



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

[English Translation]

27 December 2018

Clerk to Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central
Hong Kong
(Attention: Miss Josephine SO)

Dear Miss SO,

**Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene
Improving Public Toilet Services and Facilities at Major Tourist Spots**

Regarding the passed motion at the Panel meeting on 11 December 2018, our response is as follows:

- (1) To enhance the services of public toilets, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) and the Architectural Services Department (ArchSD) have set up a working group to review from time to time the existing sanitary fittings and equipment in public toilets, carry out refurbishment works for dilapidated public toilets and install new facilities. In addition to

the trial provision of air-conditioning systems and dehumidifiers, one stop provision Cabinet Wash Hand Basin Systems and drinking water dispensers as mentioned in the discussion paper, FEHD will gradually provide or retrofit new and refurbished public toilets with the following facilities:

- (a) automatic sensor water tap and soap dispenser for each wash hand basin;
- (b) electric hand dryers (with a drain tank) at suitable places in the common areas;
- (c) waterproof power sockets at suitable places in the common areas;
- (d) lockable stainless steel toilet paper holders to provide jumbo roll tissue in toilet compartments;
- (e) blower fans (with timer control) to keep floor dry;
- (f) use of LED lighting to replace conventional ones; and
- (g) manhole covers of public toilets will be placed at inconspicuous locations and away from the toilet entrances as far as practicable.

FEHD is also exploring the application of new technologies in public toilets with reference to practices of the Mainland China and overseas, including:

- (a) application of advance ozone technology on a trial basis for Sai Yee Street Garden Public Toilet in Mong Kok in Q1 2019. Ozonated water will be injected into the flushing system to inhibit bacteria growth, and degrade odour molecule so as to abate odour and improve air quality; and
- (b) application of Nano Confined Catalytic Oxidation technology on a trial basis for Peak Tower Public Toilet and Southorn Centre Public Toilet in Wan Chai in Q2 2019. The technology decomposes odour molecules and pollutants into harmless water molecules and carbon dioxide so as to abate odour and improve air quality.

On the software front, FEHD has stepped up inspection and monitoring of contractors' performances of 83 public toilets with relatively high usage rates since September 2018 to ensure that the contractors' services are up to the standards and deep cleansing is performed on a regular basis. After implementation for over three months, the programme has brought about noticeable improvement to the hygiene conditions of the public toilets. On top of routine cleansing services, FEHD will set up additional deep cleansing teams starting from Q1 2019 to perform regular deep cleansing services for public toilets with relatively high usage rate.

- (2) FEHD has in place a management mechanism for its outsourced contracts. Service requirements and performance standards are stipulated in the contracts. FEHD's staff will check whether the contractors have complied with the cleansing services contracts through site inspections, surprise checks and examination of job records. In the event of any irregularities, defaults or non-compliance with contract provisions in the delivery of public toilet cleansing services, FEHD will take follow-up actions, including the issue of verbal and written warnings, default notices, deduction of monthly payment and even termination of contracts.

As for third-party monitoring and complaints mechanism, there are various channels (such as Members' offices, the Office of The Ombudsman, 1823 etc.) which the public may raise suggestions or complain on the services of FEHD. FEHD will follow up the cases and its Quality Assurance Section will conduct surprise inspections of cleansing services and facilities, including follow-up investigations in response to complaints. District management staff have also stepped up surprise inspections of public toilets and monitoring of contractors' performances in order to enhance hygiene conditions of public toilets. In November 2018, FEHD created 3 Senior Health Inspectors posts who are mainly responsible

for surprise inspections of cleansing services and facilities. FEHD opines that the enhancement measures above can effectively improve the monitoring of public toilet services and a review will be carried out in due course, and there is currently no plan to introduce external parties for monitoring purpose.

- (3) FEHD has allocated additional resources to enhance the services of public toilets. Additional dedicated deep cleansing teams will be procured starting from Q1 2019. Such dedicated deep cleansing teams will also be provided to all public toilets upon renewal of street cleansing services contracts in the future.

The current improvement plan for public toilets at major tourist spots is only the beginning. We will extend the plan to other public toilets with reference to the experience accumulated.

In addition, FEHD has set up health education promotional booths at public toilets on a trial basis to remind the public of being mindful and considerate while using the toilets. Meanwhile, FEHD also plans to produce publicity materials with Keep Clean Ambassador Ah Tak to disseminate messages on the importance of toilet hygiene as well as the proper use of toilet facilities through various platforms.

Yours sincerely,

[Signed]

(Gilford LAW)

for Secretary for Food and Health

c.c. Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene