



中華人民共和國香港特別行政區政府總部食物及衛生局
Food and Health Bureau, Government Secretariat
The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
The People's Republic of China

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(By e-mail)
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Mr Anthony CHU
Clerk to Public Accounts Committee
Legislative Council
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central
Hong Kong

Dear Mr CHU,

Public Accounts Committee

Consideration of Chapter 3 of the Director of Audit's Report No. 64

**Public cooked food markets managed by
the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department**

Further to our first batch of response sent on 2 June 2015, I enclose herewith information on the items (c), (d), (e), (f) and (m). We apologise for not being able to revert earlier.

Yours sincerely,

(Miss Diane Wong)
for Secretary for Food and Health

c.c.: Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene
Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury
Director of Audit

Item (c) – The reasons for not implementing the stipulated fire safety measures at each Cooked Food Centre (CFC)/Cooked Food Market (CFM)/Cooked Food Hawker Bazaar (CFHB) and a work plan and timetable to improve the fire safety measures for each public cooked food market

CFCs

Out of the 39 CFCs managed by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD), 31¹ are equipped with all the six stipulated fire safety measures. To recap, these measures are –

- (a) automatic sprinkler system;
- (b) automatic cut-off device for mechanical ventilating systems;
- (c) emergency lighting;
- (d) fire hydrant and hose reel system;
- (e) manual fire alarm; and
- (f) portable fire extinguisher.

2. Seven of the eight remaining CFCs are provided with five fire safety measures. What remains outstanding is the automatic cut-off device for mechanical ventilating system. These seven markets are Kwu Tung Market Shopping Centre CFC, Sha Tau Kok Market CFC, Kam Tin Market CFC, Heung Che Street Market CFC, Quarry Bay Market CFC, Tin Wan Market CFC and Yue Kwong Road Market CFC. According to Fire Services Department's (FSD) latest advice, since there is no central air-conditioning/ventilating system in these seven CFCs, the automatic cut-off device for mechanical ventilating system is not necessary.

3. In respect of the one remaining CFC, i.e. Sham Tseng Temporary Market CFC, two of the six fire safety installations are outstanding, namely the automatic cut-off device for mechanical ventilating system and the automatic sprinkler system. Again, given that

¹ Centre Street Market CFC was originally counted as not having installed the automatic cut-off device in the audit report. However, based on the latest advice of the works departments, an automatic cut-off system has already been installed to stop, in case of a fire outbreak, the ventilating/air-conditioning system for the whole building in which the CFC is housed. Hence, the number of CFCs equipped with all the six stipulated fire safety measures is now revised to 31 as opposed to 30 in table 6 of the audit report.

there is no central air-conditioning/ ventilating system in this CFC, an automatic cut-off device is not necessary. As regards the automatic sprinkler system, Architectural Services Department's (ArchSD) advice to FEHD is that because the temporary market is located under a flyover, the construction of a sprinkler pump room, water tank and trench for sprinkler pipe would not be feasible without major refurbishment. ArchSD will conduct a feasibility study on an alternative proposal for a sprinkler system in view of the site constraints and latest statutory requirements.

CFMs and CFHBs

4. As explained to the Audit Commission and Public Accounts Committee before, subsequent to the meeting with FSD in 2003 and following the spirit of the Fire Safety (Commercial Premises) Ordinance, Cap. 502, FEHD had reviewed the fire safety measures at CFCs and public markets selling dry and wet goods and implemented plans to upgrade their fire safety measures. In addition, FEHD had implemented fire safety upgrading works at three of the 25 CFMs, namely Kik Yeung Road CFM, Kin Yip Street CFM and Tai Tong Road CFM. A thorough record search did not reveal the reason why the other CFMs and the CFHBs were not covered in the review then. Our conjecture is that it might be a question of priority.

5. As at the end of 2014, four or more of the six fire safety measures mentioned above had been implemented at 15 of the 25 CFMs. It is nonetheless acknowledged that less than four such measures were available in the remaining 10 CFMs; and six of the 11 CFHBs were yet to be acted upon. FEHD has since been working closely with ArchSD, FSD and the relevant departments to improve fire safety at these relevant cooked food venues.

