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Subcommittee to Study Issues Relating to Mainland-HKSAR Families

**Minutes of the 21st meeting
held on Tuesday, 10 January 2012, at 2:30 pm
in Conference Room 1 of the Legislative Council Complex**

Members present : Hon LEE Cheuk-yan (Chairman)
Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung (Deputy Chairman)
Hon Miriam LAU Kin-ye, GBS, JP
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP
Hon Audrey EU Yuet-mee, SC, JP
Hon WONG Kwok-hing, MH
Hon Ronny TONG Ka-wah, SC
Prof Hon Patrick LAU Sau-shing, SBS, JP
Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan
Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che
Hon WONG Sing-chi
Hon WONG Yuk-man

Members absent : Hon Albert HO Chun-yan
Hon CHAN Hak-kan

Member attending : Hon James TO Kun-sun

Public Officers attending : Items I and II

Ms Maggie WONG
Principal Assistant Secretary for Security
Security Bureau

Mr Erick TSANG
Assistant Director of Immigration (Visa and Policies)
Immigration Department

Attendance by invitation : Items I and II

Society for Community Organization

Miss SZE Lai-shan
Community Organizer

Item I

The Association for Family Reunions

Mr CHOW Kwok-fai
Deputy Chairman

Justice and Peace Commission of the Hong Kong
Catholic Diocese

Miss Jackie HUNG Ling-yu
Project Officer

爭取居港權家長協會

Mr LIM Tao-shing

Right of Abode University

Father Franco Mella

Item II

Concern Group on Cross Border Split Families

Ms LUO Xi-zhao
Spoke Woman

Cross-border Children Concern Coalition

Mr Eric LAI Yan-ho
Coordination Officer

關注中港家庭權利聯席

Mr CHAN Wai-hung
Member

Mainland-Hong Kong Families Rights Association –
Single Mother Concern Group

Ms LI Yu-lan
Member

New Women Arrivals League

Ms ZHENG Yan-yao
Member Councilors

Hong Kong Christian Institute

Mr Andrew SHUM Wai-nam
Programme Secretary (Social Concern)

Clerk in attendance : Miss Betty MA
Chief Council Secretary (2) 4

Staff in attendance : Ms Candice LAM
Senior Council Secretary (2) 4

Miss Karen LAI
Council Secretary (2) 4

Miss Maggie CHIU
Legislative Assistant (2) 4

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I. Implementation progress of application for One Way Permit for "overage children" of Hong Kong residents
[LC Paper Nos. CB(2)718/11-12(01) to (02) and CB(2)804/11-12(01)]

The Subcommittee deliberated (index of proceedings attached at **Annex**).

2. The major views of deputations attending the meeting were as follows -

- (a) the progress of processing One Way Permit ("OWP") applications by "overage children" of Hong Kong residents was slow. The Administration should announce the

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implementation timetable and arrangements for the second round of applications as soon as possible;

- (b) setting up an appeal channel in Hong Kong to deal with complaints and grievances relating to the issue of OWP;
- (c) the Administration should study the demographic and social profiles of the "overage children" applicants to better plan for the support service for these adult new arrivals; and
- (d) whether "overage children" whose Hong Kong parents had passed away and those who were above the age 14 when their natural fathers or mothers obtained the Hong Kong identity cards could apply for OWP.

3. Sharing the concerns of the depositions, members expressed concern whether the slow progress in the processing of the applications by "overage children" would unduly delay the commencement date for the second round of applications. Members called on the Administration to convey to the Mainland authorities to expedite the processing of OWP applications by "overage children" as far as practicable and announce the concrete timetable for the subsequent phases of application, in order to facilitate early reunion of these "overage children" to take care of their ageing parents in Hong Kong.

