



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]

25 January 2019

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
Survey Results and Control Strategy Against Biting Midges**

Regarding the passed motion at the Panel meeting on 8 January 2019, our response is as follows:

According to the one-year study on biting midges undertaken by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) between July 2017 and July 2018, biting midges found currently in Hong Kong are not disease vectors capable of transmitting diseases to human. Besides, the World Health Organization does not provide any guidelines for systematic surveillance targeted at biting midges. Other places including the Mainland China, Singapore as well as countries in America and Europe do not formulate regular surveillance programmes for biting midges. As such, from the public health perspective of

the risk of disease transmission and with reference to international practices, there is no need to introduce an index for long-term surveillance particularly for biting midges in Hong Kong at this stage.

Nevertheless, FEHD will continue to monitor the biting midges situation in public places through routine inspections, district feedbacks and complaints follow-up. Targeted prevention and control measures will be conducted in collaboration with relevant departments at locations under their purview. At the macro level, a breakdown of the complaint figures relating to biting midges has been kept by the Government since mid-2016 to facilitate timely adjustment of the control strategy. FEHD will consider conducting another round of territory-wide survey to look into the change of the biting midges situation in Hong Kong if necessary.

In light of the survey results, the Government has developed control strategies against biting midges by taking into account their habitual behaviours as well as their seasonal and localised activity patterns. All departments will, before the approach of warm and humid weather, carry out preventive work in humid places where biting midges are active and where the public frequently visit (especially parks) to minimise the breeding of biting midges. FEHD will continue to provide training and technical support to various departments and to provide technical advice to owners or management staff of private premises infested with biting midges. FEHD will also step up its education efforts to raise the awareness of the public of adopting self-protection measures and to remind them to wear light-coloured, long-sleeved clothes and trousers as well as apply insect repellent when they have outdoor activities.

Yours sincerely,

[Signed]

(Gilford LAW)

for Secretary for Food and Health

c.c.: Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene