

**立法會**  
**Legislative Council**

Ref : CB2/PS/3/04

LC Paper No. CB(2) 1397/04-05  
(These minutes have been seen by  
the Administration)

**Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene**

**Subcommittee to Study the Streamlining of Food Business Licensing**

**Minutes of meeting**  
**held on Saturday, 5 March 2005 at 9 am**  
**in the Chamber of the Legislative Council Building**

- Members present** : Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, JP (Chairman)  
Hon WONG Yung-kan, JP  
Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo  
Hon Vincent FANG Kang, JP  
Hon WONG Kwok-hing, MH
- Members attending** : Hon Fred LI Wah-ming, JP  
Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP
- Public Officers : Attending** : Mr Vincent LIU  
Principal Assistant Secretary (Food & Environmental Hygiene) 2  
Health, Welfare and Food Bureau
- Ms Annette LEE  
Deputy Director (Environmental Hygiene)  
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
- Mr LO Fu-wai  
Assistant Director (Operations)1  
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
- Mr K M MO  
Assistant Director (New Buildings)1  
Buildings Department

Mr LAW Hung  
Senior Divisional Officer (Licensing and Certificate Command)  
(Policy Division)  
Fire Services Department

Mr KO Woon-ming  
Housing Manager (Commercial Properties)  
Housing Department

Mrs Brenda YIP  
Head, Business Facilitation Division  
Economic Analysis and Business Facilitation Unit  
Financial Secretary's Office

**Attendance by :  
invitation**

The Hong Kong Federation of Restaurants & Related Trades

Mr Simon WONG  
Chairman

Mr Michael LEUNG  
Director

The Association for Hong Kong Catering Services Management  
Limited

---

Mr YEUNG Wai-sing  
Chairman

Mr LAU Kwong-choi

Association of Restaurant Managers Limited

Mr NG Kwok-keung  
Director

Mr Edmund LEUNG  
Director

Hong Kong Catering Industry Association

Mr WOO Lun

A S Watson Group – PARKnSHOP

Mr Peter Johnston  
Quality Assurance Manager

Mr Alvin SO  
Licensing Manager

Hong Kong Japanese Restaurants Association

Mr Frankie P WU  
President

Cambo Thai Restaurant Limited

Mr NG Chong-muk  
Director

Tsui Wah Restaurant

Mr David NG  
Consultant

Tao Heung Holding Limited

Mr Sunny LAM  
General Manager  
Corporate Administration Department

Rainbow Seafood Restaurant

Mr CHAN Wai-ming  
Managing Director

Federal Restaurants (Group) Limited

Mr Tony TAM  
Director

Mr TAM Hon-cheung  
Licensing Consultant

Xin Cuisine

Mr Joseph SO  
Executive Director

King Bakery

Mr CHONG Yam-ming  
Director

De Rodeo Catering Limited

Mr YU Tai-fuk  
Administration Manager

Entertainment Business Rights Concern Group

Mr KWAN Lim-ho

Ms CHAN Yun-lin

California Red Limited

Mr NG Ka-keung, Dicky  
Manager

Ms LI Tsau-ha, Jessica  
Secretary (Public Affairs)

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

**Staff in attendance** : Miss Betty MA  
Senior Council Secretary (2)7

Ms Anna CHEUNG  
Legislative Assistant (2)5

---

Action

**I Meeting with deputations and the Administration**  
(9:00 am – 11:55 am)

The Chairman welcomed representatives of deputations to the meeting.

Action

Views of deputations

*Hong Kong Federation of Restaurants & Related Trades (HK FORT)*  
*[LC Paper No. CB(2) 966/04-05(01)]*

2. Mr Simon WONG and Mr Michael LEUNG presented the views of HK FORT as detailed in its submission.

3. Mr Michael LEUNG expressed concern that the Administration's proposal to suspend the issue of licence to food premises operating without licences would adversely affect the food business trade. The Chairman said that the Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene would discuss the Administration's proposal at its next meeting on 8 March 2005.

