

**立法會**  
***Legislative Council***

LC Paper No. CB(2)1870/11-12(06)

Ref : CB2/PL/FE

**Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene**

**Background brief prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat  
for the meeting on 8 May 2012**

**Trap-Neuter-Release Scheme**

**Purpose**

This paper gives an account of the past discussions of the Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene ("the Panel") on the Trap-Neuter-Release ("TNR") Scheme.

**Background**

2. TNR aims to control the population of stray animals through neutering them before returning them to their habitats to continue their lives until they die of natural causes. According to the Administration, animal welfare organizations ("AWOs") have widely promoted in the past few years the concept of TNR as an alternative to the catch and removal strategy. They have strongly advocated for TNR to be adopted in Hong Kong for stray dogs, and consider that this will be a viable way to control stray dog population while safeguarding animal welfare. Whilst there are few examples worldwide that have scientifically and categorically pointed to the success of TNR for dogs, the Administration is prepared to allow some AWOs to conduct a pilot scheme to assess the effectiveness of TNR in controlling the stray dog population in selected areas in Hong Kong. The Administration will assist the relevant AWOs in devising the details of the

pilot scheme, and providing technical help and support to them in implementing, monitoring and evaluating the outcome of the trial scheme. The Administration has been actively discussing with the Society for Protection of Cruelty to Animals ("SPCA") and the Society for Abandoned Animals on the operation protocol for the trial scheme and identifying suitable sites. Relevant District Councils will also be consulted on the trial scheme. Details of the proposed trial scheme are in **Appendix I**.

### **Past discussions by the Panel**

3. At its meeting on 14 June 2011, the Panel was briefed on the Administration's proposed measures which included, among others, TNR pilot scheme for stray dogs to further enhance the Administration's work in respect of animal welfare and management.

4. While expressing support for the early implementation of TNR pilot scheme, members suggested that the Administration should gauge the views of some small AWOs apart from the large ones, such as SPCA, during the consultation. Concern was also raised about the insurance matter relating to the TNR pilot scheme.

5. According to the Administration, preliminary consensus had been reached on the aspects, such as legislation and insurance coverage, between the Administration and the two partner organizations of the TNR pilot scheme. The Administration was working with them on the selection of districts that were suitable for the operation of the trial scheme as well as the evaluation method and criteria to assess the effectiveness of the scheme. The Administration assured members that relevant District Councils would be consulted before the commencement of the trial scheme.

6. Information was sought on the rationale behind one of the conditions under which the TNR pilot scheme would be suspended (i.e. serious accident(s) caused by one or more subject dogs of the pilot scheme which leads to public outcry). Members were advised that during the trial period, the Administration was deeply concerned whether there would be emergence of public health risks, such as the outbreaks of rabies; complaints regarding animal nuisance or animal welfare arising from the pilot scheme; serious

procedural irregularities or non-compliance with the agreed protocol; or serious accident(s) caused by one or more subject dogs of the pilot scheme which led to public outcry. Though any accidents caused by dogs were not necessarily related to the pilot scheme, the Administration would suspend the scheme if any of the above circumstances occurred in order to study the incidents involving subject dogs and consider whether the scheme should continue.

### **Relevant papers**

7. A list of the relevant papers on the LegCo website is in the **Appendix II**.

Council Business Division 2  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
2 May 2012

### **“Trap-Neuter-Release” Pilot Scheme for Stray Dogs**

This annex sets out the latest proposals of the “Trap-Neuter-Release” (TNR) pilot scheme for stray dogs.

#### **Objectives**

2. The TNR programme aims to reduce gradually the population of stray dogs through reducing the number of reproductive dogs. As there is currently no conclusive evidence demonstrating the effectiveness of a TNR programme, a pilot scheme will be implemented in selected districts in Hong Kong with a view to collecting relevant empirical evidence. The pilot scheme will assess the outcome in terms of the size of the stray population in each selected area as well as nuisances caused to the public.

#### **Implementation**

3. The pilot scheme will be run by animal welfare organisations (AWOs) which agree to follow a pre-designed and agreed protocol. A broad framework is as set out in ensuing paragraphs.

