



中華人民共和國香港特別行政區政府總部衛生福利及食物局  
Health, Welfare and Food Bureau  
Government Secretariat, Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region  
The People's Republic of China

Our Ref.: HWF CR/1/9/581/03  
Your Ref.: CB2/SC2

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19 May 2004

Miss Flora TAI  
Clerk to Select Committee to inquire into the  
handling of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome  
outbreak by the Government and the Hospital Authority  
Legislative Council  
8 Jackson Road, Hong Kong  
(Fax: 2248 2011)

Dear Miss TAI,

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

I write to provide further supplementary information in order to facilitate the deliberations of the Select Committee.

SC Paper No. : W140(C)

2. As mentioned in paragraph 29 of our earlier submission on "Performance and Accountability of the Health, Welfare and Food Bureau (HWFB) in the Handling of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) Outbreak" (~~SC09-12P-EX~~) issued to you under cover of our letter (Ref (23) in HWF/CR/2/3777/03(04) Pt. 8 dated 11 March 2004), on 28 March 2003 the Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food requested and oversaw that the Department of Health (DH) and Hospital Authority (HA) develop an electronic database that would enable them to share and exchange information of SARS cases in real-time. The system, an on-line database called e-SARS, with internet access, was launched on 8 April 2003. At about the same time, the Police, through its involvement in the Inter-departmental Action Coordinating Committee, offered their sophisticated computer-cum-geographical information

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system called the Major Incident Investigation and Disaster Support System (MIIDSS) to facilitate DH's work on contact tracing. The innovative combination of e-SARS and MIIDSS facilitated DH's work in conducting prompt case investigation and swift contact tracing.

3. Our achievement in establishing such a sophisticated system to fight the disease in such a short time has now been recognized internationally. The Stockholm Challenge Award, organized annually by the city of Stockholm, Sweden, is an international IT award for projects that through inspirational approaches benefit people, society and the environment in their local context. Hong Kong's entry to the Stockholm Challenge Award 2004, "Policing Disease" (which features the innovative application of e-SARS, MIIDSS and the Case Contact Information System of DH (SARS-CCIS) in the fight against SARS), has won the top prize in the Health category of the prestigious event.

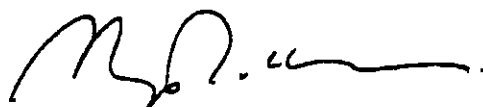
4. There were nearly 900 entries from 107 countries competing for this year's Stockholm Challenge Award. Members of the evaluation panel were impressed by Hong Kong's innovative application of the IT system of its police force that was used to track down criminals and turned it into a smart tracking system to identify the chain of human transmission of SARS.

5. The award is a recognition of the innovation and flexibility of healthcare professionals and civil servants in successfully combining the criminal tracking system with the HA's bedside clinical information for tracing close contacts of SARS patients, which was instrumental in turning the tide in our combat against the SARS epidemic last year.

6. This international recognition also testifies to the foresight and leadership of the senior management displayed during an unprecedented epidemic, which was pivotal to controlling the disease eventually.

7. The relevant press releases and a copy of the Certificate of the Stockholm Challenge Award are attached for your reference.

Yours sincerely,



(Patrick T. K. NIP)  
for Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Encl.

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## Hong Kong wins another Stockholm Challenge Award

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Hong Kong's entry "Policing Disease" was named one of the winners yesterday (May 13, Stockholm time) in the Stockholm Challenge Award held in Stockholm, Sweden this year.

The entry from the Health, Welfare and Food Bureau featuring the innovative application of the Police's Major Incident Investigation and Disaster Support System (MIIDSS) in collaboration with the Case Contact Information System of the Department of Health (SARS-CCIS) and the Hospital Authority's eSARS for use in contact tracing of potential SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) carriers during last year's outbreak won the top honour in the Health category.

There were nearly 900 projects from 107 countries competing for this year's awards under six categories, namely e-government, culture, health, education, e-business and environment. This year finalists are from 40 countries representing all continents.

This is the second time that Hong Kong receives the top honour in the Stockholm Challenge Award. In 2001, the then Information Technology and Broadcasting Bureau's entry - Electronic Service Delivery (ESD) Scheme - won the category in Public Services and Democracy.

The Stockholm Challenge Award, organised annually by the city of Stockholm, is an international award programme in information technology that helped to make the city a hub in a global movement to bridge the digital divide.

A panel of international IT experts would judge and evaluate entries on four criteria - innovation, user need, sustainability and transferability.

Members of the panel were impressed by Hong Kong's innovative application of the IT system of its police force that was used to track down criminals and turned it into a smart tracking system to identify the chain of human transmission of SARS. The MIIDSS identified "hot-spots" of infection which would give rise to suspicion of an environmental factor for the spread of SARS.

