

**Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene**

**Final Report of initiatives taken to enhance environmental hygiene  
to combat human swine influenza**

**Purpose**

The Finance Committee of the Legislative Council (FC) approved on 14 July 2009 a commitment of \$289.8 million for five departments to launch a series of environmental hygiene improvement initiatives to tackle human swine influenza (HSI). In addition, the Administration allocated about \$10.2 million for two departments to step up their work on environmental hygiene. When the Administration reported progress to the LegCo Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene Panel on 9 March 2009, we undertook, at Members' request, to report progress again after the completion of these time-limited initiatives. This paper sets out the relevant information for Members' reference.

**Background**

2. At its meeting on 14 July 2009, the FC approved a commitment of \$289.8 million for the Drainage Services Department (DSD), the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD), the Home Affairs Department (HAD), the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) and the Social Welfare Department (SWD) to launch a series of environmental hygiene improvement initiatives to tackle HSI. The initiatives would last for a period of 12 months. At the same time, the Administration also allocated an additional \$6 million and \$4.2 million to the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) and the Marine Department (MD) respectively to step up their work on enhancing environmental hygiene.

## **Measures to step up environmental hygiene**

3. After funding approval by the FC, the departments commenced work in the second half of 2009 in accordance with the work plans and relevant work targets as pledged in the funding proposals. All the work has now been completed, with details set out in the ensuing paragraphs.

### **Drainage Services Department**

4. With the approved provision of \$15.5 million, DSD has, as originally planned, carried out additional cleansing work to underground drains and sewers in blockage-prone areas, including the rear lanes in congested old urban areas (such as Mong Kok and Wan Chai). The frequency of cleansing work in these places has increased from three or four times a year to about six times a year. In addition, DSD has also increased the frequency of cleansing work to downstream drains and sewers of all hospitals, major Government clinics and public markets from one to two times a year to about three times a year. The aim of the above initiative is to minimise the risk of occurrence of unhygienic sewage overflows.

5. To gauge the effectiveness of the additional cleansing work, DSD has compared the complaint figures on blockage of sewers and drains in blockage-prone areas (including Mong Kok, Tsim Sha Tsui, Hung Hom and Shau Kei Wan) for the period from October 2009 to September 2010 with those for the period from October 2008 to September 2009. The number for the former period is 3 038, which is 23% less than the 3 960 recorded for the latter period. If we look at all the additional cleansed areas, there is also a general improvement in the whole territory, with the complaint figures dropping from 9 465 to 8 239, representing a decrease of 13%, over the aforesaid periods in question.

6. For the whole exercise, DSD has issued work orders at a total value of \$15.1 million for carrying out additional cleansing work to 188 kilometres of underground drains and sewers, exceeding the original plan of about 100 kilometres by 88%. The \$15.1 million amounts to 97.4% of the approved provision, of which \$14.6 million has been paid to the contractors while the remaining \$500,000 is under account finalisation. All work has been completed, with 79 time-limited jobs created during the 12-month period.

## **Food and Environmental Hygiene Department**

7. With the approved provision of \$99 million, FEHD has carried out the following: (1) enhancing cleansing and disinfection services in public markets; (2) enhancing street washing services; (3) enhancing the clean-up of environmental hygiene blackspots; (4) providing one-off clean-up services to common areas of private buildings without property management bodies; (5) enhancing cleansing services for aqua privies and public toilets; and (6) stepping up publicity and educational programmes on personal, domestic and environmental hygiene.

8. With regard to public markets, FEHD has enhanced the cleansing and disinfection services in the 104 public markets under its management, including (1) hourly disinfection of handrails of escalators/staircases and button key panels of passenger and goods lifts as well as replacement of the sterile plastic sheets over the button key panels on a need basis; (2) enhanced cleansing and disinfection of common areas of markets, including loading/unloading areas, refuse collection points, vacant stalls and staircases after the last cleansing operation of each day; (3) cleansing of market toilets not less than six times a day, including disinfection of toilet floors and toilet facilities; and (4) disinfection of other common facilities in markets (such as tables and chairs in common areas) twice a day. Please see Annex I for examples of the enhanced cleansing and disinfection services in public markets.

