

**立法會**  
**Legislative Council**

Ref : CB2/PL/FE

LC Paper No. CB(2) 2090/03-04  
(These minutes have been seen by  
the Administration)

**Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene**

**Minutes of Meeting**  
**held on Wednesday, 25 February 2004 at 10:45 am**  
**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 WONG Yung-kan  
Hon YEUNG Yiu-chung, BBS  
Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo  
Hon Michael MAK Kwok-fung  
Hon LEUNG Fu-wah, MH, JP  
Dr Hon LO Wing-lok, JP

**Members attending** : Hon Mrs Selina CHOW LIANG Shuk-ye, GBS, JP  
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip  
Hon IP Kwok-him, JP

**Public officers attending** : Item IV  
  
Dr YEOH Eng-kiong, JP  
Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food  
  
Mr Eddy CHAN  
Deputy Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food  
(Food & Environmental Hygiene)  
  
Miss Vivian KO  
Principal Assistant Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food  
(Food & Environmental Hygiene) 1

Mr Gregory LEUNG  
Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

Mr Thomas CHAN  
Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation

Mr Donald TONG  
Deputy Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene  
(Administration and Development)

Mr C W LAI  
Assistant Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation  
(Inspection and Quarantine)

Item VII

Mr Eddy CHAN  
Deputy Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food  
(Food & Environmental Hygiene)

Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong  
Assistant Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation  
(Fisheries)

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

**Staff in attendance** : Mr Raymond LAM  
Senior Council Secretary (2)5

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**I Confirmation of minutes of previous meetings**  
[LC Paper Nos. CB(2) 1261/03-04 and CB(2)1386/03-04]

The minutes of the meetings held on 18 December 2003 and 9 January 2004 were confirmed.

**II Date of next meeting and items for discussion**

[LC Paper Nos. CB(2) 1382/03-04(01) and (02)]

2. Members agreed to discuss the following items, as requested by the Administration, at the next regular meeting scheduled for 19 March 2004 at 10:45 am-

- (a) Control of ice-making plants;
- (b) Reprovisioning of cremators at Diamond Hill Crematorium; and
- (c) Follow-up discussion on the control of importation and sale of chilled meat and poultry.

**III Information paper(s) issued since last meeting**

[LC Paper No. CB(2) 1438/03-04(01)]

3. Members noted that the Administration had, in response to members' request at the meeting on 2 February 2004, provided an information paper on prosecutions and appeals against conviction for sale of meat from unapproved sources and displaying chilled meat for sale as fresh meat.

4. The Chairman said that as requested by the Administration, the issue would be further discussed at the next regular meeting scheduled for 19 March 2004.

**IV Follow-up discussion on measures against the outbreak of avian influenza**

[LC Paper Nos. CB(2) 1382/03-04(05) and CB(2)1493/03-04(01)]

Proposed interim measures and longer-term issues to address the avian influenza problem

5. At the invitation of the Chairman, Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (SHWF) briefed Members on the Administration's paper on the proposed interim and longer-term measures to address the avian influenza problem. He said that so far the preventive measures in Hong Kong were found to be effective in achieving zero H5N1 infection in Hong Kong. However, the outbreak situation in the region strongly suggested that the problem would be recurrent, and there was potential public health hazard as the virus could be transmitted from poultry to human. SHWF said that the Administration would welcome views from the public and Members on the proposed interim and longer-term measures to address the avian influenza problem.

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6. SHWF further said that, subject to Members' support for the importation of fertile eggs, the Administration would discuss with the poultry farmers the feasibility of developing local hatcheries and report back to the Panel. The Administration intended to report, in about two weeks' time, the criteria and circumstances for resuming the importation of chilled and frozen poultry meat from the Mainland and other infected countries. The Administration also intended to report, in about a month's time, its proposals to achieve the policy objective of separating humans and live poultry.

7. Mr WONG Yung-kan said that although the live poultry trade was not opposed to the importation of fertile eggs for local hatching, they were very much concerned about their livelihood given the uncertainty on the timing for resuming the importation of live poultry. Mr WONG considered that as the situation in the Mainland and the neighbouring Asia region had stabilised, importation of day-old chickens should be resumed. If the Administration intended to permanently prohibit the importation of live poultry, many people involved in the wholesale, retail and transportation of live poultry would not be able to maintain their living. Mr WONG expressed reservation about the success rate of hatching fertile eggs by local hatcheries and asked whether the Administration would provide assistance in the development of local hatcheries.

8. SHWF responded that it was not possible to predict when the avian flu problem would subside in neighbouring places, and the Administration had proposed interim measures to address the problem. SHWF said that the Administration had to strike a balance between safeguarding public health and protecting the interests of the industries. SHWF further said that given the severity of avian influenza outbreaks in the region, the Administration did not envisage that the importation of live poultry from places affected by avian influenza could resume in the near future, especially when there were new cases of avian influenza in the Mainland and Japan. He pointed out that Beijing and Shanghai had also maintained similar ban on live poultry. The Administration was aware of the difficulties encountered by the live poultry trade and had thus proposed a series of relief measures. The Administration would discuss with poultry farmers the feasibility of establishing local hatcheries. He said that consideration would be given to lifting the ban on the importation of chilled and frozen poultry from places of lower risk when the outbreak situation in the neighbouring region started to ease off.

9. Mr WONG Yung-kan asked whether Hong Kong would lift its restriction on the importation of live poultry, if similar restrictions were lifted in Beijing and Shanghai. SHWF responded that Beijing and Shanghai were quoted as examples in explaining the measures adopted in other places. The Administration would first consider whether public health could be safeguarded in considering whether the import ban should be lifted.

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10. Mr LEUNG Fu-wah commented that unlike other places such as Japan and Shanghai, all local chickens were vaccinated against H5N1. Moreover, the live poultry in Mainland farms for export to Hong Kong were under indirect monitoring by the Hong Kong health authorities. Mr LEUNG considered that the measures adopted by the Administration were too stringent. He said that the proposal of importing only chilled and frozen poultry from the Mainland would adversely affect the local live poultry industry trade. He also asked whether the Administration had consulted experts other than microbiologists on the proposed measures. He suggested that the Administration should resume the importation of live poultry from designated farms in Guangdong Province if there were no avian flu cases in these farms.

11. SHWF responded that the Administration had recently sought the views of academics and experts, including experts who had expressed views at the Panel meeting on 30 January 2004, on the risk management of avian influenza. He said that the Panel had passed a motion at the meeting on 30 January 2004 urging the Government to stop processing applications for the import of live poultry, poultry carcasses and poultry eggs from affected places, when there was not yet an outbreak of avian influenza in Guangdong Province. It was inappropriate to lift such a ban when the current situation was even worse with outbreaks in over 16 provinces including Guangdong. He stressed that the Administration would consider resuming the importation of chilled and frozen poultry when the outbreak situation in the neighbouring region started to ease off.

12. Mr YEUNG Yiu-chung said that the live poultry trade was concerned about the uncertainty in the timing for lifting the ban on the importation of live poultry. He asked about the criteria for lifting the import ban.

13. SHWF responded that the Administration was not in a position to predict the timing for lifting the ban on importation of live poultry from affected places, which would depend on the outbreak situation in the region, the measures adopted in other places, and the migration pattern of migratory birds. He anticipated that the ban on importation of live poultry would not be lifted for at least a few months.

14. Mr Andrew CHENG considered that it was most important to safeguard public health. Referring to paragraph 11 of the Administration's paper, he asked how the Administration would assess whether the outbreak situation in the region had started to ease off. He said that if the public had no confidence in the safety of live poultry, it would not help the trade even if the import ban was lifted. While agreeing that the Administration should keep the situation under review and revise its measures from time to time, Mr CHENG considered that the Administration should let the public know the criteria and procedures for lifting the import ban on chilled and frozen poultry from the affected places. He commented that the way SHWF had handled the SARS outbreak gave the impression that the Administration lacked commitment in dealing with outbreaks of this kind. He therefore hoped that the Administration could demonstrate its commitment in tackling the problem of avian flu.