4. The AWO will assume the role of Programme Coordinator (PC). The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) will provide technical help and support as necessary. The pilot scheme will be conducted over a three-year period during which the PC will be required to submit annual progress reports to AFCD.

5. Under the pilot scheme, an area will be first selected for operation of TNR. The choice of the selected area will be subject to the endorsement of the relevant District Council. The PC will designate volunteer Carer(s) who will be tasked to catch dogs within the selected area and take care of the dogs subsequently selected to join the pilot scheme (subject dogs).

6. The Carer(s) will actively catch dogs in the selected area and arrange for the dogs caught by them to be transported safely and directly to the holding facilities of the PC for assessment and, where appropriate, treatment. Veterinary examination and temperament assessment will be performed by a registered veterinary surgeon of the PC during the holding period. Aggressive dogs and dogs with serious health problems will be euthanised. If a dog is found with a microchip or is suspected to have an owner, it will be held in the holding facilities of the PC until ownership status is verified. Any dogs found to be owned will be returned to their owners.

7. Dogs selected to join the pilot scheme will first be treated for parasites. Thereafter, they will be neutered, microchipped and vaccinated for rabies and other common canine diseases.

8. After examination, vaccination and neutering, the PC can decide which of the dogs are to join the pilot scheme and which are to be rehomed. The Carer(s) will monitor the dogs after release. Apart from their day-to-day duty to feed and care for the subject dogs, the Carer(s) will also be required to ensure that the environmental hygiene of the location is satisfactorily maintained. Prior training will be provided to the Carer(s) by the PC with AFCD-endorsed training material.

9. Although aggressive dogs will not be returned to public places under the pilot scheme, incidents involving subject dogs may still occur. Common incidents include dog bites and traffic accidents, which may cause injuries to members of the public. In this connection, as the PC of the TNR pilot scheme, the AWO concerned will be required to obtain adequate third-party insurance coverage.

### **Assessment and Monitoring**

10. To ensure an independent assessment of the outcome of the pilot scheme to be carried out, a research institution will be commissioned to conduct a baseline population survey in collaboration with the PC before the commencement of the scheme. All stray dogs and their offspring found in the selected area during the study period will be identified as far as possible.

11. AFCD will, along with the research institution, monitor all the field work conducted and records collected by the PC in the selected area during the three-year trial period.

12. The research institution will analyse and submit regular reports on the data concerning the change in the number, distribution and ecology of stray dogs as well as the number of complaints received in the selected area during the study period and the correlation among them. A mid-term review of the effectiveness of the pilot scheme will also be conducted. Upon completion of the pilot scheme, the research institution will submit a final report with assessments on its effectiveness.

13. During the trial period, AFCD will continue to handle public complaints relating to the subject dogs and other dogs in the study area under the existing operating procedures. However, subject dogs caught during the pilot scheme in response to complaints will be returned to the PC. Dogs not yet included in the pilot scheme will be processed according to the procedures stated in paragraphs 6 – 8 above. In order to safeguard animal welfare as well as public health and safety, the pilot scheme will be suspended if any of the following conditions arise:

- (i) Emergence of public health risks (e.g. outbreaks of rabies or other serious zoonotic diseases).
- (ii) Significant increase in the number of complaints concerning animal nuisance or animal welfare in respect of the pilot scheme.
- (iii) Serious accident(s) caused by one or more subject dogs of the pilot scheme which leads to public outcry.
- (iii) Serious procedural irregularities or non-compliance with the agreed protocol.

## Appendix II

### Relevant papers on the Trap-Neuter-Release Scheme

Meeting	Date of meeting	Paper
The Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene	14.6.2011 (Item VI)	<a href="#">Agenda</a> <a href="#">Minutes</a> <a href="#">CB(2)1995/10-11(07)</a> <a href="#">CB(2)1995/10-11(08)</a>
Legislative Council	3.11.2010	Motion moved by Hon CHAN Hak-kan on " <a href="#">Formulating an animal-friendly policy</a> "
	15.6.2011	[Question 2] Asked by: Hon Miriam LAU <a href="#">Cruelty to animals</a>

Council Business Division 2  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
2 May 2012