

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

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) announced today (January 3) that a dog inoculation campaign will be held at various fishing ports in Hong Kong. Fishermen can have their dogs vaccinated against rabies and microchipped and renew the licences.

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

Sam Mun Tsai	January 10
Aberdeen	January 12
Sha Tau Kok	January 12
Castle Peak	January 14
Shau Kei Wan	January 19
Sai Kung	January 24
Cheung Chau	January 26

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

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 in contact with other animals carrying diseases, 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 upon conviction.