9. Another highlight of FEHD's work is enhancing street washing services and cleansing work in environmental hygiene blackspots. In this regard, FEHD has used high pressure hot water cleaners to enhance street washing services regularly, and removed the stubborn dirt, grease and chewing gum deposits, etc. from 1 553 problematic back lanes in the vicinity of food premises, hawker concentrated areas and public markets. Please see Annex II for examples of the enhanced street washing services.

10. Concerning the clean-up of environmental hygiene blackspots, as stated in the document submitted to the FC in July 2009, FEHD has identified 105 blackspots in consultation with the District Councils (DCs). By February 2010, all the blackspots have been removed from the list after thorough cleansing. FEHD has continued to monitor the condition and provide additional cleansing services as necessary to maintain a clean environment. Please see Annex III for examples of the enhanced clean-up services of such blackspots.

11. FEHD has also thoroughly cleansed the roofs, staircases, lightwells and other common parts of 5 008 private buildings without property management bodies, removing a total of 307 tonnes of waste. The overall hygiene condition has been enhanced. Please see Annex IV for examples of the one-off clean-up services to private buildings.

12. Besides, FEHD has enhanced the cleansing services of 562 aqua privies and public toilets without attendants, including increasing the daily cleansing from one or two times to three times and the weekly thorough deep cleansing from once to twice. Please see Annex V for examples of the enhanced cleansing services for aqua privies and public toilets.

13. FEHD has also conducted publicity and public education programmes to impress upon the public (including foreign domestic helpers, new immigrants and ethnic minorities) the importance of keeping personal, domestic and environmental hygiene. The publicity and educational programmes include: (1) six “Maintain Hygiene for a Healthy Life” Activity Days on personal, domestic and environmental hygiene (with three for foreign domestic helpers and three for new immigrants) were held in different districts from October 2009 to March 2010 respectively. The activity was aimed at promoting personal and environmental hygiene messages to targeted groups, including foreign domestic helpers and new immigrants; (2) about 100 000 copies of a booklet prepared in nine Southeast Asian languages to promote personal and domestic hygiene messages were distributed to schools admitting non-Chinese speaking children, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) serving ethnic minorities, and district offices of HAD and FEHD. In addition, about 40 000 bookmarks with personal and environmental hygiene messages were distributed to schools admitting non-Chinese speaking children; (3) roving exhibitions and game booths were held in 66 public markets and 73 public markets respectively to promote personal, domestic and environmental hygiene, and talks and cooking demonstrations on anti-flu dietetic therapy were held in 38 public markets; and (4) about 45 000 cleansing packs were distributed to market patrons as souvenirs; over 12 000 cleansing packs to market tenants of all 104 public markets and cooked food markets in the territory; and about 70 000 cleansing packs to visitors to the Health Education Exhibition and Resource Centre. Please see Annex VI for examples of the publicity and educational programmes.

14. All work has been completed. The total actual expenditure of FEHD is \$72 million. The estimate was originally based on the hourly rates of the posts to

be created and the equipment/vehicles to be hired. However, the actual tender prices have turned out to be lower. Nonetheless, the targets of the various enhancement measures have been met. The total number of time-limited jobs created is 558 (462 cleansing workers, 48 drivers and 48 supervisors).

## **Home Affairs Department**

15. With the approved provision of \$41.2 million, HAD has implemented environmental hygiene improvement measures and community involvement projects. On cleansing work in the community, HAD has engaged contractors/NGOs to provide cleansing services for the common areas of private buildings without property management bodies and the dwelling places of the under-privileged so as to improve the hygiene conditions and to appeal to the owners to up-keep the cleanliness of their premises. About 3 100 buildings and 29 000 households have benefited from such cleansing services.