*Hong Kong Catering Industry Association*  
*[LC Paper No. CB(2) 1007 /04-05(02)]*

4. Mr WOO Lun presented the views of the Association as detailed in its submission.

*Association of Restaurant Managers Limited*  
*[LC Paper No. CB(2) 1007/04-05(01)]*

5. Mr NG Kwok-keung and Mr Edmund LEUNG presented the views of Association as detailed in its submission.

*A S Watson Group – PARKnSHOP*  
*[LC Paper No. CB(2) 966/04-05(02)]*

6. Mr Peter JOHNSTON presented the views of A S Watson Group – PARKnSHOP as detailed in its submission.

*Hong Kong Japanese Restaurants Association*  
*[LC Paper No. CB(2) 966/04-05(03)]*

7. Mr Frankie WU presented the views of the Association as detailed in its submission. He mentioned that there was only limited supply of Hygiene Managers who were required for the sale of sashimi.

*Cambo Thai Restaurant Limited*

8. Mr NG Chong-muk said that the process of issuing food business licences should be expedited. He pointed out that a full licence could only be obtained six months after submission of application, even though the premises met all basic requirements.

Action

*Tsui Wah Restaurant*

9. Mr David NG said that the Administration should expedite the setting up of a one-stop licensing office for food businesses as the current licensing procedures were not user-friendly.

*Tao Heung Holding Limited*  
[LC Paper No. CB(2) 966/04-05(04)]

10. Mr Sunny LAM presented the views of Tao Heung Holding Limited as detailed in its submission.

*Rainbow Seafood Restaurant*

11. Mr CHAN Wai-ming presented the views of Rainbow Seafood Restaurant, as follows –

- (a) the licensing departments adopted a rigid approach in applying the regulations (e.g. provision of toilets and sprinklers);
- (b) fresh seawater should be allowed to be used for keeping live seafood; and
- (c) the Administration should encourage the food business to participate in the Hygiene Manager and Hygiene Supervisor Scheme on a voluntary basis.

*Federal Restaurants (Group) Limited*

12. Mr Tony TAM said that he shared the views of the other deputations. He expressed concern about the calculation of areas for the provision of toilets and kitchens in food premises. He considered that the licensing authority should reconcile the inconsistent methods for calculating the gross floor areas of food premises and kitchens.

*Xin Cuisine*

13. Mr Joseph SO said that at present, an application for a liquor licence was sometimes approved several months after a provisional/full licence had been issued. To facilitate the operation of the industry, liquor licences and provisional/full licences should be issued at the same time.

Action

*King Bakery*

[LC Paper No. CB(2) 966/04-05(05)]

14. Mr CHONG Yam-ming presented the views of King Bakery as detailed in its submission.

15. Mr CHONG added that for food premises in the Housing Authority estates, the licensing authority still required the applicant to provide proof that the operator had complied with the building safety requirements, e.g. thickness of the wall, whereas food premises in commercial premises could largely rely on certifications by Authorized Persons.

*De Rodeo Catering Limited*

[LC Paper No. CB(2) 966/04-05(06)]

16. Mr YU Tai-fuk presented the views of De Rodeo Catering Limited as detailed in its submission.

*Entertainment Business Rights Concern Group*

17. Mr KWAN Lim-ho and Ms CHAN Yun-lin presented the views of Entertainment Business Rights Concern Group, as follows –

- (a) the licensing authority should make public the criteria for issuing the food and liquor licences for reference by potential restaurateurs;
- (b) corporate licensees or designated company officials should be allowed to apply for liquor licences; and
- (c) the Liquor Licensing Board should enhance its transparency by making public the considerations for rejecting an application (e.g. proximity to residential areas, limitation on liquor selling time), and the progress of vetting an application for liquor licence. The Board should also specify the time limit for raising objection to an application.

18. Mr KWAN said that as the Liquor Licensing Board (LLB) did not hold hearings in summer, it had caused delay in the processing of liquor licence applications. He suggested that the LLB Secretariat should let the parties concerned know about the timeframe for the gazettal of applications and the provision of documents for hearings.

19. Ms CHAN suggested that there should be a one-stop liquor licensing unit, in order to reduce the time for delivery of documents among different departments and reduce the time for follow-up actions.

Action

*California Red Limited*  
[LC Paper No. CB(2) 999/04-05(01)]

20. Mr Dicky NG and Ms Jessica LI presented the views of California Red Limited as detailed in its submission.

21. Mr NG suggested that demerit points should not be awarded to minor breaches such as the provision of an additional refrigerator in the food premises. He also urged that consistent standards should be adopted by health inspectors during site inspections, e.g. how the temperature of food should be taken.

Other submissions received

22. The Chairman said that two written submissions had been received from Swire Beverages Limited [LC Paper No. CB(2) 999/04-05(02)] and Maxim's Caterers Limited [LC Paper No. CB(2) 1007/04-05(03)], and they did not send representatives to the meeting.

Discussion

23. The Chairman invited the Administration to respond to the views and suggestions of the deputations.

24. Principal Assistant Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Food and Environmental Hygiene)2 (PAS(FEH)2) said that the purpose of the food licensing system was to safeguard public health and safety. PAS(FEH)2 pointed out that improvement measures had been taken by the departments concerned in recent years to shorten the licence processing time. Presently, the shortest possible time as pledged by the Administration for granting a provisional licence for restaurant was 21 working days. As for other types of food licence, the shortest possible time as pledged by the Administration for issuing a licence ranged from 11 to 31 days. The Administration was willing to discuss with the food business industry to study how the existing procedures for food business could be further streamlined to facilitate the business.

25. PAS(FEH)2 said that some deputations had made reference to overseas experience in respect of the short time taken to issue a food licence. He pointed out that different countries adopted different licensing procedures, and the short time for issuing a food licence in these countries might only refer to cases where the hygiene requirements, and not the fire and building safety requirements, had been met. The Administration would consider the views and suggestions of the deputations and further discuss with the Subcommittee.

26. Deputy Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene (Environmental Hygiene) (DD/FEHD) said that her initial response to views expressed by the deputations was as follows –

Action

- (a) The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) played a co-ordinating role in processing food licence applications, and a Case Manager Scheme had been introduced. Once an application for licence was received, the Case Manager would pass it to the relevant departments for action, and coordinate the responses. To a certain extent, one-stop service was being provided to the applicants. FEHD welcomed suggestions to further streamline the licensing process, but it should not mean lowering the requirements for food, fire and building safety;
- (b) The Buildings Department (BD) and Fire Services Department (FSD) had made available lists of Authorised Persons and professionals for the trade's reference;
- (c) Up to January 2005, over 6 300 Hygiene Managers and 29 000 Hygiene Supervisors had undergone the training courses required under the Hygiene Manager and Hygiene Supervisor Scheme. FEHD offered 13 to 15 training courses free of charge for Hygiene Supervisors monthly. In addition, academic institutions and vocational training centres would offer 20 training courses recognised by FEHD for Hygiene Managers in the next three months. If there was demand, FEHD could liaise with the academic institutions and other organisations concerned for conducting Hygiene Manager courses in Japanese;
- (d) The Administration would seek legal advice and consider the suggestion of a composite licence in the context of its review;
- (e) It was necessary to impose strict temperature control for the sale of sashimi from the food safety angle. Siu mei and lo mei were regarded as high-risk ready-to-eat food. Nevertheless, the Administration would consider providing more flexibility in categorisation of licences in the context of its review;
- (f) A new computer system would be put to use by FEHD in May 2005 to standardise the licence application procedures for food premises in urban areas and in the New Territories;
- (g) Issuance of the provisional licence did not require the applicant to fulfil all requirements of a full licence. However, after the issue of a provisional licence, the applicant should take steps to comply with the requirements of a full licence as soon as possible. The time required for issue of a full licence hinged on the responsiveness of the applicant in complying with the licensing requirements in respect of hygiene, ventilation, building and fire safety;