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15. SHWF responded that as a principal official under the accountability system, he was always committed to safeguarding public health. On lifting the import ban on chilled and frozen poultry, he said that the factors to be considered included whether the situation in the affected places were under control (i.e. there were no further outbreaks or the number of cases had stabilised), and whether the monitoring mechanisms of the places concerned were adequate. He said that the Administration would first discuss with the experts, and then consult the Panel and the industry on the proposed criteria and procedures in about two weeks' time.

16. Mr Michael MAK said that while he agreed that it was important to safeguard public health, he also shared the concern about the difficulty faced by the industry. He asked why the importation of fertile eggs would pose a lower risk of introducing avian influenza in comparison with imported day-old chickens. He also asked whether the Administration would provide technical support and facilitate technology transfer from other places, if the hatching rate of fertile eggs was low.

17. Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation responded that normally if the chicken was sick, it would not produce any eggs. Moreover, fertile eggs were sanitised before hatching, whereas there was a high risk of cross-infection among day-old chickens in the transportation process. He said that the Administration had recently discussed the hatching of fertile eggs with the local poultry trade, and he was confident that the technical problems could be overcome. Where necessary, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department would discuss with the Labour Department regarding importation of the necessary skilled labour.

18. Dr LO Wing-lok expressed support for the Administration's proposed measures to address the avian influenza problem, although the importation of sanitised fertile eggs for local hatching might not be the best option. Nevertheless, he agreed that importing fertile eggs for local hatching would be able to reduce the risk of introducing avian influenza, and approved local hatcheries isolated from other farms could also ensure the safety of the hatching process. He asked how the Administration could attract poultry farmers to invest in the development of local hatcheries, if local hatching was only a temporary "tide-over" measure.

19. Dr LO further said that since frozen poultry imposed less risk to human health than chilled poultry, consideration should be given to the importation of frozen poultry in the first place before the importation of chilled poultry. He also suggested that the viscera of frozen or chilled poultry should be removed before import. SHWF undertook to consider the views of Dr LO.

20. Mr Albert CHAN said that if the Administration wished to encourage local hatching of fertile eggs, it should consider providing subsidies to poultry farmers for development of local hatcheries. He considered that the Administration should formulate a long-term policy on the development of agriculture and poultry.

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21. SHWF agreed with the views of Mr Albert CHAN. He said that it was the Administration's policy to maintain stable local supply of chickens. The Administration would provide financial and technical support to poultry farmers.

22. Mr Albert CHAN asked why chilled poultry, which was kept at about 4°C to 8°C, would pose a lower risk to human health than live poultry. He said that it often took a few days for the chilled poultry to be delivered to Hong Kong, and the hygiene conditions of some poultry farms were not satisfactory. Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene responded that the poultry would have to satisfy the health requirements before slaughtering and avian influenza would not develop inside chilled chickens. There were also stringent requirements on the handling of chilled poultry. Mr CHAN said that there was still the risk of development of other viruses in chilled chickens which were kept at a temperature of 4°C to 8°C.

23. Mr Tommy CHEUNG said that he did not see the need for importing fertile eggs. He asked about the extent fertile eggs were considered safer than imported day-old chickens, and whether the Administration had decided not to import day-old chickens on a long-term basis. He said that he had supported the motion moved at the Panel meeting on 30 January 2004 because there was stocking-up of chickens in markets at that time, and a government official had said that an outbreak of avian influenza in Hong Kong could lead to the death of some 300 000 people.

24. Mr Tommy CHEUNG asked the Administration to clarify -

- (a) whether the risk of human-to-human infection of avian influenza was high; and
- (b) why there was a need to ban the importation of live poultry, chilled poultry and day-old chickens from designated farms in Guangdong Province where there were no outbreaks.

