



食物環境衛生署
Food and Environmental
Hygiene Department



食物安全中心
Centre for Food Safety

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7 December 2011
(urgent by fax : 2840 0716)

Ms Miranda HON
Clerk
Public Accounts Committee
Legislative Council Complex,
1 Legislative Council Road,
Central,
Hong Kong.

Dear Ms Hon,

**The Director of Audit's Report on the
results of value for money audits (Report No. 57)**

**“Food labelling” and “Nutrition labelling
of infant and special dietary foods” (Chapter 3 and 4)**

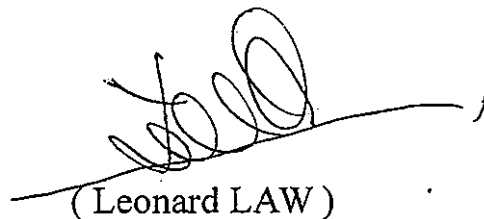
I refer to your letter of 6 December 2011 and would like to provide the requisite information as requested by the Public Accounts Committee in relation to Chapter 3 of the Director of Audit's Report (Audit Report) as follows :-

- (a) copy of the assignment report produced by the Independent Commission Against Corruption on “Enforcement of Food Labelling Requirements” (in English only) at **Annex I**. You may note that we have accepted all but two of the recommendations made in the assignment report. For the two recommendations (i.e. to take into account the residence of the Health Inspectors when assigning districts to them for routine inspection and to move the Chief Health Inspector's office to the Food Labelling Unit (FLU) office to enable the exercise of direct supervision over the FLU), the ICAC has agreed with us not to take on the recommendations having noted our explanations on the inherent

operational difficulties;

- (b) information on the dates and attendees for the meetings to discuss the tolerance limits in the CFS Technical Guidance Notes are given in **Annex II**; and
- (c) an account for the drop in the number of prosecutions and convictions in 2011 is given in **Annex III**.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Leonard LAW', written over a horizontal line.

(Leonard LAW)
for Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene

c.c. Secretary for Food and Health (fax no. 2526 3753)
Director of Health (fax no. 2893 9613)
Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (fax no. 2147 5239)
Director of Audit (fax no. 2583 9063)

***Note by Clerk, PAC: Annex I not attached.**

Annex II

Dates and attendees of the technical meetings in which the issue of tolerance limits has been discussed

Round	Date	Attendees
1st round	6 August 2004	Importers/Suppliers
	15 September 2004	Food Retailers
	11 January 2005	Laboratory Service Providers
2nd round	6 April 2005	Manufacturers
	7 April 2005	Importers/Suppliers
	11 April 2005	Food Retailers
	13 April 2005	Laboratory Service Providers
3rd round	8 June 2005	Laboratory Service Providers
	9 June 2005	Manufacturers
	21 June 2005	Importers/Suppliers
	22 June 2005	Food Retailers
5th round	28 September 2007	Manufacturers
	8 October 2007	Laboratory Service Providers
	10 October 2007	Importers/Suppliers
	11 October 2007	Food Retailers
	9 November 2007	Traders for ethnic minority food
7th round	9 January 2008	Importers/Suppliers
	10 January 2008	Food Retailer
	11 January 2008	Manufacturers
8th round	19 March 2008	Food traders
	20 March 2008	Laboratory Service Providers
9th round	22 April 2008	Food traders
	7 May 2008	Food traders
10th round	18 June 2008	Food traders
	20 June 2008	Laboratory Service Providers

Dates and attendees of the workshops/ seminars in which the issue of tolerance limits has been explained to traders

1. Workshops on Nutrition Labelling Scheme (Basic)

Date	Attendees
25.7.2008	Traders in small and medium enterprises trading organic or health foods
1.8.2008	Food traders
12.8.2008	Laboratory service providers
2.9.2008	Traders in small and medium enterprises trading foods
23.9.2008	Food manufacturers, food importers/ suppliers
24.9.2008	Food retailers
16.10.2008	Traders of bakery foods
30.12.2008	Food traders
19.3.2009	Food traders (including health food)
22.6.2009	Food traders
5.8.2009	Traders of Japanese foods
28.10.2009	Food traders
9.12.2009	Food traders
31.3.2010	Food traders
26.4.2010	Food traders
2.6.2010	Food traders
21.7.2010	Food traders
22.9.2010	Food traders
20.1.2011	Food traders
27.6.2011	Food traders

2. Workshop on Nutrition Labelling Scheme (Advanced)

Date	Attendees
23.1.2009	Food traders
28.4.2009	Food traders
29.7.2009	Food traders
8.10.2009	Food traders, especially those for Japanese foods
29.12.2009	Food traders
21.4.2010	Food traders

3. Experience sharing session on Nutrition Label Calculator

Date	Attendees
12.6.2009	Food traders, especially small-medium entrepreneurs

Note

The documents of the technical meetings and the draft Technical Guidance Notes were available on Food and Health Bureau and CFS websites for reference and comment by members of the public

Annex III

The reasons for the drop in the number of prosecutions and convictions for food labelling non-compliant cases in the first 6 months of 2011 as compared with the corresponding figures in 2010 are as follows :-

- The chained supermarkets/stores have over the years come to know better the general labelling requirements, particularly after the implementation of the nutrition labelling scheme in July 2010. Accordingly, the compliance rate on general labelling has improved, resulting in the smaller number of prosecutions being made in 2011; and
- Routine inspections and blitz operations to check the compliance of the trade with the food labelling and nutrition labelling requirements were temporarily suspended from April to June 2011 in order to release staff to help deal with the outbreak of food incidents arising from the Japanese nuclear accident and plasticizer incident in Taiwan.

Inspections were resumed to normal in July 2011. CFS will endeavour to check a comparable number of samples as in 2010.