The organiser has also invited Hong Kong delegation to set up an exhibition booth to showcase the system at the Global Forum - Networking and Exhibition.

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Upon learning the news, the Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food, Dr Yeoh Eng-kiang, said in Hong Kong: "The award is a recognition of the innovation and flexibility of the healthcare professionals and civil servants in successfully combining the criminal tracking system with the Hospital Authority's bedside clinical information for tracing close contacts of SARS patients, which was instrumental in turning the tide in our combat against the epidemic last year.

"Without this system, we could not have identified most of the 26,000 contacts of suspected and confirmed SARS patients within the peak period of April last year.

"This timely identification followed by swift isolation action was pivotal to controlling the outbreak."

To deal with an outbreak of SARS with a magnitude and rapidity witnessed in Hong Kong last year, Dr Yeoh recognised the need for, and instructed, the creation of an information technology system which would enable rapid contact tracing.

The development of the e-SARS to capture online and real time information of suspected SARS patients admitted to public hospitals was initiated by Dr Yeoh during the SARS outbreak to speed up contact tracing. The electronic database was then linked onto the Police's MIDSS to facilitate DH's work in conducting prompt case investigation and swift contact tracing.

Speaking on Hong Kong's success after the prize presentation ceremony in Stockholm, the Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food, Mrs Carrie Yau, said the prize once again demonstrated Hong Kong's competitive position as a city of innovation and reinforced its image as a leading digital city in the globally connected world.

"We are delighted to see that Hong Kong's innovation in IT applications, in particular informatics technology, is recognised in the international arena again," she said.

Mrs Yau was the then Secretary for Information Technology and Broadcasting when Hong Kong took its first honour in the Stockholm Challenge Award 2001.

Apart from leading a delegation to Stockholm for the award competition and participating in the Global Forum – Networking & Exhibition, Mrs Yau took time to meet senior Swedish officials responsible for health and food during her stay in Stockholm between May 12-14.

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Other members of the delegation were Consultant (Health Informatics) of the Hospital Authority, Dr James Kong; Principal Medical and Health Officer of the Department of Health, Dr Heston Kwong; Assistant Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food, Miss Daisy Lo; Detective Chief Inspector Alan Chan and Senior Inspector David Wong of the Hong Kong Police.

Besides Sweden, Mrs Yau will also visit Finland and the Netherlands.

Speaking on her visit to Sweden and Finland, Mrs Yau said these two Nordic countries have been among the top in the world in being most web savvy.

"These countries are remarkable for the way in which citizens have incorporated Internet technology in their daily routines and have enjoyed more user friendly and efficient public services including health care services," she said.

Mrs Yau's visit to Finland is at the invitation of the Finnish Government to share Hong Kong's experience in communicable disease prevention, in particular avian influenza and SARS.

"Hong Kong has invested heavily on capital works, human resources and relevant hardware and software on the prevention and control of communicable diseases to live up to the expectation of a safe city," she said.

The visit also aimed to obtain the latest development in Europe on IT application in surveillance and the capture of syndromic data so that Hong Kong could evaluate how best it should set up its communicable disease information system (CDIS), she added.

Mrs Yau will depart Stockholm in the morning of May 14 to continue her visit itinerary to Finland and the Netherlands to meet senior officials of relevant ministries and academics with expertise in various disciplines, including communicable diseases and food hygiene. She will return to Hong Kong on May 19.

Ends/Friday, May 14, 2004

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## 香港再度揚威斯德哥爾摩科技挑戰大獎賽

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香港參賽項目「偵緝疫症」昨日（斯德哥爾摩時間五月十三日）成為今屆在瑞典斯德哥爾摩舉辦的「斯德哥爾摩科技挑戰大獎賽」得獎項目之一。

該參賽項目由衛生福利及食物局提名，奪得健康組別的最高殊榮。「偵緝疫症」的主題是以當局去年在沙士（嚴重急性呼吸系統綜合症）爆發期間，創新地運用警隊的「重大事件調查及災難支援工作系統」，結合衛生署的個案接觸資訊系統及醫院管理局的綜合症網上電子資料庫，來偵緝潛在沙士帶菌者。

今年共有來自一百零七個國家近九百個參賽項目角逐六個組別的獎項，六個組別分別為政府工作電子化、文化、健康、教育、電子商務及環保。最後有來自各洲的四十個國家晉身今屆總決賽。