25. Mr Tommy CHEUNG said that the Administration should also consider the fact that there were already stringent monitoring and surveillance measures for live and chilled poultry imported from the Mainland. He considered that the Administration should give consideration to the impact on the economy in continuing the import ban, and conduct a realistic and comprehensive assessment on when the ban should be lifted.

26. Mrs Selina CHOW considered that the motion passed by the Panel at its meeting on 30 January 2004 had spent its usefulness in the light of new developments. Mrs CHOW said that the live poultry trade was worried that the ban would become a long-term measure and the trade would have no room to operate in the future. Many people in Hong Kong also hoped that the supply of live poultry would not be discontinued. Mrs CHOW asked whether the Administration would, instead of

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continuing the import ban on live poultry, take steps to ensure the sanity standard of local farms and designated farms in the Guangdong Province. She urged that the Administration should formulate plans, in consultation with the live poultry trade, to resume the importation of live poultry as soon as possible.

27. SHWF responded that the Administration had no intention to permanently prohibit the importation of live poultry from the affected areas. He said that the estimates made by an official of the Department of Health on the possible death arising from an outbreak of avian influenza in Hong Kong were based on a theoretical world and on a number of assumptions in a discussion seminar. He stressed that while he had confidence in the present surveillance and monitoring system on live poultry in Hong Kong, there was no guarantee that Hong Kong was 100% safe in view of the widespread outbreak in neighbouring places. Given the close contact between human and live poultry and the crowded environment in Hong Kong, it would be necessary to look at the ways to achieve the policy objective of separating human from live poultry as a longer term measures. The Administration hoped to brief members on its way forward in about a month's time, and it hoped to achieve a balance that was acceptable to all parties. In the meantime, the Administration would provide assistance to the trade to help them tide over the present difficulties.

28. SHWF further said that chickens hatched from fertile eggs were safer than imported day-old chickens because fertile eggs were sanitised before import and had a lower chance of infection, and hatching of chickens would take place at places separated from other chickens. On the other hand, if a day-old chicken was infected by H5N1 virus after hatchery, the virus could multiply inside the chicken and spread rapidly to other chickens in the farm through its faeces. As for the effectiveness of vaccination, SHWF pointed out that at present, only 70% to 80% of vaccinated chickens had developed H5N1 antibodies. Moreover, the vaccine had no effect on H7 virus, and its long-term effectiveness was also unknown.

29. The Chairman said that the Administration had stated at the Panel meeting on 30 January 2004 that since there was no outbreak of avian influenza in the Guangdong Province, it would not ban the importation of live poultry from the Mainland. The Administration decided to impose the import ban only in that evening after receiving reports of confirmed H5N1 cases in Guangdong. He asked whether there was a change in the Administration's policy in that it would not lift the import ban until the outbreak situation in the neighbouring region had eased off.

30. SHWF responded that there were only small numbers of confirmed infection in a province and suspected cases of infection in two other provinces in the Mainland on 30 January 2004. The situation at that time was much different from now as there had been widespread outbreaks in over 16 provinces in the Mainland. The consideration of lifting the import ban on live poultry would depend on whether the current surveillance measures were adequate to prevent the occurrence of avian flu in Hong Kong.



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31. Dr LO Wing-lok said that the motion passed by the Panel at its meeting on 30 January 2004 reflected the demand and sentiment of the community at that time. There was also public concern about the possibility of live poultry being smuggled from affected provinces into Guangdong, which did not have any avian flu cases at that time, for export into Hong Kong. Mr Tommy CHEUNG commented that the risk of live poultry being smuggled from affected provinces into Guangdong for export into Hong Kong should be low.

32. Mr LEUNG Fu-wah proposed the following motion which was seconded by Mr WONG Yung-kan -

"That this Panel urges the Government to resume as soon as possible the importation of quarantined and healthy live poultry and newborn chicks, as well as frozen and chilled poultry carcass, from farms in Guangdong Province designated for export to Hong Kong."

