

立法會

調查政府與醫院管理局 對嚴重急性呼吸系統綜合症爆發的處理手法 專責委員會

第二十六次公開研訊的逐字紀錄本

日期： 2004年3月27日(星期六)

時間： 下午2時30分

地點： 立法會會議廳

出席委員

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楊永強醫生, JP

Legislative Council

Select Committee to inquire into the handling of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome outbreak by the Government and the Hospital Authority

Verbatim Transcript of the Twenty-sixth Public Hearing
held on Saturday, 27 March 2004 at 2:30 pm
in the Chamber of the Legislative Council Building

Members present

Dr Hon LAW Chi-kwong, JP (Chairman)
Hon Mrs Sophie LEUNG LAU Yau-fun, SBS, JP (Deputy Chairman)
Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan
Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming, SC, JP
Hon CHAN Kwok-keung, JP
Hon CHAN Yuen-han, JP
Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo
Hon Michael MAK Kwok-fung
Dr Hon LO Wing-lok, JP

Members absent

Hon Kenneth TING Woo-shou, JP
Dr Hon David CHU Yu-lin, JP

Witness

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong, JP
Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

主席：

首先歡迎各位出席調查政府與醫院管理局對嚴重急性呼吸系統綜合症爆發的處理手法專責委員會的第二十六次公開研訊。

提醒各位委員，整個研訊過程必須有足夠的法定人數，包括主席在內是4位委員。我亦要藉每一次開始的時候，提醒旁聽今天研訊的公眾人士及傳媒，在研訊過程以外場合披露研訊中所提供的證據，並不受《立法會(權力及特權)條例》的保障。所以，如果大家有需要，各位列席人士及傳媒應該就他們的法律責任，徵詢法律意見。

我現在宣布研訊開始。委員會會繼續向衛生福利及食物局局長楊永強醫生索取證供。

楊醫生，多謝你又再出席今天的研訊。提醒你，你在3月13日早上作供的時候已經宣誓了，所以現在你是繼續在宣誓下作供的。亦提醒你旁邊的兩位，是不可以在委員會裏面發言的。

各位委員，我們可以開始了，有問題的請舉手示意。首先是鄭家富議員。

鄭家富議員：

這一段問題主要是集中問局長，就着威院的問題去問，或許請局長回答。

局長，我想瞭解一下，因為馮康醫生，即新界東聯網總監及威院行政總監，在我們1月17日的聆訊上曾經表示，其實你與馮康醫生在電話中曾經談過威院的問題。我希望現在大家集中談一談，瞭解當時在3月初那段時間，局長你可否回憶與馮康醫生談過多少次類似有關與威院關閉急症室，以及威院8A病房的問題，有多少次這些電話上的聯絡？有，是多少次，以及大概的談話內容是甚麼？

主席：

楊醫生。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong, Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food:

Mr Chairman, my recollection of the outbreak of Prince of Wales is, as I gave in my evidence, that I first learnt of the outbreak from the media reports on the 11th of March. Obviously I was very concerned relating to the large number of, i.e. 11, healthcare workers that reported sick. So my recollection is that during that period, not only did I communicate with the Director of Health and the Chief Executive of the Hospital Authority but I also directly communicated with Dr FUNG Hong because it is my usual practice to try to get the information first hand. I remember talking to him on the phone asking him about some of the actual clinical syndromes, etc., and on what actually happening. Through out the outbreaks, we periodically called Dr FUNG Hong to get updates on what was actually happening in Prince of Wales. If there were specific events or occasions where I was concerned, I would ring him. But I do not recall the actual number of occasions. My recollection is mainly that these were in the context of the outbreak in Prince of Wales and the things that were done, what were happening to the healthcare workers, the patients and whether there were any issues concerned.

At the first formal meeting that we had — the first, not formal — the first meeting that we had for the outbreak, as I gave my evidence was on the 13th of March, Dr FUNG Hong was also present with executives from the Hospital Authority and the Department of Health and also a representative and experts from the World Health Organization, a representative, Dr FUKUDA who is also the infectious disease expert for the Centers for Disease Control in America. At that meeting, Dr FUNG Hong and Dr William HO, Dr KO, Dr Margaret CHAN and Dr P Y LEUNG were also present. Dr FUNG Hong and colleagues briefed us on the outbreak of Prince of Wales, the precautions they had taken and what they had done to contain it. That was my recollection of my discussions with Dr FUNG Hong.

I have no recollection of Dr FUNG Hong specifically talking to me about the closure of A&E. My recollection on the discussions of the A&E were more from Dr KO Wing-man and Dr William HO when they advised me on how they were adjusting the work in the hospital, that they were reducing the admissions from medical wards first and they were diverting some of the other medical emergencies to Nethersole Hospital. These Community-Acquired Pneumonia would be treated at the Prince of Wales and they were scaling down the operations. So at no time, in my recollection, did Dr FUNG Hong directly talk to me about these issues. I think the issues about the arrangements for A&E were mainly from the discussions with Dr KO and Dr William HO. I might have asked Dr FUNG Hong the details of these arrangements, the practicalities and effects of these. But I think all these proposals to divert patients, to stop

admitting patients from A&E.....My recollection is that these discussions in the main were with Dr KO and Dr William HO.

鄭家富議員：

楊局長，因為馮康醫生在我們這個委員會上說，就着威院醫護人員集體感染一事，局長你曾多次致電向馮康醫生瞭解情況。以你記憶所及，你有沒有主動跟他談，詢問有關威院的這個問題？因為剛才你的作供似乎是有，基本上有談過，但是主要都是從高醫生或者何醫生那裏得知。那麼，你對於早期當時威院那個病房爆發的疫症，你有沒有主動找過馮康醫生？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I'm sorry if I haven't clarified. Certainly, as I said, I did on many occasions speak to Dr FUNG Hong either on the phone or in person. Of course on both days of the 20th and the 14th, I was at the Prince of Wales Hospital myself. So I met with Dr FUNG Hong in different fora – one on the 14th when I visited the Prince of Wales with Mr TUNG where we were briefed on the outbreak situation, the control measures taken and what we were doing to control the outbreak. On the 20th in the staff forum, where there were hundreds of Prince of Wales staff, I also got to speak directly with the frontline staff in terms of how they were managing the outbreak, their concerns and their anxieties. As I said, even after the outbreak occurred, I directly communicated with Dr FUNG Hong in addition to the meetings that we had in the Bureau on the 13th and 14th. On the 13th, certainly Dr FUNG Hong was present to brief us on the outbreak. But, as the Honourable Andrew CHENG said, that during this period, I was in constant communication with Dr FUNG Hong in addition to my meetings with him on the phone to get the most updated information on what was actually happening in the Prince of Wales, to see whether there were any other things that I could help and also to assure myself that the hospital was managing the outbreak in the most effective manner.

鄭家富議員：

你當時.....以你剛剛知道威院8A病房的情況時，特別是你與馮康醫生談這個問題的時候，你感覺到當時那個形勢，你怎樣去形容呢？你是否記得？是很險峻、很嚴重，還是觀望，看看情況的發展？那時你的感受，來自馮康醫生的傳述，你印象中是怎樣？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, when the outbreak in Prince of Wales occurred and involved 11 healthcare workers, I was highly concerned because it was a very unusual

phenomenon that we had so many healthcare workers presenting sick at the same time. As the outbreak progressed in the hospital, the rapidity at which the staff were falling sick, and the rapidity at which staff had to be hospitalized, and the rapidity at which the pneumonia was developing in the staff obviously gave us very, very grave concerns that something really very critical was happening. So we had to do something about it. That was why we had this meeting on the 13th, to get together experts from both the Department of Health and the Hospital Authority and from the universities. Fortunately, we also had this WHO expert representative who was here to get the best advice we could to tackle this outbreak. Of course, as such, then on the 13th, we already identified the priority areas that we needed to do epidemiological investigations and contact tracing. We needed to look at the hospital infection control. We needed to really try to identify what was happening and to look at the cause.

鄭家富議員：

馮康醫生亦在他的口供說，他大概在3月12日左右與當時的衛生署署長陳醫生——Margaret通過電話，談關於威院的一些問題，當時陳醫生跟馮醫生說，“好，我會跟局長談談這個問題”。那麼，在你印象中，當時前署長與局長你有沒有談過威院的問題。如果有，大概在何時？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Certainly, I do not have any recollection of the Director of Health reporting a conversation to me that she had with Dr FUNG Hong. On the 13th of March when the meeting was convened to review the outbreak of Prince of Wales Hospital, both Dr Margaret CHAN and Dr FUNG Hong were present and these issues relating to any possible closure of the hospital was not mentioned. In those meetings of the 13th and 14th of March, the emphasis has been given to us that the appropriate infection control measures had been taken. Ward 8A had been closed for admissions and discharges. It had been restricted to visitors that the hospital had organized a team of so-called their ‘clean team’ which would be comprising healthcare professionals taking care of patients that were not thought to be exposed to this infection. They had another team that took care of patients that were thought to be exposed. All these infection control procedures were thought to be adequate. The hospital had also adopted droplet precautions and had adopted the appropriate precautions to protect staff. All these were raised and discussed at the meeting.

But at no point in time on the 13th or 14th, and at no point in time inside or outside the meeting, did anyone mention the necessity to close the hospital. Neither Dr FUNG Hong nor the Director of Health had mentioned this to me either on the 13th or the 14th. This is very clear and distinct in my mind because

if this had been raised, it should have been raised at that meeting on the 13th and the meeting on the 14th. If there was concern that the hospital should be closed for any reason, these should have been raised at the meeting where you were looking at the infection control measures that were being put in place. Neither Dr FUNG Hong nor the Director of Health raised any of these issues or even any suggestions to close the hospital in these meetings on the 13th nor on the 14th of the Task Force.

鄭家富議員：

但是，局長，如果是這樣的話，假如當時沒有人提出過，包括你剛才所提的幾個重要關鍵人物，那麼當時你自己本身呢？譬如你瞭解到威院的情況，你亦進去見過一些管理人員，甚至我想你大概都可能掌握到那個情況，當時在你的理念中，有沒有想過是否要在病房或者急症室這些問題上，採取一些具體的行動？你當時有沒有這類想法？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, in the meetings on the 13th and 14th, we had the best experts you can find in Hong Kong to help us look at the situation. They had looked at the infection control procedures and had come to the view that they were sufficient. We were monitoring their situation very closely and the hospital had taken measures based on the best knowledge at that time to protect staff and protect patients. In addition to the closure of wards to patients and restricted to visitors, the hospital had also worked with the Department of Health to instigate the investigations and contact tracing. The information that I also got during those meetings was that the infections at that time and the people that were sick could all be linked to either having worked in ward 8A or having been associated with people that had worked in 8A. For all the intent and purposes, the experts were of the view that these were appropriate infection control measures. Certainly, none of the experts at that time raised any other options or suggested any additional measures which should be taken.

鄭家富議員：

局長，我想問一下，3月14日是Task Force on SARS第一次開會，在那個會議上，我看完那個簡單的3頁minute，因為整體上……或許我們一起看看那個minute，然後我問局長一、兩個簡單的問題。那是A1(C)，主席。我相信局長都很熟了。

A1(C)的Annex B第1頁是“Notes of 1st meeting of Task Force on SARS”，這個是在3月14日早上11時在CGO八樓開的。這第一次會

議，你看看“Terms of reference”那裏，“In broad terms, the Task Force will monitor the outbreak and oversee its control.”在3月13日，你與威院的主要管理層開會討論威院的那些問題，接着在3月14日早上開會。整體上，我看回那個minute，似乎對威院的問題沒有怎樣觸及。局長可不可以回想當時那個會議，既然這個Task Force主力是希望針對SARS，亦是monitor着那個outbreak and oversee那個control，那麼為何在整個會議上似乎沒有怎樣提過威院的問題？為甚麼呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, obviously, the events led to the outbreak started in the Prince of Wales Hospital. The syndrome was identified, or at least it was suspected it was this syndrome.....because on the 14th, SARS had not been coined by the World Health Organization but certainly on the 12th of March, the World Health Organization had alerted the global community to this possible respiratory syndromes. On the 13th of March, we reviewed the outbreak in Prince of Wales. Most of the information relating to the discussions was just summarized. By the 14th of March, we already recognized that there were other clusters in the community. It was not just the Prince of Wales Hospital that we were concerned about. If you remember that we already described there were other clusters of patients that seemed to show the same phenomenon, there were already some indications that this infection was present in certain areas in the community which had spread to healthcare workers. We already started identifying a pattern of clusters of cases from this unique form of Community-Acquired Pneumonia which seemed to have predilection to affect healthcare workers. At that stage, we were not just looking at Prince of Wales. We were looking at a wider phenomenon where we could have infections appearing in other hospitals. So the emphasis was not just on the Prince of Wales alone because in the initial discussions on the Prince of Wales outbreak, the control measures were already looked at on the 13th. On the 14th we just reviewed this and.....the expert committee obviously, the expert investigation.....when we set up the Task Force the main purpose was also to investigate PWH healthcare staff in their household context and other hospitals with similar respiratory outbreak among healthcare workers. So we were looking at a wider phenomenon. The Task Force was looking at outbreak control, not just in Prince of Wales but in other clusters. Obviously, it was a very difficult situation because we had no diagnostic tests and the symptoms were non-specific. So we were already on the alert of looking for a wider prevalence of infection than in the Prince of Wales.

鄭家富議員：

我明白，局長。但是你說整體上你希望從一個更加宏觀或者闊一點的層面，去看當時的SARS問題。但在時間上，當時剛好是3月14日，那麼，在3月13日和3月11、12日開始的那段時間，你說你與馮康醫生也好，高永文醫也好，何兆煒醫生也好，對威院的爆發，你們是高度關注的，你們用了一個“highly concerned”的字眼。那麼我便覺得，以常理推斷，如果我是Task Force的member，第一次會議，Terms of reference是“monitor the outbreak”和“oversee its control”，雖然你說會從一個更闊的層面去看，但是威院很明顯也是當時一個比較要重點討論和處理的問題，我看整個minute，卻是完全不提。你可不可以告訴我……你可以說“當然，這是notes而已”，你是有提的；要是你有提的話，是提過些甚麼呢？討論過些甚麼呢？因為當天在場的有署長，而Hospital Authority的，不過是一個Dr TSANG和劉少懷醫生。你可不可以告訴我，有沒有談過威院的問題？如果有，大概談過些甚麼？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, at that time the notes were purposely kept very brief. As I gave evidence, on the 13th of March, the day before we had a meeting comprising members who eventually also became members of the Task Force: Dr FUNG Hong, the Director of Health, Dr William HO, as well as the expert from the WHO, we discussed the outbreak in Prince of Wales. So the actual detailed discussions of the outbreak in Prince of Wales were discussed at that meeting. In that meeting, in fact there was quite a detailed discussion relating to Dr TSE Lai-yin briefing us on the disease surveillance systems, the HA reported cases on the Community-Acquired Pneumonia and what the Working Group on the Atypical Pneumonia, found in this Severe Community-Acquired Pneumonia, the surveillance system they set up on February the 11th.

At the meeting, we also learnt that the PWH started to be alerted that staff reported sick on the 10th of March and closed the ward for admissions. They reported the symptoms of the patients, of the staff included having fever and other flu symptoms. The situation on the 11th of March was that two staff were admitted, two to Prince of Wales and one to Kwong Wah. The hospital had set up an urgent clinic in the evening to house sick staff. Screening and tests were arranged. 50 staff were called back for screening, and were tested. Those suspected were admitted. 23 were admitted and 8 showed signs of pneumonia. By the time of having the meeting, 29 staff in the Prince of Wales including four students had already been admitted. There were 1,220 staff in the clinic and 18 showed pneumonia signs.

All this was discussed in the meeting very detailedly. On the 13th of March, the day before the Task Force.....So all these measures were discussed. At that meeting, it was on the basis of this review of the outbreak that we decided to set up a Task Force and an expert group. Most of the people in the Task Force were present in the meeting on the 13th, and were aware of the outbreaks. So at the discussions on the 14th of March of the Task Force, it was not a repetition of what we had discussed on the 13th.

On the 13th, we already decided that HA and DH should start to investigate the outbreak. They would exchange information with WHO and the Mainland and the US to see whether there was any further intelligence. The HA had already taken precautions to protect its staff. Dr William HO also briefed me on the measures that they had taken on droplet precautions and the precautions that staff had taken to protect staff and patients. So the meeting of the 13th was a prelude to the 14th. That's why the notes of the 14th were necessarily brief relating to the Prince of Wales. It was looking at the impact of this, not just the Prince of Wales, but also the overall control of this new phenomenon in Hong Kong where we already saw signs that it was emerging not just in Prince of Wales but in three other clusters.

鄭家富議員：

我想問一下局長，當時除了Prince of Wales有briefly討論，你一直重複說有different clusters，那麼你當時的討論中，有哪幾個是你們所關注的？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, at that time, in that meeting, it was noted that there were PWH healthcare staff and household contacts. There were other hospitals with similar respiratory outbreaks among healthcare workers. We talked about four clusters at that time. We noted that there was one in the Pamela Youde Eastern Hospital, a group in the Princess Margaret which was the patient transferred from Hanoi to Hong Kong and died in Princess Margaret. At that time, we were not aware of the problem but we already thought that that could be a possible second cluster. The fourth group that we were starting to examine was a report of a private doctor seeing a patient and came down with pneumonia and also three of his nursing staff. So these were the four possible sources of infection that we were already beginning to identify even though there was no laboratory test and the symptoms were not specific. But because they were linked up to healthcare workers and close contacts, the picture was already emerging that the problem was more prevalent than just the Prince of Wales.

鄭家富議員：

在剛才你所說的那個問題上，在這4個比較重要的focus的clusters上，大部分都與醫院內的環境有關。那麼，在14日那個會議上有沒有討論過：我們的醫院是否要提高警覺，甚至在醫院的範圍內，我們是否要做些甚麼去防止疫症蔓延？有沒有類似的討論呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, on the 13th of March, the infection control measures were already looked at. Dr William HO did report the infection control measures that were taken to protect staff and to look at how the hospital should be geared up to prevent infections. In fact Dr William HO had already initiated the action. The Department of Health had already started measures to alert the private sector relating to this information so that it could take the appropriate measures. So on the 14th of March, it was just re-emphasis of the work that needed to be done. The Department of Health would be also looking at the whole disease outbreak and how to do investigations. The Hospital Authority would be looking at the management of patients in its hospitals and instituting infection control measures to protect patients and staff and to prevent further dissemination of infection and to work with the Department of Health to investigate the outbreak and to provide any necessary intelligence to our work.

鄭家富議員：

但是，局長，你一直的口供都是說，因為3月13日既然都開過了，有些事情便不想在3月14日好像在重複似的。但是3月14日，我想搞清楚，因為始終3月13日的那個是在威院裏面開的，對嗎？主要是談威院的問題，對嗎？但3月14日是名正言順大家談過要成立一個Task Force on SARS。我想搞清楚這個事實，3月13日那個會議是不是在威院裏面開的，還是哪裏？我想瞭解。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, both meetings were held in the Bureau. On the 14th there were quite a few meetings. On the 14th, the Task Force meeting was held in the Health, Welfare and Food Bureau, in the West Wing. On the 13th, the meeting was held in the Health, Welfare and Food Bureau in the Murray Building. On the 14th, I also visited the Prince of Wales Hospital in the afternoon with the Chief Executive. There were a whole series of meetings. Two of the meetings, the ones that I referred to in coordinating and looking at the outbreaks, were done in the Bureau. The third meeting which was actually to see what was happening

in the field, to understand the operational issues and to see for myself how the hospital was controlling the infection and the investigations that were done, was held in the Prince of Wales.

鄭家富議員：

明白，謝謝局長。再翻下去，看看3月17日那個meeting，局長。如果你說在3月13日和3月14日這樣接近的時間去談威院的問題，都談完了。3月13日、3月14日主要都是整體的一個更加廣泛的討論。然而，3月17日也是一個很緊張的日子，但我卻看不到對於威院的問題……那裏只有一個“Index patient in PWH agreed”，你可不可以談談當時3月17日的那個討論。3月17日多了很多人，主席。出席者包括何醫生和高永文醫生——醫管局的，亦有袁國勇教授在場，而且還有WHO的expert。那麼，在這個問題上，似乎威院的問題是否……這令我感覺到，如果我光看你的notes，似乎是不太緊張的，是嗎？即是在這個問題上，當時來說不是太過集中於威院的討論，可不可以解釋一下呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, obviously it isn't what actually transpired. The main concern was obviously tackling this what seemed to be a new infection, a new disease that we were facing as a threat. The issue was related to the Prince of Wales. Obviously it was the largest outbreak that we had at that time. But we were also equally concerned about the extent of the infection in the community. We were looking at it from the perspective of both Prince of Wales outbreak in relation to what was actually transpiring and the overall SARS impact on Hong Kong. Both issues were looked at in the same time.

My recollection is that in those Task Force meetings, there were reports, updates on the control in the Prince of Wales but they were not recorded in detail by this Task Force because at that time, there was no mention of things that were not going according to what the hospital had told us. For instance, when the hospital was facing problems in terms of workloads, etc. These were only raised by the Chief Executive from the Hospital Authority. I also had meetings with him and I had in fact one meeting with both the Chief Executive of the Hospital Authority and Chairman of the Hospital Authority on several occasions, very often before the Task Force or after the Task Force. Some of these issues about workload, etc. were not raised in the Task Force. The Task Force was really looking in terms of the overall control of the outbreak both in the Prince of Wales and in the territory as a whole. That's why when there were significant things like the Prince of Wales index patient identified, they updated me on what was actually happening in the Prince of Wales. Because there were also

collection of statistics on people that were involved, the relevant developments were discussed at the Task Force. I still remember that they continued to update us that the infections occurred were still confined as far as they could gather to patients and visitors and staff that were related to 8A. Right through the outbreak we were given these assurances. I assure Members that in fact in every of our Task Force meetings, we were reviewing the total outbreak and, as the Honourable CHENG Kar-foo said, in the early part of the outbreak, the Prince of Wales Hospital was one of the key parts of control which we did discuss and look at. But the records of the meeting were necessarily brief because only the relevant things that were brought up, which the secretary thought were vital, were put in in the notes as action points.

鄭家富議員：

3月17日的那個會議，局長你有沒有紀錄是開了多久？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I do not have a record of how long this meeting lasted. But in general I think the meetings would last certainly in terms of about two hours or thereabouts. But I cannot recollect the exact time of each of these meetings. My general impression and my recollection is that they were in those sort of time frames. Sometimes it would be somewhat shorter, sometimes longer depending on the discussions at the meetings.

鄭家富議員：

如果當作是兩個小時吧，你大概用了多少時間談威院的問題？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I cannot honestly give a.....

鄭家富議員：

大概呢？即是佔了多少個部分？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I think it would have been a considerable time we have been discussing. As I said, it is artificial to separate the Prince of Wales with the total outbreak control. Obviously, there were some issues which were unique to the Prince of Wales that had to be dealt with and the issues relating to total disease control. They were both looked at in totality. I can assure Members

that we were very concerned about the control of the outbreak in the Prince of Wales right through, not just in the beginning but right to the end because, as Members know, the New Territories East Cluster had carried a large brunt of the outbreak. Even in the later stages of the outbreak, there were recurring problems in the New Territories East cluster outbreak. In fact I had very frequent phone calls with all the Chief Executives of the New Territories East Cluster hospitals. The workloads and the arrangements, the number of patients they treated presented great challenge for the hospitals in that cluster to manage. I was very concerned about the outbreaks in the hospitals from the beginning to the end.

鄭家富議員：

主席，我想引用陳太的一個口供，來看看局長怎樣去面對威院這個問題。當時我們問及陳太關於威院發生的事情，譬如是否應該要修例，或者是對於急症室關閉的那些問題，當時那個問題的背景就是這樣。陳太便說……我很快地讀出來吧，主席。她說：“我想，當沙田威爾斯親王醫院發生這件事情，我很瞭解前線工作人員，包括醫管局的同事、大學的同事，他們的心情和關注。如果他們確實有這樣的要求，應該要坐下來詳細討論，然後表達他們的關注，這些應該由管理人員，包括醫管局管理人員及我們衛生署在楊局長的統領之下去查看”，查看甚麼呢，就是第一，陳醫生說：“有沒有關閉醫院的需要，或是應該怎樣關閉，然後以甚麼權力去關閉，我想這樣的做法是比較適切。”

局長，當時陳太說應該在楊局長統領之下，關於“統領之下”，我在這裏翻看過往紀錄，其中一個統領的方法，當然應該是Task Force了，因為你是主席。但是這裏的關鍵，她的口供說：“有沒有關閉醫院的需要，或是應該怎樣關閉，用甚麼權力去關閉”，這幾句最重要的factors，似乎在剛才你的答案中，在Task Force內，似乎我看不到你們是從這一個關鍵去討論威院的問題，是不是呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I think I just want to reiterate once again that we looked at the infection control measures in the Prince of Wales on the 13th of March, on the 14th of March, on the 17th of March. And even on the 17th of March, the notes, although they were brief, said that we understand from WHO and CDC their recommended infection control guidelines, the transmission mode — most likely droplet, aerosol unlikely unless on nebuliser — so this related to discussions surrounding the Prince of Wales. Around that time, they had identified the index patient. We would begin to understand the modes of transmission and the

circumstances. They were already talking about the nebuliser which was used in 8A ward where it was not known that the patient was infectious with this SARS virus. The nebuliser was used in the ward and this was thought to have caused this widespread infection in the Prince of Wales Hospital. As far as the hospital closure, at no time did anyone, Dr HO, Dr FUNG Hong, Dr Margaret CHAN or anyone involved in the Task Force or in the meeting on the 13th and 14th, raised this as something we needed to look at.

主席：

局長，我想剛才鄭議員所提的那個描述是“在你領導下”，那是一個假設的情景的描述，而不是一個事實的描述。他說如果要討論的話，便要從這裏去討論，由局長去統領。不過事實上，剛才局長已回答了你的問題，就是沒有討論過。

鄭家富議員：

不，主席，我的問題核心……因為剛才一直聽這45分鐘的證供，其實局長和陳太在威院的問題上，大部分都是一致的，那就是說，因為馮康又沒有提過，其他人又沒有提過。不過，陳太說，如果要談呢，其實應該由局長去領導醫管局的管理人員，大家坐下來去談……

主席：

即是如果……

鄭家富議員：

……但局長表示：對不起，由於沒有人告訴我，所以我也無需要去想。OK……

主席：

這也沒有矛盾，鄭議員。

鄭家富議員：

我明白，但我的意思是，難道局長你不覺得，如果陳太對某項事情的看法與你不是有矛盾，而是有所不同……陳太覺得局長你應該領導去想，去行這一步，但局長你似乎就表示，不是這樣，因為沒有人對你說，所以無需行這一步……

主席：

不過，鄭議員，不好意思，作為主席，你所引述的證供與你提問的問題，有兩個明顯不同的地方。有關的證供指出，如果要進行討論，便要這樣地討論；而你問證人的，就是為何你們不討論呢……

鄭家富議員：

那麼……

主席：

即是兩樣不同的東西……

鄭家富議員：

……或者我換另一個方法問局長。其實雖然我剛才都有略為問過，但是我掌握不到局長當時確實的心情。那麼我直接地問，就算沒有人提過，但你理解到其實威院也好，其他一些cluster都有發生爆發，開始有些不尋常的問題發生了，那麼你當時為何不是作為一個領導去深入討論威院或者其他醫院面對這個問題的時候，是否應該要作出一些具體……譬如關閉急症室，或者修例等問題，以解決當時所面對的爆發呢？為何不是由你領導？你表示沒有人提過你，所以不用去想。為何會有這樣的思維呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, simply because at that time, we had the best expert advice on what were the appropriate infection control measures to put in. The infection control measures that were put in was to close the ward 8A to admissions and discharge, to restrict visitors, to segregate the medical staff team, to adopt precautions to protect patients and staff and to do the contact tracing and investigation. All these were accepted and endorsed by the experts in the meeting. I think I don't know why the speculation relating to the hospital closure was thought to be a measure. At no point in time did anyone talk about hospital closure nor actually define what it meant. I remember in the Expert Committee this was mentioned. In the Government's Expert Committee they did ask the question of what people meant by hospital closure. I think what we are interested in is not a term that doesn't really define how it would achieve its purpose and the problems that we associated. The infection control procedures that were instituted by the Prince of Wales Hospital was affirmed to me by many experts including the World Health Organization expert that they were adequate.

They did not suggest any other measures that were necessary. Nor did Dr FUNG Hong, nor did Dr Margaret CHAN who is the authority for public health mention the need to consider other measures.

鄭家富議員：

主席，我想進一步瞭解一下，鍾尚志教授與.....在局長你的陳述書第17、18條，關於你提到鍾教授作出社區已經爆發的言論之後，你與他通電話的一些內容。在陳述書第18頁，局長，即Answer 17-18，你是一次過回答這兩條問題的，你表示“learnt of Prof Sydney Chung’s remarks from media report on 18 March”。然後你在該段的倒數第2行表示，“I told him I shared his concerns”。可否談談那個電話內容，你所謂的“shared his concerns”，是指甚麼？可不可以具體說多一點？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, obviously from the evidence that I have given, I continued to be very concerned about the Prince of Wales outbreak and I had frequent contacts, not only with the management and the staff. When Professor CHUNG was reported in the media as expressing concerns relating to the spread of the infection, I was obviously very highly concerned relating to why Professor CHUNG, whom I have a great deal of respect for, would not give this information to us and would go to the media. Obviously, I was very concerned about that.

I can assure Members that right from the start, we have been as open and transparent as we could. We did our best to give the most updated information to the public in the way that we hoped the public would be able to understand and make up its mind. When Professor CHUNG was reported in the media that there were these outbreaks in the community, I wanted to learn directly from him first-hand what information he had that I might not be in possession of. Having worked in a hospital, I realized how fast the outbreak was occurring. When I for the first time I learnt about the outbreak on the 13th, I was really alarmed at the rapidity, the number of people and how rapidly they were getting sick and how quickly things were moving. So I rang up Professor CHUNG to understand whether there was any gap of information from the hospital to the Department of Health or to the HA Head Office and to us in the Bureau. I mean, I depend on the information of the outbreak from the Department of Health and the Hospital Authority.

So I rang him up to understand what his concerns were. My recollection is that he told me that there were a lot of family members of patients and staff that were starting to get admitted to hospital and the numbers were growing so

rapidly. When I talked to him, the information that he had was what I already had at that time. By that time the development reporting systems were more efficient. The family members that were sick and were being admitted were very similar to the information I was in possession of. Obviously I shared his concern relating to the infections that were occurring from patients and visitors. I think that was the main concern that this seemed to be spreading very rapidly from the discharged patients, from visitors, from staff. But obviously I think at that time, I knew that what was being done was between the Department of Health and the Hospital Authority. They were trying their best to get the information, and to do the contact tracing. I was also aware of the division of work between the Hospital Authority and the Department of Health to do the contact tracing and to bring patients who were sick into the hospital so that this infection could be controlled early. When I talked to him, I was at least able to get the information that, he was not in possession of information that I wasn't already aware of.

