

**The 12<sup>th</sup> Fire Services Department Public Liaison Group**  
**Notes of the First Meeting**

The first meeting of the 12<sup>th</sup> Fire Services Department Public Liaison Group (PLG) was held at the multi-purpose hall, G/F., Fire Services Headquarters Building on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2005 at 6:30 p.m.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Opening Remarks**

The Department welcomed all members to the first meeting of the 12<sup>th</sup> PLG and thanked them for spending their valuable time to make contribution to society by participating in public services. The Department then introduced each departmental representative in attendance to the meeting.

1.1 **Terms of Reference of the PLG**

1.1.1 The Department indicated that policy matters were not within the PLG's scope of discussion and introduced its terms of reference as follows:

- Exchange views with the Department on fire and emergency ambulance services;
- Monitor the fire and emergency ambulance services to ensure that performance targets are met; and
- Put forward suggestions and views to improve the service quality.

1.2. **Meeting Arrangement of the PLG**

1.2.1 The Department stated that at least three meetings would be convened every year and they were usually held on weekday evenings at the Fire Services Headquarters Building. Members would be informed of the date of the meeting by post. Members wishing to propose matters for discussion at the meeting could submit their proposed agenda item or discussion paper to the Secretary of the PLG prior to the meeting by one of the following means:

- By mail to 8/F, Fire Services Headquarters Building, 1 Hong Chong Road, Tsim Sha Tsui East, Kowloon
- By fax at 2367 0973
- By e-mail at [fsdplg@hkfsd.gov.hk](mailto:fsdplg@hkfsd.gov.hk)

2. **Confirmation of the Notes of the Last Meeting**

2.1 The notes of the last meeting were confirmed without amendments.

## **Matters Arising from Previous Meetings**

### **3. Activities of the PLG**

- 3.1 The Department informed the meeting that members would be invited to passing-out parades, fire station/ ambulance depot open days, new fire station/ ambulance depot opening ceremonies, Ambulance Service Campaigns and drills at Operational Commands apart from meetings to augment their understanding about the work of the Department. The Secretary had given the PLG membership list to relevant units so that members would be invited to various activities.
- 3.2 Members were informed that a PLG member had made the following enquiry via e-mail: "I hope the Department can arrange activities like visits to the Fireboat Excellence, large-scale drills and rescue exercises as well as various fire service units for PLG members." The Department replied that it had conducted public visits to fireboats and various fire service units through the activities of the Fire Safety Ambassadors and co-organized fire station open days with District Fire Safety Committees. The Department further said that members would be invited to the opening ceremonies of new fire stations, such as Penny's Bay Fire Station. However, it was inappropriate to invite members to visit all fire stations.

### **4. New Fire Appliances and Ambulances**

- 4.1 The Department told members that the tender exercise for the 12 light ambulances had completed and the contractor was drafting the design of the ambulance compartment. It was expected these ambulances would come into operation by December this year. The Department had procured logistic support appliances recently and the details would be reported in paragraph 18 under "Matters for Discussion". The meeting agreed to delete this item from the agenda of the next meeting.

### **5. World Firefighters Games (WFG)**

- 5.1 The Department informed the meeting that the Games would be held from 18<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> February next year and there would be 58 competition events in total. The Department had invited Mr. Jackie CHAN as "Ambassador" of the Games and many other artists in the showbiz were also as "Youth Ambassadors". In addition, many political and business celebrities in the territory had been invited as "Honorary Presidents" of the fund-raising committee to support the Games. The Chinese and English publicity leaflets of the Games were placed on the table for members' reference. The Department also indicated that it had launched a recruitment exercise for volunteer helpers for the event. PLG members and Fire Safety Ambassadors were welcome to apply.
- 5.2 In response to a PLG member's enquiry, the Department said that the Games was open to all fire service employees, including full-time/ part-time/

retired firefighters and civilians. Their spouses and dependants aged 18 or above could also participate in the event.