33. The Chairman expressed concern whether there might be conflict between the proposed motion and the motion passed by the Panel at its meeting on 30 January 2004.

34. Mr LEUNG Fu-wah explained that he proposed the motion in view of the following -

- (a) Hong Kong so far did not have any avian influenza infection;
- (b) there were stringent control measures on the importation of live poultry from designated farms in the Guangdong Province, including biosecurity measures in the designated farms, and antibody tests and quarantine of live poultry 28 days and five days before export to Hong Kong. There were also import control measures in Hong Kong on imported live poultry;
- (c) the Hong Kong Poultry Wholesalers Association, the Hong Kong and Kowloon Poultry Dealers and Workers Association and the Poultry Trade Workers Union requested lifting the import ban so as to maintain the living of their members; and
- (d) the Administration could impose the import ban again if there was any subsequent changes in the circumstances.

35. The Chairman ordered a break of five minutes to enable members to discuss amongst themselves the motion proposed by Mr LEUNG Fu-wah. (SHWF left the meeting at this juncture due to other commitments.)

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36. When the meeting resumed after the break, the Chairman invited comments from members of the Panel.

37. Dr LO Wing-lok said that the motion moved by Mr LEUNG Fu-wah was in conflict with the motion passed on 30 January 2004 and, if passed, would undermine the creditability of the Legislative Council. Dr LO said that the outbreak situation in other places was no better than that on 30 January 2004 and the World Health Organisation was more concerned about the spread of avian influenza. He considered that persons and trades affected by measures aimed at safeguarding public health should be assisted through relief measures. Dr LO stated that he did not support the motion. He suggested that Mr LEUNG Fu-wah should withdraw the motion.

38. Mr Michael MAK shared the view that Mr LEUNG's motion was in conflict with the motion passed by the Panel on 30 January 2004, and he did not support Mr LEUNG's motion at the present stage. He expressed concern that the situation in other places was still not fully under control, and there could be an outbreak after the import ban was lifted. He considered it more appropriate to discuss the matter in about two weeks' time.

39. Mr Tommy CHEUNG considered that there was no conflict between the motion moved by Mr LEUNG Fu-wah and the motion passed on 30 January 2004. Mr CHEUNG said that his understanding was that the motion passed on 30 January 2004 sought only a temporary ban on the importation of live and chilled/frozen poultry. As there had not been any avian influenza case in Hong Kong in the past four weeks, and there were adequate monitoring measures for the designated farms in Guangdong, he considered that it would be safe to lift the import ban on live poultry from Guangdong. He said that the Administration could step up its monitoring measures on the imported poultry to enhance public confidence in live poultry.

40. Mr WONG Yung-kan said that there was no conflict between the motion moved by Mr LEUNG Fu-wah and the motion passed on 30 January 2004. He considered that the circumstances had changed and the public now had a clearer picture on the situation. He further said that there were findings that the H5N1 virus was transmitted by wild birds, and it was possible to prevent the introduction of such virus into Hong Kong by improving the biosecurity of local farms. Moreover, all chickens in Hong Kong were already vaccinated against H5N1. He added that it would not be necessary to introduce the proposed relief measures if the ban on the importation of live poultry would be lifted in the near future.

41. Mr Albert CHAN expressed concern whether lifting the ban on the importation of live poultry would have any impact on the protection of public health. Mr CHAN said that without information on the effectiveness of measures adopted by designated farms in the Guangdong Province and whether there had been any case of avian influenza in these farms, he would like to know whether the Administration was confident that no problems would arise after lifting the import ban.

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42. Mr Andrew CHENG pointed out that the outbreak situation in the neighbouring region had not improved but even worsened. He considered that if the public had no confidence about the safety of imported poultry, lifting the import ban on live poultry could lead to greater losses of the live poultry trade. He also asked whether the Administration would still introduce the proposed relief measures if the motion was passed.