鄭家富議員：

即是基本上在開始時，你不知道鍾教授是否有些資料是你沒有的，但傾談之後，發覺情況不是這樣，其實他所知道的，你都知。那麼換言之，他在電話中向你表達的憂慮……既然大家所知道的差不多，為何他會如此憂慮，向傳媒表示社區已經爆發，甚至是含着淚，很緊張地說出來？當時你們在電話中的對話，你是否感覺到你與他之間的判斷是很不同的？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I think at that time obviously there was this impression, which Members also have, that the Government was trying to play down the extent of the infection in the community. Of course, we at no point in time tried to do that. Of course, because of those reports, I think Professor CHUNG had that impression. But when I talked to him, the information that was provided to me was very similar. Obviously that was still a reason for concern for me. I told him that my concerns were similar in terms of this spread of the infection to family members, whether there were other things that we could do better and differently which could have reduced this infection. So I think, as I understood, it was the work that the hospitals were actively doing to try to control the spread of the infection. I think we all felt a bit helpless at that time because so little was known of this disease. There was no way to make sure of a diagnosis. The symptoms were non-specific, even the case definitions were changing from the World Health Organization and we had great difficulties. I think the hospitals had great difficulties in tackling the problem. The Department of Health did its best to try to do the large number of contact tracing of the large numbers of people that were infected in such a short time.

鄭家富議員：

你是否記得當時 —— 我仍然是圍繞着3月18日的電話對話，局長。你是否記得當時鍾教授曾向你提出要求，希望政府在一些譬如隔離政策上，要盡快做一些事，你有沒有這樣的印象？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, Professor CHUNG has at no point in time either on the phone or in person, and not even on the day when I was in the Prince of Wales in the staff forum, ever suggested, at least not to me personally, the need for any quarantine.

鄭家富議員：

鍾教授在我們的委員會裏，曾就這一段對話作供。主席，我想把它提出來與局長討論。李柱銘議員當時問到有關這一段對話……對不起，我想先弄清楚，究竟是否這一段對話。對了，鍾教授表示，“他在電話談話中曾說過……” —— “他”即是指局長你 —— “你這樣說可能會引起恐慌”。接着鍾教授……李柱銘議員一直提問，問他的感覺當時是……即是他覺得為何你的看法會是這樣。鍾教授表示，“可能他不高興吧”。其實，當時你回應電話的內容，如果現在回看，鍾教授在整個對話中，你有沒有跟他說過，他這樣會引起恐慌？你的語氣和調子是否對鍾教授作出批評？特別是當你得知他所知道的資料，與你知道的一樣，為何他所說的與你那麼不同？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I don't know the impression I gave Professor CHUNG but certainly that was not what I intended, not that I have any recollection of some of the other things that were mentioned in Professor CHUNG's evidence. Of course, certain things he said I might have said, and certain of his impressions of what was said.

My main recollection is that because of my respect for Professor CHUNG, my main reason for that phone call was to really try to distill whether there was any information that I needed to know to deal with the outbreak. In fact, I have worked with Professor CHUNG before. In the Hospital Authority I still remember when we dealt with the Pat Sin Leng fire, Professor CHUNG was one of the key persons working in the hospital. I found Professor CHUNG to be a very committed clinician, a very sensible person. I had a great deal of respect for him.

And, I really at that time was trying to leave no stone unturned so that I would have the most direct information for people who were dealing with the outbreak. As you know, in communications if there are too many layers and too many lines, information tends to be distilled out and modified. It has always been my policy and my practice to directly contact the people who are involved in the work. This was the main reason why I talked to Professor CHUNG. I might have also wanted to foster a partnership with him in managing the outbreak as an academic. We know that academics generally have a very good standing in the community. Of course, if we are able to work in partnership with the academics, it would help us in dealing with the outbreak both in the hospital, in public health and in communicating with the public. As you see from what we did during the outbreak, we have always tried to involve the academics both in our infection control, and the outbreak control, and in our communications with the public. There were many occasions where Professor SUNG, Professor YUEN were involved in our press briefings so that they would also help us present the information to the public as it was.

鄭家富議員：

局長，接着鍾教授亦都向委員會表示……李柱銘問他：“局長表示他不高興你這樣向傳媒說話，表達你的意見？”鍾教授就表示：“他並沒有說：‘你這樣說，我很‘黐’”。他並沒有這樣說，他沒有exactly這樣說……他只是說過，如果你以醫學院院長的身份向別人說話，會有人相信的”。我想問一問局長，當時你有沒有說過類似這樣的話？如果有的話，你所說的——如果以醫學院院長的身份說社區有爆發，會有人相信的——你覺得你自己當時都相信鍾教授的說法，但是你不願他這樣說，還是你當時根本都不相信他的說法？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, as I already said, at that time, the information that Professor CHUNG mentioned to me, and in fact the information that was reported in newspapers, was the information that I already had in the Bureau. Those were the numbers. The cases were a similar number and the people that we described……when Professor CHUNG talked about the infections in the community……were the family members and the visitors and the contacts of the staff who were infected in the community. We were in fact very clear about the situation at that time that how the outbreak had spread. This information was very similar so there was, and this information in fact had been provided to the public already even before Professor CHUNG did his press interview. So when Professor CHUNG did his press interview on the 17th, we presented in fact all this information to the public. That's why at that time I was a bit concerned that

there were even more patients in different context that could be infected. Our main anxiety is to learn more from him. I don't know why.....

鄭家富議員：

明白。主席，我想局長你集中回答.....因為剛才那些只是重複，你已回答過。由於鍾教授表示你這樣跟他說過，即他是醫學院院長，他這樣說會有人相信的，首先你有沒有說過這句話？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

I don't recall that I made that statement, Mr Chairman. As I said, I might have spoken to him. That's why I brought in this issue of partnership of getting the academics to also work with us in not just outbreak control but also in communications. I certainly do not recollect having made those exact statements but it might have been in the context of communicating to the public that Professor CHUNG might have got the impression that I had said that but I certainly do not have a recollection of having made that statement.

鄭家富議員：

類似這樣的內容或者表達這樣的意思，即是這樣說可能會有人相信，你在電話的內容曾否類似這樣地表達過.....

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I certainly do not have any recollection of having said anything of that nature. I am just trying to speculate in terms of why Professor CHUNG's recollection would be of something similar. As I said, I have a great deal of respect for Professor CHUNG. It might have been in our discussions that he might have got that sort of impression. But I certainly do not have a recollection of having said anything of that nature.

鄭家富議員：

但是因為鍾教授.....我有很深的印象，當時李柱銘議員問他的時候，他清楚記得有這一段對話，內容就是這樣。局長你完全沒有印象有類似這樣的statement提過，是不是這樣？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, yes I think I can affirm that my main recollection is my concerns about the spread of the infection, the extent of the spread of the infection. My main purpose for the telephone was to see whether I could access any information that I was not in possession of.

鄭家富議員：

無論怎樣也好，我都想再瞭解一下局長你當時……既然鍾教授與你……對話是由兩個人進行的，即是接收的問題。現時對方接收到這樣的一個訊息，你是否覺得這個訊息來自以下一個方法：要麼你不相信他所說的，要麼你雖然相信他，但是你很希望運用你作為局長的權力，叫他不要再這樣說了，你是否覺得給了鍾教授這樣的一個訊息？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I think that would be in contradiction with the evidence I have given. The information I got from Professor CHUNG relating to the description of the cases that he had mentioned to the media were already similar to the information that we had. I think if Members could in fact look at the reports in the newspapers of the cases that he was describing, they were already in our press release on the 17th. There was no discrepancy in the information, at least not material difference in the information that Professor CHUNG had disclosed to the media and the information that we had disclosed ourselves to the media on the 17th.

鄭家富議員：

你剛才的作供，一直給我們的印象是，你十分……你表示尊重鍾教授，因為過去你跟他有很多次場合或者在工作上一起合作，那麼對於鍾教授在3月17日作出“社區爆發”的結論——讓我這樣說吧，當時的一個小小的結論——在電話對話當中，你有沒有任何訊息覺得，其實你與他的結論很不同，你覺得社區沒有爆發？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, as I said, we did not describe that. We just looked at what was actually happening. I think, for Professor CHUNG, being an academic and understanding the issues in infection control, we were more interested in the specifics of the cases that were emerging and how they had acquired the infection and, how we could control the infection. So in fact when I spoke to him, we were discussing in those terms. In fact, there was no difference in view in relating to……there was no difference in the information that he had, because I told him that we had already reported that information to the media that the Department of Health was aware of those, and they were trying their best to control the outbreak.

鄭家富議員：

局長，在那個談話……我想是接近完結的時候，我相信每次大家的談話，都會就究竟鍾教授所說的社區爆發的言論……其實當時你的想法，你是否相信鍾教授所說的，即社區有爆發？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I said we did not discuss that term. We just discussed the actual phenomenon.

鄭家富議員：

我知道。我的意思是，因為似乎你過去曾經對傳媒說過這些問題，你打電話給鍾教授，基本上你都知道鍾教授made了這樣的一個statement。你重複地告訴我們，你們在談話中其實並不是主要談論有沒有爆發，而是談論整體……其他的……威院也好……這個問題上，但是你可否recollect你當時聽完之後，你是否相信他作為醫學院院長，他所說的事情？我現在不是說對話的內容。在當時那一刻，3月18日的電話對話差不多完結時也好，或者已大致上傾談完畢，你是否相信他作為醫學院院長，他所說的事情是真的呢？你相不相信？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I said there was no disagreement in the information that we discussed. Professor CHUNG was describing the number of cases that he was seeing, that he was seeing people infected from the hospitals that there had been discharged patients, visitors, the family members of the staff that were getting sick. He was describing this phenomenon and this was exactly the phenomenon that we had already understood. So there was no disagreement at all between us on the actual phenomenon that was occurring.

鄭家富議員：

即是你其實相信他所說的——在當時來說，社區有爆發，是不是？因為你們之間no disagreement。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

I think, Mr Chairman, we did not discuss whether there was an outbreak. We always said there were cases of SARS in the community and that we are seeing them, clusters of cases and that there were linkages. There were now cases spreading from the healthcare staff to the family members who are in the

community. This was always a phenomenon that we described. So I hope Members will accept that in fact this community outbreak is really not a very precise definition and really didn't help us in understanding the situation. Because this infection had always been in the community. I have always emphasized time and again that these cases were in the community; otherwise they would not infect healthcare workers. Otherwise where would infections start? These are Community-Acquired Pneumonia. At that time, at the start of the outbreak, when the Task Force met, we identified four possible cases in the community that were starting to infect healthcare workers. When you talk about infections in the community, they started in the community and then they infected healthcare workers and then afterwards brought it back into the community to infect other people. It is a continuation of this cycle. So we described the actual phenomenon to the public without using the term.

鄭家富議員：

根據你一直所說的，即是說，對於鍾教授所表達的憂慮，你都是同意的？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I obviously shared his concerns.....

鄭家富議員：

是shared concerns的。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

.....about the rapidity of the infection, of the infection spreading to family members. Obviously, we were highly concerned because of the rapidity of the outbreak and the large numbers of people that were infected in 8A ward.

鄭家富議員：

主席，關於這個問題，我想進而去到應該是3月20日，鍾教授在一個場合送局長往乘車.....

主席：

在職員會.....

鄭家富議員：

.....在停車場那裏。當時.....局長，或者我亦都讀出一、兩句鍾教授向我們委員會所作的口供。當時，局長你們出席一個staff forum，在前往停車場的時候，你們有一段5分鐘的對話。關於那段對話，當時鍾教授向我們委員會表示，都是關於威院那些.....你也知道，當時在3月20日的時候，都是如火如荼，他亦都是與你傾談威院爆發的一些問題。我這樣問鍾教授：“你是否記得，在20日楊局長聽完了你所說的5分鐘的談話後，他的反應如何？”鍾教授表示：“我都覺得他不是很convinced”。關於這方面，“convinced”的意思，據我估計，當時其實鍾教授一直都想跟局長你說，無論是醫學院也好，或者是威院也好，同事是憂心耿耿，希望政府多做一點，但是局長你似乎都不是很“convinced”。請局長你回想大概3月20日這5分鐘與鍾教授的談話。究竟你是否記得.....因為你剛才所說的，似乎與鍾教授向我們委員會所講的可能有少許不同。你現在回想，當時那5分鐘鍾教授跟你談過些甚麼呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, can I ask respectfully, I am not sure what Professor CHUNG referred to, I am not convinced of what? I am not sure what he was referring to.

鄭家富議員：

呃.....對不起，主席，我想提出的就是，當時我們正談論“社區中已經有人與人之間的感染”。其實就是社區有沒有爆發這個問題。即是說，關於那段5至10分鐘的對話，我們環繞着這個問題問鍾教授。鍾教授表示在20日，跟你傾談過5分鐘。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I really don't understand the context of what Professor CHUNG said. I wasn't convinced of what? If there was.....

鄭家富議員：

不如這樣吧，主席，你一邊翻看有關證供的時候，我以我的理解.....你看看我這樣問是否合理。鍾教授覺得局長你不被“convinced”，意思就是說，當時在3月20日，你都不被鍾教授說服，社區中有人與人之間的SARS傳染。即是說，到了3月20日，似乎你都不認同鍾教授所說“社區有爆發”。你覺得是不是這樣呢？OK

嗎，局長……不，sorry，OK嗎，主席？我這樣問都fair嗎？看完有關的口供，然後這樣put……

主席：

看看局長怎樣回答你，好嗎？

鄭家富議員：

……給局長？好嗎？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I am sorry I cannot comment on this “convinced”. I just want to reiterate time and again that even on the 18th of March, I said “there are patients who carried this virus in the community”. They are in the transcripts that Members have, in the press briefings. “They are then brought into the hospital because they are sick and because we are unaware of the virus. It then spreads to the healthcare workers and to close family contacts.” So we always accepted this phenomenon. In fact, we have described this phenomenon. I do not understand this context that “I wasn’t convinced”. I don’t know what “I wasn’t convinced of”. If there is no description of what I am not convinced of, I cannot comment. I would like to tell you on the 20th of March when I went to the Prince of Wales Hospital in the open forum, it was quite a lengthy session. There were hundreds of staff present. They described to me the very difficult situation they were facing, how difficult it was when they saw their colleagues coming down one by one, with pneumonia, with fever, with SARS. The forum was highly charged because it was a new phenomenon and the infection control measures were also discussed. Professor CHUNG himself in that forum was very concerned about the impact on the medical school and on the hospital. In that meeting, my recollection, in the open forum, is that he was very concerned about the future of the hospital and the medical school and asked my absolute support for the hospital and for the medical school in future. And I gave him my absolute assurance. So I understood that in fact at that time everyone in the Prince of Wales was under a great deal of pressure. It was really quite understandable the emotions that this new disease had caused in the staff. After the meeting, my recollection is that, then just before I left and before going to the car, Dr FUNG Hong and Professor Sydney CHUNG both had a brief discussion with me. My recollection is that Professor CHUNG talked about the cases of infection in the community from the context of infected staff and patients. So they were really the repetition of what he had told me of on the 18th when I talked to him on the phone. But the new concern at that time, my recollection is that the concern wasn’t really just about the cases in the community. My main recollection of that conversation was that they expressed concern about the

contact tracing done by the Department of Health staff. Because there had been a movement of the senior person, Dr Gareth AU, who had just taken ill and that their perception was that they were not carrying out the contact tracing with the same vigor as before because they were not visible in the hospital. So it was really mainly in the context of the contact tracing work that they brought this up to me. If the contact tracing work was not done, as they thought, effectively and efficiently, this potential of spread of infection would be even more rampant. They were already so concerned about the numbers of infections from the discharged patients and from the staff, the family members. They were concerned that if the contact tracing was not done effectively and efficiently, the spread would continue. So my recollection was that, on that particular day, the main discussion was on the contact tracing work, the perception of the contact tracing work done by the Department of Health. I was obviously very concerned about that allegation, and I said that I would certainly take this up with the Department of Health to really see what was actually happening. Of course, I did so the next day.

主席：

或者鄭議員，我提一提剛剛看完的紀錄。剛才所說“not convinced”是指，鍾尚志教授表示，“其實那個訊息很簡單，在社區中已經有人與人之間的感染，就是這樣……我都覺得他不是很convinced”。不過，我想向鄭議員提一提當時的一段證供，亦是由你問的……

鄭家富議員：

Sorry，主席，哪一頁呢？

主席：

第31頁。

鄭家富議員：

31頁。

主席：

對不起，我們先向議員澄清一下。請看看，鍾尚志教授表示，“我想他再正視社區……”，鄭家富議員你便說：“爆發”。鍾尚志教授說：“傳染的問題”。你便說：“一個很廣泛的問題……”。你再看看後面那一頁，我便介入了，我說：“鍾教授，你當時是用“社區

爆發”這個字眼去描述情況，還是以“社區傳染”的字眼？你是否記得？”他說：“當時exactly用甚麼字眼，我沒有辦法說出來”。所以，你是一直採用“爆發”的字眼，不過他一直都不能夠表達清楚，究竟他當時與局長討論的，是“傳染”抑或“爆發”這兩個字……

鄭家富議員：

嗯。

主席：

……可以嗎？因為你不斷問他是不是“爆發”……

鄭家富議員：

是的。

主席：

不過他一直都表示，他不清楚是不是“爆發”……

鄭家富議員：

是的。

主席：

可以嗎？

鄭家富議員：

是，明白。不過問題就是，因為局長剛才作供時都表示，基本上就算類似這樣的討論都似乎不是的，其實集中在談論contact tracing。那5分鐘的對話，據局長的理解，就是正在與鍾教授和馮康醫生談論個案的追蹤，並不是人與人之間……是否在社區中有人與人之間的傳染的問題。但是根據鍾教授的口供，似乎那5分鐘的對話曾經有這方面的討論，而且他的印象是，局長不被說服，就是說，社區沒有人與人之間的傳染，是嗎？但是局長，我再多問你一次，既然主席看完……亦都將“傳染”和“爆發”這個引述……你是否肯定其實當時那5分鐘……因為5分鐘的對話真的很短，不過那5分鐘的對話為何重要呢？因為在3月20日，當時來說，那個對話有關於社區有沒有人與人之間的傳染這個問題，根據你的印象，是不是完全沒有觸及到？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, time and again, I don't understand this issue about human to human spread. SARS is an infection that occurs from human to human so this is a given.....so I don't understand this statement, that I wasn't convinced that it was human to human spread. Because SARS is transmitted from humans to humans, that's why we had this epidemic in Hong Kong. Otherwise we would never have had the epidemic. I guess probably it was the perception rather than the reality. I think because as I had spoken to Professor CHUNG before, I understood his anxieties. What he was seeing in the hospital was large numbers of people infected of Community-Acquired Pneumonia, so there were infections in the community that were coming to hospital in a short time. Honestly, they were very concerned about our ability to control this epidemic. The message I got, I mean, in terms of these infections in the community, the family members, the visitors, the discharged patients, their carers, all this information was not new to me. I understood the problem, and the solution to the problem was of course good infection control policies and effective and swift contact tracing.

When he talked to me that there were even more people coming to the hospital and then Dr FUNG Hong telling me about the contact tracing, my concern obviously was the two together: the large numbers of people infected but the solution was the contact tracing. If this was done effectively and efficiently, it would reduce the numbers that would be infected. So that's why in my mind, on that particular day, it wasn't that I wasn't concerned about the number of cases. I was concerned about the number of cases but it was something that was already happening. Something that I was concerned about is whether we could do anything about it. The ability to do something about it at that stage in time of these infection in the community was early contact tracing. So what Dr FUNG Hong was saying brought to my attention about his concerns of hospital about contact tracing. So I was very, very concerned relating to this allegation that was made. Someone was sick that it seemed to appear that the contact tracing work was not continuing with the same vigor but obviously I learnt the next day from Dr P Y LEUNG that they had continued to do work and then I discussed with Dr P Y LEUNG how they could strengthen the contact tracing work. So the gist of the conversation was relating to his concern about how the infection was spreading in the community and what could be done to limit the spread.

鄭家富議員：

局長，你現在聽過剛才我們花了不少時間所討論及取證於3月18日你與鍾教授的電話對話，以及在3月20日那5分鐘的對話，這兩個對話，你現在回想，你與鍾教授在工作上合作的理念，以及大家互相之間的認知或者認識，你怎樣形容大家之間.....因為你

剛才形容過，表示你沒有disagreement。3月20日，那5分鐘的對話完結後，大家其實是否仍然都沒有太大的分歧呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, because of our different roles, I think the perceptions are very different. I have been a frontline clinician before, and I know that sometimes our doctors in the frontline see things very differently from the people in the management. Sometimes, they may have the impression that we don't understand the problems. Sometimes, they may have the impression that even if we have understood the problem, we may not wish to know. But I have always tried my best to demonstrate to the colleagues in the field, and tried to convince them that I hope that they will always bring the bad news to me at the first possible time, and that I do not wish to have things swept under the carpets. Because it doesn't help the problem to do so. So right through the outbreak, I tried my best to access the most direct information so that I could be able to contribute within my own capabilities. Obviously, I think Professor CHUNG being an academic and being a clinician primarily was concerned about whether we were doing our best to deal with the problem, whether we had fully accepted the extent of the problem. I did my best to assure him that we were trying. But obviously I think because the outbreak was occurring so rapidly and the perception that the contact tracing was not done as effectively, it may have influenced his views on Government's actions. Of course, with the Government, I guess he would tend to lump us all together. I certainly understand Professor CHUNG's concerns at that time because as a frontline clinician, I completely share his emotions and views and I knew how difficult it was for the colleagues in the field in encountering such a bizarre situation where their colleagues were coming down one after another. In that forum, which still leaves a lot of memories for me. What is imprinted in my mind is the emotions that were faced: when today you are working with a colleague and tomorrow that person is lying in intensive care under respiratory treatment and at the risk of his or her life. So those forums were very, very emotional and very understandably.

鄭家富議員：

我明白，局長，我的問題核心其實很簡單，你很簡單地回答我便可以了，因為你一直都用幾個字，就是“shared concern”，如果中文來說就是我分享到、我感覺到，不過分享到和感覺到，與是否同意，是兩回事。我的問題核心就是，對譬如你一直提及的contact tracing，或者我提及的、鍾教授提過的社區有否傳染，或者人與人之間的傳染，或者甚至更廣泛的，譬如一些quarantine policy，整體你與鍾教授當時到了20日那一刻，有否不同？你覺得

是否不同？你是否覺得他們都是過分感性，因為他們在前線，而“我便要做一个理性的局長”，是否這樣？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I think that is certainly not, I hope, the impression that I gave. I was saying I understood the emotions, but what Professor CHUNG was describing was a very rationale phenomenon which was exactly similar to our understanding. There was no difference in understanding of the phenomenon of the spread of the infection. We had right through, even on that same day, we had said that there were cases of the virus that were in the community. In fact, we said that: we don't know the virus so we don't even begin to understand the numbers in the community. So I have already accepted. My concern wasn't just even in terms of the cases that were linked up to the hospitals. My concern was how widespread this was in the community because the cases that Professor CHUNG described to me were all linked up to the Prince of Wales outbreak. But my concern was beyond that.

My concern, I mean, every time when I talked to Professor CHUNG, my concern was whether they were finding cases beyond those linkages to the Prince of Wales outbreak which would cause me even greater concern because that would mean that there were many more cases in the community that we could not link up. Mr Chairman, I think why we have kept on emphasizing the clusters and the linkages and the contact tracing because this relates to the mode of transmission of the virus. Because the virus is transmitted predominantly by droplets, normally it is the healthcare workers and the close family contacts and carers who have been in contact that are at the greatest risk. So, if there was a phenomenon where we were seeing cases that were not linked up, this extent of infection in the community would be even more threatening to us in Hong Kong. So we were really very threatened by this number of cases. I think maybe that's why Professor CHUNG did not get the impression of my concern, alarm as his, because my concern was there. But obviously he expected me to be very alarmed. I guess it may have been that if I had not given the impression that I was completely alarmed, I seemed to be in possession of the facts. He may not have been convinced that I was aware of the problem. I certainly was aware of the problem and very concerned but my concern was beyond Professor CHUNG's concern. My concern was whether these were cases in the community that we could not link up because that would have meant a very different phenomenon.

鄭家富議員：

主席……

主席：

.....鄭議員.....

鄭家富議員：

.....最後一兩個問題，很快的，因為到了3月20日.....主席，你知道最重要的幾點我想澄清完了，我便讓其他同事提問其他有關委員的問題。局長，鍾教授也.....我曾經問過他在3月20日與局長討論過之後，在他的陳述書曾經講過，他說他又要用“another avenue of communication needed to be sought”，即是說他覺得3月20日討論之後，他用這個“其他渠道要去處理”。接着我的問題的背景就是這樣，接着我便問鍾教授，因為他曾經用過“angry and frustrated by her response”來形容Margaret Chan當時給他另外一個對話的感覺，那麼我便問：你完了與局長3月20日的討論之後，那段時間你的心情又是怎樣？鍾教授說：很難找到一個適合的形容詞，但是我想我當時的心情，就好像見到一個小朋友快要掉下井裏，想去攔着他，其他的人不讓我上前，那麼我便問他這個人是否包括陳太和楊局長，他說：我想也可以，也可能不單止。當然局長你聽完鍾教授一段這樣的口供，在幾次你與鍾教授那麼重要的對話，你覺不覺得你所謂的“shared concern”—— 分享，你根本是完全不能協助到在最前線、正在打仗的醫生和醫護人員他們的憂慮，以及真正政府能夠帶領打這場仗的事工？在這個問題上，你覺得如果鍾教授覺得你是其中一個阻礙他去救一個掉下井裏的人，你覺不覺得這樣的演繹和評論，你又怎樣看呢？你覺得你自己在這個問題上，是否嚴重失職呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, at that time I wasn't aware of the conversation between Dr Margaret CHAN and Professor CHUNG nor the events that led up to that. I mean that might have coloured his impression of Government's work as a whole. I certainly wasn't aware of the letter that he wrote to Margaret on the day before nor the discussions. When you look at my actions during the outbreak, I did provide many opportunities for Professor CHUNG to directly communicate with me, and I don't understand why he didn't do so. You saw on the 14th of March, I visited the Prince of Wales with the Chief Executive to understand how the hospital was coping, the infection control procedures, the contact tracing. On the 18th of March, I initiated that phone call to him. He did not mention to me this discussion with Margaret and his concerns and what he had seen. He might have just assumed that I would have acted in the same way. I can only assume that. Maybe he assumed that Margaret would have told me, but I can assure

Members that this discussion was not communicated to me before or after the outbreak. It is only subsequently that I learnt of the letter.

On the 20th of March, I visited the Prince of Wales exactly to understand what more we could do. I still remember they were concerned about quarters and what we could do to provide them with options. So we tried our best. That was the main purpose of my visit. If Professor CHUNG had wanted a separate meeting with him, he would have no difficulties. I mean I was there. I mean he could have just said that we needed to discuss this at length, and he would not have had any problems discussing with me at any time. I am very accessible and I had been to the hospital twice already by the 20th. I had initiated the phone call to him. So I guess it is unfortunate that he might have been influenced by his discussions with the Director which I was not party of. I can only put it at that. Certainly the discussions continued the next day because on the 21st, Dr William HO and Dr FUNG Hong carried on the discussions with me and obviously I think we clarified some of those problems.

主席：

鄭議員.....

鄭家富議員：

.....沒有問題，主席.....

主席：

.....因為剛才你的問題很長，所以你滿意了答案吧，不用再問.....

鄭家富議員：

.....看看其他同事.....

主席：

.....因為現在是4時10分了，本來這個時間應該有個break，我想各位就威爾斯親王醫院爆發的情況，有些甚麼問題想提問？長抑或短的？

勞永樂議員：

短的。

主席：

很短的，那不如問完它吧。何秀蘭也有問題？

何秀蘭議員：

很短的。

主席：

很短的，那麼不如問完它，我們才稍作休息。勞永樂議員。

勞永樂議員：

局長，請你看看你的陳述書，你回答我們問題的第7和第8條的答案，在第2段，你說3月13日召開了會議，就是檢討威院爆發的情況，你亦在下一段談到8A病房由10日開始已經不再收人，以及不再讓病人走——一系列的安排，除了這一段之外，你那個會議有否再討論過有關8A病房的安排？有否其他的情況是在那個會議中說過——關於8A病房？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, my recollection is that there wasn't any more discussion presented relating to the infection control procedures they took. In terms of what I had provided there, and that they had put up a team to do the contact tracing. So my recollection is that those were the things that were discussed. Obviously, the other things were related to the infection control measures, the droplet infections, things like that to protect staff. Those were discussed as well.

勞永樂議員：

在那會議中，有否討論過……其實那天已經是3月13日，其實我們現在已經知道，3月13日威院已經將8A病房再次用來接收新的非典型肺炎病人，你知不知道這件事——在那次會議那裏？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, certainly that was not mentioned in the meeting and I wasn't aware of that till quite later on. In fact, the re-opening of 8A was not brought to our attention and knowledge until I think it was the Expert Committee of the Government when they did the review that this surfaced.

勞永樂議員：

事後才知道……

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Yes.

勞永樂議員：

即直至檢討才知道，那麼我接下來的問題不用問了，14日那個會議亦沒有談過這個問題？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

No, that's correct, Mr Chairman.

勞永樂議員：

你14日到威院探訪，亦不知道有這個問題？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, that was never brought to our attention that they had re-opened 8A ward for any purpose.

勞永樂議員：

好的，主席，我沒有其他問題。

主席：

何秀蘭議員。

何秀蘭議員：

是的，謝謝主席。行政長官3月14日去了威院，是與醫管局的行政總裁和局長一起去的，局長可否告訴我們，是誰提出邀請行政長官去威院視察的呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, in fact this was the initiative of the Chief Executive himself. I briefed him on the outbreak of the Prince of Wales and he said that he had intention to visit the Prince of Wales and asked my view whether he should do so. I agreed that it would be a good idea for him to actually visit the hospital to

understand what was happening. It would provide him first-hand information and knowledge. It would also be good for the hospital management and staff as well and for the community. So in fact the initiative was taken by the Chief Executive himself.

何秀蘭議員：

局長是何時與行政長官談論威院的情況呢？其實是在督導委員會成立之前，行政長官和局長彼此是怎樣就SARS的爆發，保持聯絡溝通呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, my recollection is that when the Prince of Wales outbreak occurred, I had communicated with the Chief Executive to inform him about the situation and that the Hospital Authority and the Department of Health were investigating the outbreak and they were doing everything possible to control the outbreak. Of course he asked me to monitor the situation and get it closely under control. So my recollection is that this occurred before the Task Force meetings. So right at the outset I had already briefed him. I continued to brief him when there were new developments. Sometimes it was on the phone. Sometimes it was in meetings with him. I really had a number of discussions with him on the Prince of Wales outbreak before the 14th of March.

