

PROVISIONAL LOCAL VESSEL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the 31st Committee Meeting held in Conference Room A, 24/F, Harbour Building on 26 March 2003 (Wednesday) at 10 a.m.

Present

Chairman:	Mr. Roger TUPPER	Deputy Director of Marine
Member:	Mr. Paul CHENG <i>(on behalf of Mr. SHUEN Wai)</i>	Representing Cargo Vessels Operators
	Mr. Martin CHU <i>(on behalf of Mr. R.. W. Pickup)</i>	Representing Ship Survey Industry
	Mr. HUNG Bing	Representing Local Seafarers Associations
	Mr. KEUNG Yin-man, MBE	Representing Fishing Industry
	Dr. Alan LAU Kwok-lam	Representing Pleasure Boating Operators
	Miss LAU Shuk-yee <i>(on behalf of Mr. CHOI Kim-lui, JP)</i>	Representing Launch & Excursion Vessels Operators
	Mr. Vitus SZETO Kin	Representing Ship Building & Repairing Industry
	Mr. WU Wing-sun <i>(on behalf of Mr. HO Chi-shing)</i>	Representing Ferry Vessels Operators
	Mr. XU Jian <i>(on behalf of Mr. HE Wei-ping)</i>	Representing River Trade Cargo Operators
	Mr. Tony YEUNG Pui-keung	Representing Seafarers Training Institutes
	Mr. LING Wai-po	Hong Kong Police Force
	Mr. Michael LEE	GM/LVS, Marine Department
	Mr. F. L. CHEUK	Ag. GM/Ops, Marine Department
Secretary:	Ms. Shirley HO	ADS/C&G, Marine Department

In Attendance

Mr. HO Kwun-yin	Local Seafarers Associations
Mr. LEUNG Wai-ying	HK Fishermen Association
Capt. WU Ka-shun	HK Shipping Staff Association
Miss Rita YEUNG	CLOI, Marine Department

Absent with Apologies

Ms. Una CHAN

Mr. CHEUNG Yau-kwong

Representing Marine Insurance Industry

Marine Excursion Association Ltd

I Opening Remarks

1. The Chairman welcomed all to this unusual PLVAC meeting and thanked all for coming in such a short notice.

II Presentation and Discussion

2. The Chairman told the meeting that the purpose of the meeting was to give members information about the recent outbreak of “Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome” (SARS), which was also called “Atypical Pneumonia” (AP), so that they could pass the message to other members of the local shipping industry. The Chairman reassured the members that the government was doing all it could to tackle the outbreak.
3. As invited by the Chairman, Mr. F. L. CHEUK gave a presentation on the AP. By showing PowerPoint slides prepared by the Department of Health, Mr. F. L. CHEUK briefed members of the background, definition, common symptoms, ways of transmission, preventive measures and advice and useful website about the AP.
4. The Chairman supplemented with an AP case for members’ reference. He quoted that a wife of a member of staff, who was a health care worker, was diagnosed as having the AP. The member of staff was asked by his employer to go home for isolation and to see if he would get the symptoms of the disease. Subsequently, he had fever and was sent to the hospital. He was also found infected. The employer immediately arranged cleaning up and disinfections of the whole area that the member of staff had been working. His colleagues were observed over the next 7 days. The Chairman drew members’ particular attention to the fact that a person was be at a higher risk if he/she was living with somebody who had contracted this disease.

5. The Chairman invited members' questions and welcomed Dr. Alan LAU's professional advice on the issue.
6. Upon members' enquiries, Dr. Alan LAU gave the following information about the AP-
 - (i) The AP was most probably be transmitted by respiratory droplets over a short distance or by contact with patients' body secretions.
 - (ii) The most obvious symptom of the disease was continuing high fever (38°C) and so a readily available thermometer was strongly recommended.
 - (iii) Regular cleansing and disinfections of facilities by diluted household bleach was necessary.
 - (iv) The AP was caused by virus, which could not survive long on dry non-organic surface and could be killed by 70% alcohol. Therefore, if it was not possible for you to wash your hands by water and soap, an alternative was "Alcohol Rub".
 - (v) Wearing facemask, particularly in busy or confined area such as elevator or public transport, was advisable to help prevent the spread of AP.
 - (vi) A person should maintain good personal hygiene and build up good body immunity, e.g. drinking more water, maintaining a healthy diet and taking more rest, to reduce the chance of being infected.
 - (vii) A person should, once found having fever, go home, wear facemask, wash hands frequently and **consult doctor immediately**.
 - (viii) As far as the doctors knew at this stage, no specific symptoms could be detected during the incubation period.
 - (ix) If a person was infected, his/her health condition would deteriorate rapidly and the person would be unable to work normally. Employers should observe staff and instruct them to consult doctor once they felt unwell.
 - (x) Unless for essential treatment avoid going to hospital.

7. The Chairman gave his great thanks to Dr. Alan LAU for his professional advice offered at the meeting and requested the members to pass the information to their other members in the industry.
8. The Chairman informed the members that the Marine Department (MD) had issued an MD Notice No. 39/2003 to inform owners, agents, operators, masters and persons-in-charge of ships and locally licensed vessels of the background and the advice from the Department of Health in respect of the AP.

III. Any Other Business

9. The Chairman invited the members to raise questions, if any, related to the normal PLVAC matters. Members made no particular enquiries.

VI. Date of Next Meeting

10. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 11 a.m. The date of next meeting would be announced in due course.