

立法會
Legislative Council

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Paper for the House Committee meeting on 24 June 2005

Proposed overseas duty visit by the Panel on Manpower

Purpose

This paper seeks the permission of the House Committee under rule 22(t) of the House Rules (HR) for the Panel on Manpower to undertake an overseas duty visit to Ireland for the purpose of studying the country's experience in tackling unemployment and providing training/retraining for its workforce.

Background

2. The Panel on Manpower is tasked to monitor and examine Government policies and issues of public concern relating to labour and manpower planning matters. The problem of high unemployment in Hong Kong is one of the major areas of concern of the Panel.

3. Although the unemployment rate in Hong Kong has dropped from 8.6% in the second quarter of 2003 to 5.9% in the three months ending April 2005, some members remain concerned about the high unemployment situation and the difficulties faced by the unemployed, especially those with low skills and low education attainment, to re-enter the labour market.

4. To enable members to have a better understanding of overseas experience, the Panel agreed at its meeting on 19 May 2005 that the Panel should undertake a duty visit to Ireland to study the country's experience in tackling unemployment and providing training/retraining for its workforce. Specifically, the visit aims to study -

- (a) Ireland's policies and initiatives to tackle unemployment;
- (b) training and manpower development strategies and programmes of Ireland to support its employment policies/initiatives; and
- (c) Government involvement in and funding for training/retraining of the workforce.

Details of the visit

Visit programme

5. The Panel has agreed that the visit will be from Sunday, 18 September 2005 to Friday, 23 September 2005. During the stay in Ireland, the delegation will hold meetings with the relevant government officials, as well as conduct visits to training and manpower development authorities and training institutes.

6. The Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Brussels is drawing up a visit programme and will provide assistance in making preparation for the visit.

Members of the delegation

7. Seven Members (including one non-Panel Member) have indicated interest in joining the visit. The names of these Members are in **Appendix I**.

Funding arrangements

8. As approved by The Legislative Council Commission, each Member is provided with an overseas duty visit account of \$55,000 for the purpose of duty visits outside Hong Kong organised by committees, other than the Parliamentary Liaison Committee, of the Council. The fund in the account is for use by the Member in a four-year term. Any expenditure incurred in excess of the available balance in a four-year term has to be paid by the Member personally.

9. A preliminary estimate of the expenditure to be incurred by each participating Member for the duty visit is about \$21,400 (economy class air passage) or \$48,600 (business class air passage). A breakdown of the estimated expenditure is in **Appendix II**.

Advice sought

10. HR22(t) provides that should any Panel consider it necessary to undertake any activities outside Hong Kong under the name of the Panel of the Council, the prior permission of the House Committee shall be sought.

11. The House Committee's permission is sought for the Panel to undertake the overseas duty visit as proposed.

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
22 June 2005

Panel on Manpower

**Members who have indicated interest to join
the duty visit to the Republic of Ireland
(18 to 23 September 2005)
(position as at 22 June 2005)**

Panel members

Hon LAU Chin-shek, JP (Chairman)

Hon KWONG Chi-kin (Deputy Chairman)

Hon LEE Cheuk-yan

Hon CHAN Yuen-han, JP

Hon LI Fung-ying, BBS, JP

Hon WONG Kwok-hing, MH

Non-Panel Member

Hon CHOY So-yuk

Total: 7 Members

Panel on Manpower

**Estimated expenses for the duty visit to
the Republic of Ireland from 18 to 23 September 2005**

Breakdown of the estimated expenses

Items	Estimated expenses HK\$ (per person)	
	<u>Economy</u>	<u>Business class</u>
1. Return air ticket Hong Kong / Dublin (via London)/ Hong Kong	12,400	39,600
2. Hotel accommodation (4 nights)	4,330	
3. Meal / In-town traveling / Sundries (4 nights)	2,886	
4. Travel insurance	400	
5. Airport tax and charges	1,400	
TOTAL :	21,416	48,616
Say :	21,400	48,600

NOTE :

- Other expenditure including hospitality, local group transportation, interpretation services and souvenirs will be charged against other votes of the Secretariat.
- Exchange rate as at 31 May 2005 -
1 EUR = HK\$9.8055
- Airfare quotation obtained in June 2005

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