4. Principal Assistant Secretary for Security ("PAS(S)") advised that -

- (a) the application, approval and issue of permits to "overage children" largely followed the existing procedures of general OWP applications;
- (b) the Administration considered that the applications had been processed in an objective, fair, transparent and professional manner. With experience, the processing of applications would be handled more effectively. Depending on the progress, the Mainland authorities aimed to accept second round of applications in the first half of 2012;
- (c) Mainland children of Hong Kong parents might apply for OWP if they were the age of 14 or below when their natural fathers or mothers, on or before 1 November 2001, obtained their Hong Kong identity card, as long as their natural fathers or mothers still resided in Hong Kong on 1 April 2011; and
- (d) the Administration would collect data on the demographic and

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social characteristics of OWP holders when they first entered Hong Kong via the Lo Wu Control Point. The Home Affairs Department ("HAD") conducted surveys on service needs of new arrivals from the Mainland when they applied for the Hong Kong identity cards, uploaded the information on the website quarterly, and disseminated the statistical reports to relevant Government departments and non-governmental organisations for service planning. HAD had started to collect information on the service needs of "overage children" OWP holders.

II. Immigration arrangements for Mainland single mothers visiting Hong Kong to take care of their children

[LC Paper Nos. CB(2)482/11-12(01), CB(2)718/11-12(03) and CB(2)804/11-12(01) to (02)]

5. The Subcommittee deliberated (index of proceedings attached at **Annex**).

6. Deputations attending the meeting had highlighted to members the difficulties faced by Mainland single mothers with Hong Kong children. Members were advised that these women were not eligible for OWP application because their Hong Kong husbands were deceased or they had divorced. Moreover, their applications for "one-year multiple" exit endorsement for visiting relatives in Hong Kong were seldom approved. Coupled with a limited duration of Two Way Permits ("TWP") to stay in Hong Kong, they had to return to the Mainland to re-apply for renewal of TWP frequently. To obviate the need to travel frequently back to the Mainland, deputations requested the Administration to extend the limits of stay of Mainland single mothers to enable them to take care of their children in Hong Kong and enhance the transparency of exercising discretion to extend the limits of stay of TWP holders.

7. Members shared the concerns of the deputations and sought clarification as to whether Mainland single mothers with young children in Hong Kong were eligible for "one-year multiple" exit endorsement for visiting relatives in Hong Kong. Members called on the Administration to take into account the special circumstances of families comprising Mainland single mothers and Hong Kong children and exercise discretion within the remit of the Immigration Department ("ImmD") to extend the limit of stay of these Mainland single mothers concerned. In addition, the Administration should actively discuss with the Mainland authorities the proposal of allowing Mainland single mothers who did not meet the eligibility criteria for "reunion with spouses" but who had young children in Hong Kong to apply for OWP. Members appealed to the Secretary for Security to convey

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the Subcommittee's concern in writing to the Mainland immigration authorities, and the Chief Secretary for Administration to follow up the subject matter from the perspective of population policy and its impact on Mainland-HKSAR families.

8. PAS(S) advised that the objective of the OWP Scheme was to facilitate family reunion in an orderly manner. The assessment of applications for and the issue of OWP, TWP and exit endorsement fell within the remit of the relevant Mainland authorities. Where necessary, the Administration would communicate and follow up with the Mainland authorities on individual cases. The ImmD would convey to the Mainland immigration authorities the exceptional circumstances of individual cases, such as OWP applicants whose Hong Kong spouses were deceased and who had young children, together with the relevant case details and background information for their active consideration. Some applications from Mainland single mothers for "one-year multiple" exit endorsement for visiting relatives in Hong Kong had been approved. PAS(S) added that ImmD had from time to time exercised discretion to allow TWP holders to extend their limits of stay having regard to individual circumstances, and each case was considered on its own merits.

III. Any other business

9. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 5:27 pm.