6. To-date, all CFHBs are provided with portable fire extinguishers.

7. Action is being taken by FEHD to install, in the coming six months, emergency lighting and manual fire alarm in all CFMs and CFHBs where such devices are lacking at present.

8. For installation of the remaining three fire safety measures (viz. fire hydrant and hose reel system, automatic sprinkler system and automatic cut-off device for mechanical ventilating system), owing to the need to resolve the technical issues involved and consult relevant departments, more time will be needed. For installation of fire hydrant, hose reels and fire sprinkler system, it will be necessary to identify suitable space in the cooked food venues for construction of water tanks and the associated plant rooms. The location and operation of the water tanks or plant rooms should avoid affecting existing installations in the venues. In particular, detailed structural assessment is required to ensure that the cooked food venues can support the loading imposed by the additional structures. In addition, the fire safety design/ installation proposal as well as the water supply for the fire safety system will require separate approval by FSD and Water Supplies Department respectively. FEHD will work with the relevant departments to conduct studies as soon as possible to ascertain the feasibility of installing these fire safety measures in CFMs and CFHBs where such devices are lacking at present.

Other Fire Safety Precautionary Measures

9. To enhance the awareness of CFC/CFM/CFHB staff and stall tenants on fire safety, FEHD will, with the assistance of FSD, arrange fire safety talks for them on topics such as “Common Fire Safety Irregularities”, “What to do in case of fire”, “Proper Use of Fire-fighting Equipment”, “Safe Use of Dangerous Goods”. Fire drills will also be organized.

10. The two departments will also carry out fire hazard abatement actions at cooked food venues where the situation so warrants. FEHD will enhance fire safety management in the cooked food venues, including disseminating fire safety messages to cooked food stall operators during routine inspections and taking appropriate follow-up action should any potential fire risks be identified in connection with the operation of the stalls.

11. Separately, the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) will continue to provide engineering support to FEHD in

promoting and ensuring electrical and gas safety in public cooked food markets and take appropriate enforcement actions according to the relevant statutory requirements.

Item (d) – correspondences between FEHD and ArchSD

12. A full set of the written correspondences between FEHD and other government departments including ArchSD and EMSD, and relevant outside bodies on upgrading the electricity system of the Kwun Tong Ferry Concourse CFM between July 2009 and May 2015 is attached at **Annex A**.

Item (e) – standard for electricity supply for stall operation

13. The standard electricity supply requirement (i.e. 60 amperes (60A), 3 phase) for cooked food stall is stipulated in Clause 3.29.1 of the "Handbook on Standard Features for Public Markets and Cooked Food Centres" issued by FEHD in December 2011. The same requirement is also found in the former Urban Services Department (USD)'s document issued in 1999. However, no record can be found on how this standard was formulated by the former USD or FEHD at that time.

14. As advised by ArchSD and EMSD, a three phase 60A power supply would provide electricity for equipment and appliances up to roughly 33 kilowatt. The provision is generally adequate in respect of commercial type electrical appliances such as cooking range, rice cooker, refrigerator, tea urn, toaster, etc. that are normally required for a cooked food stall. Taking domestic appliances supplied by 13A power sockets for illustration purpose, the three phase 60A electrical system can meet the power requirement for about 15 induction cookers or as many as 40 1.8-litre traditional rice cookers.

***Note by Clerk, PAC:** *Please see Appendix 36 of this Report for Annex A.*

Item (f) – copy of guidelines on the use of electrical appliances

15. In consultation with EMSD, we have drawn up guidelines on electrical safety and use of electrical appliances in CFMs/CFCs for tenants' reference. A copy of the guidelines is at **Annex B**. FEHD will ensure that these guidelines are properly implemented and updated as necessary.

Item (m) – organization chart and job duties of FEHD staff for management of public cooked food stalls

16. The organization chart of FEHD staff responsible for the management of CFHBs, CFMs and CFCs and their respective job duties is at **Annex C**.

***Note by Clerk, PAC:** *Please see Appendices 37 and 29 of this Report for Annexes B and C respectively.*