

**Economic and Employment Council
Retail Task Force**

Hygiene Manager and Hygiene Supervisor Scheme

Purpose

This paper briefs Members on the requirements for Hygiene Manager (HM) and Hygiene Supervisor (HS) in supermarkets/superstores.

Background

2. To strengthen food safety supervision in licensed food premises, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) implemented the HM/HS Scheme in May 2005 by imposing an additional licensing requirement/condition for both provisional and full licences. Under the Scheme, all large food establishments and food establishments producing high-risk food* are required to appoint an HM and an HS. All other food establishments are required to appoint an HM or an HS.

3. The main duties of an HM or HS are to supervise the safe and hygienic operation of the food business and serve as a focal point of contact with FEHD. An HM should be a managerial staff at the licensed food premises. The duties of an HM include identifying key areas of risk in various food operations; ensuring compliance with the regulations, licensing conditions and codes of practice relating to food businesses; and providing in-house training for food handlers. An HS should be a staff member and performs a supervisory role in food handling at the licensed

* High-risk food are sushi/sashimi, oyster/meat to be eaten raw, and any other food of animal/fish/shellfish origin to be eaten raw.

food premises. The duties of an HS include advising food handlers on the proper practices and ensuring their observance; and conducting daily checks on the personal, environmental and food hygiene conditions of the food establishment and keeping records on the findings.

4. FEHD has recognized 10 academic institutes/vocational training centres for conducting 13 HM courses. Most HM courses last about 16 to 20 hours and the course fee ranges from about \$900 to \$1,500. FEHD has been offering free HS training courses since December 2001 and the course lasts about 6 hours. Moreover, FEHD has recognized HS training courses organized by one vocational training centre, one academic institute and the Skills Upgrading Scheme under the Education and Manpower Bureau. As at 31 October 2005, a total of 12,200 HMs and 43,100 HSs have been trained and awarded a certificate.

HM/HS Requirements for Supermarket/Superstore

5. The HM/HS Scheme is licence-based under which the HM/HS requirements are imposed on the licensees rather than in respect of premises. The requirements for supermarket/superstore are as follows:

<u>Portion</u>	<u>Requirement</u>
• food factory (with preparation of high risk food)	HM plus HS
• food factory (without preparation of high risk food)	HS
• siu mei and lo mei shop (retail)	HS
• fresh provision shop	HS
• bakery	HS

6. In a supermarket/superstore, different portions of the premises are covered by separate licences. Accordingly, an HS is required for each of these licences, except for the food factory portion which requires an HM plus an HS if preparation of high risk food is involved. In practice, therefore, a supermarket/superstore is likely to require to have one HM plus a few HSs.

Composite Food Licence

7. Members are aware that we are considering introducing a new composite licence covering the sale of ready-to-eat food, e.g. siu mei/lo mei, cooked food, bakery products, sushi/sashimi, cut fruits, frozen confections and milk etc. Amendment to the Food Business Regulation (Cap. 132 sub. leg. X) is necessary to implement this proposal. With the introduction of this new composite licence, the number of licences required for food premises such as supermarket/superstore would be reduced.

Considerations and Way Forward

8. In setting the HM/HS requirements for supermarket/superstore as outlined in paragraph 5, we have taken into account the special characteristics of a supermarket/superstore as described in paragraph 6. That said, we note that some members of the Retail Task Force have expressed concerns about such requirements. We are ready to look into the issue in the context of formulating a new composite licence for ready-to-eat food.