**6. Priority Despatch System(The original motion: Despatching Ambulances in Order of Priority)**

- 6.1 To address a PLG member's concern expressed in his e-mail on priority despatch system, the Department explained that it currently divided ambulance calls into four categories. Except for Priority One Transfer, Priority Two Transfer and Non-emergency calls, which had a longer response time, the response time of all emergency calls was 12 minutes. As there was an increasing demand of ambulance calls, the consultancy study report on paramedic ambulance services completed in 2001 recommended that the priority despatch system should be introduced. The Department illustrated with the case in England. In England, emergency calls or calls involving people's life had to be attended to within 8 minutes (75% of the cases met the target). Other emergency calls not involving people's life had to be attended to within 12 minutes while calls of secondary importance had to be attended to within 12 to 15 minutes. The Department had commissioned a consultant to launch a study in March and the report was expected to be finished in September. The consultant would make recommendations on the implementation of this system in the territory. The recommendations would cover areas like classification of calls and their corresponding response time, manpower resources and training schemes. The Department would also submit the recommendations of the consultant to the Government.
- 6.2 A PLG member said that although the PLG was not a policy making body, the implementation of the system was politically controversial. As Hong Kong was an international city, the system could provide first-class emergency ambulance service to the public. Therefore, he urged PLG members, who were representatives of ordinary Hong Kong citizens, to consider this system because he believed it would help the Department to lobby support from the Legislative Council. The Department thanked the member for his opinion and added that the reason for the Department to commission a consultant study was that the above system could achieve better utilization of ambulance resources. The Department then invited other members to express their opinions on this system.
- 6.3 A PLG member said that the general public would think that all ambulance calls were urgent. Although currently the ambulance personnel had to turn out for all ambulance calls, there were clear guidelines on triage procedures in the accident and emergency departments (A&E departments) in hospitals. He was concerned about how the Department differentiate urgent ambulance calls from non-urgent ones. The Department indicated that it was normal for patients to consider their own condition as urgent. Currently, the triage procedures in the A&E departments were conducted through a series of inspections to distinguish urgent patients from non-urgent ones. Under the priority despatch system being studied by the Department, the triage procedures in the A&E departments would be conducted earlier through the consultation procedures set out by health care professionals to categorize

the ambulance calls. If the Government decided to implement the consultant's recommendations, it would fully inform the public first. The Department added that it would enhance the community's awareness of this system through publicity and civic education. At present, about 40% of the urgent calls were classified as non-urgent by the triage procedures in the A&E departments and the patients concerned had to wait for three to four hours before receiving treatment. However, under the current practice, ambulances still had to attend to these calls immediately after receiving them. For example, when there was an urgent call in a district where the only ambulance available at that time was despatched to attend to a non-urgent call earlier, this more urgent case might then not be attended to within the shortest time. The Department urged members to explain more about the priority despatch system to their relatives and friends after the Government decided to implement the system.

- 6.4 A PLG member said that the triage procedures in A&E departments were conducted by nurses. He was worried that if the classification of ambulance calls was based only on information collected over the phone, it would give rise to many complaints. Some callers might also intentionally exaggerate the seriousness of their condition so as to get an ambulance to the scene as soon as possible. The Department thanked the member for his concern and remarked that although it was difficult to prevent the public from providing inaccurate information, the Department would review the system from time to time and tried its best to close the loopholes.
- 6.5 A PLG member enquired whether the Department had any plans to charge the public for using the ambulance service. She said that according to her personal experience, the ambulance service in Hong Kong was more efficient than that of England. However, many people were abusing the ambulance service in Hong Kong. The Department replied that whether to charge the public was a policy decision for the Security Bureau. The Department was only responsible for implementing established policies. Nevertheless, as there was a great increase in ambulance calls each year, the possibility of charging the ambulance service could not be eliminated. Currently, the cost for every ambulance call was about HK\$1,400. It was believed that even if the service was charged, the Department would not be able to recover all the costs. The Department also thanked the member for her concern about the ambulance service and indicated that the Department would continue improving it.
- 6.6 A PLG member said the public would think that there were no concrete recommendations in the consultancy report. Moreover, data collected in foreign countries might not be completely applicable to Hong Kong. The public might also exaggerate their condition in order to get an ambulance to the scene as soon as possible. The Department replied that due to the high consultancy fee, it had to comply with the requirements of the World Trade Organization to conduct an open tender exercise worldwide. The Department had formed an assessment board to select an appropriate consultant and if the plan was to be implemented, Hong Kong would be the first Asian city to adopt the priority despatch system. In addition, the Department would continue strengthening the work of civic education and would not give up any plans to raise the standard of ambulance service just because the service

might be abused.

- 6.7 A PLG member said that fire prevention talks were not organized for secondary and primary schools at the time being. The elderly might not know how to distinguish between urgent and non-urgent ambulance cases, either. Therefore, he suggested that the Department should explain to the public the advantages of the priority despatch system through civic education so that they would know how to distinguish urgent ambulance cases. The Department thanked the member for his opinion and said that it would certainly strengthen the work on education and publicity if the system was to be implemented.
- 6.8 A PLG member said that recently there were newspaper reports on the demand of ambulance personnel to be separated from the Fire Services Department. If it came true, the quality of ambulance service might not be as high as it was now. The Department thanked the member for his appreciation of the ambulance service and clarified that there was no plan for the fire service and ambulance service to separate.

## **7. Performance Pledge of Fire Services Department**

- 7.1 The Department said that its performance pledge in 2005 had been uploaded onto the departmental homepage. Details were as follows:

Performance Pledge	Target (%)
Building fire calls	92.5%
-- respond to building fire calls within the graded response time of 6 minutes in built-up areas	92.0%
-- respond to building fire calls within the graded response time of 9 to 23 minutes in areas of dispersed risks and isolated developments	95.0%
Emergency ambulance calls	92.5%
-- respond to emergency ambulance calls within a response time of 12 minutes	

- 7.2 A PLG member stated that since ambulance calls were usually concentrated in certain periods, the average response time performance might not reflect the actual situation. He suggested that data within time slots, for example every 2 hours, should be used for statistical purpose for calculating the number of cases with response time over 12 minutes. The Department replied that it had a breakdown of daily calls by different regions and different times of the day. It would also try to use such statistics to monitor the availability of ambulances and the number of calls with a view to better matching the ambulance service provided and the demand.

## **8. Development and Implementation of Paramedic Ambulance Service**

- 8.1 The Department informed the meeting that since 28 February this year,

comprehensive paramedic ambulance service was provided by all ambulances (including the day-shift fleet of 213 ambulances and the night-shift fleet of 114 ambulances) and 31 emergency medical assistant motorcycles. Every ambulance had an Emergency Medical Assistant (EMA) II to conduct detailed examination for patients. Moreover, among the 794 ambulance supervisors (at the rank of Principal/Senior Ambulancemen) in the establishment, 737 (i.e. 93%) had already obtained qualifications as EMA II. The Department would continue arranging more ambulance personnel to receive EMA II training so that the deployment of manpower would be made more flexible. The Department added that it had pledged to fully implement paramedic ambulance service by phase in 2004 and the plan was successfully implemented last year. Members agreed to delete this item from the agenda of the next meeting.

**9. Making the Best Use of Community Resources to Promote Fire Protection, Calamity Prevention and Hazard Abatement**

9.1 The Department informed the meeting that District Fire Safety Ambassador Management Committees (DFSAMC), chaired by Divisional Commanders, had been set up in the 18 districts in Hong Kong. Each DFSAMC would hold meetings regularly and its members, including 10 Fire Safety Ambassadors (FSA) in the District, would participate in, plan and promote the FSA activities in the District.

9.2 The Department stated that a PLG member had raised the following issue via e-mail: "The FSD organizes various kinds of activities every year to promote fire prevention publicity campaigns and the ambulance service. These activities include competitions like "Fire Safety Quiz and Essay Writing / Slogan Design Competition for Secondary School Students in Hong Kong", Chinese Slogan Design Competition and Drawing Competition for "Full Implementation of Paramedic Ambulance Service". But all these competitions are open to students only. The FSD should open these competitions to the public, too." The Department thanked the member for her opinion and said that in general, competitions could enhance the interest of teenagers while activities for adults like reporting and rectifying any breach of fire regulations were more focused on giving play to civic spirit. Furthermore, the Department had organized many activities for the public. For example, many adults had participated in fire prevention publicity campaigns, fire safety roving exhibitions, fire drills and fire prevention talks organized by the District Fire Safety Committees and FSAs. The Department would consider the member's opinion when organizing similar activities in future.

**10. Unwanted Alarms of Automatic Fire Alarm Systems**

10.1 This item was fully reported in the last meeting and members agreed to delete this item from the agenda of the next meeting.

## **11. The 12<sup>th</sup> Fire Services Department Public Liaison Group**

- 11.1 Regarding a PLG member's claim that some of the FSA application forms submitted by him had still not been processed, the Department said that the Community Relations Section had contacted the people on the list provided by the member and found that they had not submitted the FSA application forms. Therefore, the Department could not process the applications. The member had been informed of the result. He would follow up this case and submit applications again when necessary.
- 11.2 The Department stated that a PLG member raised the following issue via e-mail: "The tenure for PLG members is one year. If a member's attendance record is satisfactory, the Director of Fire Services (D of FS) will consider extending his/her tenure for one more year. Then, how many members this year are invited by the Director to stay on and what are their attendance rates?" The Department replied that it had invited 14 members to stay on and 9 of them had accepted. Among these, two came from Hong Kong Island, three came from Kowloon and four were from the New Territories. The Department said that it would only invite members who had completed their first year of service to stay on but their tenure could not exceed two consecutive years. Except for one member who was invited to stay on at the discretion of the D of FS, all other members invited to serve one more year had attended the PLG meetings last year.
- 11.3 In response to the enquiry by a PLG member, the Department said that members who had finished their tenure could apply to be PLG members again in future if they met the requirements of the PLG. The Department also hoped that there could be more new members so that more citizens could learn about the work of the Department. Another PLG member suggested that the Department should increase the number of PLG members. The Department replied that 30 members were appropriate, neither too many nor too few. Another PLG member suggested that only those with good attendance records should be invited to stay on so more new members could join. The Department said that in accordance with the current practice, generally speaking, serving members who had completed their first year of service with good attendance records would be invited to stay on. This could enhance the continuity of the PLG and allow the PLG to watch over the work of the Department.

## **12. Recruitment Arrangement**

- 12.1 The Department informed the meeting that it was conducting physical examination and interviews for the candidates applying for station officers, firemen and ambulancemen at the time being.

## **13. Equipment of the FSD**

- 13.1 This item was fully reported in the last meeting and members agreed to delete this item from the agenda of the next meeting.

**14. Computer Data File**

14.1 This item was fully reported in the last meeting and members agreed to delete this item from the agenda of the next meeting.

**15. Floor Plan**

15.1 This item was fully reported in the last meeting and members agreed to delete this item from the agenda of the next meeting.

**16. Home-use Fire Extinguisher**

16.1 This item was fully reported in the last meeting and members agreed to delete this item from the agenda of the next meeting.

**Matters for Discussion**

**17. Fire Station Open Day**

17.1 The Department stated that a PLG member raised the following issue via e-mail: “Fire station open days are mostly held in autumn and winter every year. Although it is a good time to disseminate fire prevention message, can the Department also consider organizing open days in spring and summer to avoid several fire station open days being held on the same day?” He also hoped that open days could be organized in the following fire stations because some of them had not organized open days for several years.

Hong Kong Command : Sai Wan Ho, Chai Wan, Tung Lo Wan

Kowloon Command : Shek Kip Mei, Mong Kok, Kowloon Bay, Po Lam

New Territories Command : Lai King, Tung Chung, Chek Lap Kok, Pat Heung, Tai Po East, Tin Sum, Ma On Shan, Sai Kung

Some of the above fire stations were quite remote but it would allow some members of the public and FSAs to attend the activities. The Department thanked the member for his enquiry and pointed out that some of the above fire stations had organized open days before. Details were as follows:

<b>Name of Fire Station</b>	<b>Year of Open Day</b>
Sai Wan Ho	1995 and 1997
Chai Wan	1999
Shek Kip Mei	2000



Po Lam	2002
Tin Sum	2003
Ma On Shan	2002

The Department continued that it could enhance the understanding of the public about its work through organizing fire station open days. At the same time, it could disseminate fire prevention messages and promote the message of better utilization of ambulance resources. Therefore, organizing fire station open days during autumn and winter, when there was a higher chance of fire, could remind in time the public of the importance of fire prevention and reduce the outbreak of fire. Furthermore, since open days would usually be held in open yards, the more stable weather in autumn and winter could reduce the chance of cancellation or postponement due to bad weather and thus avoid wasting public money and the preparation work. Generally speaking, in deciding which fire station be used to hold open days, the following criteria would be adopted :

- The fire station should be located in a more densely-populated district to benefit from cost-effectiveness.
- The fire station could be reached by public transport.
- The fire station should be large enough to accommodate large number of visitors and the rescue appliances for display.

The Department also indicated that the member's suggestions had been referred to Operational Commands for consideration.

17.2 A PLG member said that he lived in the New Territories West and had been a PLG member before. However, he had not been invited to the Tin Shui Wai Fire Station Open Day. He asked whether it was because fire station open days were organized by District Fire Safety Committees or because of insufficient resources that PLG members were not invited. The Department replied that it was departmental policy to invite PLG members of a district to the fire station/ ambulance depot open days of that district. The Secretary had already given the correspondence list of PLG members this year to all the Commands. PLG members would certainly be invited when open days were organized in fire stations in his/her district. Moreover, the information on fire station open days would be uploaded onto the departmental homepage and publicity banners would be hung on the outer walls of the fire stations concerned. The Department added that open days were activities open to public and tickets were not required for entry.

