

**LegCo Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene**

**Information Note**

**Regulation on Racing Pigeons**

At the joint meeting of the Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene and the Panel on Health Services on 12 December 2006, Members requested the Administration to provide information on the regulatory measures on the keeping of racing pigeons in other places, including the Mainland and Taiwan.

2. There is no need to obtain a licence for keeping racing pigeons in the Mainland. However, according to relevant regulation of the Mainland, pigeon keepers have the obligation to compulsorily immunise the pigeons against animal diseases in accordance with the requirements set by the veterinary authorities. Keepers are also required to maintain animal health records and put in place animal labels in accordance with national requirements. All racing pigeons must have animal quarantine certificates issued by official veterinary surgeons of the animal health authority, without which the pigeons shall not be permitted to race and transporters shall not undertake related delivery service.

3. In Taiwan and South Korea, keepers of racing pigeons are also not required to obtain a licence.

4. In the circumstances of Hong Kong, having considered the relatively low risk of an outbreak of avian influenza in pigeons in Hong Kong, the Administration decided in 2006 to allow the keeping of pigeons in an enclosed area, provided biosecurity measures are implemented to prevent contact with wild birds. Premises for keeping pigeons will be inspected regularly to test for avian influenza virus. Pigeons are also allowed to fly outdoors for exercise and competition purposes provided that they do not cause any nuisance to the neighbouring public.

5. Taking into consideration the handling of the keeping of racing pigeon in other places of the world, we consider that the prevailing regulatory regime in Hong Kong is effective in striking a balance between the need to protect public health and environmental hygiene, and to accommodate the local racing pigeon activities as far as possible.

**Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department**  
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