16. HAD has organised and implemented community involvement events. In addition, HAD has conducted various promotional activities. It has joined hands with the DCs and residents' organisations (such as owners' committees and mutual aid committees) to carry out district-based activities, as well as mobilising volunteers to reach out to the needy to disseminate information on flu pandemic and assist in household cleansing. Promotional materials, including banners and posters, were displayed by the DCs across the territory. Over 600 promotional events on personal/environmental hygiene, such as seminars and roving exhibitions, have been organised in various districts. In addition, television and radio announcement in the public interest have been launched.

17. HAD has spent \$38.6 million by 30 November 2010, representing 93.7% of the approved provision. The actual expenditure on cleansing services of \$9.9 million is lower than the original estimate mainly due to the lower contract cost than budgeted and services rendered by volunteers. NGOs and contractors have been engaged as necessary, creating 240 time-limited jobs for one year. HAD has also created 49 time-limited jobs, including 20 Community Organisers, 11 Project Assistants, 4 Project Coordinators and 14 Project Executives, for one year.

## **Leisure and Cultural Services Department**

18. With the approved provision of \$39.1 million, LCSD has further strengthened cleansing and disinfection services in leisure and cultural venues with high patronage. It has also employed Health Ambassadors (HAs) at these venues to step up environmental hygiene and related public education and promotion work.

19. With regard to the cleansing of leisure and cultural venues, LCSD has stepped up the thorough cleansing and disinfection of around 600 parks and playgrounds. Through the engagement of additional mobile cleaners by cleansing contractors, the cleansing frequency of its parks and playgrounds has increased from once or twice a month to at least once a week. The frequency of cleansing and disinfection work of children's playground and equipment, elderly fitness equipment, pebble walking trails, garden benches, arbours, chess tables, refuse collection bins, drains, etc. has also increased from once to at least twice daily. As a result, the cleanliness of the leisure venues, particularly those without on-site cleaners, has noticeably improved.

20. LCSD has also engaged additional cleaners to step up the cleansing service of computer workstations for public use at the Hong Kong Central Library and other public libraries by increasing the cleansing frequency for computer peripherals, including keyboards, mice, Chinese writing devices etc., with diluted bleach (1:99) from once daily to once every hour.

21. To promote the HSI precautionary message and measures at leisure and cultural venues, LCSD has employed, on a time-limited basis, 106 HAs to work in 23 indoor sports centres, 29 major parks/playgrounds/holiday camps/outdoor recreation and sports centres, 34 public libraries, 12 indoor stadia and performing arts venues, and 8 public museums. The HAs help disseminate messages to the venue/facility users on the fight against HSI, promote the importance of personal health and hygiene, directly respond to users' enquiries, maintain environmental hygiene of the venues and inspect the cleansing and disinfection work at the venues.

22. To ensure the service quality of the HAs, LCSD has organised a range of training programmes for them including induction training, training on preventive measures against HSI and customer service training. The service of the HAs is well-received by venue/facility users who have become more alert to personal and environmental hygiene. For example, children would clean their hands before entering the children's play rooms. The HAs are also provided with surgical

masks and alcohol swabs for distribution to venue/facility users in need. The HAs have played a positive role in strengthening the monitoring work over the cleansing and disinfection of venues and enhance the awareness of venue/facility users on the importance of personal and environmental hygiene in the fight against HSI.

23. The actual expenditure of LCSD is \$33.1 million, representing 84.5% of the approved provision. This is mainly due to the lower contract costs offered. The total number of time-limited jobs created is 386 (197 full-time, 83 part-time posts of workers and 106 posts of HAs), which has exceeded the initial planned number of about 300.

### **Social Welfare Department**

24. With the approved provision of \$95 million, SWD has provided additional resources for some 1 800 welfare service units of 365 welfare organisations to hire additional cleansing service or employ part-time or temporary helping hands to strengthen general cleansing service and enhance environmental hygiene as appropriate.

25. Altogether, the welfare organisations have spent \$32.3 million on hiring of cleansing service from contractors, \$53.2 million on employing part-time/full-time temporary cleansing workers, and \$3.3 million on purchasing cleansing materials. The total actual expenditure of the welfare organisations is \$88.8 million, representing 93.5% of the approved provision. This is due to the difference between the approved provision and the actual expenditure incurred by the welfare organisations. The total number of part-time/full-time temporary cleansing workers employed on a time-limited basis is 2 536.