何秀蘭議員：

這些彼此討論、電話，或者是會上的接觸，是每天都有，抑或是一個星期大概兩趟、三趟？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, it really depended. It was very frequent. Even on the 14th, after the Task Force meeting I had a session with him in his office to brief him in greater detail about the understanding of the outbreak, what the Task Force had recommended, the situation in the Prince of Wales. It was in that context that he suggested and proposed to go to the Prince of Wales. In fact, the meetings with the Chief Executive were very, very frequent. They were usually on a daily basis and very often few times a day and some of these would be meetings with him. There were also a lot of telephone conversations. Sometimes we would have experts introduced. There would be meetings with other people. We had some meetings where he and I and the Chief Executive of the Hospital Authority and the Chairman from the Hospital Authority met. Sometimes it would be the Director of Health and myself and himself. Sometimes it would be some international experts. So there was a whole series of meetings right

through the outbreaks. There was increasing frequency as the outbreak evolved. Very often, many times a day we would be communicating. But at the initial part, it would be almost on a daily basis.

何秀蘭議員：

那麼局長是否同意有個那麼緊密的溝通，其實行政長官是可以掌握到足夠的資料，於是看着那疫情的爆發有改變呢？他是有足夠的能力和 understanding 去提出一些應變措施，而不需要等候局長和署長提出的？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, obviously I tried to present to the Chief Executive the information for him to understand the situation and to be sure that we were doing everything possible to control the outbreak and to seek his guidance on the strategies and what else needed to be done. Obviously, the Chief Executive was not a public health expert. If there were issues that would require his attention, I would bring that up to him. But certainly I kept him informed as best as I could on the overall picture and the understanding. He had a great deal of understanding even of the technical nature of the work, even in terms of how the infection was spreading. He was very concerned about the outbreak. He even spent time understanding some of the medical nature, the public health nature of the work. He very often asked me about whether we could find an effective treatment early, how long it would take to develop vaccines. I think he had also a lot of concern relating to the public health epidemiological tools that we could use to investigate the outbreaks. He always gave me guidance relating to trying to seek any possible help we could and the expertise within and outside Hong Kong. We tried to do that because he recognized that this outbreak was something that required extraordinary action and that Hong Kong would need as much help as it could from experts from all over the world. As you know, we were fortunate that we could get support from World Health Organization and the Centers for Disease Control. We also got people referred to us from the academic institutions. I also informed him that I was sourcing support from the universities. So we got academics to help us both in our clinical work, research work and public health work.

何秀蘭議員：

主席，返回威院方面，行政長官14日到過，他前往的目標是去瞭解威院裏面的情況，你覺得這個目標是否能達到呢？如果能達到，行政長官到過後，有否一些跟進他是建議大家應該去做，然後有付諸實行的？付諸實行是落實去做，主席。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I think the Chief Executive in fact did spend quite a bit of time listening to the presentations from the hospital. I remember both Dr FUNG Hong and Professor Joseph SUNG were present in that session. Professor CHUNG was also there. There was a room full of clinicians and some of the administrators who briefed him on the outbreak, the things that they were doing. We also went to visit the Disease Control Center where we were quite impressed that there was already a large team of people from the Department of Health and the Hospital Authority working to control the disease. This was what we actually saw. We were assured that the hospital was doing its best to control it. After the meeting, obviously he had an understanding of what was actually happening. He was very concerned because of the pressure on our services and the risk of spread of infection to the other members of the community. He asked me to make sure that I did my best to control the outbreak, to provide the leadership and coordination and to support the hospital and the staff. After the meeting in fact he did say that we were facing a huge challenge and that we would give the health authorities our full support in whatever resources. So he had already given us a blank cheque. We just needed to say what we needed and that would be provided by the Government. He gave an absolute assurance of the gravity, of the support that the Government would provide. He gave the understanding that we all understood the gravity of the situation. He did in fact make that statement on that day.

何秀蘭議員：

主席，我問完問題了，謝謝。

主席：

李議員，你的問題會是長抑或短？因為這個時間我應該是去停一停的。你想我先停了，是嗎？那麼我建議我們休息大約12分鐘，4時35分回來，好嗎？

(研訊於下午4時24分暫停)

(研訊於下午4時39分恢復進行)

主席：

各位委員，我們可以再開始了嗎？那麼我們開始了。先是李柱銘議員，接着是麥國風議員。李柱銘議員。

李柱銘議員：

局長，這個問題剛才鄭家富議員問了你很多，不過我還有些不理解，希望你容忍我再問一問這方面。我想理解一下，究竟鍾尚志教授與你——局長——有些甚麼不同的看法？照你剛才所說，你們掌握到的資料是一樣的，是嗎？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Yes, Mr Chairman.

李柱銘議員：

但是鍾尚志教授……我們看看他現在那個逐字的口供，在第28頁，他說：“其實那個訊息很簡單，在社區中已經有人與人之間的感染，就是這樣。”，接着他說，但是他覺得你不是很convinced，他後來又再說，在32頁……

主席：

李議員，因為都是他隔鄰的兩位看的，那麼你可以照讀那些內容。

李柱銘議員：

接着他用甚麼字眼呢？他說他曾經跟你講過：“有些病人有這樣的情況，在社區中感染，不斷有病人入院”，所以鍾教授請你“正視這情況”，那麼是否其實他想你正視情況，但你卻跟他說根據你監控的數字，沒有增加的趨勢，所以令到他不滿意，是否這樣呢？即是他很緊張的告訴你，希望你正視，你卻說根據你監控的數字，沒有增加的趨勢，所以就有不同看法，是否這樣呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I don't think that was the difference because when I looked at what Professor CHUNG had said in the media reports, he talked about, as I say, the cases that were in the community and were being admitted. I also understood that his concerns about the number of people that were being admitted to the hospitals, increasing numbers on a day to day basis. These were the discharged patients and their family members who had been discharged and then they had infection. In terms of the numbers of cases, certainly they were increasing at that time so there would have not been this view that the cases were not increasing. We already had reported those to the public relating to the

infections we now at that time were beginning to see in the family members and in the discharged patients and their carers and in the context of the healthcare staff. The information that he provided to the media and the information that he confirmed to me on the telephone were very similar to the information we had. So I don't understand this issue about the person to person spread.....the understanding of that term. Certainly, as I said in my evidence earlier, the reason why SARS was a problem is because we had human to human spread. Perhaps it is also.....maybe his perception after his discussions with my colleague relating to our understanding of the problem. I can assure Members that what he described to me was something that I was aware of, something that I was concerned about. But I was concerned about something even beyond what Professor CHUNG was saying. I was concerned about cases that had no context. When I rang him up, when he gave me that information relating to the context, it just reaffirmed the extent of the problem as we saw it. It did not give me any additional information about the infection spreading in a different way. If there were cases that he was seeing that did not have a contact history, I would have been greatly alarmed because it would have meant that the disease was spreading in a different manner. So maybe it was because of that he got the impression that I wasn't as alarmed as he was. Obviously, I was very concerned about the spread from the discharged patients.

李柱銘議員：

那麼你即是說你與他通完電話，你現在仍覺得可能他是誤解了你，是不是呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

I guess, Mr Chairman, as the evidence that has just been described to me, it may have been affected by his discussions earlier with the Director of Health. That conversation with the Director of Health seemed to have given the impression that we did not recognize the problem. But it is difficult for me to speculate why Professor CHUNG made those remarks. But I can just tell Members that very clearly from both my recollection and even from the information, if you look up the newspapers at that time when Professor CHUNG described the phenomenon, it was already described in our press briefing.

李柱銘議員：

但是他跟我們說的時候，他記得你跟他講電話的時候曾經講過，說你跟他講，就說：鍾教授這樣說可能會引起恐慌。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, as I said earlier, I do not have a recollection of having made that statement. It may have been an impression of Professor CHUNG. But I certainly have no recollection of having made that statement.

李柱銘議員：

那麼如果他發了誓很清楚告訴我們，他是記得你有這樣講過這句說話，你自己又沒很清楚的記憶，你便不可以說他錯啦，對不對？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, obviously I cannot comment on Professor CHUNG's statements and why he made them and his recollections. But my recollection is that I did not make that statement.

李柱銘議員：

你是記得很清楚你沒有講過那句說話，抑或你忘記有否講過那句說話？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I have no recollection of having made that statement.

李柱銘議員：

那便不是你記得很清楚沒有講過那句說話了？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Ah, Mr Chairman, I.....

李柱銘議員：

兩件事是不同的.....

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Yes, yes, Mr Chairman. Mr Chairman, my recollection is that I did not make that statement.

李柱銘議員：

那你現在即是轉了？我問完，你就轉了，是嗎？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Well, Mr Chairman, Honourable Mr LEE asked me to clarify what I meant, and I clarified what I meant.

李柱銘議員：

因為我首先問得你很清楚，就是你自己頭一次給我的答案是，你忘記有講過這句說話，但是後來我再問你，你卻說你記得沒有講過這句說話。

主席：

李議員，他那句英文的直接翻譯就是：“我沒有這個記憶”，——“I have no recollections”，所以是“我沒有這個記憶”，所以就不是我忘記我有講過這番說話，我沒有……

李柱銘議員：

……那英文……

主席：

……這番說話的記憶，I have no such recollections。

李柱銘議員：

I am sorry，那英文我想要……我們自己回去再playback啦。

OK。因為如果你與鍾教授的看法是一致的時候，你是不可能講這句說話的，根本不可能說他這樣的講法會引起恐慌，同意不同意？不可能你這樣講的，如果你現在的口供是正確的話。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, obviously I can't say it's possible or not because I do not understand the context of Professor CHUNG's evidence. But as the Honourable Mr LEE has indicated, I think, Mr Chairman, you can go back into records and look at the information that Professor CHUNG disclosed to the newspapers on that day and the information that in fact we put up on that day.

There we described the phenomenon of the family contacts. My recollection of the newspaper reports is that his main concern was that it did appear that the Government was not recognizing the problem. He was describing the phenomenon which we were describing. By that time, we already had the information reported and they were reported to the public. I think Mr Chairman, I can only speculate that because it took some time for the information relating to the family members to be reported, so when the hospital was looking at our statistics before that event, there did appear to be a lag time between the numbers that we were seeing being admitted to the hospital and the numbers that were being reported. As you would imagine, it takes time before the patients that are admitted can be confirmed as suspected and then reported to the Department of Health and then reported to the public. So my understanding was that probably it was the time taken to get our database to report the phenomenon they were seeing. There was always going to be a lag phase between admissions and what they were seeing in the hospital and the numbers that seemed to appear to be reported.

李柱銘議員：

所以就因為你這個差別的時間，可能令到鍾教授不滿意，是否這樣呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I can only speculate that this may be one of the reasons. Because what I understood, by the time that I talked to him on the phone, the information that he was providing the public, we were already providing and we were already aware of.

李柱銘議員：

會不會是他不滿意你的講法是因為雖然社區上已經有人與人之間的感染，但你還是很清楚地說，是沒有社區爆發，這個講法會不會是因為他不滿意呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I did not use that term in my discussion with him. I think what I did was, I tried to describe the phenomenon of these cases in the community and the clusters we were seeing and the infections that these infected persons were spreading in the community. So I think the information, I think we were agreed of.

李柱銘議員：

如果是這樣講法，如果大家掌握的東西又一樣，大家的看法又沒有甚麼分歧，你不可能讓他感覺到.....即是與他通電話時，你不可能讓他感覺到你不高興的，因為沒有甚麼東西令到你不高興，對不對？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I don't know why I gave him that impression. Maybe it was my anxiety and concern to understand what the issue was. As I told Members, in fact my greatest anxiety at that time was not just the cases that were spreading from the Prince of Wales outbreak to members in the community. My concern was the extent of this infection in the community. So I think my concerns were beyond just the Prince of Wales phenomenon. My concern was the total picture of the disease in the community.

李柱銘議員：

你亦擔心到社會上可能引起恐慌，是不是呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, as I said, I do not recollect having made that statement.

李柱銘議員：

其實你身為局長，你不想社會上有恐慌，其實是很正常的。

主席：

李議員，你已經重新再問你在10天之前提問的那些問題了。

李柱銘議員：

我現在最後一句就是這句，因為勞醫生提醒我的，是嗎？你身為局長.....

主席：

.....楊局長，你還是否想回答這個問題？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Sorry?

主席：

Do you want to answer that question again?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, the question as you say I have already answered, but obviously there was a lot of anxiety in the community. I think it was very important for us to provide as much information as possible. It was not easy to deal with this anxiety in the public and we provided as much information as we were in possession of in an open and transparent manner. This was the best way to allay any unnecessary anxieties.

李柱銘議員：

主席，雖然我上一次又這樣問，今次又這樣問，兩次他都沒有回答，我不再問了。

主席：

他的答案已有少許不同。李議員，你可以翻看兩份 transcripts 的分別。麥國風議員。

麥國風議員：

多謝主席。問題我都問了局長關於他回答我們的這個問題7、8段，這個簡單少許，局長說：“I also discussed with the Director of Health on the arrangements made to seek external expert help from WHO”，我想問一問當時局長與陳馮富珍醫生談論的那個安排，找世衛的專家，你可不可以解釋多一點是找甚麼專家呢？有否指定哪位專家，以及最後的結果如何？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, because of the possible threat to Hong Kong in dealing with this very unknown disease, I knew already at that stage that we needed as much external support as we could. Because one understands even in a place like America where the Centers for Disease Control has thousands of experts, it takes them time to build up the system, to understand, investigate the outbreak and tackle it. So, it was in that context that I discussed with the Director of Health to seek help from the World Health Organization and other authorities. In fact, I remember, in her conversation with me, I did ask whether we should seek help directly from the Centers for Disease Control. She said that normally we would seek the help through World Health Organization and they then would source the

people, and that was the best way to proceed. I then asked her to make a contact. She informed me that Dr FUKUDA was in Hong Kong. We immediately said that we should get him to help us first. That's why in the meeting on the 13th, Dr FUKUDA was formally invited to help. Dr FUKUDA, as Members know, has been to Hong Kong before to help us deal with the bird flu in 1997. So he has some familiarity with our systems. Dr FUKUDA was the first person from World Health Organization that provided support. He was here for a couple of days. When he was here, he was extremely helpful. Being a senior member of the CDC, he could access people in the Centers for Disease Control, the types of people who could help. He was also familiar with the people in the World Health Organization. When we saw difficulties with the case definition, he did the communications with WHO. He was a very valuable member but of course he couldn't stay for a long time because he was needed back in the CDC.

So the Director of Health made arrangements for teams from the WHO to come and help us with the investigation. These were arranged right away. There were teams of people that came from WHO, that came from different countries, for different periods. Most of them had background in epidemiology, in investigating outbreaks. They came in teams. I still remember that, as the outbreak occurred, I discussed with the teams from WHO. I met with them as well to identify which were the areas of expertise we require. One of the areas they identified that required more support was in terms of environmental hygiene investigation. That's why later on, after the Amoy Gardens outbreak, we had another team from WHO to complement their ongoing team support.

麥國風議員：

Dr FUKUDA 13日與你們開會，他對於威院當時的安排，有沒有甚麼特別的意見？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, my recollection is that Dr FUKUDA, with his background for the influenza area — a very experienced and very senior person in the Centers for Disease Control — gave us the understanding of droplet infections: how they will occur. He did discuss with us the measures the Prince of Wales taken. He agreed they were the appropriate measures. He did not suggest any other measures other than those that had been done.

麥國風議員：

我接着想問一問關於特首的一些問題，因為剛才你回答何秀蘭議員時說，特首開了一張 open blank cheque 給你，他有否甚麼期

望 —— 對你很清晰或者很客觀的期望告訴你，說“我給了你這張 blank cheque，你要做些甚麼工夫”？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, obviously the Chief Executive, like all of us, really would not have wanted to see an outbreak in Hong Kong. Of course, if there is an outbreak, to have it controlled at the earliest possible time. The message that he gave me was that resources were not an issue. He would give the assurance that he would do everything possible to bring this outbreak under control in the shortest possible time and resources was not a consideration.

麥國風議員：

最短的時間，他沒有說清楚，即只是說 shortest possible time —— 舉例你14日去 —— “楊永強醫生，請你在多久之內一定要控制到疫情”，有否講得很清楚？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I think at that time nobody would have understood.....we didn't even understand the phenomenon. He certainly did not mention a time frame because I think we were all still learning about the disease. So I don't think he would have given me this time frame and date although later on, he did. But that was later in the epidemic as we learnt more of the disease and that our measures of infection control and contact tracing seemed to be starting to work. It's only then that he started giving me objectives and targets that he could measure. I can tell you that I achieved all these objectives.

麥國風議員：

你說他之後就給了你一些目標，之後給了你甚麼目標呢？是否甚麼時候控制疫情 —— 是否在說控制疫情還是怎樣？還是零的.....因為他在立法會說過，希望盡快是零感染的，是哪一方面？你可否跟我們說一說？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I think obviously with the infections in health personnel, I think, we were all very concerned about it. Both the Chief Executive and myself were trying to understand how the hospitals were dealing with the infection control and whether the hospitals were doing all they could to protect healthcare workers. He gave this objective but he didn't give me a time frame because he knew the difficulties that the hospitals were facing. After the long

discussions that he had both with me and with the Chairman of Hospital Authority and then the Deputizing Chief Executive, I think he knew that we were trying our best. But I think obviously he was very, very anxious and very impatient that the healthcare workers continued to be infected for some time. I can report to members that he was asking me on a daily basis, making sure that I was doing everything possible and he tried to help me in every way to get this under control, including, as Members know, my colleague, Dr Sarah LIAO, because of her background, was also recruited to help. So we did our best and eventually achieved this objective. The other objective was really getting the total epidemic under control. When he started seeing that the epidemic was starting to get under control, he gave me targets of getting infections down to five a day and then down to zero a day, and we achieved that.

麥國風議員：

有沒有印象是甚麼時候說到零的，楊局長？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

I think it was an evolutionary matter when he saw that I was nearly getting down to five, he gave me a target of zero.

麥國風議員：

我想知道大約在甚麼時候要求你去到5？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I do not have an exact recollection because these were in my discussions with him. I think he always set this. In fact I set them for myself but he mentioned them that. Obviously I think it was something I would do, that I would get down to zero in the first possible time. So I think we were very similar in our assessments of what we were doing. It's just that I think he was concerned, so he just wanted to make sure that we had some yardstick to go by. If I could not achieve these yardsticks, then I would have had to explain to him why I couldn't achieve them. It was useful because it meant that we could focus on some targets that we would achieve. I do not have an exact recollection but certainly it would not have been when Amoy Gardens outbreak occurred. It was when, I think, he started to see some degree of control then, he would understand. As Amoy Gardens was breaking out, we had still not understood the problem. So as we understand the problem, obviously then we understand the solutions and we are able to put in the measures to prevent them.

麥國風議員：

你覺得特首對你的工作是否滿意呢？如果根據我們的文件編號A35，其實就只是一個表而已，我想，其實你可以拿來看看。從特首3月14日去威院，直到——如果你說接近5的話，都到了8月了……不是，不好意思，5月8日——大約接近5的那時候，都差不多有兩個月，我想特首“頸都長晒”了。那他對你的工作有沒有……很不滿意你的工作，說不如把你革職，有沒有這樣說過？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, the Chief Executive had been very supportive and obviously very concerned relating to the outbreaks. He provided very good advice to me and leadership in managing the outbreak. He understood why this was occurring. I kept him well-informed. If Members do understand, the outbreak occurred so quickly and with such rapidity and magnitude that I think we were all amazed at the numbers of people that were infected at such a short time. He recognized how difficult it was dealing with an unknown disease. He tried whatever way to provide support required, and he understood that some of the issues that impact beyond the health sector that he needed to provide the steer. So, this is how the things transpired. When we were able to understand Amoy Gardens and that the event at Amoy Gardens had occurred so soon after the Prince of Wales outbreak meant that we had two very unique events – one is the Prince of Wales where the nebuliser was used which was thought to disseminate the infection to a large number of people in a short time and Amoy Gardens……

主席：

對不起，局長，因為麥國風議員問你一個很簡單的問題，你就正在解釋特首明白多少事情，不過他問的問題，就是他對你的表現是否滿意，不如你直接回答他的問題，我想可能會對委員會有多一點的幫助。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I was trying to explain that. I guess in his reports he would provide the evidence of his assessment of our performance. So I think, it is not up to me to speculate what his assessments are. I was just describing my understanding of my interactions with him during the outbreak.

主席：

麥議員。

麥國風議員：

那在這個特首領導的督導委員會中，其實有沒有討論過一些這樣的指標——5、零的指標有沒有提過？我好像找不到。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I do not have a recollection of whether the notes reflected this. But these were certainly my recollections of my discussions with him.

麥國風議員：

說到關於特首當天——即3月14日去威院，其實先前那個行程是你替他決定還是特首自己決定的——即進入威院裏面的行程？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, my recollection is that before we went to the Prince of Wales, I briefed him in greater detail on the outbreak situation and the observations and advice from the Task Force, and he proposed to visit the Prince of Wales. We had some discussions in terms of the things that he would like to see. Based on that, arrangements were made for him to visit the Prince of Wales.

麥國風議員：

是局長說不進入病房造訪，還是特首老人家說不進入病房造訪的？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I don't think neither of us made this comment that he should not visit the wards. I think at that time the main concern was to understand the outbreak situation and to understand directly from the hospital how the outbreak was being contained and controlled. I do not recall that I had advised him nor had he said he would not visit the wards. I think, Mr Chairman, we left most of the arrangements afterwards to the Chief Executive's Office with the Hospital Authority. We just talked about the main reason that he would like to visit the hospital was to really meet with staff, to understand what was being done to control the outbreak.

麥國風議員：

特首有沒有說到他擔心受到感染 —— 即是去沙田威爾斯親王醫院？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, my recollection is that at no time did the Chief Executive express any anxiety of his infection risk. But I recollect that the colleagues in the Government had obviously had anxieties. I do not recall whom. But I knew that the colleagues from the Chief Executive Office had expressed concerns about the infection risk to the Chief Executive.

麥國風議員：

那麼你.....是的，你說不知道是特首辦公室的哪一位，但其實如果你作為衛生福利及食物局局長，我想在這麼多方面都要評估那個風險，那你其實有沒有向特首提出忠告，究竟那個風險是有多高呢？即如果他真的那麼不幸，感染到了，那有很多人很高興也不出奇。

主席：

麥議員，我想你問清楚你的問題是.....

麥國風議員：

即我就是問，作為局長，或者陳馮富珍醫生是政府的 chief advisor on health，當時有沒有評估特首去威院那個感染的風險呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, this was a very difficult decision at that time and I know that the Chief Executive himself was quite prepared to visit. The infection risk is obviously in the context of the droplet infection at that time. Our understanding is that if we visited, we needed to protect ourselves using the surgical mask and wearing the protective garment if we were going to the infectious ward. These were the precautions that were understood to be effective at that point in time. So, obviously, there were a lot of unknowns at that stage. Of course, in that unknown situation, there were unknown risks. But if we assume it was droplet infection, the precautionary measures that we had proposed would have been sufficient. So I guess at that time the only information we could provide was our best understanding of how one could protect oneself, and then it became a

difficult decision as to whether we should expose the Chief Executive to unknown risks. My understanding is that the difficulty that the Chief Executive's Office had was not that they doubted our professional advice on what we knew. But I think they were concerned about what we did not know.

麥國風議員：

局方就成立了一個Task Force，接着特首辦公室在3月25日就正式作總的統籌，其實期間特首是否可以早一點成立一個督導委員會去作出一個總的統籌會好一點呢？

主席：

這個問題已經問過了，麥議員。

麥國風議員：

我忘記了是甚麼時候問的，他可否再回答一次？

主席：

或者局長你簡單地再回答。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I think this was an evolutionary process. As I gave evidence, I had been reporting regularly to the Chief Executive the extent of the problem and the implications of the disease. So he was monitoring this very closely. And before he set up the Steering Committee he had discussed this with me on the necessity to coordinate all Government actions. As the number became larger and we saw more infections of kids in the schools and people who were infected going to work.....and then obviously the latter part was after this Task Force was formed.....then we had the Amoy Gardens. So I think he was already aware at that time that certain actions needed to be steered from a high level, I think it was evolutionary. So he decided that it was the right time to have this Steering Committee. But prior to that, any actions and any support needed that extended beyond my office would have been taken up by himself because I was briefing him on that situation. So, as it emerged, the timing for the Committee was appropriate because we really needed more input from other bureaus. But it didn't mean that before that, actions couldn't have been taken because as the Chief Executive, he would be able to direct other bureaus or departments to take the appropriate actions.

麥國風議員：

剛才你也回答我，說特首是無限量地支持——人力、物力、資源那方面，其實你在哪一方面可以向我們反映，你是有了特首這麼好的支持，但是你是無限量地做有關的工作去將那個疫情控制——尤其是在人力、物力那裏？人力我所說的是那些專業人士——有關的人士；或者物力就是譬如購買有關一些個人防護裝備那方面……

主席：

麥議員，我很希望大家留意，大家避免問一些比較寬闊的問題，因為時間關係……

麥國風議員：

雖然是寬闊，我想局長很簡單……

主席：

即你問為甚麼……對不起，麥議員，你問他做了些甚麼事，即是所有事情他都可以回答你了，他會做了一些甚麼來制止疫情，他會可以答你數十天，每一天所做的工作，這樣是太寬闊的一個範圍，我希望大家取證就收窄一點，問題要具體一些……

麥國風議員：

因為我主要其實就說回那個督導委員會，因為在25日成立督導委員會，但是他在14日有個blank cheque，他有一張這樣的blank cheque，其實有9日可以做一些甚麼工作呢？如果今天你做了譬如舉例，他有沒有積極去“請人”呢？這樣簡單，不如先談“人”那方面，好嗎？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, the Chief Executive gave me that assurance mainly to make sure that the hospitals would not be concerned about……as you know, we were very concerned about the efficiency of our services, the use of resources……just to make sure that we would spare no efforts and resources in tackling the problem. So in terms of the expertise as I said, both he and I realized that we needed as much expert support as required. I had already informed him that we would seek the support and help from the WHO. He said that if it is a matter of resources, then it is not a problem. So, obviously with that WHO it is not an

issue about paying for the visits. We also had international experts. We had Dr KOPLAN, the previous Director of CDC, Dr Robert WEBSTER, Professor David HO. We also got Dr Meirion EVANS who was one of the Consultants for WHO in Guangdong province to come and look at our control systems in public health because he is a very experienced public health expert. I also was sourcing around to see whether we could beef up our public health expertise. So obviously I think he knew that I was trying to source people. It wasn't a matter of finance, it was a matter of getting the people that could understand and help us, which was the issue. Because in Hong Kong, our being a small place, there are not a lot of public health trained persons. That's why we had even got to the position of getting people like Dr Paul SAW. And people like those who had been working in universities also helped in our public health measures. I got them to come and work with the Department of Health.

So all these things were happening. I had the confidence that it wasn't resources. So I never had to worry about the financial resources so long as we get the right people to help us. We would get them. So we tried to mobilize as many people, both locally and internationally that could help with the efforts. As you know, as with the protective gear in the Hospital Authority, we gave them the indication that they should go out and get whatever protective gear that was needed and that we would then pay for the bills as it were. This is what actually transpired.

麥國風議員：

局長，其實你剛才提到很多名人，譬如何大一之類這些有關的專家，其實我想這些是在上層那方面做的；但是前線——其實我想“請人”是聘請，因為在25日也有至少100多個員工受到感染，全部都是前線的。那你有沒有想到都仍然有機會有人受到感染的？應該說你是在前線方面，是否似乎要多做一點工作去彌補至少這100多個人呢，對不對？我就想其實“請人”的意思不是說聘請外面的人，是聘請有關……至少前線的、足夠數目的員工去補充這些病倒的同事，或者即將來臨的戰役，所以我就問你至少在25日之前——14日至25日——你有沒有做到有關的工作呢？或者責成有關的人士做有關的工作，去做這些控制……幫忙或者控制疫情，尤其是在前線員工那方面？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, the Hospital Authority was mobilizing resources. I think the reason why we gave that message to the Hospital Authority was that we were encouraging the Hospital Authority to do everything possible to get this outbreak under control, including recruiting staff. I know that the Hospital Authority was

trying to recruit staff. There was a question of re-deploying resources internally and then to recruit doctors, nurses that could help. They did try to recruit. Obviously trying to get people to come and work in the hospital setting at that time was difficult. We also then worked with organizations in healthcare. In fact I convened two meetings of all healthcare professionals — private and public — in the Bureau to see how we could enlist their help. One of course is to work in the hospital, the second is to see how we could work with all healthcare professionals so that they could contribute to the handling of the epidemic. I know that the Hospital Authority did try to recruit doctors and nurses. We also then had this programme later on to get private doctors to help with the nursing care sector, the nursing home sector and the cramped aged homes. All these measures were taken and the Hospital Authority was given the go-ahead to recruit any number of staff that it needed and could get in the market. I just want to assure Members that that was done.

麥國風議員：

你說“無限量地請人”，這個訊息是甚麼時候發放給何總裁的？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I do not recall the exact time. But certainly when we told them the resources was not an issue, as Members will remember we went to the Finance Committee to get money for tackling the outbreak. Right through, we did indicate that resource was not an issue. I do not recall exact time, but even on the 14th the message was clear.

麥國風議員：

在14日就很清楚——即是何兆煒醫生、陳馮富珍醫生都知道這方面的訊息了，是嗎？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Yes, I think everyone knew that controlling this outbreak was a priority. He had probably been making the statement. On the first day that the CESC was established, I already decided to seek this \$200 million from the Finance Committee of this Legislature to strengthen the infection control and treatment.

麥國風議員：

主席，謝謝，我暫時沒有其他問題了，謝謝。

主席：

陳婉嫻議員。

陳婉嫻議員：

多謝主席。我想問一問局長，就是剛才你說3月14日董先生就去威院關心醫院的狀況，你又陪他去，我想問一問當時董先生入威院的時候，有沒有直接見到威院那些醫務工作者呢？

主席：

陳婉嫻，他也講得很詳細，見了那些人的名字他都列出來了，包括鍾教授……

陳婉嫻議員：

是嗎？行，OK……

主席：

……全部說過了。

陳婉嫻議員：

主席，不好意思，我剛才遲了進來。

主席：

是，那麼你……

陳婉嫻議員：

那我繼續問下去。就想問當時董先生有沒有聽到有關威院員工那個擔心的狀況，有沒有呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, my recollection is that both Dr FUNG Hong and Professor SUNG updated him on the situation in the Prince of Wales and the control measures that were taken. He also met with frontline staff in that discussion both in that conference room and also in the Disease Control Center. He did talk to the staff that were actually dealing with it and was really quite impressed by their professionalism — how they were tackling it. I don't have a

recollection of their painting their own anxieties. I think the impression that we got is that they were very professional; they were putting themselves at risk and their main objective and main drive seemed to be to get the infection under control and to treat patients and make sure that they get well.

陳婉嫻議員：

董先生個人有沒有問到你知不知道那些員工有甚麼要求呢？有沒有問到？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I think in the meeting, my recollection is that he did give the hospitals and the staff the indication in which he came up to make a statement that he would provide whatever support that were needed to help them control the outbreak. My recollection is that he did say that we would support the hospital in any way we could.

