

**Information requested by the Bills Committee
at its meeting held on 21 December 2001 regarding
the Karaoke Establishments Bill**

The information requested by the Bills Committee is set out in the following paragraphs –

- 1. To consider the possibility of shortening the time required for the Police to vet an applicant for a karaoke establishment permit for an existing licensed restaurant or a new restaurant.**

On average, the Licensing Office of the Hong Kong Police Force is currently handling some 13,000 vetting cases per month in addition to over 1,000 licence checks on various licensed premises. With a view of balancing an all-round licensing schedule, 30 days is considered to be the most practical and feasible time-frame under the current manpower situation.

- 2. To consider the proposal of introducing a mechanism for declaration of the background of the owner of the karaoke establishments.**

The licensing authority cannot expect the applicant who usually being an employee of the karaoke establishment, be able to provide accurate background information on the proprietor(s) of the company, whether it be in the form of a declaration or as a statement in the application form. The consideration in granting a licence/permit lies with whether the applicant satisfies the requirements set out in clause 5(3)(a) including whether he/she is a fit and proper person to operate the karaoke establishment.

- 3. In the light of the relevant regulatory provisions in other Ordinances, to review the drafting of clause 3(1)(e) to spell out the criteria to be adopted by the licensing authority granting exemption from applying for a karaoke establishment licence or permit.**

As Hon. Members request, we have considered how clause 3(1)(e) may be amended so that there is more clarity as to the various factors that may be

taken into account in the consideration of granting an exemption order. Taking reference from the relevant regulatory provisions in the Hotel and Guesthouse Accommodation Ordinance (Cap. 349), the Clubs (Safety of Premises) Ordinance (Cap. 376) and the Bedspace Apartments Ordinance (Cap. 447), we propose to amend clause 3(1)(e) to read as follows:

- “(e) exempted by the licensing authority, for reasons connected with situation, means of ingress or egress, design, construction, size or equipment, installations or facilities therein, by order in writing that is for the time being in force.”