

Ms Joanne Mak
Senior Council Secretary
Home Affairs Panel
Legislative Council Secretariat
3/F Citibank Tower
3 Garden Road
Central
Hong Kong

7 December 2005

Dear Ms Mak,

**Legislative Council Panel on Home Affairs
Proposed Approval Procedure for Overseas Duty Visits of the Privacy
Commissioner for Personal Data and the Chairperson of the Equal
Opportunities Commission**

We support the Government's proposal to require both the EOC Chairperson and the Privacy Commissioner to seek approval from the Government before they go on overseas duty visit.

There are two crucial principles in the "**Seven Principles of Public Life**"¹ which both the EOC and PCO must learn to obey and they are as follows:

"Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office."

"Openness

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands."

¹ See The "Report of the Independent Panel of Inquiry on the Incidents Relating to the Equal Opportunities Commission" Appendix 7 for the Seven Principles in detail. The Report recommended the EOC to adopt the Seven Principles pursuant to the Panel's findings on the EOC's failures over the years.

*The EOC Concern Group is an independent body of professionals
that reviews the EOC's performance*

We could not find any legitimate reasons why heads of both organizations would oppose the imposition of an approval process when the two go on overseas duty visits just to make sure that they act properly. They should welcome the proposal to show their commitment in adhering to the Seven Principles.

We ask that the Government should proceed with the implementation of the proposal to cover loopholes as soon as possible.

From,

The EOC Concern Group

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