### **Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department**

26. With the approved provision of \$6 million, AFCD has maintained and improved the cleanliness of country park facilities, and improved the environmental hygiene of wholesale food markets under its management.

27. With regard to enhancing the cleansing of country park facilities, AFCD has engaged the cleansing contractors to strengthen cleansing work at country parks (e.g. Ma Shi Chau Special Area, Tung Ping Chau, Pak Tam Chung, Hoi Ha Wan, Tai Lam Forestry Track and Ngong Ping Camp Site etc.) and refuse accumulation

sites near recreational facilities (e.g. Nai Chung, Wan Tsai, Wong Shek, Tai Mo Shan, Tai Mei Tuk and Hok Tau etc.). AFCD has provided ten more mobile toilets near popular recreation sites (e.g. East Dam of High Island Reservoir, Tsing Tam, Needle Hill, Plover Cove Country Park Visitor Centre and Shui Chuen O Street etc.) to improve the hygiene facilities at country parks. AFCD has also completed the upgrading of cleansing facilities for flushing toilets in country parks. More automatic cleansing facilities (including 300 water taps, 180 soap dispensers, 130 hand dryers and 130 disinfectant dispensers) were installed in 86 flushing toilets in country parks.

28. On strengthening the hygiene measures at the three Government wholesale food markets, AFCD has requested the cleansing contractors to provide additional manpower to enhance the hygiene conditions of about 37 public toilets located at various wholesale food markets and to increase the frequency of daily cleansing services in the wholesale food markets (from four times to six times), daily refuse collection (from one/two times to two/three times), daily cleansing/disinfection of lifts (from three times to six times), cleansing of drainage and roads (from once a week to twice a week), weekly tidying of premises (from once a week to twice a week) and cleansing of sewage pump stations (from once a month to twice a month). Members of the Market Management Advisory Committee have commented that the market cleanliness has greatly improved due to the increased frequency of cleansing of market facilities and refuse collection by the cleansing contractors, and are satisfied with the overall market hygiene.

29. The actual expenditure of AFCD is \$5.5 million, representing 92% of the approved provision. This is due to a lower labour cost than originally estimated. About 70 time-limited jobs have been created.

## **Marine Department**

30. With the approved provision of \$4.2 million, MD has maintained and improved the environmental hygiene of cross-boundary ferry terminals, marine refuse collection points and other concerned water areas.

31. In relation to providing additional cleansing services to cross-boundary ferry terminals, more cleaners have been deployed and additional cleansing services provided for passenger toilets at the Macau Ferry Terminal and the China Ferry Terminal. The hygiene condition and cleanliness at these places have been enhanced and found satisfactory. Besides, the newly made steel rubbish recycling



bins have been placed in both terminals. The two thorough cleansing and washing exercises at both terminals have also enhanced their hygiene condition and cleanliness.

32. To improve the environmental hygiene in marine refuse collection points and other concerned water areas, MD has set up a special team of 14 persons on a time-limited basis to enhance refuse scavenging at littoral foreshore areas. The team has operated seven days a week (eight hours per day) for 12 months, collecting a total of 360 tonnes of refuse. Besides, MD has procured six sets of high pressure hot water spray guns and the relevant operational training has been completed, for daily intensive cleansing at marine refuse collection points.

33. The actual expenditure of MD is \$3.87 million, representing 92% of the approved provision. This is due to the difference between the approved provision and the actual expenditure incurred on the equipment purchased. 42 time-limited jobs have been created.

### **Job creation**



34. During the discussion on the funding proposal, some Panel and FC Members were concerned about the number of jobs that would be created. The seven departments have created a total of more than 3 800 time-limited jobs for implementing the various initiatives.

