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9 July 2008

Mrs Percy Ma  
Clerk to Panel  
Legislative Council Building  
8 Jackson Road  
Central  
Hong Kong

Dear *Percy*,

### Recovery Agents

We refer to the above matter and the meeting of the Panel on Administration of Justice and Legal Service ("AJLS Panel") on 19 March.

The following is an update of the recent developments on the topic of recovery agents.

### Possible prosecutions

On 3 July 2008, the Police mounted an operation to combat the illegal activities of recovery agents. A total of 21 persons were arrested and 22 premises were searched in various places in Hong Kong, Kowloon and the New Territories. 11 computers and more than 900 box files of various documents were seized. Of the 21 persons arrested, two were charged with offences including (1) conspiracy to commit maintenance; (2) champerty; (3) theft; (4) perjury; and (5) conspiracy to commit champerty. It is expected that further arrests/charges would be made in due course.

The Department of Justice also issued a press release on 8 July 2008 reporting the laying of charges and giving a clear message to the public to beware of the illegal activities of recovery agents.

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**Public education**

With a view to achieving maximum publicity, we have arranged for the broadcast of Announcements of Public Interest (APIs) commencing on 9 July 2008. We have also informed the two legal professional bodies of the timetable for the broadcast.

**Other follow-up work**

In April 2008, the Law Society's Working Party on Recovery Agents helpfully provided us with a letter from the Hon Justice Le Pichon to the Law Society and the Bar Association regarding a legal practitioner possibly involved in an "arrangement" for legal fees. The relevant documents have been referred to the Police for investigation.

Meanwhile, we will continue to work closely with both professional bodies on the matter.

Yours sincerely,



(Frank Poon)

Deputy Solicitor General (Acting)

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