Action

- (h) A restaurant licence would not be issued to premises operating inside a factory. Licences for factory canteens were issued for historical reasons and the restrictions imposed were primarily based on fire and building safety considerations;
- (i) The Administration would provide a paper on licence fees for discussion at the next meeting of the Subcommittee; and
- (j) The Administration would look into the individual cases referred to by some deputations on receipt of more information.

27. Assistant Director (New Buildings)1/BD said that approval for applications for alteration of layout was based on building safety consideration, and the requirements were laid down in A Guide to Application for Restaurant Licence. Normally, unauthorised building structures listed in Annex K of the Guide would not be accepted. The Administration was now considering a minor works control regime which if implemented would enable certifications by Authorised Persons on alterations to layout plans of food premises which were classified as minor works. Pending the enactment of the legislation, the applicant could submit the applications for approval and commencement of the building works simultaneously under the Buildings Ordinance.

28. Senior Divisional Officer (Licensing and Certificate Command) (Policy Division)/FSD said that sprinkler system requirements would be imposed on food premises of floor area greater than 230m<sup>2</sup> irrespective of whether they were located in urban areas, the New Territories or outlying islands.

29. Housing Manager (Commercial Properties) Housing Department (HM/HD) said that he would look into the case mentioned by De Rodeo Catering Limited after obtaining further information from the deputation. Responding to the Chairman, HM/HD explained that for premises in the Housing Authority estates, HD played a dual role both as the property owner and authority for building safety. Before signing the tenancy agreement, HD held meetings with the applicants and their building contractors to brief them on the renovation and alteration requirements. HD would consider ways to further shorten the time for processing these applications.

30. Head, Business Facilitation Division of Financial Secretary's Office said that the objective of the Subgroup on Business Facilitation established under the Economic and Employment Council (EEC) was mainly to develop and oversee a review programme with a view to eliminating outdated, excess, repetitive or unnecessary government regulations impacting on business. A Retail Task Force had been formed under the Subgroup to review the number of licences involved in the operation of retail food businesses including that of food and supermarkets/chain stores, and it was presently collecting views from the food business industry. It was expected that the Retail Task Force would complete its work in this aspect by May 2005.

Action

*Food premises operating without licences and abortive licence applications*

31. Ms Emily LAU said that as a member of EEC and its Subgroup, she hoped that with the input of the Legislative Council and the trade, EEC could achieve the purpose of facilitating business development and job creation. In this connection, Ms LAU requested the Secretariat to prepare a summary of views and suggestions made by deputations for members' reference and follow-up.

Clerk

*(Post-meeting note : The summary of views and suggestions made by deputations at the meeting on 5 March 2005 was issued vide LC Paper No. CB(2) 1155/04-05(12) on 29 March 2005.)*

32. Ms Emily LAU further said that while she agreed that the licensing process should be streamlined, it did not mean that the hygiene or safety standards should be lowered. She expressed support for providing one-stop service to the food business trade even though it would require additional resources. Referring to cases where the food businesses had started operation before obtaining the requisite licences, Ms LAU asked whether the food business trade regarded the court fine as part of the operating cost.

33. Responding to Ms Emily LAU, Mr CHONG Yam-ming of King Bakery said that some food business operators had to commence operation before obtaining the requisite licences to avoid losses because of the high rental of the premises and high staff cost. He pointed out that staff cost represented about 30% of the operating cost. The operators had no intention of regarding the fine as part of their operating cost given that the fine was not a nominal amount. He added that sometimes the operators had problems with the procedures and the proof requirements.

