

Brief on Quality Assurance Section

In October 2000, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department set up the Quality Assurance Section (QAS) with the primary objective of monitoring and improving quality of service provided by in-house and contractors' staff. In September 2005, a Central Investigation Team (CIT) was established within the QAS tasked with the additional responsibility of investigating complaints from contractors' workers on employment-related matters.

The QAS, led by a senior superintendent, has 20 full-time staff and 2 part-time staff responsible *for carrying out investigation/inspection*.

In the past 9 months, the QAS has conducted 765 regulatory inspections to various public services including cleansing, pest control, public market and mechanical cleansing. In the course of inspections, inadequacies identified in systems, procedures, guidelines and standards are referred to district management or the departmental Management Services Unit for improvement or review as appropriate. Over the same period, the QAS has also handled around 200 cases of staff misconduct, namely, non-performance of duties, unauthorized absence, not wearing uniform on duty, unpunctuality, neglect of supervisory responsibility, etc. For good performers, the QAS will report promptly to the district management for appropriate recognition. As an annual exercise, the QAS recommends to the Director for the award of Quality Assurance Awards to the best performing district supervisory teams.

In the past 9 months, the CIT has handled about 80 complaints in relation to employment of non-skilled workers by our service contractors.