43. The Chairman asked the Administration to inform members of its position on the motion moved by Mr LEUNG Fu-wah and how it would implement the motion if passed. The Chairman also asked -

- (a) how the Administration would ensure that imported chickens were free from avian influenza virus; and
- (b) whether the relief measures would still be introduced, if the importation of live poultry was resumed.

44. Deputy Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food & Environmental Hygiene) (DSHWF) responded that SHWF had explained clearly the Administration's position regarding maintaining the ban on importation of live poultry and stressed that safeguarding public health was the first priority. He said that although the measures adopted so far had reduced the risk of avian influenza, the risk of occurrence of avian influenza could not be completely ruled out. Thus, the Administration had to remain vigilant. He further said that any action to be taken by the Administration would be based on the public interest. He added that the Administration would welcome the views of Members on the proposed relief measures.

45. Dr LO Wing-lok requested the Chairman to state his position and exercise his original vote on the motion moved by Mr LEUNG Fu-wah.

46. Mr LEUNG Fu-wah considered that as motions passed at Panel meetings were not binding, it was not necessary for the Chairman to state his position or participate in the voting. He asked the Clerk to explain the relevant procedures.

47. The Clerk advised that Rule 22(p) of the House Rules provided that "During a Panel meeting, a motion may be proposed if it is considered by the chairman of the Panel as directly related to an agenda item of that meeting. The motion will be proceeded with if agreed by a majority of the members voting. Any proposed motion or amendment to a motion should be presented to the Panel in written form.". Rule 77(13) of the Rules of Procedure provided that "All matters for the decision of a Panel shall be decided by a majority of the members voting. The chairman or any other member presiding shall, if the votes be equally divided, have a casting vote in addition to his original vote. Such voting shall not be binding on any Member, whether in Council, in a committee of the whole Council or in the House Committee."

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48. The Chairman said that although he had his own views on many matters, he had always sought to chair meetings in a fair and impartial manner. For many years, he had adopted the practice of not voting when he took the chair of Panel meetings. He informed Members that he would adhere to this practice.

49. The Chairman further said that he could however give his personal views on the matter as requested by some members. He explained that he had consulted some professors on the issue of importation of live chickens. In line with the opinion of WHO, he was of the view that consideration could be given to resuming the importation of live poultry when there was no new avian influenza case in Guangdong Province for 21 consecutive days. As the motion involved resuming as soon as possible the importation of all kinds of poultry meat, it was very difficult for him to support the motion.

50. Dr LO Wing-lok considered that in order to fully reflect the view of the Panel on the motion, the Chairman had an obligation to exercise his original vote, as other members, on the motion. He suggested that Mr LEUNG Fu-wah should withdraw his motion, as it was evident that there were four members in favour of the motion and four members were against the motion.

51. Mr Michael MAK sought clarification as to whether the Chairman must cast his vote on the motion but not exercise his casting vote when the votes were equally divided. The Clerk explained that the motion would not be carried if the votes were equally divided. However, the Chairman had a casting vote in addition to his original vote.

52. The Chairman reiterated that he would adhere to his past practice of not participating in the voting.

53. Mr LEUNG Fu-wah said that after consulting the poultry trade, he considered it not appropriate to withdraw his motion.

54. The Chairman put Mr LEUNG Fu-wah's motion to vote. Mr Tommy CHEUNG, Mr WONG Yung-kan, Mr YEUNG Yiu-chung and Mr LEUNG Fu-wah voted in favour of the motion, while Mr Andrew CHENG, Mr Michael MAK and Dr LO Wing-lok voted against the motion. The Chairman declared that the motion was carried.

55. Dr LO Wing-lok requested that a verbatim record be produced on the discussions relating to the motion. The Chairman said that the names of members who supported and opposed the motion would be recorded in the minutes.

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Relief Measures for the Live Poultry Trade

56. Members noted the Administration's paper, which was tabled at the meeting, on the relief measures for the live poultry trade.