陳婉嫻議員：

但是有關那個……當時員工頗大的訴求，就是關閉急症室，其實董先生有沒有聽到這個訊息呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, this discussion about the Accident & Emergency closure was not brought up either to me or to Mr TUNG on the 14th.

陳婉嫻議員：

我剛才亦留意到你說過，你實際在那個期間，即整個SARS期間，你差不多天天都跟董先生有接觸和傾談的，對嗎？我沒有聽錯吧？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, at the outbreak of the epidemic in the Prince of Wales, I had been in contact with him probably on a daily basis. But I do not have the records. Because many of the meetings were ad hoc. He would call me up and say “come and brief me”. Sometimes he would be on the telephone but certainly they were on a daily basis.

陳婉嫻議員：

那我想問一問，在這段期間——即在14日之後，董先生有沒有跟你說，威院是否需要有些關閉的措施呢？有沒有說過呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, certainly at that time, there was no discussion about closure of the hospital, so certainly Mr TUNG would not have mentioned it. Certainly not the Director of Health nor the Chief Executive of the Hospital Authority nor the Chief Executive of the hospital, Dr FUNG Hong nor even Professor Sydney CHUNG. Nobody ever talked about a closure of the hospital at that time.

陳婉嫻議員：

嗯。我亦想問一問在3月19日，即我們看回一些資料，知道衛生署公布，最少有7宗SARS的病人是和京華酒店有關的，其實這個訊息你也應該知道的，是嗎——3月19日？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, the Metropole investigation was done, I believe, on the 18th. I did not learn about the Metropole incident until the 19th when the Director of Health had finished her investigation and decided that she would want to do a press briefing. I only learnt about that before the Director did the press briefing. So I had no knowledge of the Metropole incident until she had pieced all the information together and before the press briefing.

陳婉嫻議員：

我想問你有沒有向董先生反映這個情況呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I think obviously the Amoy Gardens investigations.....

主席：

Metropole。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

.....sorry, the Metropole Hotel investigation was a very unusual one. After I got the information, I did communicate with the Chief Executive to let him know what was happening and the investigations that had been done.

陳婉嫻議員：

那董先生當時有甚麼反應？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I do not recall the reactions the Chief Executive had. I think there would have been a great deal of anxiety because of these linked infections in the Metropole Hotel. I do not recall what the reactions were. But I would have thought that there was a great concern about this incident.

陳婉嫻議員：

有沒有說過——即是在這個期間，他有沒有說過香港可否多做一些事呢？例如去到26日衛生署署長才提出有關修例，即董先生在那個時間有沒有說過這些，或者你有沒有跟董先生談過這些內容呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I think certainly Mr TUNG would not have been aware of the public health laws. I certainly do not recall at any point in time that he talked about instituting changes to the public health laws.

陳婉嫻議員：

好，謝謝主席。

主席：

各位委員，如果就着威院那部分大家沒有甚麼問題，我們就會進入另外一部分，是關於淘大的爆發有關的工作。不如就由何秀蘭你先開始，好嗎？

何秀蘭議員：

好的，主席。我知道局長還有兩個小時，所以我們快問快答，也請局長快答，好嗎？首先是淘大花園那裏，在行政長官那個督導委員會那裏，第一次提到淘大花園就是3月29日，我有沒有理解錯誤呢，局長？因為我們看到的只是會議紀錄，會不會在3月29日之前也有提過，但是沒有記下在會議紀錄內？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I do not have the records. I have to look at the records of the meeting. But on the 26th of March, the Task Force had already identified the Amoy Gardens as a problem. Apparently in the notes of the 26th, I did report in paragraph 7 it says that “SHWF said the recent infection cases happening in Amoy Gardens reinforce our belief that germs could be spread in public areas such as lifts and lobbies.” So I would have reported the situation to the Chief Executive in that meeting.

何秀蘭議員：

在3月26日那個會議那裏，既然在會上都提到淘大花園，當時除了好像在會議紀錄的第4段說了3個選擇之外，還有沒有其他討論是關於淘大花園的？或者局長翻到3月26日那個會議紀錄，第4段那裏就說到……在立法那一段，即是那個題目之下的第4段，是有說到究竟是家居隔離，還是隔離中心那樣。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, when the Director of Health proposed the list of measures including the inclusion of SARS in the Cap. 141 of the laws, it was in anticipation that we might have to enact these laws. At that time, the Amoy Gardens outbreak had just started. We were just aware of it on that particular day. So there was no discussion relating to the implementation of application of these laws to any sector. So the discussions were in the context: if we needed to enact the laws, which options should we use. So these were the three options that were brought up for discussion.

何秀蘭議員：

那在27日就立了法，在27日那個會議紀錄亦沒有提到淘大花園，但是我們理解就是3月26日開始有幾個家庭去了聯合醫院，衛生署知悉淘大有爆發，在27日有雙位數字的病案，在28日亦有雙位數字的感染，那為甚麼到了3月29日才第一次很確切地去討論淘大花園呢？之前是發生了些甚麼事，或者沒有發生些甚麼事呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I think at that time we did not understand the phenomenon in Amoy Gardens. That's why on the 26th when the thing first surfaced, we were influenced by the investigations in Metropole Hotel on the 19th. If you remember at that time, it was thought that one of the reasons why there were individuals in Metropole Hotel that got infected was because of droplet infections.

There are these secretions that could contaminate environments such as lifts and lift lobbies. So at that time when Amoy Gardens outbreak occurred, this was one of the possibilities that we were thinking about. But we didn't understand the outbreak in Amoy Gardens. At that time, we were still depending on the team from Department of Health to investigate. Of course, they very actively went to investigate the outbreak in Amoy Gardens. We did not have any information from the investigation team on the 27th except that we noted an increasing number of admissions as the Honourable Cyd HO said. On the 28th, when the numbers started to increase further, obviously we were very alarmed. I remember ringing up Dr Thomas TSANG who was heading the investigation on the evening of the 28th to ask him directly the progress of the investigation because we were really very concerned and very anxious, at least both the Chief Executive and myself.

So I rang him up and he told me the situation in Amoy Gardens and said that there seemed to be a disproportionate number of cases in Block E, and that there was a very unique pattern that it seemed to be concentrated in two vertical units, 7 and 8. He also informed me that they were doing all the contact tracing. He said that he suspected that the index patient was a patient that was discharged from the Prince of Wales Hospital with renal failure. So he described to me the things that the team was doing. When he described the two 7 and 8 units, I asked him whether he had looked at the building's systems, because immediately my mind was looking at vertical systems that would transgress different floors. He told me that initially they had looked at the building systems, and that there didn't seem to be anything that he could identify that might be related. He described the extent of the investigation that he did. I remembered asking him about this renal patient whether it was a dialysis patient, whether it could be some contamination of the renal dialysis patient. I asked him whether it was a chemo-dialysis or peritoneal dialysis. If Members know, for peritoneal dialysis, they usually do it outside the hospital and there could be fluids that could contaminate the garbage. So I asked him about the garbage systems. It was quite a long discussion with him on the investigations he had done and to provide some insight to me. I was trying to see whether there was any way I could help in the investigations.

I also asked whether there were other residents in E Block, the ones that had not been admitted, whether they had been contacted. I was concerned that there might be other persons in Amoy Gardens that were already sick that were not hospitalised. After my conversation with Dr TSANG, I rang up the Director of Health. I think it was about 11 o' clock at night; it was some time like that. I said to the Director that I think we should send someone to go to all the residents in the affected blocks to see whether there were other people infected that were not being hospitalized and to give them the information. So the Director then sent a team the same evening to Block E residents to knock on each door to see

whether the residents in the rest of the E Block were affected. And they reported to me the next morning that they had completed E Block by about 5 o'clock sometime that morning. Initially there were some concerns to disturb the residents. But I said that was very important that we got this information right away, that we needed to understand the situation in Amoy Gardens. We should do it even though it was in the middle of the night. So they were able to go through more than a hundred families. Some of the people had already left and some were in the hospital. They were able to contact over a hundred of the flats. They reported to me the next day that there was no indication that they were sick and they had left information notes to the other residents to contact them.

何秀蘭議員：

局長確實在另外的證供中也說過在3月28日他打了兩個電話，但是這種溝通模式，對我來說，我就覺得很怪，因為理論上應該是前衛生署署長才是局長直屬的下屬，如果要瞭解一些衛生署的工作，我想像之中局長是應該向她瞭解的，但是局長就和曾醫生在電話中談了很久，然後再打一個電話給前署長，告訴她希望衛生署做一些甚麼工作。其一，為甚麼局長不是由前署長那裏瞭解那個情況，然後告訴署長要做甚麼工作；或者為甚麼局長不是向曾醫生瞭解了那個情況，然後直接告訴曾醫生要做甚麼工作。這個……這麼怪的溝通模式，是否一直都是局長和衛生署同事那種工作模式，以及局長為甚麼要選擇這個方法去傳遞一些指令呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I think this was a very extraordinary outbreak that required extraordinary skills and which not all of us individually had. I think, in getting all the skills and competence required, because of the nature of the outbreak, we couldn't work in the usual manner. And I think we all understood that we could not work in the usual types of relationships. It is also because of my own anxiety and understanding that I wanted to see whether there were any insights or perspectives that I could provide in helping with the investigation. Dr Thomas TSANG, I knew, had very thorough training in epidemiology because Dr Thomas TSANG, in field investigations, had been to the Centers for Disease Control in the States for two years, so he had very good grounding and very good experience in the system. It is my habit or my tendency to work directly with the officers and obviously to keep the Director and the people informed because certain things needed to be done by the Director.

As the outbreak evolved, in fact, the Bureau and the Department worked as one team. The traditional relationships were really put aside. I think the

Director also understood that. Very often I would interact directly with the subject officers if there was something that needed to be done. Obviously the Director of Health is still the head of the Department. She would need to be informed either by myself or by the subject officer because she was still responsible for the Department's work and functions. So a lot of the operational things and the administrative things were left to the Director.

But in outbreak control, I took a very active role in participating in the actual investigations of the outbreaks and not just monitoring but in actual contributing to some of the efforts that needed to bring this outbreak under control. So the Amoy Gardens investigation was something that I felt I needed to do personally, rightly or wrongly, because I thought that I had some of the background and the knowledge to understand and to help in providing additional insights. Obviously, I could not do the outbreak investigation myself. But I had the benefit of good people like Dr Thomas TSANG. Also the Community Physicians in the field were really excellent. So I was able to get insights from them and then to be able to synchronize some of the information and knowledge and then to provide some suggestions to the colleagues. Obviously, some of these would have led to some possible investigations. Some of these may just have been speculative. But I think we needed the team and we needed inputs and insights from people who contribute.

何秀蘭議員：

局長及後與前署長通電話的時候，她知不知道淘大花園最新的情況，你掌握得多抑或她掌握得多？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I don't recollect going into details of the investigations with the Director of Health. I just asked whether the residents in E Block.....whether she had any plans to send the team because I needed the Director to send the team to visit the E Block. Whether she had any plans to do it, and she didn't. She didn't have any plans. So I asked her to do it. I think in the investigations of this outbreak, we had people with different experiences. I think the experience with outbreak control resided in Dr Thomas TSANG and some of the Deputy Directors also had some experience dealing with outbreaks. The Community Physicians that were responsible for contact tracing and investigations of cases had all the field experience. So I did not go into detail to discuss those investigations with the Director of Health because I knew that the expertise resided in the few.

何秀蘭議員：

即是你只告訴她要做甚麼，只是一個指令？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I did ask relating to the E Block whether arrangements had been made. My recollection is that when I got the message that they had not been made, I asked her to make sure that she sent a team that same evening.

何秀蘭議員：

3月29日提到淘大花園，行政長官非常關心，他想是否須將整幢建築物隔離，因為英文此處只是說“when the whole building should be put under quarantine”，此處的“building”，我想澄清一下，當時只是指“Block E”抑或整個淘大花園？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, my recollection is, it was after my conversation with Dr Thomas TSANG that evening. I reported it in the Chief Executive's Steering Committee and I referred to that block.....which was referring to Block E.

何秀蘭議員：

局長是否記得，你跟曾醫生通電話的時間有多久，你剛才說很久，而你跟前署長通電話的時間又有多久？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I can't honestly give a time. But certainly with Dr TSANG it was quite a long and extensive phone call. It was the first time that I got involved in the actual investigations other than the Prince of Wales outbreak, the first time I understood how the investigations in outbreak control were being done by public health people. I was asking about the index patient. So it must have been at least more than half an hour or so. Truly I can't recall but it was quite a long phone call. I think the phone call with the Director of Health was a much briefer one. It was really just to see whether the E Block residents were being attended to and to give instructions that we should send a team there right away.

何秀蘭議員：

OK，3月29日是星期六，早上曾經開會，3月30日晚上9時半召開緊急會議，而3月30日又是星期日，局長，你是否記得當日曾經到過淘大花園？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I did not go to Amoy Gardens myself during the outbreak. What I did was that I was in contact with Dr TSANG. On the evening of the 28th, because of my concern about the building services issue, I did ask him to get in touch with the people from Dr Sarah LIAO's departments to investigate the outbreak again. I remember on the 29th, they went back to continue with the investigations of the outbreak. I asked the latter multi-disciplinary team again to look at whether there were any clues in Amoy Gardens. So on the 29th the team had gone down, I recall that I rang up Dr TSANG some time again. At that time, after I had known that he was doing the investigations, I was in very regular contact with him to see whether there were any new clues that would provide us with insights as to how the infection was spreading and what we needed to do. But my recollection is that on the 29th, there was no new information. They were still doing the work. So it wasn't until the 30th when we had the Task Force meeting that we had these presentations of the most up-to-date picture where we saw that the E Block seemed to have this predilection and the infection seemed to occur from the E Block to the rest of the other blocks. So the picture became much clearer on the 30th after they had done the initial investigations.

On the 30th, they also started looking at the possibilities. One of the possibilities that they talked about was the construction site from across. There were different hypotheses where the infections could have occurred. So we were starting to get some information. But certainly the information in the Task Force was clear that E Block was very different from the other infected blocks. Most of the infections were there. Not only was E Block unusual in having a disproportionate number of cases but also the infections seemed to occur earlier than the other blocks. This very unique pattern of unit 7 and 8 did not appear in the other blocks. Because of that, the conclusion that was drawn was E Block was the pool of infection and that we should do something to contain it. And the Task Force looked at various options and recommended that we should isolate E Block residents.

何秀蘭議員：

在Task Group中，哪位提出要將“E座”隔離？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

I don't recall exactly who suggested this but certainly it was something that we were considering already because as Honourable Cyd HO was saying, the Chief Executive had mentioned this. We had discussed this in the Chief Executive's Steering Committee on the 29th. So this was something that was already foremost in our minds — whether we needed to isolate the E Block residents and of course, the infection control laws had been enacted and we would have the powers to do it.

何秀蘭議員：

在Task Group中，這項建議是否無人反對，不用多加討論便可馬上達成共識？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I think my recollection is that there was no one who disagreed with that. The discussion that we were considered was whether we should suspend the construction site because that was also another theory. I remember in the Task Force, the Chief Executive joined us in the Task Force. In the first part of the meeting, we had presentations from the Department of Health on the progress of investigations in Amoy Gardens. And then the Chief Executive joined the meeting later on. I think it was probably one hour later after we started the meeting where we continued with our discussions. There were questions raised as to what we needed to do in terms of having this initial information, whether we needed to isolate E Block, or whether we needed to suspend the construction site because that was also the other theory. But the experts at the meeting all agreed that it was unlikely that it was the construction site. They all believed that E Block was the source of infection. That's why there was consensus in that meeting that we should isolate E Block residents. In the meeting, there was no disagreement. No one raised any issues relating to isolation of E Block. I think we were all there, there was no dissent. The people who discussed it were all of the view that E Block residents should all be isolated.

何秀蘭議員：

由隔離“E座”至將“E座”居民撤離，這項決定又是如何作出的？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, after the Task Force came to that conclusion, the Chief Executive left the meeting. We, more or less, wrapped up the meeting after that.

After the meeting, I consulted with the Chief Executive because I was part of that discussion and I agreed with the conclusion that E Block was the source of infection and we should isolate E Block. I then started the actions to make the decision. So I spoke with the Chief Executive on the phone to consult him of making this Order because it was the first time that we were making this Order. Although SARS had been included in Cap. 141, this was the first time we were actually enacting it. So I consulted the Chief Executive who obviously agreed to this action. I then asked the Director of Health. The meeting had just finished and she was still in the room. I said to the Director of Health to ask her to exercise her powers and isolate the E Block residents in accordance to what we had discussed in the Task Force. Because in the Task Force, we had noted that this was a point source infection, that it had appeared to have happened at one point in time. So it did appear that this was a sequence of events that had led to the infection in E Block which then became a pool of infection to the other residences. And there was certainly no evidence that there was ongoing infection risk to E Block residents. So the discussion was that because E Block provided a pool, by isolating the E Block residents, we would be protecting both the residents; we would put them under medical surveillance. If they became sick, we could very easily put them in hospital. It would also protect these potentially infected persons from infecting other residents in Amoy Gardens and in the rest of the territory. So these discussions in fact had already taken place in the Task Force. So I asked the Director of Health to use her statutory powers to isolate E Block residents.

主席：

或者楊局長和何議員，我建議休息10分鐘，因為局長似乎不太聽得懂你的問題，我們先休息10分鐘，回來再問，好嗎？

(研訊於下午6時暫停)

(研訊於下午6時12分恢復進行)

主席：

各位委員，我們可以繼續開始了。

何秀蘭議員：

提一提局長……

主席：

或者你稍等一會，讓局長先將耳機戴好。因你講話可能會……
何秀蘭議員。

何秀蘭議員：

多謝主席。提一提局長，如果你再答得那麼長，即使今天來過也要再來。我們剛才問到由2月30日……

主席：

3月30日。

何秀蘭議員：

是，對不起，可能我需要再多10分鐘。我們剛才談到3月30日決定作出隔離令，但3月31日卻變成“撤離”，“from isolation to evacuation”，在不足24小時內究竟發生了甚麼事，令政府覺得須於24小時後改變做法，將大家撤離？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I apologise to Members that I didn't get that part of the question. Between the isolation to the evacuation, what had actually transpired was that after the residents were moved out of Amoy Gardens – they were isolated in the Amoy Gardens – the DH continued with the investigations. There was another site inspection with greater involvement of the colleagues from the Environment, Transport and Works Bureau. On that day, I think they continued with their investigations to try to identify whether there were any clues as to why the outbreak was occurring. On the morning of the 1st of April, the Secretary for Environment, Transport and Works, Dr Sarah LIAO very early in the morning tried to contact me. I remember I was at a meeting with the Chief Executive and my assistant said that Dr LIAO was trying to contact me because she wanted to discuss with me the initial findings from her team in conjunction with the Department of Health. So I excused myself from the Chief Executive's meeting.

We went out and she then told me the preliminary findings of the ventilation systems of the lift and the sewage systems of the Block E. And then I became a bit alarmed when she mentioned the sewage systems because prior to that, I knew that just a few days before, I think it was two days or three days before, I learnt from the Dr Wilina LIM, who is the virologist of the Department of Health that they had done some initial studies in different specimens from patients and that some of the fecal specimens, they were able to detect, using PCR, this virus. Obviously, it was very preliminary information. They could not confirm yet whether this was correct or not. Having the genetic material doesn't mean that it was the virus. It could be just the genetic material that is passed out. But I was already alarmed by that because it immediately occurred

to me that perhaps this might be one of the reasons why we had this large infection.

So I immediately went to learn a bit more about the investigations. And then I spoke to the Chief Executive who was in fact at that time in the Executive Council. I got him off the meeting to say that I thought there was a risk to the residents in E Block and that we should consider evacuating the residents out of the E Block. So the Chief Executive then organized his meeting of the Steering Committee where both Dr LIAO and I presented the findings and I strongly recommended we should move the residents of the block out and that was why the decision changed. It was based on the new information which Dr LIAO was able to get that there might be a possibility that the sewage systems might be involved in the dissemination of infection.

何秀蘭議員：

主席，其實3月26日在督導委員……對不起，3月29日在督導委員會上，CE已請民政事務局局長先去看看有沒有地方可作隔離中心之用，29號已有這概念存在。事實上，如果民政事務局局長可很快物色到一些度假中心作隔離之用，並於30號立即進行撤離，“evacuate”淘大居民的安排是否更加有效？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, when we looked at the reasons for isolating E Block, we had considered this issue. If Members look at the minutes of that meeting chaired by the Chief Executive on the 30th and even in the Task Force, we had considered this point whether there was any infection risk to the residents. At that time, we saw that it was a point source that something had happened and that the index patient was there. Later on we knew that there was a series of events that the sewage system, the water system stopped in E Block and there were infected persons. So it was a combination of factors, and the Department had already given instructions to do the proper de-contamination. So it was the view that there was no infection risk to E Block residents. And even on the 1st of April, there was concern and we were not sure. But because there was a risk and the possibility. That's why I made the recommendation. Certainly, prior to that, we did not have that same information that there might be a possibility that that would be continued infection risk. So on the 1st, because of the information about the point source outbreak, one could assume that the event had occurred. But because of the possibility of the sewage system, we thought it safest to move the residents out of that block.

何秀蘭議員：

4月1日終於好像走難般全部撤離到度假中心，局長會否覺得，你剛才提到特首給你的那張支票，如要過數也須等候幾天？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, the Isolation Order.....the preparations were all done because of the possibility that we might need to move people out. So the preparations were already done. So when the Isolation Order was made, the colleagues were able to get things organized in the fastest possible time.

何秀蘭議員：

主席，接着我想詢問有關吳錦祥醫生對淘大花園老鼠帶疫的看法。這份文件——W124(C)是吳錦祥醫生的文書，因上次吳醫生前來時，我們曾將政府給我們的文書，讓吳醫生逐段翻看，研究內容是否準確。因此，我希望今天跟局長.....對局長公平一點，進行相同的程序，讓局長翻看吳醫生的文書，讓他有機會談談記憶中事實是怎樣發生。關於4月3日，我不打算提問，主席，因那是一個很簡單的電話，而4月4日，大家及後也清楚知道，局長並無在會上出現，所以我由4月5日.....

主席：

局長有出現，他曾於4月4日會上出現。

何秀蘭議員：

是，是遲了。不過，主席，我想集中問一問4月5日，即由吳醫生那份文書第16段開始，16、17兩段並無甚麼與局長有關，只有第18段，那天早上開會，9時見到局長，本來約了10時，但吳醫生很早便到，9時便到，其實局長那時與他大概傾談了多久，關於淘大花園的疫情？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I do not recall the discussions I had with Dr NG before the meeting that we had. Certainly it was more in general terms because the purpose of the meeting was to get Dr NG to come to the meeting to have the information presented by the Department of Health on the outbreak in Hong Kong and particularly in Amoy Gardens, to see whether Dr NG could provide any insights that would help us in our investigations. That morning I had

another appointment with *Time* magazine reporters. So I didn't have a lot of time to spend with him before the meeting. So my encounter with him was probably very brief. So I do not recall that we had any substantial discussions before the meeting.

何秀蘭議員：

但局長是否記得，吳醫生曾提到淘大花園所有居民均應被撤走？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I do not recall discussions relating to moving all the residents in Amoy Gardens because I would have not had thought that there was any reason to move the residents in Amoy Gardens. I do not recall why he would have considered moving all the residents from Amoy Gardens at that stage in time.

何秀蘭議員：

在第23段，中間有十幾個中文字，我相信局長不懂其意思，但我想問局長，你當日開會時是用英文抑或廣東話？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I think we would have probably used English because Dr ELLIS, the veterinarian is English-speaking so I would think that we used English during that meeting. We wanted his input and his insights as well. So it would have been very strange for us to use Chinese at that meeting.

何秀蘭議員：

但據第23段所述，當你跟他們開會的時候，Dr ELLIS已經離開？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I think that was not correct. In fact, Dr ELLIS was there at the meeting. I recall that in fact it was I that, specifically after discussions, asked Dr ELLIS to do the post-mortem on that day. In fact, it was on a public holiday. It was Ching Ming Festival. I was so concerned about the findings of the coronavirus in the rat droppings. I knew that it would take some time for the laboratory to do the serology; they needed time for that. The fastest way to see whether there was any indication that the rats would be infected would be to do an autopsy or post-mortem. Because we had caught four rats from Amoy

Gardens, I asked Dr ELLIS, Trevor ELLIS to do the autopsies on that same day which was a public holiday.

何秀蘭議員：

局長是否記得 Dr ELLIS 於何時去做化驗？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I think it was somewhere after we had discussed the findings. We were discussing the findings of the rat droppings for the first time because the findings had just been made. My recollection is the day before. I had just learnt about the findings the day before. This was the first time that I had the opportunity to discuss the rat findings with Dr Thomas TSANG from the Department of Health.

何秀蘭議員：

局長是否記得 Dr ELLIS 離開後，你們轉用廣東話抑或繼續用英文？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I think we would have probably been using both Chinese and English. I think in most of our discussions, we would drift into Chinese and English but certainly when Dr ELLIS was there, we would have used English.

何秀蘭議員：

我相信為對局長公道一點，應將那幾句廣東話讀給他聽，就是“我都估到係老鼠，不過估唔到會 amplify”，這確實是中英夾雜。局長，你是否記得他曾經講過——不論用英文也好，廣東話也好，他曾經講過類似的說話？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, in fact, I would not have made such a statement because on the 2nd and 3rd of April, I was really very concerned about rats and in the Chief Executive's Steering Committee, I already said that we should investigate whether rats played a role. Of course in our mind.....because prior to this, we already had some suggestion that some of the cats might be infected and I would have been very concerned that the rats would be infected. So I would have not made a statement like that because I would have been investigating whether the rats were infected. That would be my main concern.

何秀蘭議員：

在同一段中，據吳醫生記述，局長曾經說過，如果是老鼠的話……對不起，主席，我不應將字放在局長口中，因為原文是“*We all agreed that it would deal a severe blow to Hong Kong’s economy as travel and trade might be further restricted by foreign countries.*”。其實，局長上兩次向我們作供時，曾提到大家都想香港好，大家都不想經濟和旅遊方面受損，他只不過說出真相，讓其他人作出最好的決定。局長，你是否記得當時曾敘述同樣理據，因而令吳醫生有此記述？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I certainly do not recall that we had this discussion. I think our main concern at that time was E Block, the Amoy Gardens investigation. I was very concerned about whether rats were possibly another mode of transmission. This would have obviously been very important in our infection disease control. In fact, the subsequent actions do not attest to my having made this statement because I think my primary concern was the infection control of this outbreak. If rats had anything to do with it, the measures taken would have been very different from what we had done hitherto.

何秀蘭議員：

是，在同一段中最後一句，吳醫生記得，在討論中局長覺得可能會暴動，他以廣東話轉述當時局長的說話——“暴動都似”，局長又是否記得曾經講過這4個字？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I do not recall that I made statements to that effect.

何秀蘭議員：

接着第26段，局長，吳醫生亦記得在討論中，局長覺得不如不要進行有關老鼠的化驗，因為如果“唔做就唔駛講”，英文意思是“if you don’t do anything, there is nothing to tell”，我亦想問局長，在你記憶之中，有沒有講過這番說話？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, in fact, obviously I refute that I made any statement like that. The actions in fact are contrary to these statements because I asked Dr Trevor ELLIS to do the post-mortems that same day. In fact, I asked him to go in the

middle of the meeting to do the post-mortems right away. I asked for our pest expert, Mr YUEN to attend the meeting because of the concern of rats. I asked him to come and it was Ching Ming Festival. He was in the middle of “拜山”. He came on that morning to brief us on the behaviour of rats. On the 2nd and 3rd of April, before this meeting, I already said in the Chief Executive’s Steering Committee that we should investigate whether rats were involved. So all these things were already done. And when Mr YUEN came and described those things, we asked him about the rat infestation situation in the Amoy Gardens. I asked him afterwards to really do even more rat trapping and not just in Amoy Gardens but in the neighbouring areas in Lower Ngau Tau Kok and Telford because I was quite worried. We had discussions that Lower Ngau Tau Kok would be even a bigger risk because it was an old estate. So I asked him to go and get rats, not just from Amoy Gardens but from the neighbouring estates as well.

何秀蘭議員：

局長，你是否記得有沒有找人通知Dr ELLIS不需要再進行這項化驗？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I absolutely can’t understand why this statement was made because it was at the meeting that I asked Dr ELLIS to do the post-mortem.

何秀蘭議員：

是，這是吳醫生的證供第27段最後兩句。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I think I can’t understand why, why this was made because it would be absolutely contrary. I wanted to know more about the possibility of rats rather than converse. It was I who instructed Dr Trevor ELLIS to do the post-mortems on a public holiday. It would be inconceivable that I would change my mind in the middle of it and ask him to stop the post-mortems. I did no such thing.

何秀蘭議員：

接着第28段，局長，你懂不懂何謂“顧全大局”？

楊永強醫生：

懂。

何秀蘭議員：

即你有能力說出這4個字，可以做得到？

楊永強醫生：

我不懂得講，但我聽得懂。

何秀蘭議員：

“犧牲”你也懂？

楊永強醫生：

主席，我聽得懂，但主動去講則未必做得到。

何秀蘭議員：

主席，我們都有點 achievement，因為現在可令局長講廣東話……

主席：

問你的問題吧！

何秀蘭議員：

局長，你是否記得在立法會任何發言中，有否用過“犧牲”等字眼，有吧，即你能完全掌握這兩個字的意思？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I understand the meaning, I may use it but as Members know, my usage of Cantonese is.....there are limitations to my use. Sometimes these words.....although I may be familiar with them, they may not come to me immediately. I cannot recall whether I have used them in previous hearings of Legislative Council. But certainly at no point at the meeting, before the meeting or after the meeting, during the outbreak, have I made any statements that could be interpreted in that manner. Because right through the outbreak, my main concern has been to protect public health and the health of each individual in Hong Kong. And it would be inconceivable that I would make a statement like that. So I absolutely refute any suggestion that I made such a remark or even inferred that I made such a remark.

何秀蘭議員：

第30段，局長，同樣有十幾個中文字，“唔係個個睇嘢好似你咁全面”。局長，可否告訴我們“咁全面”的意思，在當時會面討論中，“咁全面”包括甚麼？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I don't recall making such a remark to Dr NG. I don't understand what this is in the context. Because Dr NG is not a researcher. Dr NG works in the private sector, in business. He does not have a research laboratory. He is, I believe, in business. He had previous experience in public health in America but certainly I am not aware that he is actively engaged in research in Hong Kong.

何秀蘭議員：

局長，可否嘗試向我們解釋，為何……或據他理解，為何吳醫生記得的事實，與局長記得的事實，會如此截然不同？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I cannot speculate on why Dr NG's recollection is so different from ours. But we have all the objective information in terms of the work that we did, the records of the Chief Executive's meeting, all the results of the investigations that were made public. All are contrary to the information presented by Dr NG.

