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環境及生態局  
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[English translation]

16 November 2023

Clerk to the Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
Legislative Council Complex  
1 Legislative Council Road  
Central, Hong Kong  
(Attn.: Miss Connie AU)

Dear Miss AU,

### **Prevention of import of bedbug infestation**

Thank you for your letter dated 9 November 2023, conveying Hon Judy CHAN's view on the captioned matter. In response to the public and LegCo members' concern, we briefed the LegCo Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene on the follow-up measures taken by the Government and relevant sectors in preventing the import of bedbug infestation on 14 November 2023, and answered members' concerns.

In gist, bedbugs are very common in tropical and subtropical areas, and less common in cold areas. There is speculation that climate change might have led to sudden proliferation of bedbugs in cold areas, hence causing local attention. Since bedbugs from other places may be brought into Hong Kong through travellers, aircraft and ships, etc., the Government has taken prompt actions to

strengthen the prevention of bedbug transmission.

First, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) has strengthened publicity and education to outbound citizens and inbound travellers at the Airport in recent days by distributing leaflets to them. It has also collaborated with the Port Health Division of the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health and the Airport Authority Hong Kong (AAHK) for on-site inspections at the Airport to provide technical advice on the prevention and control of bedbugs and remind airlines to pay attention to the environmental hygiene of aircraft. The FEHD and the CHP have also conducted on-site inspections at the Cruise Terminal and the Ocean Terminal to provide technical advice on the prevention and control of bedbugs.

Second, the Government has maintained close communication with relevant sectors on preventing the import of bedbugs. The Environment and Ecology Bureau, together with the FEHD, the AAHK, the MTR Corporation Limited, the hotel sector, the Tourism Commission and relevant departments, held a meeting on 11 November for understanding and assisting relevant sectors in sustaining the implementation of effective preventive measures. Hong Kong is located within the subtropical zone, and the presence of bedbugs is nothing new. The Airport, the Airport Express, the hotel sector and the Cruise Terminal have implemented regular pest control measures. The relevant sectors view the issue of preventing the import of bedbug infestation proactively and seriously, and have taken concrete measures, such as conducting deep cleansing and disinfestation more frequently, in order to avoid the import of bedbug infestation into Hong Kong.

Third, the Government has strengthened the promotional and educational work on preventing the import of bedbug infestation, including circulating the bedbug prevention information and leaflets to the tourism and hotel sector, and the public transportation sector, etc., with a view to reducing the chance of bringing bedbugs into Hong Kong by returnees and travellers. The Government's inter-departmental Pest Control Steering Committee has also disseminated the relevant information to other stakeholders, so as to enhance public understanding of how to prevent the import of bedbug infestation. The FEHD will also optimise the channels for information dissemination, including displaying relevant information in a more notable position on its website, so that the public can get access to the methods for preventing the import of bedbug

infestation more easily.

The Deputy Chief Secretary for Administration has directed inter-departmental coordination in strengthening the prevention of import of bedbug infestation. The Government will continue to monitor the development of the situation, strengthen communication with frontline organisations and sectors, and continue to provide technical support, in order to reduce the chance of import of bedbug infestation from overseas into the local community and safeguard environmental hygiene.

We thank Hon CHAN for her valuable advice.

Yours sincerely,

[Signed]

(Ms Wendy Au)  
for Secretary for Environment and Ecology

c.c.:

Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene (Attn: Mr Arsene YIU)