34. Mr Frankie WU of Hong Kong Japanese Restaurants Association and Mr Alvin SO of A S Watson Group – PARKnSHOP said that although the Administration had explained that the shortest possible time for issuing a provisional licence was 21 days, they wondered how many could really get a provisional licence on the 21<sup>st</sup> day. Mr SO pointed out that an applicant could not start building works unless it had obtained approval for commencement of the works. It was therefore difficult, if not impossible, for the process to be completed within 21 days.

35. The Chairman said that the Subcommittee had also raised concerns about the long processing time at its last meeting on 2 March 2005. The Administration was requested to provide statistics on the number of food licence applications processed and the time taken to process these applications. The Subcommittee would further study the matter at its future meetings.

36. Ms Emily LAU said that the Subcommittee also noted that FEHD had recorded more than 1 000 abandoned and withdrawn applications each year. She asked whether the trade would agree to imposing fees and charges for lodging applications in order to deter withdrawals or abortive applications.

Action

37. Mr Simon WONG of HK FORT said that as operating food businesses would involve substantial capital investment, the applicants would not withdraw their applications without good reasons. The crux of the problem was the long processing time taken in issuing a food business licence in Hong Kong. In some other overseas countries such as Japan, a food licence could be issued within two to three days. However, it would not be possible for Hong Kong to issue a food business licence within such a short time because much more complicated requirements were adopted in Hong Kong. Moreover, some of the existing licensing regulations were outdated. To facilitate the trade, the licensing authority should compile a list of qualified contractors who were well-versed with the licensing requirements for reference by the trade.

38. Mr David NG of Tsui Wah Restaurant said that applicants would not withdraw their applications for food licences without good reasons. The prospective operator would normally engage a consultant and ensure that the premises would be suitable for operating food business, because he would have to sign a three-year or five-year contract for renting the premises.

39. Mr KWAN Lim-ho of Entertainment Business Rights Concern Group believed that withdrawn applications were made by those who had no genuine intention to apply for a full licence. This was because under the existing legislation, when an application for food licence was being processed, the enforcement departments could not confiscate the goods sold at the food establishments concerned.

40. To enable the Subcommittee to better understand the problem, Ms Emily LAU requested the food business trade to provide actual cases of withdrawn/abortive applications to the Subcommittee.

*Licensing process*

41. Mr Andrew CHENG said that the food trade had suggested that the licensing authority could rely on certifications by Authorised Persons in issuing food business licences, and check the compliance of licensing requirements through subsequent site inspections. However, such an approach might result in more frequent inspections of the food premises, and this was contrary to what the food business operators wanted, given that FEHD already conducted more than 400 000 inspections of food premises a year. Mr CHENG asked the deputations for their views on the proposal and whether they encountered any difficulties in the licensing process.

42. Mr David NG of Tsui Wah Restaurant responded that while the food business trade requested that the licensing procedures should be further streamlined, it did not ask for lowering the safety requirements. He said that the licensing process in Hong Kong was cumbersome. As Authorised Persons were qualified professionals, the licensing authority should entrust them to check the compliance of the licensing requirements, and dispense with the site inspections. The Authorised Persons would be held responsible for any non-compliance. This could shorten the licence

Action

processing time. He pointed out that such arrangements were commonly adopted in overseas countries, such as Singapore, the United States and Canada.

43. Mr Simon WONG of HK FORT said that in Japan, there were only about 100 enforcement officers responsible for the inspection of more than 150 000 food premises in Tokyo. In his view, FEHD should enhance education on food safety of operators of food premises, rather than stepping up inspections of food premises.

44. Mr Frankie WU of Hong Kong Japanese Restaurants Association added that the departments concerned did not advise the applicants of all the improvements/rectifications required at one time, and this had unnecessarily prolonged the licence processing time. Mr WU pointed out that in Japan, food establishments were operated in premises which were designed for the purpose and they were already in full compliance with the building and fire safety requirements. An applicant in Japan could therefore be issued with a food licence within one to two days.

