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## **Wellcome's Submission to the Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene**

**2 February 2007**

- Food safety is our top priority and we are very concerned about the oilfish incident.
- We all share the same objective, which is to ensure the highest standards of food safety in Hong Kong.
- Further improving food safety in Hong Kong requires the commitment and collaboration of all local and overseas stakeholders in the food industry. We are fully committed to playing our part in this ongoing effort.
- In this case, there are two main issues: health and labelling;

Health: we were notified on 23 January 2007 by the FEHD of a number of complaints from members of the public who had eaten oilfish marketed as codfish. As a precautionary measure, we immediately removed all cod fish products from our shelves. We had not received any customer complaints related to oilfish prior to the reporting of this incident.

Labelling: we did not knowingly label oilfish as codfish. On 24 January 2007, we became aware that Sea Ocean (H.K.) Limited, one of our suppliers, was the company that had supplied the oilfish products in question. We immediately followed up with Sea Ocean and, once it had been confirmed that we had unknowingly sold oilfish in our stores, we informed the public.

- Since the incident, we have been carrying out a comprehensive check on the labels of raw seafood products in our stores.
- On 31 January we realised that, in two of our stores, regrettably we were selling oilfish sushi and sashimi products labelled under one of its common names, "snowfish" (白玉豚). We took immediate action to remove the products from sale.
- We are conducting a comprehensive review of our food safety and labelling processes and will make whatever further improvements that are necessary.
- To obtain more specialist seafood labelling knowledge, including fish species identification, we are seeking the advice of relevant experts from the University of Hong Kong and the Chinese University of Hong Kong.
- We regret the occurrence of this incident and are sparing no effort to prevent recurrence.