

立法會
Legislative Council

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**Paper for the House Committee meeting
on 2 February 2001**

**Report of the Subcommittee on Overseas Duty Visits
undertaken by Panels and other Committees**

Purpose

This paper reports on the deliberations and recommendations of the Subcommittee on Overseas Duty Visits undertaken by Panels and other Committees.

Background

2. The Subcommittee was formed at the House Committee meeting on 15 December 2000 to conduct a review of the existing guidelines for the allocation of funds for Members' overseas duty visits undertaken by Panels and other Committees of the Council. It comprises 10 members. A membership list of the Subcommittee is in the **Appendix**.

3. Under the chairmanship of Hon Mrs Selina Chow, the Subcommittee has held one meeting.

Deliberations and Recommendations of the Subcommittee

4. The Subcommittee considers that overseas duty visits are very useful to Members in the performance of their duties. Probably owing to the short tenure in previous terms, very few duty visits were undertaken, but more such visits are envisaged in the current and future terms. In view of the limited financial resources made available for overseas duty visits, there is a need to regulate such visits to ensure that the expenditure on such visits is within the approved limits. The Subcommittee, however, also appreciates that

there are practical difficulties to plan visits too far ahead, or to limit the number of visits or the number of participants for each visit. Taking all these factors into consideration, the Subcommittee would like to propose a mechanism with a view to providing fair and equal opportunities for every Member to participate in these visits.

5. The Subcommittee proposes that planning for the use of funds for these visits is to be made on the basis of a LegCo term, rather than a financial year. Based on the budget of \$896,000 for Members' overseas duty visits in 2001-2002 (excluding those undertaken by the Parliamentary Liaison Subcommittee which are under a separate budget), the budget for the current term is about \$3,600,000 ($\$896,000 \times 4 = \$3,584,000$ (say \$3,600,000)). Under the proposed arrangement, a separate vote of account "Provision for Members' overseas duty visits undertaken by Panels and other Committees" is to be set up, with provision not expended in one financial year being carried forward to the following financial years in the same LegCo term.

6. Each Member (excluding The President) will be given an account holding \$61,000 to cover expenditure relating to overseas duty visits incurred by him/her during each term ($\$3,600,000 \div 59$ Members = \$61,016 (say \$61,000)). Expenses incurred by each Member for each visit will be deducted from this account, and records will be kept by the Accounts Office of the LegCo Secretariat. Expenses in excess of \$61,000 incurred in connection with overseas duty visits are to be borne by individual Members. Funds in individual Member's account are non-transferable.

7. Expenses incurred by Members on overseas duty visits are mainly on travelling and accommodation. It has been the practice for Members to be provided with passages and subsistence allowance equivalent to the entitlements of a government officer on directorate salary points D4 or above. The Subcommittee recommends that this practice should continue and be adopted as the standard expenditure level for these visits.

8. The relevant Committee planning an overseas duty visit has to prepare a budget for the visit based on the standard expenditure level. Individual Members have the discretion to adopt a lower standard of travel (e.g. to travel economy instead of business class) or make alternative arrangement for accommodation in order to making savings for other visits. Only actual expenses incurred by Members will be deducted from their respective accounts. Extra costs arising from upgrading the standard entitlement (e.g. travelling on first class) will have to be borne by individual Members.

9. The overall financial position of the vote on "Provision for Members' overseas duty visits undertaken by Panels and other Committees" will be reviewed at the end of a term. In the event of savings being available, the unused funds will be paid on a pro rata basis to all Members who have spent more than their entitlement within the term. However, only the standard expenditure which has exceeded a Member's entitlement in each LegCo term, and which has not been reimbursed elsewhere, will be counted for this purpose.

10. As provided for under House Rule 22(u), prior permission of the House Committee has to be sought for overseas visits under the name of a Panel of the Council. The Subcommittee considers that the membership and size of the delegation for a visit should more appropriately be determined by the relevant Panel or Committee. The membership of the delegation should be restricted to members of the relevant Panel or Committee. In normal circumstances, it should be as broadly representative as possible.

Advice Sought

11. Members are invited to endorse the recommendations of the Subcommittee in paragraphs 5-10 and submit them to The Legislative Council Commission for approval.

Administration Division
Legislative Council Secretariat
February 2001

事務委員會及其他委員會
進行海外職務訪問的小組委員會
Subcommittee on overseas duty visits
undertaken by Panels and other Committees

成員名單
Membership List

周梁淑怡議員, JP (主席)
Hon Mrs Selina Chow Liang Shuk-ye, JP (Chairman)

田北俊議員, JP
Hon James Tien Pei-chun, JP

呂明華議員, JP
Dr Hon Lui Ming-wah, JP

單仲偕議員
Hon Sin Chung-kai

黃宏發議員, JP
Hon Andrew Wong Wang-fat, JP

楊孝華議員, JP
Hon Howard Young, JP

劉漢銓議員, JP
Hon Ambrose Lau Hon-chuen, JP

石禮謙議員, JP
Hon Abraham Shek Lai-him, JP

麥國風議員
Hon Michael Mak Kwok-fung

葉國謙議員, JP
Hon Ip Kwok-him, JP

(合共 : 10 位委員)
(Total : 10 members)