

**For information
on 11 January 2005**

LegCo Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene

Anti-rodent Campaign 2005

PURPOSE

This paper briefs Members on the Anti-rodent Campaign 2005 led by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD).

BACKGROUND

2. Rodents are harmful pests that can cause physical damage to properties and contaminate foodstuff. They can also transmit a number of diseases, such as plague, leptospirosis, hantaviral diseases, scrub typhus, urban typhus and spotted fever. The table at **Annex** shows the number of reported cases on rodent-borne diseases found in Hong Kong between 2000 and 2004. Sustained and concerted efforts from all sectors of the community are necessary to contain the harm and nuisance that rodents can bring about.

3. Being the pest control authority in Hong Kong, FEHD carries out regular inspections and anti-rodent measures throughout the territory. In addition, FEHD has been holding anti-rodent campaigns on an annual basis. Each campaign features specific target areas where dedicated rodent control, publicity and educational efforts are made by relevant government departments. Market complexes, construction sites, food premises, residential buildings and cargo handling areas were the target areas for the past four years. These campaigns have proven instrumental in reducing the rodent population and enhancing public awareness of the significance of rodent prevention in the community and the target areas in particular. This is evidenced by the decreasing trend of rodent infestation rates¹ in the territory in the past few years-

¹ FEHD conducts rodent infestation survey by placing bait in selected locations to monitor the situation of rodent infestation in the territory regularly. The percentage of bait consumed by rodent gives the rodent infestation rate (i.e. number of bait consumed by rodent/total number of bait set X 100%), which indicates the seriousness of rodent problem in an area. Seriousness of rodent problem increases with the rate of rodent infestation.

<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004(Jan-Jun)</u>
16.0%	8.8%	9.1%	5.6%	4.3%

ANTI-RODENT CAMPAIGN 2005

4. To sustain governmental and community efforts on the prevention and control of rodent problems, FEHD has launched a new round of anti-rodent campaign in 2005. Like previous campaigns, the Anti-rodent Campaign 2005 seeks to maximize its impact through concerted efforts of relevant government departments. Under the stewardship of FEHD, the 20 members of the Inter-departmental Working Group on Pest Prevention and Control (including the Education and Manpower Bureau, Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department, Architectural Services Department, Buildings Department, Correctional Services Department, Drainage Services Department, Environmental Protection Department, Government Logistics Department, Department of Health, Highways Department, Home Affairs Department, Housing Department, Immigration Department, Labour Department, Lands Department, Leisure and Cultural Services Department, Marine Department, Social Welfare Department, Water Supplies Department and the Hospital Authority) all have participated actively in the planning and launching of the Campaign. They make dedicated efforts to monitor and eliminate rodent infestation in venues/sites under their charge and help disseminate anti-rodent messages to the community through their networks.

5. Shopping centres are areas with high human concentration and frequent human activities. Vast number of food premises in the shopping centres provides food and favourable harbourages for rodents to proliferate. Shopping centres are one of those areas which should be given high priority in rodent control and prevention. The Anti-rodent Campaign 2005 therefore aims to reduce the risk by targeting our rodent prevention and control work at shopping centres and their peripheries.

6. The slogan of “Prevent Disease, Eliminate Rodent Nuisance (防鼠工作做得好 鼠患問題自然冇)” has been well accepted by the public in the past campaigns. The Anti-Rodent Campaign 2005, adopting the same slogan, features a promotion phase (from 20 December 2004 to 15 January 2005) and an enhancement phase in July 2005.

7. The promotion phase aims to -
 - (i) arouse the awareness of the management of shopping centres and the staff on the importance of rodent prevention and control measures; and
 - (ii) reduce the rodent population in the territory, particularly in shopping centres and their surroundings.

8. The enhancement phase to be implemented in July 2005 aims to –
 - (i) enhance rodent control work in shopping centres with persistent rodent problems; and
 - (ii) reinforce rodent prevention messages for management of shopping centres/shop.

Constant monitoring and control will be maintained in between the two phases of the Campaign.

9. During the Campaign, pest control staff of FEHD, together with the relevant staff of other departments, give advice to the management of shopping centres, and monitor and control rodent problems in areas under their jurisdiction. The management of the shopping centres will also be advised to improve and maintain the environmental hygiene at high standard, to have proper storage practices and to rectify structural defects against rodent infestation. Our pest control staff also carries out rodent surveys and disinfestations in public places around shopping centres and known black spots. Particular attention will be given to places such as rear/side lanes and vacant lands adjacent to the target shopping centres, flowerbeds, refuse chambers and store rooms. Rodent cage traps and poisonous baiting stations will be set when signs of rodent infestation are detected.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

10. Rodent prevention and control cannot be efficiently and effectively carried out without active community participation. It is essential to arouse community awareness of rodent problems and to mobilize community resources to control such problems. To this end, a series of publicity and education activities will be organized under the 2005 Campaign, including exhibition at FEHD's Health Education Exhibition and Resource Centre, theme talks for

management of shopping centres and shops, etc. Through Announcement of Public Interests (API) on radio and television, posters, pamphlets, banners, FEHD's homepage, the public and the target groups are reminded of the importance of rodent prevention and control measures. District Councils also render support to the campaign by organizing anti-rodent activities at district levels.

EVALUATION

11. At present, FEHD conducts the rodent infestation survey in selected locations for monitoring the rodent problem in the territory regularly. We will assess the effectiveness of the 2005 Campaign by placing rat baits in the target areas to further gauge the extent of rodent infestation before and after each phase of the Campaign. The data collected will provide useful reference for mapping out anti-rodent directions and strategies for future campaigns.

**Health, Welfare and Food Bureau
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
January 2005**

Annex

**Number of reported cases on rodent-borne diseases
found in Hong Kong during 2000-2004(Jan-Nov)**

Disease Year	Plague	Urban typhus	Scrub typhus	Leptospirosis	Hantaviral disease	Spotted fever
2000	0	2 (1) [#]	2 (2) [#]	1 (0) [#]	2 (2) [#]	8 (8) [#]
2001	0	4 (2) [#]	3 (3) [#]	1 (1) [#]	2 (2) [#]	9 (9) [#]
2002	0	5 (4) [#]	8 (8) [#]	2 (2) [#]	0	9 (8) [#]
2003	0	0	13 (13) [#]	1 (0) [#]	1 (0) [#]	9 (9) [#]
2004 (Jan-Nov)	0	5 (5) [#]	9 (8) [#]	6 (5) [#]	2 (2) [#]	17 (16) [#]

[#] the figure in blanket indicates the number of local cases