45. The Chairman said that although FEHD would issue the applicant with a letter specifying the requirements on the 20<sup>th</sup> working day after receiving an application for provisional/full licence, further advice on the requirements were often given later.

46. DD/FEHD advised that the issue of provisional licence was to facilitate the applicants to take steps to comply with the requirements of a full licence as early as possible. The time required for issuance of a full licence depended on the responsiveness of the applicants in complying with the licensing requirements.

47. Mr Fred LI said that he had strongly urged for the introduction of one-stop service for food licence applicants. As it would take time to set up a food business licensing board, consideration should be given to seconding staff from BD and FSD to the licensing office of FEHD for the purpose. Mr LI further said that while it might be difficult for the Administration to follow up individual cases mentioned by some deputations, the cases had demonstrated the need for streamlining the licensing process. The Administration should review and remove the outdated and unnecessary licensing requirements. In this connection, the Administration should adopt a more flexible approach and delete those requirements which were not directly related to hygiene and safety. Given the current trend that a variety of food was sold in one premises, the Administration should consider reducing the number of licences by combining some licences into a composite licence. Mr LI added that there should be an appeal and compliant mechanism to deal with disputes on licensing matters.

48. The Chairman recalled that the Administration had commissioned consultancy studies on food business licensing some years ago. The consultancy reports had made some recommendations on the licensing process, but the Administration had yet to take actions on them. The Chairman further said that the Subcommittee had also raised the suggestion of providing one-stop licensing service at the last meeting and would continue discussion with the Administration on the matter.

Action

49. Mr Vincent FANG said that he fully agreed that streamlining the licensing process did not mean lowering the safety requirements. He considered that the Administration should respond to the strong call from the trade for the provision of one-stop licensing service. The Administration should also consider the proposals of introducing a general licence to replace the 19 food licences currently required by a supermarket, and removing the outdated requirements for siu mei/lo mei and bakery licences.

50. DD/FEHD said that the Administration was willing to consider views and suggestions on the licensing system, including those on siu mei/lo mei licence and bakery licence. DD/FEHD further said that FEHD had a complaint hotline which also handled licensing matters. The Administration would consider enhancing public awareness of the hotline.

*Factory canteen licence*

51. Mr Fred LI noted that the restrictions imposed on factory canteen licensee were based on fire safety considerations. He asked whether the Administration would also make reference to the Deeds of Mutual Covenants (DMCs) of the premises concerned when considering applications for factory canteen licences. The Chairman said that the licensing authority did not make reference to DMCs of the premises concerned if the food establishments were not situated in factory buildings.

52. DD/FEHD said that the factory canteen licence was introduced many years ago to facilitate people working in the factories to take meals, as there were very few food premises in industrial areas. DD/FEHD further said that the licensing authority would make reference to the lease conditions of the factory building concerned, but the major consideration was fire and building safety.

53. Mr CHONG Yam-ming of King Bakery said that the requirement that the entrance of a factory canteen must face the interiors of the building was imposed by the Lands Department, and this was not because of fire safety consideration. He urged that the Administration should review the licensing condition that only those working in the same building were permitted to patronise the canteen.

54. Mr Vincent FANG said that if fire safety was the major consideration, the licensing authority could consider restricting the number of customers patronising a factory canteen rather than restricting the type of patrons.

55. The Chairman said that the licensing requirements for factory canteens were outdated. It would be worthwhile for the Subcommittee to further discuss the matter at future meetings.

Action

*Liquor licence*

56. Mr Fred LI asked about the Administration's initial response to deputations' proposal that liquor licence should be held by a company instead of a person.

57. Mr Vincent FANG said that the food business trade proposed that corporate licensees or designated company officials should be allowed to hold liquor licences. He urged that the Administration should seriously consider the proposal.