何秀蘭議員：

最後一個問題，主席。在第31段，吳醫生曾說他不想……我用英文讀出來吧，“I did not want to breach my promise of confidentiality”，而在另一段——第27段，吳醫生又寫下這句：“Dr YEOH then said that all those present should keep the rat findings confidential.”。局長，是否記得曾經提出這項要求，請吳醫生暫時不要將某些資料向外公開？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I think about confidentiality that may be something I might have asked of Dr NG. Because we were still investigating the outbreak and there was obviously, as far as we could see, no indication that the rats were playing any active role. Because of the importance of these findings of all our investigations, because this was the first time, other than on the 3rd and 4th I had

met with him, this was the first occasion that I had any dealings with Dr NG. The reason that we did it because we were trying to be as open as possible to get any possible inputs. But obviously if Dr NG, as he did, strongly advocated that rats were the cause and was very convinced that they were active in spreading the infection, I thought it was important that we should get confidentiality from him in case some of these findings could be misinterpreted. There were no findings at the moment. There were just preliminary findings from the Department of Health that they had initially found some coronavirus by PCR in the rat droppings. We were proceeding with the investigations and we already had a more possible hypothesis of the outbreak in Amoy Gardens. So obviously I thought I needed to impress on him that these were discussions that they should be kept at the moment confidential.

何秀蘭議員：

局長，是否記得由你行入會中至吳醫生離開，時間有多久？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

I think Dr NG was there for the meeting. I think we continued with the discussions. For most of the meeting, I think we were there. Except for the first part, I joined the meeting after I don't know how long that they had been discussing. But for most of the discussions that involved the colleagues, Dr SAW, Dr Trevor ELLIS, Thomas TSANG, Mr YUEN, right to the end, I was there and he was there.

何秀蘭議員：

大概有多久，一個小時、個半小時？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I think it was quite a lengthy meeting. It must have been more than an hour, maybe an hour and a half, two hours. I don't recall the exact length but it was not a short meeting.

何秀蘭議員：

實在令人匪夷所思，於個半、兩個小時內發生的事，兩者竟會如此不同，或者局長可否告訴我們，在你所理解的個半小時內，其實曾討論過些甚麼，如果這裏所記錄的全部都不是……

主席：

你的問題太闊了，何議員……

何秀蘭議員：

我也知道，主席……

主席：

如果你不具體提問，我建議讓第二位提問。

何秀蘭議員：

好，或者其他同事亦很有興趣想知道，究竟局長在記憶中的個半小時內曾討論過些甚麼，謝謝。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I think, just to be very brief, in the first part, we discussed the epidemiological investigations and the epidemic curve information. This was in the public health terms – the data relating to the dates of onset, whether there was one point source in terms of one event leading to the outbreaks. So the first part of that discussion, in my recollection was really between the public health colleagues. Then we went on to talk about the investigations of the Amoy Gardens, what the Department of Health and Dr Sarah LIAO's team had found. We discussed the findings of the coronavirus in the rat droppings, and the implications of that. We also looked at……there were other possible reasons for that coronavirus being found, that the rats could be passive carriers and that post-mortems would be useful in establishing whether it was infection or whether it was just a passive carrier. So the rats were just being contaminated. But if they were infected, the rats would show signs of infection. So the post-mortem would show the signs of infection. So after the discussion……obviously then I……that was why at that point I asked Dr Trevor ELLIS to go and do the post-mortems right away. Because Dr NG and I were both concerned about the possible role of rats, we then asked Mr YUEN to come back. We then looked at the pests. Because I was not just concerned with rats but also with cats and cockroaches. Mr YUEN then advised us on the behaviour of rats. He said that rats were territorial, that the sewer rats and the household rats usually did not mix and the sewer rats usually did not go up to the roofs. It was usually the house rats that moved downwards. So if anything was possible, it was the household rats which were involved. He said that there were no signs of infestation, and that they had difficulties catching rats. There were few signs of infestation in Amoy Gardens. So he was describing, because I was also concerned about cockroaches, he told me that cockroaches tend to travel longer distances. So there was a lot of discussion relating to this pests theory. That's why we then went into Lower Ngau Tau Kok. We should really be looking at the problem to a much greater extent. So the discussions really related to: first the part was on

the epidemiology; second was on the investigations done in Amoy Gardens and the third about other possible reasons for the outbreak in Amoy Gardens including the role of rats and cockroaches.

何秀蘭議員：

謝謝主席。

主席：

輪到陳婉嫻議員，接着是李柱銘議員。希望大家集中一點，不要問一些太空泛的問題。陳婉嫻議員。

陳婉嫻議員：

主席，是否集中問淘大呢？

主席：

是，沒錯，現在正提問有關淘大的部分。

陳婉嫻議員：

OK，好的。局長，現在回看，專家的報告亦都提到，我們在處理這件事的時候……或者你看看有關的文件，即嚴重急性呼吸系統綜合症專家委員會報告。在中文版——我在看中文版，對你可能不公道——在“評論各主要議題”一章，第72頁，關於淘大的部分……

主席：

你說出有關段落的數目吧。

陳婉嫻議員：

第4.36段，流行病學調查。

主席：

局長，你可以看英文版的第4.36段。

陳婉嫻議員：

不用急，你先看看吧。看到了嗎？

當中有一句是這樣的，在中文版第4.36段倒數第4行，“流行病學的調查應以受威脅的社區為本，而不是集中個別個案”。你看到這一句嗎？這裏指出以社區為本，而不是集中個別個案。即是說，我們在判斷上，會不會亦成為局長你在處理淘大的問題上，包括署長，有所延誤的一個重要因素呢？我……

主席：

陳議員，我也不明白你的問題是甚麼。

陳婉嫻議員：

那麼我……你先看看那一段，我看到局長正在專心地看有關內容。在第4.36段，當中有一句是，“流行病學的調查應以受威脅的社區為本，而不是集中個別個案”。很明顯，即是說，在社區追蹤的整個概念，包括剛才我所提問有關酒店的case，亦包括淘大……主席，我為何要提出這個問題呢？因為我看到董先生本身不是一個專家，不過CE的那個委員會在3月26日向……即當日……我相信一定是淘大出現爆發後，成立了CE的那個委員會之後，翌日他便提出……他不是專家，並問到，“可不可以考慮應該再加上家居隔離，以及把懷疑者送往隔離中心？”即是說，當時董先生……他成立那個committee之後的第二天，當署長表示要修例，要將SARS病人的家人……有一些報告，當時董先生提到，“可不可以考慮應該再加上家居隔離，以及將懷疑者送往隔離中心？”當時董先生提出兩個概念，一個是“隔離”，即“家居隔離”，一個就是“隔離中心的家居隔離”。我所看到的是，你們在整個過程中，署長詞辯，關於隔離中心，你們在30日同意了，她也不做；後來到了很後的時間，即31日才做。關於家居隔離，特首在他的委員會中，除了在那天提出之外，他在4月份亦曾提及。但是你們在很後期才成立……即是訂定家居隔離的規定。那麼我想問問局長，你現在回看，在處理一些類似淘大的社區問題時，會否因為你們太專注於另外一方面，而沒有考慮到從流行病的角度去處理呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I think the issues are two very separate issues. The outbreak investigation, the epidemiological investigation needs a lot of expertise. I think they appreciated……in fact it is not easy to do those outbreak investigations. As I said in my evidence, I did try to contribute in any way I could. During an outbreak investigation of this nature, it is not a simple matter. I made sure I mobilized all the possible resources we could by getting the

colleagues from Dr Sarah LIAO's Bureau to do the outbreak investigation. We also recognized that we needed to strengthen this environmental hygiene division. You really require different expertise and you require different disciplines to do an outbreak investigation of the nature of Amoy Gardens. In fact, when the colleagues from WHO, they.....In fact the World Health Organization's experts were really working with the Department of Health even during the investigations. So it is impossible to say that we were not mobilizing all the resources possible, but it was not easy. In fact we did.....the colleagues did a very good job in.....

主席：

局長，我覺得你不是在回答陳議員的問題，不如讓我嘗試這樣演繹陳議員的問題。這是專家的報告，它提到在淘大花園的調查中，因為起初調查是集中於.....譬如聯合醫院出現一些個案，於是每個個案都會進行追蹤，而沒有整體考慮社區的感染情況。到了28日左右，曾醫生才開始到那裏進行環境調查；29日才成立跨部門小組；到了30日，才決定進行家居隔離；在31日，才決定遷移那些人。最初在26日得悉後採取個案的追蹤，遲了大約兩天才進行環境調查，局長，你是否同意專家報告所指這是一個延誤呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, on the epidemiological investigation, my understanding is that what actually transpired is really obviously the first time that the patients admitted were from Amoy Gardens. This was picked up initially by the hospital that there was an unusual pattern. I think Members need to remember that you are looking at this with hindsight. So you would need to have someone in the hospital alerted that there was a cluster of cases from Amoy Gardens. The investigation.....this was reported to the Regional Office which would then start to do the contact tracing. The colleagues would then start to look at why the Amoy Gardens residents were infected. Obviously I think the place would be important. So once this was brought to attention, they started doing the contact tracing. My understanding is that Thomas started doing the investigations already on the 26th.

Chairman:

Is it right on the 26th?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

I think it is, my understanding is on the 26th. I'm not certain but I think they did recognize that there were issues related. He probably went down on the 27th, I think. But certainly on the 28th he was already there. So they had started looking at the issues. They had picked up the problem. So it is not as if they did not understand that this was something, that something was happening in the community. I think the Expert Committee was talking in more general terms rather than specifics about Amoy Gardens. I remember that when they talked about this population-based basis, it was in the context of the outbreak in the Prince of Wales. I don't know why it appears here. But I don't think the Department of Health, once they were alerted to the Amoy Gardens, did not look at it from that perspective. I mean in their contact tracing investigations, they would have to look at it from that perspective. They really tried their best as soon as they had the information to do the investigations and contact tracing. After they identified that there was a specific problem, Dr Thomas TSANG who has the expertise, more expertise than the others, did start doing the work. Mr Chairman, my colleagues confirm that according to records of the Expert Committee, the DH team started making site visits to Amoy Gardens on the 26th of March as soon as they realized that something was happening in Amoy Gardens.

陳婉嫻議員：

局長，其實我整個問題的焦點 —— 多謝主席將它演繹 —— 我的問題的焦點主要是，董建華不懂得醫學，他在25、26日，兩次提醒你們，一是有關隔離中心，另一是為病人進行家居隔離。但是很明顯，衛生署署長很怕成為世界的笑柄，所以一再拖延。此外，關於家居隔離，亦是一再拖到很後期才做。我的問題是，現在專家這樣說，關於這方面，局長你是否需要負上責任呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I have already said that I accept responsibility for all the consequences of the outbreak including the actions of my colleagues. In terms of this Isolation Order, I have explained to Members, in terms of quarantine orders, that this was something that was discussed very thoroughly. It is a public health measure which we do recognize. It is a tool for control. But there are concerns even in the international public health community. When we sought advice from experts, the concern is that these draconian measures may have a reverse effect because they had not been used for many decades in developed countries. The concern is that, at best, it may cause very strong reactions in the public, and it may not be acceptable by citizens of modern society. At worst, the greater concern is that it may in fact have a counter-effect

that it may discourage patients from coming forward for treatment, and that this would affect the public health control. These issues were discussed at the Chief Executive's meeting. We all considered the pros and cons because nobody in modern society had experience of implementing these quarantine orders. So the general wisdom at that time is that we should adopt an evolutionary approach. This was agreed by everyone in the Chief Executive's Steering Committee. The Chief Executive did raise this, as you quite rightly said.

In my previous evidence, I did raise the issue of quarantine, home isolation with the Director before she suggested enacting the public health laws. As I said previously, when Singapore had instituted the Isolation Order, I had asked the Director of Health whether we should follow suit. So my statements were made after consulting the Director. I also was aware of the public health experts' opinions that these Isolation Orders may not achieve the objective. So the main concern in the discussions at the Chief Executive's meeting was not even about the acceptance. I think the acceptance certainly was important because we needed acceptance of the population before it would be effective. The main concern would be whether it would be, not just be ineffective but would have a counter-effect in terms of not getting the cooperation of people to report themselves as sick and to not get the information about contacts. The concern was that if you require people who had contacts to be isolated, some people might tend to hide the information from public health authorities.

陳婉嫻議員：

局長，你在回答我們立法會提出的問題時，你再三提到你的這些想法。不過，我剛才問的問題，就是專家小組亦就這些事情提出了意見，我覺得一個並非那個專業的人，反而當時提出了一些相當重要的事情，而你們卻是這樣，那麼我想問一問，到底局長你們是否像陳馮富珍到立法會作證時所說一樣，由於你們採取一個循序漸進……又或者由於你們過於小心，以致處理這些危機事件時，處理不當？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, absolutely not. I think I hope the Honourable Member CHAN Yuen-han.....I think the Expert Committee's comments are quite separate from.....They were looked in the context of the overall epidemiological investigations which need to be on the population basis. It is quite separated from the issue of quarantine and isolation. In fact, the Committee considers that the outbreak was handled well overall. So it is really contrary to what the Honourable Member is saying. The progressive or gradual approach in isolation was of the concern that this would affect public health control. It would have a counter-effect to our control of the outbreak. The main

consideration is that nobody in the Chief Executive's Steering Committee could be certain of the effects of implementing home quarantine. So there was a long discussion among all the members present. The members then came to a conclusion that these draconian measures be.....Nobody could anticipate what the outcomes would be and that we needed to adopt a gradual approach to ensure the cooperation of the population and that these measures would be effective. This is what we did. I think if Honourable Members can draw parallels to what happened in other countries, our gradual approach was well-accepted. They did not result in any counter-productive measures. As I know, certain countries or certain places had very drastic changes which in fact had contrary effects.

陳婉嫻議員：

主席，沒有其他問題。

主席：

李柱銘議員。

李柱銘議員：

主席，我想問一問，我們打算到何時結束呢？因為我.....

主席：

我們打算在7時半結束。

李柱銘議員：

我無法在7時半問完我的問題，因為你也知道，我上次問吳醫生的時候，是很詳細地問的。目的就是很詳細地問他，以及很詳細地問局長，然後我們作出一個比較，他們兩個的口供其實是完全不同。

主席：

剛才何秀蘭議員已經問了部分的段落。

李柱銘議員：

還有很多是她沒有問到的。

主席：

嗯。

李柱銘議員：

所以，如果問到7時半便停止，接着又如何呢？現在還有沒有議員要提出問題呢？

麥國風議員就表示會發問……

麥國風議員：

一點點。

主席：

李議員，我很難在這個時間，在一個公開研訊與大家討論日後的安排……

李柱銘議員：

可否明天繼續呢？

主席：

呃，由於通常我們要給予一個合理時間的通知，不單是指即席的，還有其他委員，要公平對待所有委員，所以我現在很難即時與你討論公開研訊的安排。

李柱銘議員：

那麼我儘管先提出我的問題。

主席：

嗯，你繼續問下去……

李柱銘議員：

我可以告訴大家，一定無法完成。

主席：

嗯。

李柱銘議員：

好的。局長，我想你看看吳醫生的英文 statement。但是在看那份 statement 之前，我想問你幾件事情。局長，由於我在立法會都聽過你很多次發言，你都是盡量以廣東話說的，即是很明顯，你盡你的能力學習中文，我想這一點是正確的，是嗎？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, that's correct that I try my best to use Cantonese in Legislative Council, especially the questions and answers.

主席：

不過，對不起，局長，你不是在回答他的問題。他問你是否很努力學習中文，你在立法會回答問題的那些，不是在讀出中文，你是在讀出 romanized.....即以英文拼出中文字的讀音，是嗎？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, yes Mr Chairman, I am not, at the moment, pursuing any formal classes in Chinese.

李柱銘議員：

如果與朋友傾談時，你也盡量以中文說的，這樣又對不對？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, it depends on which colleague. I tend to use both English and Chinese.

李柱銘議員：

即是你可以用中文說的，便用中文；應付不來的時候，便用英文？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, it depends on the environment. I, in most instances, for day to day usage, I can use most of the times Cantonese. But obviously there are

certain terms which I cannot think of, or I don't have the vocabulary, then I would supplement in English. But there are certain colleagues that I tend to use more English than Cantonese. So it is a mixture of both.

李柱銘議員：

好的。與吳醫生那次見面，當時有用中文，也有用英文。如果Dr ELLIS在場的時候，你的看法就是應該全部採用英文，因為他不懂中文，是不是這樣呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Yes, Mr Chairman, that would be correct.

李柱銘議員：

但是，如果他離開之後，便沒有理由不用中文，對不對？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, it would really depend because sometimes it is a question of the flow. I mean, if you have used English, you tend to continue to use English. But we may have gone back to using Cantonese after Dr ELLIS left. So I think we would have used both, I would imagine, Cantonese and English.

李柱銘議員：

所以，有些以中文說的，有些則用英文？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, because of the technical nature, we would probably be using quite a bit of English to describe some of the epidemiological investigations. But I would concur that we would have used both English and Chinese.

李柱銘議員：

是。當然如果是technical的那些，對我來說，無論你以中文或英文來說，我都不知道你在說甚麼。不過，technical的那些，你就以英文說的？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

I would think so. But I am not very precise. But I would accept that we use both English and Chinese after Dr ELLIS left.

李柱銘議員：

假如你沒有看過他的口供紙……當然我想那個口供紙你看過很多次，是嗎？因為你明知我們會問你的。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I have read the witness statement, yes.

李柱銘議員：

最近一次是何時看的？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, just now when I was asked to go through certain sections of it.

李柱銘議員：

是。但是除了在這個會議廳看過之外，譬如前幾天有沒有再看看？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

No, Mr Chairman.

李柱銘議員：

除了今天之外，最近一次是何時看的？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, before the last hearing, I looked at the witness statement.

李柱銘議員：

之後便沒有看過？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

No, Mr Chairman.

李柱銘議員：

你可不可以告訴我們，根據你的感覺，吳醫生那次來與你們傾談，最重要是傾談些甚麼呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, as I said, the recollection is: first part was looking at the outbreak in Amoy Gardens, the patterns of infections in the various blocks, the onset dates of the infections, the number of people that were infected and, what they call in technical terms, the epidemiological curve. So it is the whole context of trying to discern some clues as when the infection occurred, when the outbreak occurred. The second part was going through the investigations done by the Department of Health and Dr Sarah LIAO's team on the investigations of Amoy Gardens. The third part was then going to the discussion of rats and cockroaches.

李柱銘議員：

但是吳醫生的專長，他希望與你傾談的，在你出席那個會議之前，你的想法是否都是討論老鼠、蟑螂那些？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, the reason why we involved Dr NG is that during the outbreak, we knew that we needed as much expert input as possible to get the outbreak under control, and Dr NG had a background in public health in epidemiology which he practised in America. Although he has come back and is not active in the field, I thought it is worthwhile to see whether he could provide any insights in addition to what the Department could provide. That was the reason why I invited him to the meeting in the Bureau to see whether he could provide any insights to us.

李柱銘議員：

但是你剛才所提到的其他方面，其實他沒有特別專長，是嗎？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, because his background is in public health and epidemiology, that's why the first part of the discussions was very much his area of work in terms of looking at the disease pattern, as it were, the epidemiology. That's his background.

李柱銘議員：

有沒有談及怎樣……evacuation那方面，即疏散那些居民？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I do not recall that we discussed.

李柱銘議員：

完全沒有談及？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

I do not recall that we discussed evacuation.

李柱銘議員：

但是如果你們談及淘大那方面，有那麼多人……完全沒有談及 evacuation？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, because when Dr NG came to the meeting, it was the 5th of April. The E Block residents had already been evacuated from E Block. We already looked at the outbreak, the point source outbreak. It appeared that it was one source infection in E Block and that there was no similar pattern in the other blocks. So there was no question of evacuating, not just all the blocks in Amoy Gardens, but even the other blocks. In the meetings that we had both regularly with our experts and in the Chief Executive's meeting, this point about other evacuations had been considered. It was the opinion that we should not, that there was no need to evacuate any of the other residents in the other infected blocks, let alone the whole of Amoy Gardens.

李柱銘議員：

但是你提到不需要再evacuate的那個意見，當時吳醫生不在的，對不對？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, that is correct because Dr NG was not party to those discussions.

李柱銘議員：

那麼你很清楚吳醫生沒有提到要 evacuate 或者疏散所有居民？你十分肯定他沒有說這番話？抑或他說了而你表示不需要呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

I do not recall, Mr Chairman, I honestly cannot recall that we discussed this issue.

李柱銘議員：

你是否覺得他很緊張，即是他認為很可能是老鼠散播這一次 SARS？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I think it wasn't just Dr NG that was concerned. I was very anxious myself because we had only learnt about the findings in the rats. That's why on that day I asked Dr ELLIS to do the post-mortems and got the colleagues from the field to come back and do further investigations.

李柱銘議員：

因為 Block E 那裏.....除了 Block E，其他 blocks 也有人“中招”，中了 SARS，是嗎？這是很清楚的。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Yes, Mr Chairman.

李柱銘議員：

如果說只是水渠的問題，即 U 渠的問題，便不可能解釋其他 blocks 亦有人感染 SARS，對不對？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, the E Block was very unusual because of the outbreak.....as I said, it was seen in the whole outbreak.....it was a point source which, was one single point in time that a large outbreak occurred. The subsequences were the human to human spread and transmission through the contaminated environment.

李柱銘議員：

所以，單是水渠那方面，便無法解釋其他blocks都有人感染，對不對？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, we are of the view that in fact there was a combination of factors, and that the E Block sewage system was the starting point. The others were due to environmental contamination.

李柱銘議員：

所以，你們覺得可能是老鼠把病毒傳到其他blocks，是嗎？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, no. The conclusion was that E Block had led to a very explosive outbreak which led to two things. One is the person to person spread. The residents of E Block had come into contact with other residents and had transmitted the infections to them. The second was that there was evidence.....

主席：

楊醫生，不好意思，剛才李柱銘議員問你的問題，是問你當時那些的所謂hypothesis，而不是今天的結論。李議員，對嗎？

李柱銘議員：

是。

主席：

你是問當時譬如4月4日、4月5日這些日子，是否有一個假設或者可能性，老鼠是其中一些帶菌者，把病毒傳染給其他人，而不是今天的結論。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, we were exploring different possibilities. At that time the information that we had was that this was likely to be from E Block to the other residents, could be.....still be Dr LIAO's thought that sewage was a possible source. The other sources were thought to be human to human transmission because of the contacts of E Block with the other residents. The third was environmental contamination. So there was evidence of contamination, viral

contamination, environment contamination. People could have got the infection like the rest. If the whole place was contaminated, then if you touch certain walls or certain areas which were contaminated, and then you touched your own mucous membranes, you would get infected. So those were the theories at that time. Obviously we were quite concerned about the roles of rats and cockroaches in this environmental contamination.

李柱銘議員：

因為有這樣的可能性，即是你所說的“environmental contamination”，如果是這樣的話，是否應該要evacuation呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, as I said, this whole issue about a point source outbreak was a very important one. It was thought that this massive environmental contamination probably occurred on the night of the 21st when the water systems, the toilet systems were suspended in Amoy Gardens, and there were a few infected individuals. This led to this massive outbreak in Amoy Gardens. Because it was a point source, after the event occurred, there was then decontamination of the environment.

李柱銘議員：

局長，如果你們那時候所想的幾個可能性是真的，即是幾個可能性都存在，那麼應該怎樣解決呢？是否應該evacuation呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman.....

李柱銘議員：

你可否先回答“是”或“不是”，然後才解釋呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I think at that time we already had the information that this was an event that had occurred, that decontamination was done. So evacuation was not an option because it was not thought to be necessary.

李柱銘議員：

如果涉及老鼠、蟑螂，都不應該嗎？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, we had done deratting measures. My colleague, the expert from the pest control was advising us about the behaviour of rats. So all these were really contrary to the possibility of rats playing a role. But in order to ascertain it, to make sure that there was no possibility, that's why we did the post-mortem.

李柱銘議員：

但是你與吳醫生會面的時候，即4月5日的時候，你仍然不能夠排除由老鼠散播疾病的可能性，對不對？“Yes” or “no”, please.

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, it's not a question of “yes” or “no”, unfortunately. We had got a pest officer there to give us more information.

李柱銘議員：

請你聽清楚，你當天可否排除由老鼠散播疾病的可能性？可否排除呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, obviously.....

李柱銘議員：

這也無法問到。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

.....to absolutely say that it is not possible requires a lot of work, but the possibility.....

李柱銘議員：

也就是說，不可能吧，局長。那就是不可能嘛！

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, the possibility of the rats playing the active role was not high.

李柱銘議員：

可不可以排除，please？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, as I said.....

李柱銘議員：

我沒有問你是否high，我只是問你可不可以排除？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I think you can never exclude any possibility under the sun. But it was unlikely.

李柱銘議員：

那麼你可以說，不能夠排除，不過.....

主席：

他回答了你，李議員。你不需要.....

李柱銘議員：

.....我不想局長.....我們繼續這樣糾纏下去，15分鐘後，我也只能夠問到一小部分，如果你繼續是這樣，因為很多次，我盡量.....用盡我作為大律師的技巧，盡量向你提出一些題目，可以用“yes” or “no”作答，但是沒有一次你肯這樣回答。

主席：

不過，剛才他已經回答了你，可能較為詳細地回答你.....

李柱銘議員：

也不是以“yes” or “no”作答。他很冗長地回答，但是沒有告訴我“yes” or “no”。

主席：

但是那個意思很清楚是“yes”，是嗎？

李柱銘議員：

是的，要我們infer他的答案是“yes”。我們不想這樣做，局長，你可否遷就我們？因為時間無多了，是嗎？

主席：

繼續吧，大家嘗試一下，好嗎？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I am trying to cooperate as far as possible with Members. I am sorry if Members find I have not given them the answers that they require. But I am trying my best to give the best possible answers which accurately reflect the situation. So I hope Members will respect that as well.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

I can't force you to answer the way I want, alright? But I am just hoping that.....most of my questions can be answered with a “yes” or “no”, and then if you want to explain, nobody is stopping you.

主席：

對不起，我想不要再辯論答問的方法。不如繼續你的問題，李議員。

李柱銘議員：

根據你的記憶，是否由頭到尾，即是你一進去開會之後，吳醫生與你兩個都是直至會議終止為止，抑或有人早些離開？他是否早些離開？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, my recollection is that after I went to the meeting.....I think when I went to the meeting, he was already there. There were some initial discussions. It was not a formal meeting. It was a meeting that I had arranged. They had some discussions before I came in. My recollection is that when we ended the meeting, we all left.

李柱銘議員：

你為何會記得他與你都是到會議結束才離開呢？譬如你們兩個是否一起走出去，仍然繼續閒談呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

I don't recall, Mr Chairman.

李柱銘議員：

會否可以是，他較你早離開了，但你不記得呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I do not recall that there was any material time difference in continuation because the meeting was organized to discuss the issues. I don't recall whether we all left at the same time or whether he left slightly before the other people. But it could be possible that after the meeting, I may have given one or two instructions to continue to do the work. But I must say I cannot recall how the meeting exactly ended.

李柱銘議員：

你是否知道他在口供中，表示他離開了，在第31段……

主席：

剛才何議員已問了。

李柱銘議員：

我想你看看第31段的全部內容。我不會逐個字讀出來，你自己看看第31段。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Yes, Mr Chairman, I don't know what Honourable Mr LEE wants me to answer.

李柱銘議員：

你看完了吧？他說得很清楚，在第31段第6行，“So I told Dr YEOH that since there was nothing further for me to do I would terminate my involvement with the investigation”。接着隔一行就是，“I left the meeting at around noon while the rest stayed to discuss the report to the Chief Executive”。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, as I said, I do not recall how the meeting actually ended. I do not have a recollection that Dr NG sort of terminated the meeting as such. I think we had considerable discussion about the investigations. And then the meeting ended. As I said, my recollection is that probably I may have continued to give some instructions to the colleagues. But I don't recall the manner in which it was suggested here, that he terminated his involvement.

李柱銘議員：

快要結束的時候，你們有沒有……他說他離開之後，你們繼續進行討論，因為你們討論怎樣向董特首報告這件事，有沒有這樣做？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I don't recall that we discussed in terms of how we presented the data. I may have, after the meeting, given instructions to continue with the work. But I don't actually recall the meeting ending in the way that he mentioned, except that……I do accept that we may have just stayed on to talk about one or two matters, but certainly not the way that is suggested that he would terminate the involvement. Really there was no involvement at all……

李柱銘議員：

那麼你……

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

……because Dr NG was never involved in our official investigations.

李柱銘議員：

不，但是他一進來的時候，你與他傾談其他事情，你還表示他是專家。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, we were primarily trying to see whether Dr NG could provide any insights. The investigations of Amoy Gardens did not involve Dr NG.

李柱銘議員：

但是你與他傾談的時候，也包括這方面。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Yes, Mr Chairman, to see whether we could get any insights in helping with our work.

李柱銘議員：

即是說，你現在咬文嚼字，不喜歡investigation那個字，是嗎？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Well, Mr Chairman, I was just clarifying the work that's being done. Dr NG was not involved in our work in investigating the Amoy Gardens outbreak. We invited him to come to see whether he could provide any insights. We presented our investigation findings to him to see whether he could provide any insights.

李柱銘議員：

Investigation這個字，可否根本理解為不是洵大，而是老鼠會否是其中一個可能性？這叫做investigation，不可以嗎？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, when I asked Dr NG to come to the meeting, it was really in the context of the overall Amoy Gardens outbreak, the SARS issue. When I first met him, we didn't even have the findings of the coronavirus in the rats. We had continued in our investigations, so it was not specifically to look at the rats issue.

李柱銘議員：

即是說，他在這一段的說法，很明顯是他胡亂說，與事實不符合，是嗎？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I do not understand Dr NG's own understanding of his role. I don't understand the statements that he made. I cannot comment on that, Mr Chairman.

李柱銘議員：

但是他不可能是對的，如果你的記憶是正確的話。他說他……不止是提早離開，要去掃墓，他表示他希望終止他的參與，是這樣。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, my recollection is that the discussions had already been quite thorough, and we had already completed with what the possibilities and what we need to do. So that was a natural conclusion to the meeting rather than the impression that is given that he terminated his involvement.

李柱銘議員：

他這樣說，肯定是錯的，對不對？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I can only give Members my recollection of the events.

李柱銘議員：

你是否很清楚記得？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, yes.

李柱銘議員：

那麼他這樣說，一定是不對了？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, my recollection is my recollection.

李柱銘議員：

即是說，雖然你十分肯定自己所記得的事情，但你亦不排除他也是對的？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, maybe I think this is the work of this Select Committee to take evidence from Members.

李柱銘議員：

當然。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Yes.

李柱銘議員：

但我們一定要看看相信你，還是相信他，是嗎？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I think there are other facts that will attest to which party that you decide to believe in.

李柱銘議員：

當然。自從4月5日及之前幾天，Dr Stephen NG這個名字你聽過了沒有？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I do not know Dr NG personally. When I first met him, certainly I had no recollection of Dr NG.