17.3 A PLG member indicated that several fire stations had held open days on the same day in the past. She hoped arrangements could be made so that open days could be held on different days, then the public would not need to hurriedly visit several fire stations on one day. The Department thanked the member for her support of fire station open days and indicated that it would try its best to coordinate the activities. Yet, the Department stressed that the main target of open days were residents in the district and the objectives of open days were to reduce the fire hazard in the district and disseminate the

message of better utilization of ambulance resources. Another PLG member hoped that FSAs could be invited to the fire station open days in the district. The Department thanked the member for her opinion and indicated that her opinion would be referred to the 18 District Fire Safety Ambassador Management Committees for consideration by their Chairmen.

## **18. Logistic Support Appliance**

- 18.1 The Department informed the meeting that a PLG member raised the following question via e-mail: “It is known that the Department has procured “logistic support appliance” for fire stations on outlying islands to be used by first responders. Will the Department consider providing this kind of appliance in urban districts to relieve the shortage of ambulances?” The Department continued that it had procured two “logistic support appliances” to be specially used in areas with narrower roads on outlying islands. They could arrive at the scene easily to provide support in simple firefighting operations. Apart from some simple manual breaking-in equipment, the appliances were also equipped with a newly-introduced AFT Water Mist Firefighting Extinguisher and a ‘Stryker’ Stretcher. The two “logistic support appliances” would be stationed in Cheung Chau Fire Station and Ping Chau Fire Station respectively. Since these appliances were specially designed for narrower roads on outlying islands, they were small in size and could only carry limited amount of equipment. Therefore, they could not be compared with ambulances and the Department had no intention of providing this kind of appliance in urban districts. In response to a member’s enquiry, the Department said that “logistic support appliances” were driven by first responders or other firemen with driving licences.

## **19. Ambulance Generator**

- 19.1 The Department informed the meeting that a PLG member raised the following question via e-mail: “As the frequency of ambulances attending calls and consumption of electricity are high, will the Department ask the appliance manufacturer to consider installing larger generators in ambulances to minimize the problem of unavailability of ambulances due to electricity shortage?” The Department continued that at present, most ambulances were equipped with a 150-ampere generator. In order to cope with the new demand for electricity, the 44 new ambulances and 12 light ambulances procured in recent years were all equipped with a 200-ampere generator. Moreover, every ambulance depot had battery chargers (on average 1 charger for every 2 ambulances) for ambulances to recharge the batteries on board during stand-by. The Department had also instructed the ambulancemen to recharge the batteries immediately after the ambulances were driven back to the depots.

## **20. Application Procedures for Places of Public Entertainment Licence and Restaurant Licence**

20.1 The Department stated that a PLG member raised the following issue via e-mail: “In the past few months, it was reported that some cinemas / restaurants had started operation before obtaining the relevant licences. According to some newspaper reports, the operators complained that their businesses were affected because they were not yet granted licences by the licensing authorities. I hope the Department can explain the work flow of processing applications for licences by the authorities in order to enhance efficiency.” The Department explained to the meeting the roles of FSD in the restaurant and cinema licensing procedures, and the initiatives of government departments to enhance efficiency in processing the licence applications.

20.1.1. *Roles of FSD in the restaurant and cinema licensing procedures:*

20.1.1.1 Pursuant to Food Business Regulations (Cap. 132X) and Places of Public Entertainment Regulations (Cap. 172A), restaurants and cinemas are governed under the authority of the Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene (DFEH). No licence of restaurant and cinema shall be granted by the DFEH unless the applicant for such licence produces to the DFEH a certificate from the Director of Fire Services (D of FS) and such other evidence as the DFEH may require to the effect that the premises in respect of which the application is made comply with any requirements issued by the D of FS.

20.1.1.2 Based on the above legislative requirements, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) will refer applications for restaurant and cinema licences to the respective Regional Office (RO) of the Fire Services Department (FSD) for processing. Upon receipt of the referral, an inspection officer (IO) from the RO will carry out site inspection and verify the plan submitted within 14 working days. If the IO satisfies that the premises is suitable for such business, he/she will formulate the detailed fire safety requirements and directly forward to the applicant for compliance.