58. PAS(FEH)2 responded that under the existing licensing regime, the liquor licensee should be a fit and proper person who did not have criminal record. The public was also allowed to raise objections to an application for liquor licence. PAS(FEH)2 said that the proposal of allowing a company to hold liquor licence would give rise to enforcement difficulties because the licensee had to be present at the premises when liquor was sold. Legislative amendments would have to be made to give effect to the proposal. Nevertheless, the Administration would further examine how to facilitate the trade in this respect.

59. The Chairman said that in the past, food business licence was issued to an individual, but now it was issued to the company. The Administration should consider extending the arrangement to liquor licence.

*Alignment of licence fees*

60. Mr David NG of Tsui Wah Restaurant pointed out that the licence fees for food premises in urban areas and the New Territories were not the same. Consideration should be given to aligning the licence fees.

61. Mr Andrew CHENG asked whether the Administration had any plan to align the fees and charges for food licences. The Chairman said that the Administration had previously put forward a proposal to align the fees by pitching them at the higher level, but the trade had opposed to the proposal.

62. DD/FEHD responded that the Administration was reviewing the food licence fees on the basis of the full cost recovery principle. PAS(FEH)2 said that the difference in licence fees for premises in urban areas and in the New Territories was a legacy of the two former municipal councils. Since the dissolution of the two municipal councils, the licence fees had remained unchanged because of Government's policy of fees and charges moratorium in past years. PAS(FEH)2 pointed out that as the current licence fees were below cost, some of them might have to be increased after the review exercise.

63. Mr Fred LI said that the former municipal councils had been dissolved for more than five years, the Administration should expedite the review of fees and charges for food licences.

Action

*Way forward*

64. Mr WONG Kwok-hing said that to facilitate the Subcommittee to follow up the matter, the Administration should provide a consolidated response to the deputations' views. The Administration should state clearly whether the views and suggestions would be pursued; and the implementation plan and timetable. If the proposals were considered not feasible, the Administration should give reasons. Mr WONG further said that the Administration's response should address the following issues raised by deputations -

- (a) introducing a general licence in place of several licences required for a food establishment;
- (b) shortening the licence processing time;
- (c) establishing one licensing office or providing one-stop service to applicants;
- (d) removing excessive or unnecessary licensing requirements;
- (e) streamlining the licensing procedures;
- (f) allowing a company or designated company officials (licensee's deputy) to hold liquor licence, issuing liquor licence together with the provisional/full licence, making public the meeting schedules of the Liquor Licensing Board and the time limit for raising objection to an application;
- (g) setting up a centralised database on licensing requirements to be accessible by the applicants;
- (h) shortening the time for vetting and approving applications for alteration of layout plans;
- (i) adopting consistent standards for inspections; and
- (j) setting up a fast and user-friendly appeal mechanism.

65. Mr Vincent FANG said that it was important to safeguard public health. The proposals to streamline the licensing process should not aim at lowering the hygiene standards of food premises. He considered that the Subcommittee should first work on those proposals which already had consensus, such as –

- (a) introducing a one-stop licensing unit;
- (b) allowing corporations to hold liquor licences;

Action

- (c) reducing the number of licences/permits required for operating supermarkets;
- (d) revising the out-dated licensing requirements for bakery and siu mei/lo mei shops;
- (e) addressing the high staff turnover problem in implementing the Hygiene Supervisor Scheme; and
- (f) relaxing the requirement that patrons of factory canteens were restricted to customers working in the same building.

Admin

66. PAS(FEH)2 said that the Health, Welfare and Food Bureau would co-ordinate a response to the views and suggestions made by deputations and members.

67. The Chairman said that the Subcommittee would hold further discussions on specific topics at future meetings. The Chairman thanked the representatives of deputations for attending the meeting.

**III Any other business**

68. The Chairman reminded members that the next meeting of the Subcommittee would be held on 4 April 2005 at 8:30 am.

69. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 12:07 pm.

Council Business Division 2  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
28 April 2005