

**ADMINISTRATION OF THE DIVISION OF FOOD AND  
DRUGS CONTROL, OFFICE OF THE UNDER-SECRETARY,  
MINISTRY OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

*by Tri Sangthongtong*

Food and drugs are among the four requisites for the welfare of people, their importance affecting the life and happiness of humanity. Accordingly every country is concerned with the control of these items for the safety of its citizen. In Thailand the administrative unit for food and drugs control is similar to those in other countries. The Division of Food and Drugs Control in the Office of the Under-Secretary, Ministry of Public Health, has the authority to control the quality of food in conformity with the food laws and to control drugs in accordance with the Sale of Drugs law and other laws concerning narcotics, Mitragyna, and Indian hemp.

Besides the functions mentioned above, the Division has been assigned to carry out two other main duties: (1) the control of poisonous substances which menace the public such as radio-active fall out from nuclear tests, chemicals like arsenic strychnine, cyanide, methyl alcohol, pesticides, strong acids, strong alkalis, and the manufacture of cosmetics; this is done in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Industry, (2) the control of the Opium Depot, including medicinal uses of opium, the storage of opium which is confiscated by the police and the payment of rewards to those who aid in the arrest of smugglers of opium and other habit-forming drugs.

The study of this matter leads the author to a hypothesis which includes 3 factors for the analytical consideration of this Division's work: (1) the organization is not yet suitable for the amount and quality of work, (2) the management is not thoroughly satisfactory for the scope of the job, and (3) problems of Administrative Reorganization result from the first two factors.

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The result of this study confirms the hypothesis that the control job going on at present is not as efficient as it should be because of gaps in the law, a lack of co-ordination and insufficient personnel.

It is therefore concluded that the Division of Food and Drugs should be raised to a higher status so that it might be responsible for both central and provincial administration. This would entail the reorganization of the division's activities at either the departmental or bureau level. This would make the job of food and drugs control more efficient and effective than at present.

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