20.1.1.3 After receiving notification of compliance by the applicant, the IO of the respective RO will conduct verification inspection within 7 working days from the notification. If the result of the inspection is found satisfactory, a Fire Services Certificate will be issued to the applicant within the next 7 working days. If there is an outstanding item, the respective RO will inform the applicant of the necessary rectification work in writing. After receiving the notification of compliance from the applicant, the FSD will arrange re-inspection.

20.1.2 *Initiatives of Government Departments to promote efficiency in processing the licence application*

20.1.2.1 To enhance efficiency of the applications, the following actions have been taken:-

(A) Participation in the Application Vetting Panel (AVP) meeting

After receiving a licence application for restaurant / cinema, an AVP meeting will be held to assist the applicant. In the AVP meeting, the applicant will meet the representatives of the FEHD, the Buildings Department and the FSD. The FSD officer will explain the fire services requirements to the applicant when necessary. The letter issued by the FSD to the applicant will also list clearly the relevant information and the contact method of the officer-in-charge so that the applicant can make enquiries by phone when necessary.

(B) Flexible Approach in the Provisional Restaurant Licencing

Pursuant to section 33C of the Food Business Regulations, the FEHD may issue a Provisional Restaurant Licence to the applicant if the premises under application have met all essential requirements (including fire services requirements) by the production of the relevant documentary proof only. After issuing the Provisional Restaurant Licence, the FEHD will forward the documentary proof of compliance with the fire services requirements and ventilation requirements to the FSD for verification. The FSD inspection officer will carry out fire safety inspection within 7 working days and ventilating system inspection within 14 working days.

(C) Improvement of Customer Service

To facilitate the applicants, the FSD has uploaded the procedures of how to obtain an FSC and Letter of Compliance (Ventilating Systems) to its website and such procedures were also inserted into the guidebooks – “A Guide to Application for Restaurants” and “A Guide to Application for Places of Public Entertainment Licences (Cinemas / Theatres)” – published by the FEHD for reference by the public. These guidebooks have also been uploaded onto the FEHD’s website.

20.2 The Department hoped that the above explanation could help members better understand the licensing procedures. It also pointed out that those restaurants or cinemas mentioned in the reports had not been issued the licences because most of them had not met the requirements. It stressed that in issuing licences, public safety and interests would always be the Government’s first priority.

20.3 A PLG member said that as far as he knew, it took at least one and a half months to process each licence application. He suggested that the Government should increase the manpower in processing licence applications so that applicants could start operating their business as soon as possible. He also suggested that the Department should take the initiative to send out officers to inspect the premises so that if restaurants / cinemas were found operating before obtaining their licences, it would not be reported in the newspapers first. The Department stated that the Government had to reduce the establishment of civil servants, so there would not be a corresponding increase in manpower for processing licence applications even

if there was an increase in workload. It hoped members could appreciate the situation. Moreover, the Government would not assume the operators were breaching the regulations and it was difficult to estimate the manpower required for conducting inspections. Assigning officers to inspect restaurants and cinema was not in line with the established policy of the Government. However, any complaints concerning unlicensed restaurants / cinemas received by the Department would be followed up within 24 hours.

20.4 In response to a PLG member's enquiry, the Department stated that the means of escape was within the scope of responsibility of the Buildings Department. However, the fire service installations and equipment in buildings must comply with the fire services requirement. The fire personnel would also look at other fire service installations and equipment inside applicants' premises when they were conducting inspections. Any irregularities would be followed up by the Fire Service Installation Task Force.

20.5 A PLG member asked what the penalty for breaching the licensing regulations on provisional restaurant licences stipulated in section 33C of Food Business Regulations was. The Department clarified that the penalty was decided by the licensing department (i.e. the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD)). It continued to explain that after being informed by the FEHD that a provisional restaurant licence had been issued, the FSD would assign officers to inspect the restaurants. If irregularities against fire services requirements were found, the FSD would inform the licensee and the FEHD. The latter would then request the licensee to rectify the irregularities within 12 working days. After receiving compliance notification from the licensee, the regional office of the FSD would assign officers to conduct inspection again within 7 working days. If the premises was still found not complying with the licensing requirements, the FSD would inform the FEHD within 3 working days and the FEHD would consider cancelling the provisional restaurant licence concerned. The member said that it was relatively passive for the FSD to conduct surveillance and inspection only and then refer the irregularities to the FEHD. The Department reiterated that the FSD was only responsible for assisting the FEHD in checking whether the fire services certificates of the restaurants and the ventilation systems concerned comply with the requirements of the FSD. The penalty for irregularities was to be decided by the FEHD.

21. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:45p.m.

Fire Services Department  
June 2005