*(Post-meeting note : The paper tabled at the meeting was issued vide LC Paper No. CB(2)1493/03-04 on 26 February 2004.)*

57. At the invitation of the Chairman, DSHWF briefed Members on the proposed relief measures for the live poultry trade.

58. Mr Tommy CHEUNG said that the Liberal Party did not consider it appropriate to use taxpayers' money to sponsor the business sector without sufficient grounds. He said that the proposed measures did not address longer-term problems arising from the ban on the importation of day-old chickens. He asked whether the proposed rental waiver would also be provided by markets managed by the Housing Authority. He considered that the Administration should meet with the affected sectors to understand their problems and needs.

59. Members generally considered that the coverage of the proposed relief measures was inadequate. Mr Tommy CHEUNG expressed concern that many sectors, such as those involved in the sale and transportation of chilled and frozen poultry, and the "siu mei" and "lo mei" shops were not covered. Mr CHEUNG considered that these trades were also adversely affected by the import ban.

60. Mr Albert CHAN considered that the compensation should also cover the workers employed by the poultry stalls. He said that the business of other market stalls were also affected after the import ban on live and chilled/frozen poultry, and they should also be provided with some form of concession.

61. Mr LEUNG Fu-wah considered that other than live poultry traders and transporters, the relief measures should also cover the affected workers. Mr WONG Yung-kan supported that "siu mei" and "lo mei" shops/stalls and cross-boundary transporters should also be included under the relief measures.

62. Mr Andrew CHENG considered that ex-gratia payment should reach those in need. Dr LO Wing-lok said that the Administration should assist affected persons in maintaining their living and provide retraining to the affected workers. The Chairman said that many operators in "Bird Garden" had complained that they were not covered under the relief measures.

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63. DSHWF responded that the Administration intended to assist live poultry farmers through local hatching of fertile eggs and provision of loans. He said that the proposed measures were aimed at live poultry traders and transporters because those involved in the trading of chilled, frozen or barbecued meats could still sell other meats. He added that frozen chickens from Brazil, for example, were not banned from importation. The proposal of covering workers under the relief measures involved matters of principle and had to be discussed with the Financial Services and Treasury Bureau. He informed Members that the Housing Authority had indicated its willingness to follow the arrangement of providing rental concessions to live poultry stalls in markets in its premises. He stressed that the proposed relief measures were preliminary views of the Administration and Members' views were welcome.

64. Assistant Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation (Inspection and Quarantine) added that operators of stalls in "Bird Garden" were not covered under the relief measures because they could still sell birds, birds' feed and cages, although the importation of live birds had been banned.

65. The Chairman concluded that while Members did not oppose the proposed relief measures, they considered that the Administration should review the coverage of the proposed relief measures.

**V Anti-mosquito campaign and dengue vector surveillance in 2004**  
[LC Paper No. CB(2) 1382/03-04(03)]

66. As there was insufficient time for discussion of this item, Members agreed to defer this item to the special meeting to be held on 3 March 2004.

**VI Outcome of public consultation on proposed new penalties for repeat cleanliness offenders**  
[LC Paper No. CB(2) 1382/03-04(04)]

67. As there was insufficient time for discussion of this item, Members agreed to defer this item to the special meeting to be held on 3 March 2004.

**VII Loans under Kadoorie Agricultural Aid Loan Fund for mariculturists affected by the recent cold spell**  
[LC Paper No. CB(2) 1382/03-04(06)]

68. Members did not raise any queries on the Administration's financial proposal.

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## **VIII Any other business**

### Special meeting on 3 March 2004

69. Members agreed to hold a special meeting on 3 March 2004 at 8:30 am to discuss the two items (Items V and VI) deferred from this meeting and the Administrations' proposal on retro-fitting of air-conditioning and/or general improvement works to 19 existing markets and/or cooked food centres.

### Special meeting on 10 March 2004

70. Members also agreed to hold another special meeting on 10 March 2004 at 8:30 am to follow up on the discussion of the Administration's measures against avian influenza.

71. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 1:20 pm.

Council Business Division 2  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
20 April 2004