今年是香港第二次在「斯德哥爾摩科技挑戰大獎賽」中勇奪殊榮。在二〇〇一年，前資訊科技及廣播局的「公共服務電子化」計劃贏得公共服務及民主制度組別的獎項。

一年一度的「斯德哥爾摩科技挑戰大獎賽」由斯德哥爾摩市舉辦，是一項享譽國際科技界的盛事，該盛事令斯德哥爾摩成為全球打破數碼隔膜行動的領導城市。

大獎賽由一個國際資訊科技專家組成的評審委員會作出裁判，以創意、實用、可持續性和可取性四個標準評分。

評審團對香港將警隊慣常用以追查罪犯的資訊系統，利用它的智能特色，創新地應用於追查人類感染沙士的途徑上，印象尤深。「重大事件調查及災難支援工作系統」鎖定感染的「熱點」，這些地方被視為有可能存在導致沙士擴散的環境因素。

大會並邀請香港代表團在全球論壇——聯網及展覽設立展覽攤位，介紹該系統。

衛生福利及食物局局長楊永強醫生得悉香港獲獎後說：「獎項肯定了公務員及醫療專家的努力、創意及靈活性，結合警隊的追蹤系統及醫院管理局的臨牀系統這個概念。這兩個資料庫的結合，是扭轉去年對抗沙士疫情的關鍵。」

「如果沒有這個系統，我們不可能以最短的時間，在去年四月疫症高峰期間，追查到二萬六千個與疑似及確診沙士病患者有接觸的人士。」

「及早察覺病例，然後盡快實施隔離，是控制爆發的關鍵。」

為應付去年沙士在香港迅速和大規模地爆發，楊醫生認定有需要並下令建立一套資訊系統從速進行個案追蹤的工作。

楊醫生在沙士爆發期間提議建立綜合症網上電子資料庫，實時收集在公立醫院接受治療的疑似沙士病患者的資料，加快個案追蹤的工作。電子資料庫其後結合警隊的「重大事件調查及災難支援工作系統」，有助衛生署及時進行個案調查及迅速追蹤個案。

衛生福利及食物局常任秘書長尤曾家麗在斯德哥爾摩出席頒獎禮後表示，今次再次獲獎，肯定了香港作為一個具競爭地位的創意城市，並強化香港作為聯繫世界的前領數碼城市的形象。

她說：「我們很高興看見香港在應用科技上的創意，尤其是在醫療信息方面，在國際社會上再次備受肯定。」

二〇〇一年香港首次獲得「斯德哥爾摩科技挑戰大獎賽」獎項時尤曾家麗為當時的資訊科技及廣播局局長。

除了率領代表團出席大獎賽頒獎禮及參加全球論壇——聯網及展覽外，尤曾家麗亦藉五月十二日至十四日逗留斯德哥爾摩期間，與瑞典負責衛生及食物的官員會面。

代表團其他成員為醫院管理局顧問醫生（醫療信息）龔詩仁、衛生署首席醫生鄺國威、衛生福利及食物局助理秘書長羅芷茵、香港警務處總督察陳麟及高級督察黃裕明。

除了出訪瑞典，尤曾家麗將會順道前往芬蘭及荷蘭。

尤曾家麗談及訪問瑞典及芬蘭時表示，這兩個北歐國家在應用網上科技上舉世聞名。

她說：「這些國家的國民把網上科技廣泛應用在日常生活中，從而享用更容易使用及效率更高的公共服務，包括醫療服務。」

尤曾家麗是應芬蘭政府的邀請進行訪問，以交流香港預防傳染病的經驗，特別是禽流感和沙士。

她說：「香港投放大量資源在預防及控制傳染病的基本工程、人力資源及有關的硬件和軟件上，以期達致建立一個安全的城市。」

她續說，此行亦旨在取得歐洲在醫學監測上如何應用科技及取得症狀群數據的最新

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資料，讓香港評估如何更有效地自行設立傳染病資訊系統。

尤會家麗於五月十四日上午離開斯德哥爾摩，進行其訪問芬蘭及荷蘭的行程，並與有關部門的高級官員及不同專長的學者會面，包括傳染病及食物衛生。她將於五月十九日返港。

完

二〇〇四年五月十四日（星期五）





# CERTIFICATE

## POLICING DISEASE

*Health, Welfare and Food Bureau, dept of Health,  
Hospital Authority and The Hong Kong Police*

**Selected Winner in Category Health  
in The Stockholm Challenge Award 2003/2004  
for their contribution in the global movement  
of building a better Information Society for all.**

STOCKHOLM, MAY 13, 2004

*[Handwritten Signature]*

SEKRETÄREN  
STOCKHOLM STAD

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SEKRETÄREN  
STOCKHOLM STAD

**STOCKHOLM CHALLENGE**