李柱銘議員：

你是否知道他其實找朋友透過特首，然後才有這個機會與你開這個會議，你是否知道這件事？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I was aware that there was one of the people from the Hong Kong University that introduced Dr NG to the Chief Executive.

李柱銘議員：

所以，你可否告訴我們，吳醫生有沒有特別理由想陷害你呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I cannot speculate on what Dr NG's motivations are for making this statement.

李柱銘議員：

即是說，你自己想不出任何理由這位醫生要陷害你，這樣說對不對？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I wish not to speculate on his motivations.

李柱銘議員：

不是speculate，我所問的是你。你是否想到任何理由這位醫生出來發誓說假話來作弄你？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I still do not wish to speculate on his motivations.

李柱銘議員：

不是speculate。你是否想到任何理由這個人要這樣對待你？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

If I can't.....if I do not speculate on his motivations, how can I answer the question?

李柱銘議員：

不，如果你有理由，便可以說出那個理由。如果沒有理由，你便說沒有理由。沒有人叫你估猜，我也不想你揣測。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I do not wish to speculate on.....

李柱銘議員：

不是，局長，我沒有叫你揣測，也不是叫你估猜。你是否想到一個理由，為何一個人 —— 他不認識你，而你又不認識他 —— 為何他要出來作假口供指證你、陷害你？你是否想到那個理由？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

I cannot speculate, Mr Chairman, because I cannot, I don't, I don't understand Dr NG's statement and why he made them. The facts speak for themselves. I have not met Dr NG before, at least not in my recollection, before this meeting on the April the 3rd.

李柱銘議員：

好的。根據你的記憶，Dr Trevor ELLIS在會議結束前便離開，是嗎？會議舉行了一半的時候，你便叫他立刻去進行化驗，是嗎？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Yes, Mr Chairman.

李柱銘議員：

對吧？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Yes.

李柱銘議員：

多謝你這個“yes”的answer，非常多謝！你說他離開之後，你便可以用中文和英文，對不對？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, that's likely, yes.

李柱銘議員：

那麼你看看他的口供紙第22段，其實如果你很快地看一看第19、20、21及22段，請你自己看看，謝謝。

看完了嗎？謝謝。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Yes.

李柱銘議員：

你也看看第23段的最初部分。他表示，“Dr YEOH joined the meeting shortly after Dr ELLIS left”。根據你的記憶，你進去的時候，Dr ELLIS還在嗎？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, my recollection is that Dr ELLIS was present. As I said, I asked him to do the autopsies.

李柱銘議員：

如果是這樣的話，吳醫生的第23段第一句便可能搞錯了，是嗎？因為你進去的時候，Dr ELLIS還在，不單是這樣，還是你叫他離開進行化驗，對不對？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

That's correct, Mr Chairman.

李柱銘議員：

是的。所以，他的第19、20、21及22段，大致上你是否同意？抑或有哪些是你不知道的？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I do not know what they discussed before I came in. There was a short discussion before I came in. But what is incorrect is: Mr YUEN certainly was not present before I came in. In fact, Mr YUEN is, in paragraph 21, “another colleague from the Pest Control Unit”. Mr YUEN in fact was called at the meeting by myself, and he came later. He is the Pest Control Officer from the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department.

李柱銘議員：

好。22段第1行，即是每個人都很擔心，這一點是對的，是不是呢？因為可能是老鼠，對不對，這裏？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, because this describes what happened before I came in. So I cannot comment on what went on before I came in.

李柱銘議員：

但是你進去的時候，你也想到老鼠會可能是一個理由，是嗎？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, when I went in, obviously as I said, we discussed the first few parts first. It was later on that we discussed the rat findings. When we discussed the rat findings, we went on to do this post-mortem and ask this pest expert to come and clarify for us on the possibilities of rats being a cause of this nature of disease.

李柱銘議員：

即是到了那時候，大家都覺得老鼠是可能的，一個可能性是老鼠傳播的，是嗎？若然不是，你也不會叫人立刻出去化驗啦，對不對？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, obviously as Honourable Mr LEE said, we could not exclude the possibility. But right through, because of our investigations, we were of the view that it was unlikely. But we wanted to make sure that there was no possibility.

李柱銘議員：

但是你立刻叫Dr ELLIS去做化驗，即是有些緊張，要立刻去做，是嗎？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, obviously we wanted to make sure that there was no possibility and that we would exhaust all possible causes of infection because we wanted to err on the side of safety. Even though we felt it was unlikely, we wanted to make sure that there was no possibility.

李柱銘議員：

局長，我覺得你這樣講是不怎麼符合，如果你已經覺得老鼠是其中一個理由，是很小的時候，你何須那麼緊張，正在開會都叫Dr ELLIS立即去做呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, in the whole SARS outbreak, obviously the knowledge has been accumulated. Even though it is unlikely, but we wanted to make sure that we have done everything possible at the soonest possible time to reduce the likelihood.

李柱銘議員：

但是你就算即時叫他做，他只有幾隻老鼠，那時候，也不可以排除那可能性的。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, that's why right through – the likelihood of this thing – we had looked at all the information. Even then, at that time, as Dr NG also indicated, rats themselves, some of the Muridae species, also have coronavirus. Because the tests were very new at that time, we were not even certain that they were specific to the human coronavirus. So all these likelihoods.....because we had other more plausible causes for the outbreak, and right through the evidence that we had been able to acquire suggestions that if rats play any role, they were more passive in terms of the environmental contamination which had already been dealt with. Deratting had been done. The Pest Officer said they had found no evidence of infestation in the households in Amoy Gardens. So the risk in fact at that time were practically nil. But we wanted to make sure that we reduced the probability even further.

李柱銘議員：

你即是說開會之前，那個可能性或者那個危險，已經是差不多零，是嗎？你還未見他的時候已經有這個看法？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, we looked at the possibilities. If Members remember, we had a discussion already the day before with the.....in Dr Sarah LIAO's office where Dr NG had already put forward his theories. So we had already had quite long discussions ourselves related to possible roles of rats and cockroaches. But we had found no evidence for that. So the likelihood of those rats and cockroaches in infecting the residents was thought to be low although we continued with our efforts. We wanted to make sure that we left no stone unturned.

李柱銘議員：

局長，你知不知道，其實我問這個題目，我說你開會之前已經覺得這個危險性是差不多零，這幾個字根本是在你的答案中抽出來的，我只是說在開會之前就已經覺得個危險性是差不多零，你這樣也不肯回答我“是”。我現在再問你一次，你開會之前那天——5日見吳醫生的時候，你心目中已經覺得這個危險性，是老鼠傳染這個危險性，是差不多零，對不對？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

No, Mr Chairman, I think we had always thought that rats could have played a supplementary role in the environmental contamination. But what Dr NG was proposing is that the rats were infected, which would be a very different story. If rats were infected, the rats could amplify the infection. So we were talking about two different, very different issues. We have always accepted that rats.....in fact we thought that rats could have also contributed to the environmental contamination. But the decontamination had been done. So even if there continued to be some rats there, it would not get the infection spreading. Dr NG was suggesting that the rats were infected by the virus, and as such they would multiply in the rats and spread to other people, so it was spread through the rats to human and not human to human transmission.

李柱銘議員：

但是你開會的時候，之前，你已經覺得他這個這樣的理論，是差不多零，對不對？

主席：

李議員，他剛才才是“unlikely”，是非常低。

李柱銘議員：

他後來搞了個“the risk is practically nil”，我寫下了的。

主席：

OK。

李柱銘議員：

所以，主席，我寫下了的。你有否講過“the risks are practically nil”？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

“Risk” and “likelihood” are two things. I think the “likelihood” is very unlikely. The “risks”, in terms of, “are practically nil”; I made that statement, yes, Mr Chairman.

李柱銘議員：

你有講的吧，“risks are practically nil”？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Yes, Mr Chairman.

李柱銘議員：

多謝你。主席，我是可以繼續下去的，你如何也要作個 decision，你不可以整天望着我，我可以繼續下去的，9時都可以的，我只是捱一捱肚餓，我完不了，我是不可以放棄的……

主席：

各位委員，不如我們回到C房討論10分鐘，好嗎？否則，我就很難處理究竟怎樣安排這件事，好嗎？大家休息一會兒，好嗎？

(研訊於下午7時37分暫停)

(研訊於下午8時20分恢復進行)

主席：

各位委員，我們再開始，我們有一個目標，希望在10時之前，我們可以能夠完成我們今天的研訊，大家都努力，好嗎？問的短，答的短，那麼我們就盡量可以完成。李柱銘議員，多謝。

李柱銘議員：

多謝，主席。局長，我想你看第4頁，

主席：

Dr Stephen NG的證供的第4頁？

李柱銘議員：

.....是，Dr Stephen NG那兒。第18段那裏，你說你不recall有談過些特別的事情，接着你就解釋，你說你要接受訪問，但是如果他在你接受訪問之前，進去你的房間談了一會兒，這個可能性是有的吧，是嗎？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Yes, Mr Chairman, that's correct.

李柱銘議員：

但是你就很肯定他沒有提過evacuation，你是很肯定，抑或不是太肯定呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I certainly had no recollection of discussing the evacuation because the information relating to the coronavirus spread had just surfaced. In our previous discussions the day before, in Dr Sarah LIAO's office, we had all thought that it was not possible for the rats to play other than a passive role. We had already had discussions the day before in Dr Sarah LIAO's office.

李柱銘議員：

會不會這番說話是早一天講的呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, certainly on that day, I think there were a lot of questions, I think, from my colleague Dr Sarah LIAO relating to Dr Stephen NG's theories which she didn't think were possible.

李柱銘議員：

會不會Dr Stephen NG搞錯了，他記得是長的那個會議——4月5日的會議，之前是另一個會議，可能他搞錯了，忘了早一天那個會議你也有份，不過會不會早一天他就提過要evacuate所有淘大的居民，不過你卻跟他說那些證據不足夠，會不會這樣呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I do not recall that in the previous meeting that this was brought up.

李柱銘議員：

如果他有提過，那麼你很可能有說過證據不足夠，那裏有差不多17 000人那麼多，很可能是這樣的，是嗎？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I really did not consider at any point in time moving out the residents in Amoy Gardens, so.....

李柱銘議員：

對的，所以如果有人提出說要，那你就可以說不應該，對不對？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I do not recall that we did discuss this. I would not have considered this point. At that point in time, there was no reason for us to consider moving the residents out of Amoy Gardens.

李柱銘議員：

對，因為你覺得根本就不應該，對吧？你不應該將他們疏散，即是任何人提你，你都覺得不應該疏散的，對不對？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, obviously, I would have been surprised by any suggestion that we would move out residents from Amoy Gardens – all residents from Amoy Gardens at that stage.

李柱銘議員：

對的，所以就算立法會議員問你、提出來，你都立刻會回答他沒有這個需要、不應該吧？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

I would have been very surprised at the suggestion.

李柱銘議員：

如果有些人那麼傻問了那個題目，你也一定說不會的，對不對？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

I would have liked to know what basis that suggestion was made because it had not been considered at any point in time in our outbreaks. Obviously to consider such a drastic move, you would have needed to give us a reason. I mean, I would not have just said there was no evidence. I would have asked why we should consider doing it.

李柱銘議員：

對了，如果他提不出理由，那你就說不會做吧？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I certainly would have asked the reasons for considering this. I would not have just said that the evidence so far was insufficient to warrant this drastic move.

李柱銘議員：

那你怎麼會說不夠證據，還是說不夠理由呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, if this had been brought up.....if I had been asked this question at that time of the outbreak, I would have asked the question: why was this necessary. I would not have said that: there was insufficient evidence to warrant such a drastic move.

主席：

李議員，不如你嘗試這樣問局長，究竟如果有人問了你這件事，你會不會記得呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I certainly would remember because it would be such a drastic move.

李柱銘議員：

但是如果問你的那人問完之後，你覺得他完全“冇料到”的、亂講的，那你就可以立刻指他沒理由，不應該搬遷，接着你就可以忘記那件事，是否有這個可能？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Well, Mr Chairman, I think certainly.....because this statement is such a drastic one, and it had not been something that we would consider, because we had not even thought about the need to move all the residents out of Amoy Gardens.

李柱銘議員：

OK，我們看19段，Dr Paul SAW.....現在說他“in an agitated state and announced that rat results were positive”，這些你不在場，就算有說，你不在場，對不對？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Yes, Mr Chairman.

李柱銘議員：

但是你後來有否問過究竟有沒有這件事呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, we were all party to the discussions of the findings of the coronavirus of the rats. So my recollection is that I don't think we had another very lengthy discussion of the implication because all the discussions of the possibility had been discussed with Dr NG's presence.

李柱銘議員：

譬如他這裏 —— “Specifically 4 out of 8 rat droppings and one throat swab were PCR positive”，有否談過呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, in the subsequent meetings, we did discuss the findings of the rat droppings. Essentially, one throat swab was positive and there were some rat droppings that were positive. But I don't have the data. But certainly we did discuss in the subsequent meeting when I was present, the initial findings from the laboratory.

主席：

楊醫生，你意思即是在你有出席那一段，你是有討論到這一部分的東西，是嗎？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Yes, Mr Chairman.

李柱銘議員：

那麼 “He was quite convinced at that point that rats were responsible for the Amoy Gardens outbreak” —— 這只是講 Dr SAW —— and had called in Dr Trevor ELLIS, the government veterinarian consultant and Mr YUEN, head of the Pest Control Unit, to attend the morning meeting.”，這裏呢，即分開兩部分，先是講 “Dr Paul SAW was quite convinced” 這 part，對不對？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, because I was not in the meeting, I cannot comment on what Dr SAW said at that point in time.

李柱銘議員：

那你知不知道是 Dr SAW 叫 Dr Trevor ELLIS 進去的？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I do not know the arrangements. When I was there, Dr ELLIS was there. But certainly Mr YUEN was not there.

李柱銘議員：

OK，所以可能是 Dr SAW 叫 Dr ELLIS 進去的，是嗎？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, that's a possibility, yes.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Thank you. OK，接着 20，“I verified —— 即 Dr NG —— with Dr SAW that the PCR was correctly performed using SARS coronavirus primers and not cat coronavirus primers……

Chairman:

Rat!

李柱銘議員：

Rat，sorry，這兒對不對，還是你不在場？

主席：

或者楊醫生你可以嘗試這樣回答的，因為雖然李議員這樣問你，有兩個part你可以回答，第一個part就是“之前”，當然你不知道，但是“之後”，當你在出席的時候，這個討論、這個內容，是否有涉及到呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, certainly the part about the findings on the rat droppings and throat swab in paragraph 19 was discussed in the session that I was present. The question about the PCR correctly performed using the coronavirus primers and not rat coronavirus primers was not discussed when I was present. In fact, Dr SAW is not a laboratory person. The understanding of.....this is quite new work. The PCR work was very new. There was, even among the experts in the laboratory, insufficient understanding of the primers that we use. So this is very technical language which I would not expect Dr SAW to be very familiar with in terms of some of the areas. But I was not party to this. So I cannot give you any opinions on this. But certainly in my own contact with Dr LIM is the consultant medical microbiologist that does this work, that does all this work. She was already in the stage of developing a lot of these tools. The PCR tool was a very new one. It was not certain in terms of how specific the tools were. So even then, it was a question whether these were the human.....because at that time, it was also known in terms of cross-reaction between this human coronavirus and some of the animals because animals also carry coronavirus. So there were a lot of uncertainties relating to these tests at that moment in time.

李柱銘議員：

你是否說Dr SAW就不是這方面的專家，反而Dr LIM才是？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Yes, Mr Chairman.

李柱銘議員：

Dr LIM其實是否.....其實Dr SAW是senior to her，是嗎？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, Dr SAW in fact has retired from the Department of Health. During the outbreak, because I thought we needed more people to help in the control, I asked Dr SAW to come back, and he came back on a voluntary basis to help in the work. So Dr SAW in fact was not a paid staff of the Department. He was an old staff of the Department. I asked him to come back and he came back to help with the.....because he is a very experienced public health person. In many of the infectious disease investigations, he was really the person who had a lot of experience. So I asked him to come back to help the Department in his work. He is not a paid staff of the Department.

李柱銘議員：

但是Dr LIM仍然在政府工作？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Yes, Mr Chairman.

李柱銘議員：

但是Dr LIM我相信也會很尊重Dr SAW，是嗎？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I am not sure at that stage where (inaudible) would come from. Certainly, Dr LIM is the virologist in the Department. She would really be able to provide some understanding of the implications of this. I did communicate with her right through these investigations to understand what was actually happening.

李柱銘議員：

22段我們問過，不過我只想再問第一句，你說你在場的時候，這些事情都發生，是嗎？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, we did discuss the findings of the laboratory, the PCR findings.

李柱銘議員：

那麼你是否worried呢？用“worried”這個字。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I am not sure that we would use the word “worried”. But certainly we were concerned because we wanted to make sure that we left no stone unturned. As I said, we had already accepted that rats could have played a passive role because of the environmental contamination. What we needed to look at is the.....any possibility that rats could be infected.

李柱銘議員：

如果那些老鼠自己都感染到，那便大件事了，是嗎？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, because we got Mr YUEN to give us an analysis of the likelihood to reinforce that the possibility of this was unlikely, we were able to establish some of the theory.....our previous theories of how the infection had occurred were further reinforced.

李柱銘議員：

但是會不會是你還未進去之前，你未曾與他們一起開會之前，他們已經談過，是覺得可能真的是老鼠都感染了，會不會呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I cannot exclude that possibility.

主席：

是吧。

李柱銘議員：

如果真的是老鼠感染到，就好大件事了，對不對？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, it would depend on how the rats were infected and also whether there were rats in Amoy Gardens that would spread it. As the Pest Officer said, there was very little.....there was no sign of rat infestation in the.....

李柱銘議員：

.....我再問你一次，如果真是老鼠感染了，便很大件事？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, in fact if rats were infected, obviously it would put a new dimension to our outbreak control.

李柱銘議員：

那就嚴重很多了，那情況？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

It could be possible. Certainly we would have taken a very serious view. We would have to examine what other measures needed to be done. But we needed to understand the infection in rats.

李柱銘議員：

所以他這句，他說你講過：“我都估到係老鼠，不過估唔到會 amplify”，英文就是“I also guessed it was rats, but did not guess it could amplify”。

主席：

剛才他答過這個問題了。

李柱銘議員：

我知道，答了是……你說你不會這樣說？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Yes, Mr Chairman, I think when we look at the rats, we are obviously looking at two roles – one is the possible contamination role and the second is to see whether they were infected. So we would look at those possibilities. But I would not guess. I think the aspect would be obviously that we needed to exclude or to minimize the possibility that this could happen because we had found the initial findings of the……evidence of the coronavirus, the gene sequences in the droppings.

李柱銘議員：

你說你沒有講過這句說話，但是你可以告訴我們，有否其他人……當你還未進去之前，有否覺得老鼠都可能感染了，對不對？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, that's correct.

李柱銘議員：

謝謝你，應該說多謝你。接着他這裏就是“A discussion followed on the broader ramifications of the spread of SARS by rats.”，有否這樣講過呢？有否談過呢，大家？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I think we were really more on discussing the possibility of rats being the cause of infection rather than ramifications of the rats. I mean, Dr NG may have talked about it, but our main focus was to follow up on even this remote possibility because we could not exclude it obviously.

李柱銘議員：

但是如果有possibility，就肯定有些ramifications吧？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Yes, Mr Chairman, but our focus at that time was still.....really to.....because we had.....right through there were other possible explanations. So it was not an area that we would be discussing the ramifications because it was a hypothetical possibility. We would be more concerned with excluding the hypothetical possibility than to talking about the consequences of that at that stage in time. That would be our main focus and concern.

李柱銘議員：

但是你身為局長，當然你要顧及對香港整體的影響，對吧？這樣很公道吧？這是你的責任。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Sure, Mr Chairman, that is correct.

李柱銘議員：

接着他就說：“We all agreed that it would deal a severe blow to Hong Kong's economy as travel and trade might be further restricted by foreign countries.”，記不記得有否這樣說呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I don't have any recollection of the.....Dr Stephen NG may have mentioned this. But my main pre-occupation would be really to follow up on this possibility and to try to establish that the possibility was unlikely.

李柱銘議員：

接着這句——“Rats and disease reminded people of plague.”，這是對的，事實上就是這樣？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I think that is correct. I mean, people would associate rats and disease with plague.

李柱銘議員：

And then “Hong Kong's image would be tarnished and Hong Kong could lose its status as a world-class city.”，這句也是對的，即as one of the ramifications，是嗎？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, as I said, I don't recollect the discussions on any ramifications. Although all these may be possible things that were said, I said that my recollection is, mainly on my focus, at that time, was to investigate this, although unlikely possibility at that stage.

李柱銘議員：

他最後那句就是“*At one point Dr YEOH expressed the fear that there might be riots in Hong Kong.*”，有否可能呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I certainly have no recollection of saying something like that.

李柱銘議員：

即是否可能有講，可能沒講，不過你現在記得不清楚呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, as I said, I have no recollection. I think I really don't recall making any statements to that effect because my recollection is that my focus

was on reducing any possibility that rats may have played a more active role than we thought.

李柱銘議員：

24 段 —— “We next discussed the methods of rat elimination.”，有否談過呢？即怎樣殺那些老鼠，有否講過呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, we did discuss the issue about rats in Amoy Gardens. Mr YUEN in fact had told us the work he had done in trying to track rats. In fact, they had found no evidence of infestation of the rats in.....the roof rats which we were concerned about. He said that the sewer rats would usually not go up to the buildings because they were territorial. So all these things pointed to the unlikely possibility of rats playing an active infection. So that in fact clarified a lot of things in terms of the possibility – just reaffirmed our original hypothesis that this was through the sewage system and that the spread to Amoy Gardens was compounded by environmental contamination, human to human spread.

李柱銘議員：

但是因為你不可以排除老鼠會不會傳播SARS，所以當然是想殺光那些老鼠，這是一個很正確的決定啦，對不對？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I think certainly we wanted to. It was good for us to keep the environment clean because rats also carried other diseases. Because the Amoy Gardens environmental hygiene wasn't the best in Hong Kong, we spent a lot of efforts in terms of improving that environmental hygiene. So the rat de-infestation was also one of the things that we wanted to do.

李柱銘議員：

這段第24段我不逐個字讀了，你看下去，是否大致上都可能是正確呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I don't recall the actual discussions. But obviously we did, there was some discussion relating to dealing with rats.

李柱銘議員：

所以你不可以說他裏面所講的有任何是錯的，對不對？你不
可以說他是錯的？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, except the point about the number of rats. I don't know how this figure of 400 rats around Amoy Gardens was dealt with. I think, my recollection is that Mr YUEN did say that the roof rats – there was no sign of infestation. There were sewer rats – but of course sewer rats are present in all the place – but I do not have a recollection of him saying that there were at least 400 rats around Amoy Gardens.

李柱銘議員：

如果有人講過400隻，你都記不起吧，是嗎？現在，那麼久了。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, sorry, I don't recall, no.

李柱銘議員：

25段呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

I think, Mr Chairman, I do recall that there were some discussions with Dr NG relating to the infections: whether rats were.....I think my recollection at that time was really relating to whether the rats had infected.....were infected by the virus. Whether we talked about chronic carriers or not, there probably was a discussion because Dr NG was talking about the infections and whether these could continue in the Amoy Gardens, whether it was stabilized. So there was a general discussion on infection of rats and this may have been part and parcel of that discussion.

李柱銘議員：

同時最後那句：“I —— 即Dr NG —— suggested that rats that were virus positive be kept alive to observe how long the virus stayed active in them.”，因為他很有興趣做這行的研究，所以他講這句說話，完全是可能他有講的，對不對？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I don't recall this statement. At that time we haven't even established that the rats could be infected. So obviously if he had mentioned this.....if we had found that the rats would be infected, there would have been a lot of other studies that needed to be done. This might be one of them.

李柱銘議員：

所以就算老鼠有否感染到，你都不要殺了牠，然後就可以做多些實驗，是嗎？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, obviously we already talked about the post-mortems that were done. So this is a bit contrary. As I gave evidence, I asked Dr ELLIS, the veterinarian surgeon, to do the post-mortems. I don't recall that this was discussed at the meeting. It would be inconsistent to our asking Dr ELLIS to do the post-mortem.

李柱銘議員：

是否一定呢，局長？因為老鼠已經死了，便做post-mortem，老鼠還未死的，便先養着，然後看清楚病菌在裏面可以生存多久？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, we had trapped the rats. I think my understanding is that they were still alive. They were using rat-traps to get the rats.

李柱銘議員：

對的，所以只是Dr NG這裏就說：如果還是生存的，便不要殺牠，只是這樣，是完全有可能的，是嗎？即他是一個這樣的學者，他是想這樣做研究嘛。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

I think, Mr Chairman, certainly this would follow if there were rats, but I think we first needed to establish that the rats were infected first. So it would be more important for us to establish at that point in time that rats were infected before you talk about whether.....

主席：

楊局長，我相信大家不是正在辯論科學的問題，我想李議員只是問你覺不覺得作為Stephen NG，他提供這個證供，他有講過，這事情是有講過的呢？如果你記不起他有否講過，那麼剛才李議員便問，你會不會排除他有講過這事情呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I am trying to help in this process by.....I certainly do not recall this was mentioned. But the Honourable Mr LEE was asking me whether there is a possibility. Obviously, there are always possibilities. But I was trying to explain that that possibility is not high because at that time we were concerned about getting the rats.....

主席：

.....局長，我想向你解釋，我們議員並非有興趣去尋找一個科學的答案——就這些老鼠的問題，所以就着科學的部分，有時也可以簡短些。這個純粹是.....你都回答了，對吧？即是你認為有可能Dr Stephen NG有談到這事情，不過你忘記他有否講過。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I was just trying to help by saying that this would be inconsistent with what we were trying to do. If you ask my opinion, obviously I cannot exclude that because I do not recall that this was brought up. It is possible, but unlikely.

李柱銘議員：

但是一隻老鼠，如果你想知道一隻老鼠有否感染到，是否一定要殺了牠才化驗到，還是留着牠生存也可化驗到呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, we wanted to know as early as possible, and because at that time, there was no other way to know whether the rats were infected. The PCR just demonstrate that the gene sequences.....it doesn't demonstrate whether the virus is active and the serology tests.....

李柱銘議員：

局長，我只是問你是否一定要殺了老鼠，然後才做 post-mortem，才可以化驗到老鼠本身……

主席：

……譬如抽血……

李柱銘議員：

……有否感染到？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I am trying to explain. At that time, if you take a blood sample……sometimes it depends on when the rats were infected. A very fast way to establish it is to do the post-mortem to see whether there were signs of infection. That would be the fastest way to at least get a hint of whether the rat was infected or not.

李柱銘議員：

但是如果你遲幾天，但是用抽血的方法，也可以化驗到的，是嗎？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

At that time it was difficult, Mr Chairman, because obviously it depends on the exposure of the rats. There was only one roof rat, my recollection, at that time, and you needed to have usually, with the serology, at least two specimens two weeks apart to show that the rats were exposed to the virus and develop rising antibody titres. So it would require time.

李柱銘議員：

如果你殺了牠做 post-mortem，然後化驗到牠果然是感染到，那麼你就不可以，已失了一個機會……

主席：

……李議員，你現在這樣問，便涉及到一個科學的問題，我都差不多很想插口向你解釋為何要做 post-mortem，不過這樣便變成我們研究……

李柱銘議員：

.....主席，其實他很容易回答我，如果他說不是.....

主席：

.....他就是.....

李柱銘議員：

.....不是殺了也可以，這又可以啦，或者說一定殺了才可以，這樣又可以，很簡單.....

主席：

.....他剛才就是說要殺了才知道，他已經回答了你。

李柱銘議員：

但是如果你殺了才做到，若原來牠真的是有的，那麼已經殺了，如果不殺牠，便可以在實驗那方面和研究方面更加有益了，就是這樣而已。

主席：

對不起，李議員，我覺得你不如繼續吧，好嗎？

李柱銘議員：

OK，你overrule我，就算吧，因為其實Dr Stephen就是緊張這點.....

主席：

.....我們在會後，我再詳細向你解釋。

李柱銘議員：

26那裏，“The discussion then moved on to what to say to the public.”，即關於老鼠方面，跟普羅大眾怎樣講呢？有否談過這些？因為其實記者都已經在發問，是嗎？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, no. I think absolutely there was no discussion of what to say to the public because it was not an issue that we were considering at that point in time. We were still investigating this remote possibility.

李柱銘議員：

但是這個雖然你說是一個很不似的可能性，但是報紙已經有報道了，老鼠可能是其中的一個因素，報紙已有報道，對吧？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, we had disclosed the.....because as the information, the results came in, we informed the public. So at that time, at that stage, our findings had been that we had found this coronavirus in cats, in a number of cats. Also at that time we didn't know whether the cats were infected. The cats, because of the contamination, would be like the rats: they would have licked up the environment, and certainly would get infected. So in the public knowledge, they were aware that cats.....we had found the coronavirus in cats. But we, at that time, did not know whether the cats were infected.

李柱銘議員：

但是普羅大眾很簡單的，貓捉老鼠，如果貓感染到，可能老鼠也感染到，對吧？就是這麼簡單，即市民是關注這個問題的，對不對？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, certainly I think we were, not just the public, we were obviously looking at all possibilities, and the cats had not been shown to be infected. We had been able to also get some specimens from cats. Some of them were found to be PCR-positive. So we had not established that cats were infected.

李柱銘議員：

但是老鼠是否可能性，這裏還未曾與.....到那時為止，還未曾與.....

主席：

.....李議員，因為我想方便proceedings，你清楚知道那個所謂“passive carrier”和“infected”的分別吧？

李柱銘議員：

當然知道啦。

主席：

那可以了，你知道便可以了。

李柱銘議員：

但是普羅大眾不知道，我現在問題就是普羅大眾……報紙是否已經報道到可能是老鼠，如果可能是老鼠……

主席：

……他答了你，可能 —— 他說 —— 是貓，是一個可能的“passive carrier”……

李柱銘議員：

……貓就聯想到老鼠啦，其他人就會這樣想，報紙有否報道，有否記者正在發問這問題，是否有人寫過東西在報紙上，說可能是老鼠，有沒有？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I do not recall that there was any discussion whether rats were involved at that stage in the newspapers.

李柱銘議員：

那麼到那天為止，你們有否告訴市民，肯定不是老鼠？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, we had looked at the hypothesis. Because we had not found any rats to be positive by coronavirus at that stage in time, that was only something that we learnt about the coronavirus just the day before that.

李柱銘議員：

那你即是說，你肯定記得那時沒有人關注到老鼠是其中一個可能性，你可不可以這樣講？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, as I said, we have always looked at the role of pests because we were concerned about the environmental hygiene.

李柱銘議員：

那即是有可能性，所以普羅大眾想到可能是老鼠，是嗎？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I think at that time there was no discussion in the public arena relating to the roles of rats in transmission of infection.

李柱銘議員：

你很肯定？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

I do not recall. Certainly I cannot be absolute unless I go back and look at all the.....

