

## AFCD to launch dog inoculation campaign against rabies at fishing ports

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) announced today (February 18) that a dog inoculation campaign at various fishing ports in Hong Kong will be held. Fishermen can have their dogs vaccinated against rabies and microchipped and renew the licences.

AFCD mobile vaccination teams will provide the services at the following fishing ports according to the schedule below from 10am to 3pm:

Aberdeen	February 22
Sai Kung	February 23
Shau Kei Wan	February 24
Cheung Chau	February 25
Sam Mun Tsai	March 1
Sha Tau Kok	March 3
Castle Peak	March 5

The half-yearly dog inoculation campaign has been held since 1980 with the aim of providing licensing renewal and rabies vaccination services for dogs kept by fishermen who work on board fishing vessels most of the time. A fee of \$80 will be charged for each dog. To date, more than 7 300 vaccinations have been administered to dogs on fishing vessels.

An AFCD spokesman said that the services are part of the proactive measures to prevent rabies, a fatal disease that is transmitted to humans from animals. Dogs on board vessels that have visited overseas countries may have come into contact with other animals, making them more susceptible to rabies infection.

"Although Hong Kong has been free from animal rabies since 1987, we must remain vigilant to prevent any possible outbreak," the spokesman said.

Under the Rabies Ordinance, all dogs aged over 5 months must be vaccinated against rabies, licensed and microchipped. Dogs have to be revaccinated against rabies and their licences have to be renewed at intervals not exceeding three years. Dog owners who fail to do so are liable to a maximum fine of \$10,000.