemented in HK to control of SARS
5 May (Mon)	The government announces its intention to establish a CDC-like organization for the prevention and control of infectious diseases
6 May (Tue)	<p>SHWF and Director of Health convene a videoconferencing with [REDACTED] and his team in WHO to provide updated data on SARS outbreak and exchange of views on its management and control</p> <p>SHWF convenes a videoconference with [REDACTED] (USA) to discuss the latest situation in HK and cooperation on SARS research and disease control</p>



May 2003

12 May (Mon)	SHWF convenes a videoconference with WHO to further update the latest HK situation
17 May (Sat)	SHWF chairs the 7 th Task force meeting to review the laboratory results and diagnosis of SARS cases
19 May (Mon)	SHWF attends the World Health Assembly held at WHO Head Office in Geneva on 19 to 20 May – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> –Meeting with WHO –Meeting with Vice Premier, [REDACTED], China –Bilaterals wit Canadian, Irish, British and Finnish Health Ministers
23 May (Fri)	WHO lift travel advisory for HK



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Update 63 - World Health Organization changes Hong Kong, Guangdong travel recommendations

May 2003

24 May (Sat)	The importation of game meat derived from civet cats has been suspended as a precautionary measure
28 May (Wed)	The government announces the membership of the SARS Expert Committee tasked to review the management and control of SRAS outbreak in HK
29 May (Thu)	Experts from Guangdong, HK and Macau meet in HK on 29-30/5 to discuss the prevention and control of SARS (2 nd meeting)



June 2003

5 Jun (Thu)	CDC, USA lifts its travel advisory against HK
12 Jun (Thu)	Secretariat of the SARS Expert Committee issues invitation to the general public for written submissions
13 Jun (Fri)	HWFB and WHO co-organize SARS Clinical Management Workshop in Hong Kong on 13 to 14 Jun



June 2003

17 Jun (Tue)	SHWF briefs participants at the WHO Global Conference on SARS in Kuala Lumpur on the latest situation in HK
19 Jun (Thu)	SHWF meets ████████, Director General, WHO in Hong Kong to provide the update on SARS
23 Jun (Mon)	WHO removes HK from the list of areas with local transmission of SARS