### **Conclusion**

35. Members are invited to note that all the work targets set out in the FC paper have been completed and all expenditure is within budget. Departments concerned will continue to monitor the environmental hygiene situation in areas falling under their purview carefully, and will implement appropriate measures that are instrumental in improving the environmental hygiene situation.

Food and Health Bureau  
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Enhanced Cleansing and Disinfection Services in Public Markets






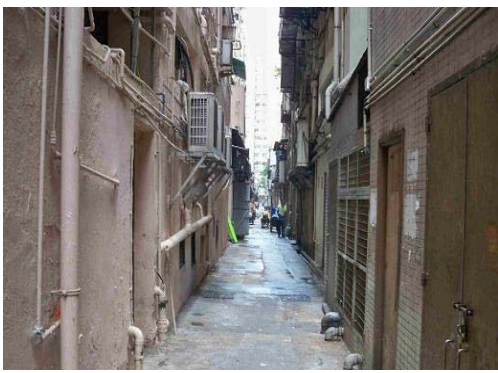
Location	Work in Progress
Ngau Tau Kok Market, Kwun Tong	 <p data-bbox="891 632 1718 707">Wiping and disinfection of handrails of escalators/staircases and button key panels of passenger and goods lifts</p>
	 <p data-bbox="954 1417 1653 1449">Enhanced cleansing and disinfection of common parts</p>







Enhanced Street Washing Services

<b>Location</b>	<b>Before Operation</b>	<b>After Operation</b>
Rear lane of 33 Graham Street and 22 Peel Street, Central / Western District		
Pavement of To Kwa Wan Road near Kwei Chow Street, Kowloon City		
Rear lane of even no. of South Wall Road, Kowloon City		



Enhanced Clean-up of Environmental Hygiene Blackspots and Sustaining the Enhanced Level of Public Cleansing Services

Location	Before Operation	After Operation
<p>Rear lane of 17-19 Wellington Street and Chuk On Lane, Central / Western District</p>		
<p>Lane at rear of Jaffe Road (opposite to Fleming Road), Wanchai</p>		
<p>Chun Yeung Street (between Tong Shui Road and North Point Road) and Java Road (between Tong Shui Road and North Point Road), Eastern District</p>		

Location	Before Operation	After Operation
<p>Rear lane of 77 Parkers Street, Yau Ma Tei</p>		
<p>Rear lane of 101-123 Chuen Lung Street and Yi Pei Square, Tsuen Wan</p>		
<p>Rear lane of Yin Hing Street and Foo Yuen Street, San Po Kong, Wong Tai Sin</p>		



**One-off Clean-up Services to Common Areas of Private Buildings without Property Management Bodies**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Before Operation</b>	<b>After Operation</b>
Roof of 852-858 King's Road, Eastern District	 A cluttered rooftop area with various items, including a ladder, pipes, and debris, under a metal structure.	 A clean, empty rooftop area with a tiled floor and a metal structure.
Roof of No. 12-14 Shing On Street, Eastern District	 A cluttered rooftop area with a metal structure, a chair, and other debris.	 A clean, empty rooftop area with a concrete floor and a metal structure.
Roof of No. 25-27 Hak Po Street, Mong Kok	 A cluttered rooftop area with a concrete floor, a blue mat, and other debris.	 A clean, empty rooftop area with a concrete floor and a yellow-painted wall.

Location	Before Operation	After Operation
Roof of No. 7-9 Wan King Street, Kowloon City		
Roof of No. 13-15 Wan Fat Street, Kowloon City		
Staircase of No. 6-8 Wan Hing Street, Kowloon.		

Enhanced Cleansing Services of Aqua Privies and Public Toilets

Location	During Operation
Sheung Shui Tung Hing Road Public Toilet, North District	 
Aqua Privy at Sai Bin Wai, Yuen Long	 



Publicity and Educational Programmes on Personal, Domestic and Environmental Hygiene

Publicity and Educational Programmes



Promotion and education sessions on personal / domestic / environmental hygiene

## Publicity and Educational Programmes



Game booth and roving exhibition on personal / domestic / environmental hygiene as well as talk and cooking demonstration on anti-flu therapy held in public markets