

**For information**

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

**Co-operation Agreement between Hong Kong and Shenzhen on  
the Inspection and Quarantine Arrangement at Qianhai**

**Purpose**

This paper briefs Members on the co-operation agreement entered into between Hong Kong and Shenzhen on the inspection and quarantine arrangement at Qianhai.

**Background**

2. Importers of frozen meat had expressed concern to the Government since 2012 about shortage of cold stores in Hong Kong to meet the demand of the trade. In view of the growth in frozen meat imports, there were suggestions to leverage on the cold storage facilities available in Qianhai to cater for the business and development needs of Hong Kong's frozen meat trade. The intended arrangement was to allow frozen meat destined for Hong Kong from overseas to be stored temporarily in the Qianhaiwan Bonded Port Area (QBPA) of Shenzhen for subsequent delivery to Hong Kong in batches. Following consultation with the trade and the relevant Mainland authorities, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) and the Shenzhen Entry-Exit Inspection and Quarantine Bureau (SZCIQ), on the premise that food safety is upheld, reached a co-operation agreement in April 2016 whereby frozen meat imported from overseas may be stored temporarily in QBPA before importation into Hong Kong in batches.

**Temporary Storage in Qianhai for Subsequent Import into Hong Kong in Batches**

3. This arrangement provides the trade with an added option for storage of frozen meat. It helps facilitate business and strengthen co-operation between the Mainland and Hong Kong in inspection, quarantine and business development without changing any of the existing statutory requirements for imported food or compromising food safety. Same as the arrangement for direct importation into Hong Kong,

when the consignment of frozen meat that has been temporarily stored in Qianhai arrives in Hong Kong, it must be accompanied by a health certificate issued by an issuing entity of the place of origin recognised by the Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene (DFEH).

### **Co-operation Agreement and Legal Requirements**

4. The co-operation agreement also requires that frozen meat transhipped through Qianhai should come from overseas countries/places which have already established import protocols with Hong Kong and are allowed to export the corresponding types of frozen meat to the Mainland. The Mainland authorities are responsible for the inspection and quarantine of frozen meat transhipped through Qianhai, including monitoring the facilities and temperatures of cold stores in which the frozen meat is kept, to ensure hygiene and safety.

5. According to the Imported Game, Meat, Poultry and Eggs Regulations (Cap 132AK), any person who imports meat/poultry into Hong Kong should produce a health certificate issued by an issuing entity of the place of origin recognised by DFEH. Besides, in line with the requirements on transhipped meat/poultry under Cap 132AK, every consignment of frozen meat that has been stored in Qianhai, upon entry into Hong Kong, must be accompanied by the aforementioned health certificate and a transshipment certificate issued by the relevant Qianhai authorities, certifying that the frozen meat was properly imported into Qianhai and did not suffer any spoilage or deterioration during its stay there. The Qianhai authorities will also audit the quantity of transhipped frozen meat to be imported into Hong Kong and the frozen meat remaining in the cold stores so as to issue a deduction table for each consignment. Every consignment of frozen meat that has been stored in Qianhai must be accompanied by a deduction table issued by the Qianhai authorities when being shipped to Hong Kong. The original copy of the transshipment certificate and deduction table should be kept by the importer.

### **Arrangement for Importing Transhipped Frozen Meat**

6. An importer is required to obtain an import licence from FEHD for transshipment of each batch of frozen meat that has been temporarily stored in QBPA to Hong Kong. Lorries transporting the frozen meat cargoes from QBPA must enter Hong Kong via Man Kam To Control Point for inspection by FEHD at the Man Kam To Food Control Office.

7. Each batch of frozen meat transhipped to Hong Kong should be kept at -18°C or below during transportation. Upon the arrival of the frozen meat, FEHD can inspect the meat, including taking samples for testing, and detain the consignment pending the test results to ensure food safety. If the frozen meat fails the inspection, it will either be disposed of or exported to its place of origin. The inspection and quarantine authorities in Qianhai will also be notified for their follow-up action correspondingly.

### **Briefing for the Trade**

8. FEHD briefed the trade about the co-operation agreement and the relevant implementation arrangements on 20 and 23 June 2016 and via the Trade Consultation Forum on 5 October 2016. The related information has also been uploaded to the webpage of the Centre for Food Safety of FEHD for reference by the trade.

### **Implementation Date of the Co-operation Agreement**

9. The co-operation agreement has come into operation starting 11 July 2016 as agreed between FEHD and SZCIQ. Both sides will maintain communication, refine the relevant procedures and strictly implement the co-operation agreement to safeguard food safety and public health.

### **Implementation Progress of the Co-operation Agreement and Usage by the Trade**

10. As at 31 December 2016, the arrangement under the co-operation agreement had yet to be used by the trade. During its regular liaison with the trade, FEHD understands that commercial considerations related to using the temporary storage arrangement may include the size of the consignment of imports, market demand, duration of storage (short term or longer-term), relative rental cost, etc. Importers may take into account their own business needs to consider if they would like to take advantage of the option for storage of frozen meat provided by the co-operation agreement. FEHD will continue to maintain communication with the trade, and plans to organise further briefings on the co-operation agreement and the relevant implementation arrangements for the trade.

## **Advice Sought**

11. Members are invited to note the content of this paper.

**Food and Health Bureau  
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department  
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