李柱銘議員：

.....如果你講到pests的時候，就應該包括老鼠在內，是嗎？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

I do not recall that there were any discussions of this issue in the public arena. We were concerned about the.....at that time when we isolated Amoy Gardens, we were talking about the sewage systems and the human to human transmission and the environmental contamination. When we started looking at the roles of cats, we related that to the environmental contamination. But that information was provided to the public for them to understand that we had found it in cats. But to say that these were just the gene sequences, we didn't know whether the cats were infected.

李柱銘議員：

你說到“environmental contamination”，就很明顯包括老鼠和蟑螂都有可能？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, the environmental contamination could be anything that moves. Thus it would be humans.....

李柱銘議員：

.....多謝你，那即是包括老鼠和蟑螂？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Yes, yes, Mr Chairman, the.....

李柱銘議員：

.....多謝你，你說“是”，不就可以了嗎？

主席：

不過，李議員，你是正在問當時是否在傳媒有討論這事情.....

李柱銘議員：

.....主席，我要逐項提問的，他就是不肯承認，於是我便問是否 environmental contamination 包括老鼠和蟑螂在內，如果是，你講到貓又有，那麼記者就會想、市民就會想，是否老鼠呢？老鼠帶到貓處嘛！

主席：

對不起，李議員，因為你接着是問：那麼會不會有呢？局長便回答了你“會”。不過，你問題的背後是問，究竟當時傳媒的報道，是有否報道有關老鼠嘛？

李柱銘議員：

是的，如果.....

主席：

.....這不是假設的問題，是事實有還是無呢？

李柱銘議員：

對，就等他回答吧。

主席：

他不是答了你，說他“no recollections of”這些報道？

李柱銘議員：

所以你的“recollection”可能是錯的呢，就是這樣。主席，我知道你是想我快點完結，你以為我不想嗎！

主席：

那你想問甚麼，李議員？

李柱銘議員：

我問了。

主席：

那你繼續有否提問呢？

李柱銘議員：

局長，可不可能你的記憶是錯呢？根本那時已經有人提到老鼠，因為貓已經有出現了，也可能是的。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, certainly, I cannot be absolute. But my recollection is that there were certainly no discussions that stick to my mind about the possibility of rats in the public arena.

李柱銘議員：

你們自己都想到……

主席：

……李議員，如果我們想證明局長是錯的，我們可以翻查所有4月4日至4月17日的剪報，4月17日就一定是有的，因為4月17日是公布了那個調查報告，而是談到老鼠的。那麼究竟局長是否記錯了，在4月4日之前是否有人討論？我們是可以翻查所有的剪報，所以我們不需要在這裏作為事實的……

李柱銘議員：

對不起，主席，你要麼便是現在查問，你如果現在不查問，之後查得到，那我也沒有機會再問了。

主席：

那你接着想問一些甚麼呢？

李柱銘議員：

那我現在問他，是否有可能他根本就搞錯了，有可能已經有人提過老鼠的問題了，這個是完全很fair的question。

主席：

因為你在問……這是兩個問題，有沒有人提過呢？這個一定是有的，他回答了你了。因為如果沒有人提過，是不會做那個investigation的。那如果你問有沒有傳媒……

李柱銘議員：

不是的，主席，可能是他們自己提出的，而不是市民那邊提出的。

主席：

他不就回答了你會有人提出，對嗎？

李柱銘議員：

那現在我就是問市民的angle，你現在就當……因為可能是他們自己——他比市民還緊張……

主席：

但是你想問市民、傳媒、抑或是政府呢？

李柱銘議員：

我們這樣“拗”真是沒有意思的，主席。我浪費得了多少時間呢——你讓我問這個題目？我現在跟你“拗”都已經不止問這個題目的時間了。

主席：

因為主席想弄清楚你的問題是問甚麼，你是想問傳媒、問市民、抑或問政府而已。我想你……

李柱銘議員：

我全部都問，alright？全部都問，你滿意了吧？

主席：

局長。

李柱銘議員：

局長，我本來想問你一樣事情，現在主席迫我問你三樣事情了。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, certainly as far as the Government is concerned, we were looking for all possible causes. So we had considered the roles of rats in transmission. Our thinking at that time, based on the information, was that they were likely to be passive carriers because of the environmental contamination. So like people, they would be contaminating……

李柱銘議員：

好了，謝謝。這是政府的，市民那方面呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

I did not recall any discussion in the public about rats. But as I gave evidence, when we found the coronavirus in cats, we did make this public knowledge for public to know because we thought that the public had a right to know. But at that time, we did not know whether the cats were infected or whether they were just, like the rats, passive carriers.

李柱銘議員：

不是這麼簡單的，局長，你們……政府已經擺放了很多traps去捉老鼠，那麼市民一定知道的，你要和市民合作的。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, this was as I said, part of the environmental measures that were taken because the environmental and hygiene conditions of Amoy Gardens reported to me were not as good as we would like to see it, so we did everything possible.....

李柱銘議員：

對了，那麼你擺放了很多捕鼠籠在那裏，市民就必定會想你們也覺得可能是老鼠，是嗎？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman.....

李柱銘議員：

這是邏輯。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

.....as I said, we had thought of the possibility of rats playing a passive role. So we were trying to clean up the environment.

李柱銘議員：

你說是 passive role 而已，市民怎麼知道是 passive 還是 active 呢？你隨便擺放一些.....

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, yes, I think I would have no way of knowing.....

李柱銘議員：

對了。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

.....Mr Chairman, but certainly this was not something that at that time was discussed intensively in the community, in the media because they were so worried about the whole Amoy Gardens saga. There were no discussions, as far as I remember, in the public arena other than by people like ourselves and Dr NG about the investigations relating to.....

李柱銘議員：

不是的，局長，不可能的，那些記者全部都去到那裏找資料，如果市民知道擺放了那些捕鼠陷阱在那裏，記者必定知道，那大家都會想，老鼠也可能是其中一個因素了。

主席：

對不起，李議員，我真的要停止你問這個問題，因為你都是問回……

李柱銘議員：

那就不要問了，不要問了。算了，算了。這樣是很公道的，主席，現在就是市民——接着下去就問他其他的事情……

主席：

因為那個事實是可以查清楚的。

李柱銘議員：

你說事實查清楚，那現在就去找。我是要問他的，接下來問完了，今天問完了，那然後找到事實，你是否再請局長回來讓我再問呢？

主席：

如果是事實，即是報章有報道，那局長就是錯了，你已經證實到那一點，不需要……

李柱銘議員：

證實他錯了，那我還要問回他，再接續下去，全部事情是有牽連的。

主席：

那他不是回答了你嗎？他不記得傳媒有沒有這個報道——在他的記憶裏面沒有。

李柱銘議員：

那我現在就要證實一點，肯定他講得太單純了，不是這麼簡單……

主席：

所以你現在正在辯論……

李柱銘議員：

……因為你擺放了老鼠的traps在那裏，那麼記者又知道，市民又知道，每一個都知道，那麼大家都會想有可能是老鼠，這些完全是邏輯，主席。

主席：

不過，他每一次都是給你同一個答案。

李柱銘議員：

那就是他錯，就不是我錯。

主席：

那所以……

李柱銘議員：

你就 —— 就是他了，叫他回答。

主席：

他每一次都是給你同一個答案，李議員，所以我建議你在這一部分不要繼續……

李柱銘議員：

我還未曾問到“入肉”，你就說他每一次都是這個答案，主席，這樣我們很難做的。要麼就是表決，其他議員是否准許我這樣問吧。

主席：

對不起，李議員，即如果你只是問究竟他是否錯了，你必定想局長說錯了還是沒有錯，對嗎？

李柱銘議員：

不是的，我現在就告訴你有這個可能性，就是那些記者已經知道，有很大的可能性——記者都知道，所以有討論這個問題，市民又知道，我接着就問，那你政府到那時候為止，仍沒有告訴市民，是老鼠或者不是老鼠。

主席：

是，沒錯，他回答了你了。

李柱銘議員：

他怎樣回答？

主席：

他說沒有。

李柱銘議員：

甚麼沒有？怎麼沒有？現在變了我問你了。他怎樣說沒有？他不是說沒有……

主席：

或者李……

李柱銘議員：

……他說他不記得而已。你自己又搞錯了！我也不想盤問你的，主席。

主席：

李議員，不如你重複一遍你的問題，看一看局長可以怎樣回答你。

李柱銘議員：

我很想返回我的問題的，主席。

主席：

你問吧。

李柱銘議員：

到那時候為止，因為你已經叫人在那裏擺放了捕鼠陷阱，市民一定知道；如果市民知道，記者一定知道；你是否同意我這個邏輯？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, obviously as the Honourable Mr LEE said, the work we had done was very transparent. Setting traps in Amoy Gardens would have been knowledge to the residents there and anyone, that had to be associated and understood what was happening.

李柱銘議員：

是的，所以到那時候為止……但是你們就未有向市民說清楚，或者向記者說清楚：是“不是老鼠，你們不用擔心”，你沒有這樣說。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, obviously……

李柱銘議員：

同意嗎？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, at that time, we talked about the sewer systems, and in Amoy Gardens, the human to human contact and environmental contamination. My recollection is, we did not specifically talk about rats at that stage.

李柱銘議員：

好了，因為你的透明度那麼大，那些捕鼠陷阱，市民知道，記者知道，但是你又沒有清清楚楚地告訴他們，不是老鼠，對吧？

所以市民和記者就繼續會想可能是老鼠，對不對？這個邏輯對不對？同意嗎？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, obviously, at that time it would have been difficult for me to know what each citizen was thinking because I think at that time, we were.....

李柱銘議員：

我沒有告訴你每一個市民怎樣想。即是市民會這樣想——有一些市民會這樣想，有一些記者會這樣想。邏輯而已，局長。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Anything is possible. I mean, that's not a question I can answer. This is a possibility that will occur in anyone's mind, and could occur. But whether it did occur, I am afraid I can't answer.

李柱銘議員：

是了，所以你們不就可能需要大家研究一下，究竟怎樣向市民交代，是否老鼠這個問題呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, at that time, we already had a more plausible explanation for the outbreak in Amoy Gardens. The work for decontamination had been done. As I gave evidence earlier, the evidence pointed to a point source. That meant that it was one event that caused the contamination in Amoy Gardens. Because that event had occurred, we had done the decontamination. That's why the residents in Amoy Gardens were kept in Amoy Gardens because we were of the view – the experts were of the view – that there was no ongoing risk. So there was no question of an ongoing risk to members of Amoy Gardens.

李柱銘議員：

那你即是說，淘大那裏的老鼠已經殺清光了，是嗎？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, no. As I said, the.....

李柱銘議員：

那你怎麼可以說“decontaminated”呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Decontamination in terms of the environment. Because the sources were humans, all the data.....

李柱銘議員：

不對，老鼠你也還不曾排除。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, if the rats are not infected, if there is no source of contamination, the rats will not be contaminated. So, Mr Chairman, I'm trying to explain that the thinking at that time, and even now, is that the source of infection was from people. The people contaminated the rats. So if the people were not infected, the rats would not be contaminated.

李柱銘議員：

那麼如果人傳染了給老鼠，老鼠是否可以再傳染給人呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Exactly. Because the possibility of rats infecting humans was very unlikely, because all the information demonstrated that rats were the victim, not the cause. The rats were like other people, because of the contamination of the sewage system, they became contaminated themselves. So once you had dealt with the sewage problem, the rats will not be infected.

李柱銘議員：

那不單止是sewage的，因為你其他的Block都有，你說來說去—— in a circle。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I'm afraid the difficulties are obviously understanding this from a microbiologist viewpoint is that.....which the Chairman, I mean, what you were trying to clarify is that the difference between what we were saying and what Dr Stephen NG was saying is that.....what we were saying is that if the

rats were not capable, because different species are not infected by other species, so if you have a virus in the person, that's why we.....

李柱銘議員：

局長，我們不要越說越遠了，你現在是否告訴我們，那裏已經.....淘大那個contamination已經全部搞清楚了，是抑或不是？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, at that moment in time, yes.

李柱銘議員：

那即是就算有老鼠也不用怕嗎？還是所有老鼠都死清光了？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

No, I think Mr Chairman. Even if there were rats, they would not be a source of contamination because the rats were contaminated themselves.

李柱銘議員：

怎麼？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Even if there were rats.....

李柱銘議員：

老鼠如果它carry呢？如果它是carrier又怎樣呢？也不要緊嗎？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, the rats were not carriers. I think that's why the Chairman was saying the difference between active and passive carriers.

李柱銘議員：

你是否很清楚老鼠又不是active，又不是passive呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, a passive carrier means that rats will only be infected if there is infectious material there. The infectious material starts from the human beings. So if the human beings are not infected, the rats will not be contaminated; they will not be carriers. So the rats must get it from someone, from the humans.

李柱銘議員：

如果老鼠感染到了就是這樣？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

No, no, Mr Chairman. If rats are not infected, that would be the picture. If the rats were not infected, in Amoy Gardens, there will be no risk of contamination.

李柱銘議員：

那如果那些老鼠是自己感染了又怎樣呢？那就不同了……

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

If the rats were infected, it would obviously have been a different story, and that's why……

李柱銘議員：

那就是了，你到那時候為止，你不可以排除了老鼠被感染的可能性，還未可以排除得到。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, that's why I said that it was unlikely. We were trying to establish that it was unlikely, and continued to be unlikely, because all the evidence pointed that it was not.

李柱銘議員：

對了，那你是否應該告訴那些市民呢？這個當作是好消息吧？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, obviously I think the information had just surfaced relating to the virus. It would always be good, have been good for us, to advise the public on pest control. In fact, we subsequently did advise the public on pest control that they should always be careful about pests in the environment, and that they should make sure that the food, and everything, is protected from cockroaches and rats, etc.

李柱銘議員：

那這一句有甚麼問題呢？第26段第1句：“The discussion then moved on to what to say to the public”。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I don't remember a discussion specifically on what to say to the public because this infers.....

李柱銘議員：

那就是叫他小心，處理那些pests。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, this is a big alarm because we were at that time not discussing the impact. We were discussing the possibility of the, of the.....

李柱銘議員：

局長，怎麼可能——如果有討論過老鼠感染的可能性，而不討論那個後果呢？你覺得這個是很負責任的部長會這樣做的嗎？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, as I said, right through, we already were investigating this passive role. We already knew the possibility. We were trying to establish the passive role. All the evidence pointed to the sewage. Once you dealt with the problem, there was no source of infection. So these were theoretical considerations which Dr NG raised, which we did our best to continue to establish.....that this was unlikely. So, right through, Mr Chairman, we were not convinced that rats played an active role. We had investigations that demonstrated that it was the sewage system that played the major role, that

human to human spread played a secondary role and the contamination, as a result of the sewage, also played a role.

李柱銘議員：

局長，但是你仍然不可以排除老鼠是感染——不可以排除，這個hypothesis仍然存在。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I think I've already given an answer. I cannot give an answer further to what I have said to satisfy Honourable Mr LEE.

李柱銘議員：

不是，你可不可以排除這個hypothesis呢？Yes or no？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, we thought that this was an unlikely hypothesis. We have discussed this on the day before.....

李柱銘議員：

局長，你現在沒有跟我們合作，我問你可不可以排除，我不是說unlikely.....

主席：

對不起，李議員，你之前問了他幾次，他回答過你是不可以排除的了。

李柱銘議員：

那為甚麼現在再問又不肯回答呢？即是那麼簡單的事情.....

主席：

我想大家.....

李柱銘議員：

他因為又“轉”了，主席，他承認了，他說不可以排除，我接着問他，他又說likely了，那我不就要“走番轉頭”，經常就是這樣，是他“走來走去”，不是我“走來走去”。

主席：

那他現在回答了你了……

李柱銘議員：

即是我現在“貓捉老鼠”，他走到哪邊我“捉”到哪邊，你經常說我“走”，其實是他自己在“走”。局長，如果你不可以排除……

主席：

局長，剛才你直接回答了他是不可以排除的吧？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I did say. But that obviously we cannot exclude the possibility. But I would say that it was unlikely. That is not inconsistent, Mr Chairman.

李柱銘議員：

對了，那麼你是否需要告訴市民這件事呢？應不應該說呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, obviously when we have the findings, we would report it to the public. If this had any relevance, and even if it was a carrier or a passive role, you would still inform the public for them to take precautions.

李柱銘議員：

對了，那如果淘大是已經全部decontaminated——你用了這個字，那香港還有很多地區還不曾這樣做到。那你也要告訴市民，究竟老鼠是會還是不會。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, it would then depend on whether the rats were infected or not. So we would need to establish that point first.

李柱銘議員：

局長，市民不管那些老鼠是怎樣的，現在問題是你要告訴市民：防鼠，對不對？

主席：

李議員，你是在問局長是否應該做一些事，抑或在問他當時有沒有討論過——即是如果你返回證供那一部分……

李柱銘議員：

我知道，我先問他應不應該，然後才問他有沒有討論過。

主席：

他回答了你不應該……

李柱銘議員：

怎麼會不應該？他有沒有說不應該？不應該那倒好。

主席：

局長，你不如直接一點回答議員的問題吧。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I'm sorry that if the Honourable Mr LEE thinks I am not helpful. I am really trying to be helpful, honestly.

李柱銘議員：

反而我覺得主席不是很helpful。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

I am trying to establish that even in terms of disclosing to the public the information, we would need to have a basis of two things – whether there is a likelihood that the rats were infected. If the rats were infected, obviously the whole approach would be different. The second – please hear me out, Mr LEE – the second would be that this is, as we thought which would be, just the environmental contamination. So once we establish that, we would then tell the public what they should do. So we need to establish that before we talk to the public. So we would not have discussed the communication to the public until we have established the likelihood of the two things first. That's what I am trying to say.

李柱銘議員：

不是的，局長，那些老鼠會不會感染，你也要告訴市民要防鼠的，是嗎？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I absolutely agree that we would need to do it. But we would discuss what to say to the public after we have established the likelihood first. So what I am saying is that we would not have gone into a detailed discussion of what to say to the public until.....

李柱銘議員：

為甚麼呢？是否因為怕嚇怕他們呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I think, as I said, if this was due to the pests in fact later on we did disclose this to the public, quite soon afterwards on pest control – all the public needed to do was to make sure that they kept their environment clean, that they should be aware that rats could be like people, carry vermin everywhere. If they had family members or households that were infected by SARS, that if the rats also got in touch with the environmental bits – which was unlikely because we didn't see the same environment as SARS – we would give general advice that rats were found to carry this virus, and they were passive and they could, like human beings, also be contaminated by SARS so they need to be very strict about environmental control. But we disclosed that information. If rats were infected by the virus, we would have to look at the overall control procedures. If there is a SARS carrier in the household, the precautions taken would be very different. We would have to relook at the whole infection control. So the message to the public would be very different. So it will be two different scenarios.

李柱銘議員：

那就是因為你不曾決定了，你就要大家去討論，向public說甚麼呢？一是passive，一是active，是怎麼樣向public說呢？所以這一句說話有甚麼問題呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I am just trying to explain that I do not recall that discussion. Dr NG may have talked about it. But in my mind, I would have established whether there was a likelihood of that first. So my main objective would be to

try to find out, as I did from the evidence, through the post-mortems whether there was any likelihood at all of this virus.

李柱銘議員：

局長，請你留心聽一聽這個問題，其實active跟passive你也要告訴市民，他做的提防工作是不同，但你也要告訴他，不需要告訴他的嗎？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I agree. I completely agree with the Honourable Mr LEE. But I am saying that, based on my own thinking, the main concern would have been to establish the likelihood of.....the reasons for that first before we went into discussion of how to tell the public.

李柱銘議員：

好了，如果是active和passive，在市民那方面的預防工作會有甚麼不同呢？主要那方面，一個“大”的方面有甚麼不同呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

It would have been very different, Mr Chairman.

李柱銘議員：

告訴我幾個“大”的不同點。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

If it was passive, the general measures should be sufficient, as we did. We will inform the public that the rats, like cats and humans, if they came into infectious material, could contaminate the environment. They would need to clean the environment, which they were already doing during the SARS outbreak. That's why the emphasis was environmental hygiene. So the rats would have been just part and parcel of that picture. There would be nothing specific except obviously, it is always good to de-rat the place. They have an alertness of that. And to keep the household food away from pests which in fact we should do on a daily basis anyway.....so to alert the public that to reinforce that message.

李柱銘議員：

如果active呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

If the rats were infected, we would have to look in terms of, as Dr NG said, how many days they were infected, whether the rats would then be passing the infections to humans. If the rats are infected – we don't now, because there is no animal model. So far, even in the academic research, there has been no published papers, my understanding is, relating to the ability to infect rats. So if rats were infected, we would need to know how they were infected, the likelihood of infection, whether the rats, when they were infected, would excrete the virus. If they do, in what form, and how this could be, have an impact in the overall perpetuation of infection to the public. But certainly, we would alert the public of this possibility. In our measures, we would be very, very cautious relating to the roles of rats in places where there was similar circumstance as Amoy Gardens, if the rats could be infected by the sewage system. Because the sewage system decontamination.....

李柱銘議員：

等一等，你記得我問些甚麼？我現在問你如果那些老鼠是感染了，是active的時候，市民應該做一些甚麼防禦工作？你不要越說越遠，局長。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I was saying that we then lead to the whole chain of events of understanding how the rats could then.....whether they were the risks. Certainly the risks would be higher than if the rats were just contaminated like human beings.

李柱銘議員：

即是否你也未曾想得通？你也未曾想得通市民要做甚麼才可以預防呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, the difficulties are of course you need to understand the circumstances. If the rats were contaminated, we would have to make sure that we catch all the rats. We would have to understand the risks to human beings because it is a theoretical possibility. That's why I was saying that it would be very difficult for us to have a long, prolonged discussion on that issue, on the basis of this theoretical possibility because we would have to ask about the other questions before we could talk about the measures.

李柱銘議員：

不是，局長，如果你不知道，未想得到，就說不知道便可以了，我現在是在問你，如果是真的是active的時候，市民要怎樣對付呢？怎樣應付呢？要採取一些甚麼特別的行動呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, with due respect, Mr LEE, I was really trying to be helpful. I was trying to explain that if the rats were infected, there would be a lot of other very complex questions that we would be asking before we talked about.....

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

But I am not interested in the questions. I am interested in the answers. How would you have advised the public? That's all.

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, it's exactly how my mind function. That's why in that discussion it would not have been a detailed discussion of what to tell the public because I would have asked a lot of the other questions before I would advise the public.

主席：

或者是否可以嘗試一下這樣問，局長，是否你剛才說你不是.....因為如果牠真是一個active的carrier，就要先知道了剛才全部問題的答案，你才知道怎樣去advise the public，你的意思是否這樣？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

I would certainly be asking all those questions first.

Chairman：

Before you can.....

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Before I would decide, I would ask those questions: what is the likelihood that the infection is going to be transmitted to man. I would ask the laboratory. Rather than saying what I would do to the public, my chain of thinking would be

asking the laboratory and the virologist to tell me what are the likelihoods that this could be infected to man.

Chairman :

So, in other words, before having answers to those questions, you would not be able to advise the public.....

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

No, no, Mr Chairman, no. My first reaction would be to ask these questions and not to say: what we should tell the public. So, I would try to get as much information as possible at that point in time from the experts, and try to get that information before I decide what to tell the public. What I am trying to say is that I would have not discussed what to do with the public at that stage. If there was a possibility, I would have asked about all those questions. Of course, if there was a possibility and there were no answers to those, or one or two answers, then I would know.....it would give me an idea as to how better I could inform the public. What I am trying to establish to Mr LEE is that I would have not gone into a discussion on what to tell the public before I enter into a discussion of the risks to the public.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

I hope you think it makes, it is making sense but you are not, with respect to you. 主席問你的題目很簡單而已，是否你要取得你所問的問題的答案，你才可以告訴那些“普羅大眾”，應該做一些甚麼預防措施，那你要麼就是，要麼就不是。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, to answer the Chairman's question, the answer is "no". But I am trying to help Mr LEE in terms of understanding this discussion, to accept the evidence, the likelihood of my discussion in this statement. I was saying that my initial questions would be: not what to say to the public, but all the risks to the public first before I talk about the risks.

李柱銘議員：

好了，局長，你既然——主席的問題你回答了不是，即是不需要取得答案，你也可以給市民一些忠告，教他們怎樣做。那我現在就問你，你叫他怎樣做呢？我就從頭到尾都是問這個題目而已，你在跟我們打圈子。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I was saying that we would have thought about all these possibilities at that time. I haven't even thought about this issue because we have not had to face this issue. If this issue really arose, I would ask those questions. If I still had no answers, obviously I would have to inform the public that there was this possibility.....

李柱銘議員：

那又怎樣呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, then we need to inform the public obviously of the.....

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Inform them of what, of what to do? How would you, how would you tell the public what to do? That's the question.

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, we have not discussed this issue, I mean, that's why I cannot even answer you now, simply because the issue never arose.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Well, according to Dr NG the issue already arose because Dr Paul SAW had been discussing with him.

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Well, Mr Chairman, that's why I cannot answer because this is consistent with what I am saying. The issue never arose. We never discussed it. So I cannot give an answer now because it is an issue I would think about before I answer you. It is a complex issue. It is exactly because we did not discuss it that I cannot give an answer now.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Well, I suggest to you, from what you have said to us, clearly, you ought to have discussed what to tell the public, having got the knowledge that you had at the time.

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, we did tell the public based on the information that we were able to establish that the rats were like passive carriers. So, subsequent to the post-mortem findings as we found in the cats, we presented the information to the public that we found this coronavirus in the rat droppings and cockroaches because it was not just in rats. We found it in cockroaches, we found it in rats, we found it in cats. Dr NG was not interested in the cockroaches. In our discussion, I remember, we did discuss that we found it in cockroaches as well. The evidence was that all these were environmental contamination. So all the evidence at that time was that this was environmental contamination. Rats were, like the cats and cockroaches that picked up the infection like humans from the environment, contaminated environment in Amoy Gardens.

李柱銘議員：

你們是甚麼時候才告訴市民，怎樣對付那些老鼠的？甚麼時候？給我一個日子，謝謝。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I can give you the actual dates later. But based on the information that we had, on the 7th of April, we developed guidelines on disinfection of households; it covered inspection, immediate cleansing of pest infestation such as rodent droppings, cockroaches in segment pipes. I think if Members are interested, I can give you the exact dates when we disclosed this to the public. But I do not recall the exact date at this point in time.

李柱銘議員：

那麼4月7日是……你給了我們一個日子——4月7日，不是那個日子嗎？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

That was just the information on our guidelines. But it is not the information on when we actually informed the public.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

So it should be later, not earlier, right?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

It would have been around that time, Mr Chairman, I would imagine.

李柱銘議員：

我說會比4月7日遲，就不會比4月7日早，對嗎？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

I cannot answer that, Mr Chairman.

李柱銘議員：

你在4月7日才有guidelines。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, the guidelines would have been about the same time, as I said.

李柱銘議員：

不會……guidelines一定會比你發給市民的通告早吧，是嗎？還是你說給了市民忠告然後才有guidelines呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

It would have been about the same time.

李柱銘議員：

一起的？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

It would have been a very small difference.

李柱銘議員：

好了，那如果說4月7日，我們現在所說的，在開的這個會就是在4月5日，那很可能就是在4月5日討論的，對吧？然後4月7日就有guidelines發出。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I think that forum was not a forum to discuss our communication to the public. Dr NG was there to provide insights to us. He was not part of our team that looked at the overall control programme.

李柱銘議員：

為甚麼不可以在那天討論呢？他又是專家，大家討論開這件事，大家討論開老鼠，Dr SAW又在那裏討論老鼠，為甚麼你在那天一定不會討論呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, as I said, that meeting was an ad-hoc one arranged to get insights from Dr NG. Dr NG might have talked about these things. But if we had wanted to discuss the messages to the public, I am saying that, that would not have been the forum for us to do it from the Government's perspective.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Why not?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Because Government would have to look at what measures to tell. I would have to discuss with our Information Services Department; it would be Miss Yvonne CHOI because she is responsible for the information dissemination.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Well, that's this actual mechanics as to how to convey the message to the public. But surely you ought to discuss with the experts, and at the time including Dr NG as to what you should tell, how you would advise the public.

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I'm sorry, my focus was to establish the likelihood. I would not have gone into in-depth discussion with Dr NG on what to tell the public.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Because you didn't trust him?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, not that I did not trust him or distrust him or trust him. I had only got to know Dr NG just two days before.....

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Was there a single reason why that could not have been discussed in his presence?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, we brought him in because – we even told him the information about the rats – we tried to get inputs. But I am just saying that in my way of doing things, I would have not discussed it in depth at that meeting. I mean, he might have brought it up. But my recollection, Mr LEE, I hope you just accept this as my recollection, I am trying to establish the likelihood of any in-depth discussion. It would not have been an in-depth discussion. We may have some cursory discourses, and I am trying to establish that I do not recall that discussion.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Alright. So, paragraph 26 should start with this sentence: “There was a cursory discussion on what to say to the public”?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I do not recall that. I am just saying that there might, I cannot exclude that possibility but my recollection is that my focus.....

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Thank you, that’s good enough. So you could not exclude that possibility: that’s the first sentence, right?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Obviously, I can’t exclude that possibility.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Thank you. That’s all I want to know. Alright. Let’s continue. “We all agreed that it would create a big alarm if the public were told that rats spread SARS at Amoy Gardens”. That’s right, isn’t it? It would, it would indeed create a big alarm if the public were told that rats spread SARS at Amoy Gardens.

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, certainly my recollection is we did not discuss that. Certainly I do not recall that we all agreed because I don't even remember that discussion.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

But if the public were told that rats spread SARS at Amoy Gardens, it would create a big alarm, yes or no?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Well, it depends on the mode of spread, Mr Chairman. I mean, certainly there would be a lot of alarm and concern in the public if rats were spreading SARS.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Thank you. Now, Dr NG went on to say "After some discussion, Dr YEOH suddenly suggested an alternative was not to tell the public anything and just concentrate on killing rats".

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I would absolutely refute that because my concern would be public health. If the public was not informed, they could not help us in combating the outbreak.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

What about the last part of the sentence "just concentrate on killing cats". That's exactly what you were doing, isn't it?

Chairman :

"killing rats"

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

"killing rats"

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I think all the evidence, if Members look at, will see that this is inconsistent. Even when the cats were PCR positive, we informed the public.

So whatever possibilities, we tried, we gave the information to the public in the most transparent way.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

No, of course, you can't kill the cats, but you can kill the rats, right?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, it would be very difficult to kill all the rats in Hong Kong. I think it would be extremely difficult because I think it's.....

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

No, we are not talking about Hong Kong, we are talking about rats in Amoy Gardens, surely, in this context.

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, if the rats were infected and of course, if they were, a way of transmission of coronavirus, it would have been an impact on not just Amoy Gardens. So if the rats were infected, we would certainly alert the public because the measures that were taken would have been taken right across the whole Hong Kong.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Yeah, and if that is so, that would create a big alarm, right?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, if the rats were the cause of the spread, obviously there would be concern and alarm in the public.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Thank you. But wasn't that your policy at that time to kill all the cats.....

Chairman :

All the rats.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

.....all the rats in Amoy Gardens.

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, because we were.....

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Yes or no, please.

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

We were trapping rats. We were not killing all the rats because there is no way that we can kill all the rats because the rat problem.....

主席：

局長，我相信足夠了，你回答了，即是你沒有一個政策去殺清光所有老鼠。

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

No.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Now, did you use poison to kill the rats apart from traps?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I was.....

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Yes or no, please.

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

No, I am trying to answer Mr LEE as honestly as I can. My recollection is that we talked about trapping rats to Mr YUEN, that was my recollection.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

So there was no policy to kill the rats, simply to trap them?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

The pest department did both things – they gave poisons and they also trapped. But my instruction to them was really to trap the rats.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

So they acted contrary to your instructions because they actually put poison to kill them?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Well, Mr Chairman, they did poison rat. But rat poisons are also limited in their action in terms of eliminating rats. So my instructions to them were to do the rat de-infestation. In particular, I was concerned about trapping more rats to do the studies. So my instruction was not specific in terms of whether they poison rats or not. They continued with their rat de-infestation but to focus on trapping rats so we could do more studies.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Why didn't you tell them not to give poison? Because the poison would kill rats.

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I did not ask them not to give poisons. I am not a rat expert. I left it to the experts to deal with the problem. So I do not recall the instructions one way or another.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

But just now, you gave me the answer that you told them not to kill the rats, but to trap the rats.

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

No, no. I think, Mr Chairman, what I said was I gave them two instructions – one is to de-infest rats; but I did not give instructions how to do it. The other instruction was to trap rats so we could do more studies.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

But Dr YEOH, you said, you gave me this answer: you instructed them not to kill the rats but to trap them. That's why I asked you whether they failed to carry out your instructions when they put poison there.

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

No, Mr Chairman.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

That's how it arose.

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

I think that was an incomplete recall of what I said. I think my instruction, my specific instruction, was for them to catch rats, trap rats for our studies to make sure that we had more rats that we could study whether they were infected. The second thing was for them to do their work in de-infestation, both rats and cockroaches. So, we knew that cockroaches were infected, they were also contaminated by.....

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

But Dr YEOH, once they use poison, the poison would kill not only cockroaches but also rats, yes or no?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, there are different poisons you use for different species.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

So, did you know what sort of poison they used?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I am not familiar with.....I only know that Warfarin is used but I know there are other types of rat poisons. But I am not familiar with them.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Did you tell them they mustn't kill the rats, they should only trap them, yes or no?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I did not give them specific instructions. I just said I gave them two instructions – one was to trap rats for our studies, and second was to deal with the rat problem. And I left it to them.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Let's continue with this paragraph "He thought", that is you, you "thought that it would make no difference whether the public was informed as long as the Government was doing all it could to eliminate rats". Did you say that?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Absolutely not, Mr Chairman.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

“He further suggested stopping all rat investigations since positive findings would have to be disclosed to the public.” Did you say that?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Absolutely not, Mr Chairman.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

“On the other hand, ‘if you don’t do anything, there is nothing to tell’.”
“唔做就唔駛講” Did you say that?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Absolutely not.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

“And he could not be accused of withholding information”. Did you say that?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Absolutely not.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

“The rat hypothesis could be downplayed as just one of the many possibilities as long as there was no confirmation”. Did you say that?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Absolutely not.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

So he told a number of lies about you.

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I cannot comment on Dr NG’s statements. I just say that I never made these statements.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Well, if he said that you made them, then clearly he was telling a lie.

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, that's Members' judgment.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

But it must be a matter of logic because you are so convinced that you never said them.

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Well, it's up to Members, Mr Chairman.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

I see. Next paragraph: "Objections were raised by some members of the group. Dr Thomas TSANG remarked that it had never been possible to keep anything in the Department of Health secret and that the press was already asking questions on the results of tests on pests". Now, let's split this sentence into two parts. First part – "Dr Thomas TSANG remarked that it had never been possible to keep anything in the Department of Health secret." Did he say that?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

I don't recall Dr TSANG saying that, Mr Chairman.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Second part: did he say, "the press was already asking questions on the results of tests on pests."? Yes or no?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

I don't recall that, Mr Chairman.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

So he might have said it?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Yes, he could have. I don't recall.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Thank you. “Dr YEOH then said that all those persons should keep the rat findings confidential”. And you told that, our colleague, the Honourable Cyd HO that you may have asked that of Dr NG, right?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Yes, that’s correct, Mr Chairman.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

“I said that even if it were possible to keep it secret in Hong Kong, scientists”, that is Dr NG now saying, he said that “even if it were possible to keep it secret in Hong Kong, scientists from other places would eventually find out the truth if the rat hypothesis was correct.” Did he say that?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, certainly I do not accept that there were any objections. We had no intention of keeping it secret in Hong Kong. So what follows with, in my recollection, is not what was discussed at the meeting.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Alright. So these objections were ignored, and you say there were no objections.

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Because we didn’t discuss this, so there were no objections. I do not agree with the statement that “objections were raised by some members of the group” in the starting of paragraph 27.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

“Dr SAW mentioned that Dr Trevor”, that is ELLIS, “was already on his way to perform autopsies on four rats. Dr YEOH then sent someone to call Dr ELLIS to stop the autopsies.” Is that correct or not?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

That’s absolutely incorrect, Mr Chairman, because as I said in my evidence, that it was I who instructed Dr Trevor ELLIS to do the post-mortems at the meeting.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

So, “Dr Trevor, that is ELLIS, could not be reached on the phone at that time.” Did you ever try to reach him?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, all those three statements are incorrect. Obviously, the third statement would not apply if we didn’t send someone to stop him to do the autopsies.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Because you wanted him to do them.

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

I wanted him to do them.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Alright. So, paragraph 28. “I”, that is Dr NG “raised the point that rats could never be completely eliminated and suggested that all other residents of Amoy Gardens be evacuated under the same pretext as Block E residents.” So let’s break it up into two parts. Did he raise the point that rats could never be completely eliminated?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, yes. Certainly Dr NG was of the view that rats could be a possible source, an active source.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

And could never be eliminated?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Never eliminated in the context, the rats could never be completely eliminated.....I think that was a fact that we already knew.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Yes. So the second part: did he suggest that all other residents of Amoy Gardens be evacuated?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I do not recall that discussion.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

But surely Dr NG's attitude was that rats were responsible, at least for some of the damage done to the residents. Is that right? He was of that view, rightly or wrongly?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, yes.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

So it will follow logically that he would have advised you to evacuate the rest of the residents on his theory, right?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, that's, that's logical, yes.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

And "Dr YEOH said he did not have the facilities to house so many people". That is a fact, isn't it?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I did not say that.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Alright, let's read on first. "T", that is Dr NG, "asked the possibility of using empty public housing flats but I was told that these were not furnished and not ready for occupation – no electricity, no water, that sort of thing." Is that correct?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

No, Mr Chairman, I do not recall those discussions. In the early discussions in the Chief Executive's Steering Committee, the Home Affairs Department had been asked to identify these accommodation for thousands of people. So they were looking at public housing flats, holiday camps, and looking at how ready these places were. So, I do not recall we discussed this in the meeting with Dr NG. But certainly we had been looking at these issues.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

And certainly the statements themselves were correct, the facts were correct, that is the empty public housing flats were not furnished and so on, right?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Yes. I think they were not furnished but in the context of if we needed them. I remember the discussions that we would have to do makeshift things if there was a necessity. We were looking at contingencies because some of these things would be difficult to plan. If you had to move people out, there was a risk. You would have to deal with it under any circumstances. So it was just finding four walls and a roof for people first.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

But there was no electricity, no water in these flats?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, if we needed to move people out.....

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

.....you would still move them?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

We would still move them. It would not have been a consideration.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

But then it is true that you already knew that many of those empty public housing flats had no electricity and no water, right?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, in fact, I was aware that some of them.....a lot of these things could be done quite quickly. The furnishing is the major problem. I think in terms of the electrical supply and the water supplies, they would not have been too big a problem because most of these flats would have been connected already. It was in terms of the furnishing and the densities. But if there was a risk to the residents, this would not have been a consideration. You would have to move them to an open air ground or tents, if necessary.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Yes, so you already knew that there were quite a few empty public housing flats, but they were not ready for occupation?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Not ready for the usual occupation, if we wanted to do it in an orderly way.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

But do you agree that you got to know these facts in previous meetings where Dr NG was not there, right?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Yes, Mr Chairman.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

So, if you had not told him, if people had not told him, he would not have known this. Is that correct?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

I really don't know, Mr Chairman. Obviously it's very obvious that for empty public housing flats, anyone would know that they are not ready for occupation tomorrow. This would be common knowledge.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

You mean Dr NG would know that there are a lot of empty public housing flats?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

I'm sure this is common knowledge, Mr Chairman, that there are a lot of these Home Ownership Scheme flats which Government has not sold.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

What is not public knowledge is that people may think they are already furnished because people wouldn't know. I wouldn't know.

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Well, I think, Mr Chairman, this is obviously an opinion.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

No, it's not an opinion. Unless Dr NG had been told, you won't expect him to know this, that's what I am suggesting to you.

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

No, Mr Chairman, if you asked me, I would have expected him to know.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Oh, I see. Why?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Because this is common knowledge.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Why common knowledge?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

It's just common sense.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Common sense that these flats were not furnished?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

I am talking about the Home Ownership Scheme. For all those Home Ownership Schemes, they are sold to the public. So they were not sold as furnished apartments. So they would naturally not be furnished.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Well, this is talking about public housing flats, empty public housing flats.

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, obviously I think in terms of the terminology.....

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

It's not Home Ownership, is it?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, obviously it is the terminology used. But in my context, it is public knowledge that Home Ownership Scheme flats were not sold by Government. So a lot of people know that they are empty.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

No, the public housing flats, would they be furnished?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

It depends on what you mean by public housing flats, Mr Chairman. But I leave it to Members, Mr Chairman, I have just given my view.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Public housing flats surely is not Home Ownership Scheme that sort of thing.

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I have given my view. Whether Members accept it or not, it's really up to Members.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

But you say that it is public knowledge. That is where I am challenging you.

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Yes, Mr Chairman, I stand ready to be challenged. But I have made the statement.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Alright. And then "Dr YEOH then said that 'for the sake of the majority, some people have to be sacrificed' (為咗顧全大局，有人係要犧牲)." And you deny categorically having said that?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Yes, Mr Chairman, absolutely. I never made this statement at any point in time, before, after, or during the outbreak to anyone because I would have never thought about this. It would be inconceivable that I would even think of this.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

But surely you have a very important role to play. Sometimes important and very difficult decisions have to be made because if you cannot cater for everyone, then you go for the majority, wouldn't you, as a public officer?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, in my training as a doctor, each life is sacrosanct and I would do my best to save each person. I would not, for one moment in time, consider that they are trade-offs.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Not trade-off, but if you can't help it. I put the same question to Dr NG, I said: "if you were, if you were in Dr YEOH's shoes and you have got to consider, what are you going to do?" And then he said, "I can understand his problem". He said "if the economy of Hong Kong were to completely collapse as a result of the fear of rats and so on, then he would be thinking of people committing suicide as a result of that and then there may be more people committing suicide than people dying of SARS and I could perfectly understand that." That's how he put it to us, right?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, Dr NG may understand that I would not, I would absolutely not consider that at any point.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

So he completely concocted a lie against you, a vicious lie.

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I don't know the evidence as given, why he has made these statements, whether his recollections were inaccurate, I cannot, I am afraid, speculate on his motives or his motivations, etc. I just want to state categorically that I did not make this statement because I would feel very strongly about it. It would absolutely be not something that I would even dream about doing. If I had to do it, I would not be in my job.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Indeed, then you would be very angry if people said that you said it?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Exactly, Mr Chairman. I am absolutely furious.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

That is why, that is why that was a lie.

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Well, Mr Chairman, I think this is up to Members to make up your minds. I do not wish to pass any judgments. I just want to make a statement for myself.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Could that be growing from a misunderstanding?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

I cannot understand why there should be.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

So it was not a misunderstanding and that was deliberate, then it must be a lie.

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

I cannot, Mr Chairman, I have already stated my position. I do not wish to comment because I do not understand Dr NG, and I do not understand these statements. How they were derived, whether they were due to his recollections which were inaccurate or whatever reasons, I do not wish to speculate.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Next paragraph: “I mentioned that I”, “I”, that is Dr NG, “mentioned that at least we should warn people to keep their household rat-safe by closing windows and covering their food” Did he say that?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I cannot remember these discussions. I think, certainly in the general context of rat control – what we need to do, we may have considered that but I think certainly closing windows was one of the issues relating to the – I can’t understand about this closing windows because the rats really were going up in the drainage system. I remember Mr YUEN talking about how rats travel

within the flats and going up the pipes, etc. So I don't recall these specific discussions and he could have talked about it but I do not have a recall on it.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

But some rats would go through windows, wouldn't they?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Maybe, Mr Chairman, that's why I am saying I am not the rat expert. So I do not have strong recollections of these issues because my main concern at that time, as I said, was trying to confirm that rats were an unlikely cause. So I did not have pre-occupation with these things.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

But covering food, covering food, it would be good advice for people to cover up their food, right?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Yes, absolutely, yes.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

And so closing windows and covering food would be good advice as far as rats are concerned, right?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

But for the ventilation systems, it would have been quite detrimental because we were postulating the negative effects of the window fans. So closing windows would cause this negative pressure and it would perpetuate the problem of the sewage problem in Amoy Gardens. So closing windows would not be something that we would consider very likely.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

I mean, even the bedroom, closing the bedroom window would not be good?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, obviously if you close windows, you would want to close all the windows and.....

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

So if there is air-conditioning, closing windows with air-conditioning in the rooms?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I'm sorry but I'm afraid that I do not recall those discussions. These were the things that Dr NG said. I do not refute them but I do not recall that we had discussions.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

But you are no expert on this sort of thing, right?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

I'm not an expert, certainly. But if we needed the experts, we had Mr YUEN who was the expert.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

I remember one witness already told us that it would be a good idea to close windows.

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

I'm not sure which witness gave that. But certainly my colleague, Dr Sarah LIAO, was very concerned about closing windows because in the bathrooms, there would be this negative pressure that would suck the droplets from the sewage system.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

So even if you pour water on the U-tube you still have to open the windows.

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Well, if you pour water, obviously you would not have that problem. But at that time we were worried that people were not actually following the instructions. So the risk of closing the windows, the bathroom windows, would be significant because we had established that as a possible source of contamination, whereas the rat was a theory which Dr NG was pursuing.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Now, paragraph 30, you already said: you did not, you did not say that. Paragraph 31 “T”, that is Dr NG, “sensed the compliment”. No, I better put this to you in the context. Dr NG said that you had said to him, “not everyone has a broad overview like you” and then he went on in paragraph 31 to say that “that appeared to be a subtle nudge to coax him into silence”. You read that, right?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Yes.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

That is why he said “I found myself faced with a dilemma as on one hand, I did not want to breach my promise of confidentiality but on the other, I felt duty-bound to warn the public of potential danger. I decided that the only honest thing to do was to extricate myself from further involvement in official investigations and to remain an independent observer. So I told Dr YEOH that since there was nothing further for me to do, I would terminate my involvement with the investigation.” Now, the whole thing, are you saying that every sentence there is not true?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I said that I might have, I probably asked the people present to keep the confidentiality as I said, but certainly I did not, this is his sense, I cannot comment on the sense.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Yes, fair enough, yes.

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

And to extricate himself from further involvement and remain as an independent observer, because as I said, Dr NG was not a researcher. We invited him to see whether he could contribute insights to our outbreak in Amoy Gardens. We presented our findings to see whether he could provide insights. That was the essence of Dr NG’s involvement. We had no, we had no plans to involve Dr NG in any other way. So there was no question of terminating the arrangement because there was no arrangement. We had invited him to see whether he could provide insights and that was the extent of his involvement. There was never any intention.....because Dr NG was not a researcher – he was not active in this area of work – so we were trying to get people that could

provide insights. So there was never question of terminating any arrangement because he was never commissioned by the Government to do any work.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Alright. And then you went on, well, according to him, “Dr YEOH said that I could”, that is “Dr NG could” “if he wanted to stay to look at some other data. I”, that is “Dr NG”, “thanked you but declined. I left the meeting at around noon while the rest stayed to discuss the report of the Chief Executive.” And you say that is not true?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I certainly don’t recall that I said that he could stay to look at some other data. I don’t know what data he was talking about because we had no other data present.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

What about the post-mortem data?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

The data was not present. The post-mortem was being done by Dr ELLIS and in fact, the information wasn’t available till late that evening.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

And, now, he then talked about other things, paragraph 32, he said “After mulling over the issues during the weekend, I wrote a letter to Dr YEOH on the 7th of April urging him not to give up the rat investigations.” Do you remember receiving such a letter?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, yes, I remember the letter.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

And that is, if you look at Appendix 3 – but before you do that, you look at his CV. It runs through many pages. Just glance through it if you would.

Chairman :

That is Appendix 1.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Appendix 1, yes. And look at the Research Awards, that sort of thing and Publications. He wrote quite a lot. Is that right and on diverse fields?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I'm afraid I cannot comment on his academic qualifications. Certainly there are journals. But when you look at journals, they were usually in America. Obviously they are involved in a lot of research. So this would not be a very, necessarily, a very impressive list because, in America, there is a great access to research. And Dr NG.....also in terms of what people looked at in research papers is: the type of journals, whether you are first author, how frequently the papers are put. So it would be difficult for me to comment. But certainly he has journal publications and he has been involved with research.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

But diverse fields.

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, certain theses in public health mainly.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Alright, now, Appendix 3, you have read that before, haven't you?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I read it. I think, when I got it, I passed it on to my colleague, Dr LO, to communicate with Dr NG to let him know that we were continuing with our work. So I did not reply to him. I gave it to my colleagues in the Bureau.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Second paragraph: "whether rats are the cause or the result of the initial outbreak at Amoy Gardens, it is important for control of future outbreaks." Do you agree with that?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, certainly if rats were the cause of the initial outbreak, it certainly is important, yes.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

And, I don't want to read too much into the record. You read the rest of the second paragraph please.

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Yes, I have read it.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Do you agree that what is suggested makes good sense?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, in fact we did study the rats. So in fact, I asked my colleague to tell him what we were doing just to assure him that we were not ignoring the problem.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

And third paragraph?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

This was already done in the Amoy Gardens because this was what the Department of Health already started to do – the case control studies.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Next paragraph: for prevention, talked about closing windows at night.

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, as I said, at that time, we were having the evidence that the rats.....because by the time we got this letter, we already have the post-mortem findings and then more information surfaced. At post-mortem, the laboratory also did tests of the specimens to see whether there was virus in the rats themselves, and they were negative. So the initial information reaffirmed that rats were not an active, were not actively infected.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

And then he talked about his hypothesis in the next paragraph.

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I think we all knew that the contamination occurred in the sewers. It's a question of whether the rats were infected or not, which was the crucial question.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

And in next paragraph he said that "epidemiological work on this outbreak must continue at full speed since we have a responsibility to ourselves and the rest of the world community." You agree with that?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Absolutely, Mr Chairman.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

And "WHO is eagerly watching and waiting for our results."

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, the WHO was part of our investigations. They were involved in all the investigations in Amoy Gardens. So the Amoy Gardens team that was doing the investigations had WHO team members present. So this question of keeping the information about rats never arose because we already had the international members of the community having access to the knowledge about rats. That's why the information that's provided is contrary to our facts that the WHO members were already part of the Department of Health team that did the investigation at Amoy Gardens and were aware of the findings in the rats.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Next sentence: "Our neighbours in China and South-east Asia shall benefit greatly from our experience." Do you agree with that?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Absolutely, Mr Chairman.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Now, next sentence. "We have a lead time in this fight and we must not waste it. While I know there are political and administrative difficulties that I may not comprehend, I think 'see no evil' is greater a moral lapse than 'say no evil'. Moreover, researchers in other countries may soon find out what we have

found.” Now, that would be a rather curious thing to say if he did not mention those things which you say he did not at the meeting with you.

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

I don't understand, Mr Chairman.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

He seems to be at least hinting that there is “see no evil” and then “say no evil”.

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Well, I cannot comment on this, Mr Chairman. Certainly I do agree that all the previous statements.....I am not even sure we have a lead time in this fight. I mean there was no lead time in our fight against SARS. I would even disagree with that because the lead time would be before the infection emerged. So in fact there was no lead time. I don't even agree with that statement.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

No, but I suppose in the sense that Hong Kong was in a better position than the rest of the world to investigate whether or not the hypothesis makes sense or not?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I think we had been looking at all possibilities. So I think certainly this is not consistent with what we were doing and my recollection of the discussions.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Yes, but if Hong Kong was able to either establish the hypothesis or demolish it, then it would be good for the rest of the world.

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Certainly, Mr Chairman, that's in fact what we did. We continued to investigate this hypothesis, this remote possibility. And as we did more and more work, it was even more and more remote.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

See the last three lines in that paragraph “While I know there are political and administrative difficulties”, were there political administrative difficulties as far as you were concerned?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, certainly not in the context of what Dr NG was referring to, I mean, the inference.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

When he says “ ‘see no evil’ is a greater moral lapse than ‘say no evil’”, he was hinting at something, wasn’t he?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

That may be his perception, Mr Chairman.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

You obviously did not agree with that?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Absolutely not, Mr Chairman.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Then he ended up by congratulating the dedication and hard work of your team. “They have accomplished a lot in the last few weeks. I would be happy as always to assist in any further work that needs to be done.” Now.....

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, may I honestly point that the last sentence that “researchers in other countries may soon find out what we have found”.....As I said, the World Health Organization team was part of the team. So it would not have been a question to find out what they already knew. The last paragraph is inconsistent to the allegations he made about us.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

But it is true that researchers in other countries may soon find out.

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

But, Mr Chairman, it's the implication of that last few statements which is inconsistent with the reality: the objective evidence that the World Health Organization team was already in Hong Kong as part of the Department of Health team and had the information relating to the rats.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Yes, but "researchers in other countries may soon find out what we have found". Now, it is suggested that we have found something already, right? And that you were not talking about it. That's why early he said "see no evil" and then talk about "say no evil".

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Well, Mr Chairman, I leave Members to come to conclusions.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Of course, we will come to a conclusion. But you see, apart from saying that certain things were said by him and by you at the meeting, he also followed up in this letter with this curious paragraph – and very curious indeed if what he said did not take place.

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, it is also curious then he ends up by congratulating the hard work and dedication. If there was a concern relating to my sacrificing the members of the public and the accusation of my having made that, if I were the person that was involved, I would blow the whistle right away. It would be very unconceivable that I would be permitted to get away with such a statement for one year. If I was concerned about the impact on the public, nothing would stop me from telling the public or at least telling the Chief Executive, Mr TUNG, or at least tell the academic community or at least make an attempt to inform someone of this terrible – it's really terrible – work that this accusation. It's so inconceivable, it's so terrible if I were guilty of any of the things he said, Mr LEE. I do not deserve any of these questions. Certainly, I would not, I wouldn't expect a person to congratulate the dedication and hard work.....

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

"of your team"

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Yes, but Mr LEE, it would be inconceivable that I would permit that person to get away with it at that moment in time because it would have been absolutely crucial for the public to really understand the threat to them.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

But can't you understand it this way that on the one hand, he heard you say certain things as he suggested in his statement but on the other hand, for the sake of the interest of human, the humankind, he wanted you to get on with the thing. He didn't want to accuse you too much. He wanted you to continue with the work.

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, if there was a risk.....this talks about research. It's not a question of research. It's a question of taking the appropriate actions to protect the public if there was a risk of the public being infected. The research would follow subsequently. I would not be talking about all these things about the research. I would be very, very concerned about the risk to the public.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

But you say you read this letter at the time, didn't you?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Yes, Mr Chairman.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Before you passed it to somebody else to reply, is that right?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Yes, Mr Chairman, I read the letter. I looked at it, and in that letter, except for this strange paragraph, I got the impression that he thought we were not going on with our investigations. And I asked my colleague, Dr LO, to inform him that we were serious about the investigations and we were continuing with them.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

So you asked Dr LO to reply to him?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

I asked Dr LO to deal with it, yes.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Did you tell Dr LO what to say in the reply?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, Dr LO was at the meeting as well and Dr LO was also aware of the investigations. I said to Dr LO that maybe Dr NG didn't come away with the meeting understanding that we would be continuing with the investigations. To assure him that we were pursuing the work and to let him know also of the findings.....By the time I got the letter, I already had the findings from the post-mortem and there was no evidence that the rats were actively infected. So I gave him the update, I asked Dr LO to give him the most updated information of our work.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

By phone?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

I don't know whether.....I don't think we replied in a letter. I think Dr LO phoned him to tell him the results and the information.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Well, did you tell Dr LO about your unhappiness about the second paragraph, second last paragraph, penultimate paragraph.

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

No, Mr Chairman, I did not pay too much attention to that at that time.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

You didn't pay much attention. It looked very odd, didn't it, suggesting there were political and administrative difficulties and then talking about "see no evil" and "say no evil"? These are very serious implications.

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I think my impression was that he appeared to seem that we thought there were political and administrative difficulties. He was concerned

that we would not be doing it because of the political nature of the work. So I read in that he was concerned that we would not want to deal with the problem. So I just asked Dr LO to speak to him for him to understand that we took all this very seriously and we continued to pursue.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Weren't you angry when he suggested that there was "see no evil" or "say no evil"?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I did not see that as an implication of myself.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Oh, the implication of who?

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

I do not know, Mr Chairman, I thought it was a general remark about.....

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

The letter was addressed to you.

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, as you say the tone was not that. The tone was one of the research that needs to be done. The tone was congratulating that we have accomplished a lot and they were happy to assist and there were no allegations in the letter except for this strange reference. At that time, I read it to be that he thought that we might just ignore the problem. I mean that's how I read it at that time, Mr Chairman.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

That "we" ignored the problem, that included "you".

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Yes, Mr Chairman, I think he might have thought that the Government might not want to deal with the problem. Maybe that also included me. But of course, we are seen as part of the system.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Just two minutes ago, I thought you said that it didn't refer to you but somebody else, and then I asked you "who" and you said "you don't know".

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Not as individual, Mr Chairman, I thought.....

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

Now you said “we”.

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

Mr Chairman, I’m sorry if Mr LEE finds problem with what I am saying.

Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming:

I don’t find any problem.

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

What I am saying is that I did not at that time see that as an implication of myself. I read it at that time to understand that he was concerned about how public bodies generally dealt with this, and his impression was that public bodies might possibly not want to identify a problem and keep it under the carpet, as it were.

主席：

對不起，李議員，因為現在是10時15分。如果我們針對證人在一些字眼上的準繩，就要非常小心了。你還要多少時間呢，因為我們已經連續進行了兩個小時了。

李柱銘議員：

那你想怎樣呀，主席？我是不要緊的，你想我繼續又可以，想我停的話，便要.....但我還未完的！

主席：

各位委員，我們只有幾個選擇而已。我們要到4月底才與楊局長繼續這個研訊，因為在未來這幾天，我相信楊局長有責任完成他作為局長的其他工作，而今晚，現在是10時15分，我覺得繼續延續下去，對所有人都不合理，所以我建議終止今天的研訊。大家在日後的討論裏面，我們會再集中考慮是否需要找楊局長來，再就某幾點去作澄清。如果有需要，可能是4月底的時候。陳議員。

陳婉嫻議員：

主席，我同意你的意見，因為我想這也太辛苦了。我覺得如果有需要，我們改天再另訂時間，好嗎？

主席：

好嗎？各位委員有沒有其他意見？沒有意見？

李柱銘議員：

意見就是我未問完，我其實是預備問的，我還想繼續。但我明白，如果這樣繼續下去，對證人都不是很公道。

主席：

各位委員，我們就在這個時間停止今天這個研訊，我們非常多謝楊局長。不過，我知道楊局長好像有些東西想在我們今天結束之前對委員會說。楊局長，你想不想在這個時間作簡短的表述呢？

Dr YEOH Eng-kiong:

好呀。Mr Chairman, obviously I am not sure that this is the conclusion to this session. I just wanted to state one or two things for the record. I think the SARS epidemic was a very painful and tragic experience for all of us in Hong Kong: all of us, and particularly for healthcare workers, for the patients and families and for those who lost their loved ones. I continue to be deeply saddened by this.

The colleagues in the Department of Health, the Hospital Authority and the rest of the Government – I think we have not given due recognition to many of the colleagues who worked in the rest of the Government, the colleagues in the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department, the people that were really dealing with the rat problems and catching rats.....At that time, they didn't know what the risks were – and the health community who worked round the clock to fight this new and unknown disease which came to us with such ferocity. Those involved in the combat against SARS did all that was humanly possible, and sometimes even humanly remotely possible, to bring this disease under control. I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute and express my most sincere gratitude and appreciation for all their extraordinary contributions and their attention to duty and true professionalism. They are highly deserving of our recognition. I would also like to thank sincerely, thank the Legislative Council Select Committee, thank all of you very sincerely for giving us this very

valuable opportunity to account to the public our policies and the efforts in controlling the outbreak. So I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Our health system had not been able to comprehensively control the spread of this disease at the early stage. In this regard, I accept full responsibility as a principal official. I am also accountable in case there are any doubts for any decisions – professional, administrative or otherwise – made by any of my subordinates. So in case there is any doubt, I remain fully accountable for all the actions of myself and my colleagues. The SARS experience has been a most humbling one. I have assimilated the lessons learnt and I am determined to improve the health system to protect public health. The Government will do all it can to make our system, ensure our system is robust and fully prepared to tackle new diseases.

Could I say a few words in Cantonese? It will be very short.

在疫症期間，衛生署、醫院管理局、政府其他部門和醫護界的同事，日以繼夜，全力以赴去對抗這種我們所知甚少的新疾病。我衷心感謝他們，我亦認為他們應該得到讚揚。我亦衷心感謝立法會專責委員會，我真的衷心、很衷心感謝你們給我們一個寶貴機會，向公眾交代我們在控制疫症方面的政策和措施。

疫症爆發初期，醫護制度未能全面應付疫症。作為問責局長，我願意為此承擔全部責任。我亦會為下屬所做的所有決定，包括專業和行政決定，負上責任。我會虛心汲取教訓，繼續為完善醫護體制、保障公眾健康而努力。政府亦會竭力確保體制與時並進，為預防和控制傳染病作好充分準備。

很多謝主席和各位議員。

主席：

多謝楊局長。我亦多謝你出席了我們差不多24小時的研訊。我們委員會稍後會再討論我們的工作，以及如果有需要，會請楊局長再來回應有部分可能要澄清的地方。稍後我們會再作安排。

各位委員，這個時間我要結束了，亦無需返回C房了。如果要執拾東西，大家便回去執拾吧。我們下次開會的時間是星期二上午9時.....9時吧，好嗎？我相信有些委員會有點困難。9時，下星期二9時，在C房。

(研訊於晚上10時25分結束)