**Proceedings of the 21st meeting of the
Subcommittee to Study Issues Relating to Mainland-HKSAR Families
on Tuesday, 10 January 2012, at 2:30 pm
in Conference Room 1 of the Legislative Council Complex**

Time marker	Speaker(s)	Subject(s)	Action required
<i>Agenda item I – Implementation progress of application for One Way Permit for "overage children" of Hong Kong residents</i>			
000214 - 000501	Chairman	Opening remarks.	
000502 - 000748	Administration Chairman	Briefing by the Administration on the implementation progress of application for One Way Permit ("OWP") for "overage children" of Hong Kong residents. [LC Paper No. CB(2)718/11-12(01)]	
000749 - 001034	Society for Community Organization ("SOCO") Chairman	Presentation of views - (a) whether assistance would be provided to "overage children" OWP applicants if they had encountered difficulties during the processing of their applications; (b) whether urgent applications from eligible "overage children" applicants whose natural fathers or mothers obtained their first Hong Kong identity cards after 1980 would be admissible; (c) whether the application arrangement for "overage children" would be the same as other OWP applications; (d) the Administration should study the profiles of "overage children" applicants to better plan for the support service for these adult new arrivals; and (e) the implementation timetable for receiving and processing all the OWP applications by "overage children".	
001035 - 001448	The Association for Family Reunions Chairman	Expressing concern about the slow progress of processing the OWP applications by "overage children".	
001449 - 001833	Justice and Peace Commission of the Hong Kong Catholic Diocese Chairman	Presentation of views that the Administration should - (a) give an account for the overestimation of the number of eligible "overage children" for OWP application in 1999; (b) liaise with the relevant Mainland	

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		<p>authorities to speed up the processing of OWP applications by "overage children" and enhance the transparency of the application procedures;</p> <p>(c) announce the implementation date and details of the second phase of applications as soon as possible; and</p> <p>(d) clarify whether "overage children" whose Hong Kong parents had passed away and those who were above the age 14 when their natural fathers or mothers obtained the Hong Kong identity cards could apply for OWP.</p>	
001834 - 002250	爭取居港權家長協會 Chairman	<p>Presentation of views -</p> <p>(a) to expedite the issue of OWP to eligible "overage children"; and</p> <p>(b) to enhance the transparency and equity of the application and processing procedures for OWP by "overage children".</p>	
002251 - 002613	Right of Abode University Chairman	<p>Presentation of views -</p> <p>(a) the Administration should endeavour to ensure that all "overage children" applicants would be issued with OWP for family reunion in Hong Kong;</p> <p>(b) the processing of OWP applications by "overage children" should be sped up; and</p> <p>(c) the Administration should make known the implementation timetable for subsequent phases of OWP applications by "overage children".</p>	
002614 - 003126	Administration Chairman	<p>The Administration's response -</p> <p>(a) the application, approval and issue of OWP to "overage children" largely followed the existing procedures of general OWP applications;</p> <p>(b) the Administration would collect data on demographic and social characteristics of OWP holders when they first entered Hong Kong via the Lo Wu Control Point. The Home Affairs Department ("HAD") conducted surveys on service needs of new arrivals from the Mainland when they applied for the Hong Kong identity cards,</p>	

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		<p>and uploaded the information on the website quarterly. HAD had started to collect information on the service needs of "overage children" OWP holders;</p> <p>(c) the new arrangement for OWP applications by "overage children" had started for a short period, it would need some time for the relevant authorities to process the applications such as collection and verification of the supporting documents; and</p> <p>(d) the Mainland authorities would promulgate the arrangements for subsequent phase applications taking into account the operational experience of the first round of application in due course.</p>	
003127 - 003959	<p>Mr WONG Kwok-hing Administration Chairman The Association for Family Reunions</p>	<p>Concerns raised by Mr WONG Kwok-hing -</p> <p>(a) the lead time taken for approving OWP applications by "overage children" after completing initial assessment; and</p> <p>(b) when the second phase application would be accepted.</p> <p>The Administration's response -</p> <p>(a) the processing time of individual applications would vary depending on the production of adequate supporting documents for verification of the status of their natural fathers or mothers;</p> <p>(b) in the course of processing the applications, it may take more time for the relevant authorities to collate and verify the aged supporting documents;</p> <p>(c) the Administration would verify and confirm the status of the applicants' Hong Kong parents referred by the relevant Mainland authorities within two weeks; and</p> <p>(d) the launch of the second phase applications would be announced in the first half of 2012.</p>	
004000 - 004512	<p>Mr TAM Yiu-chung Chairman Administration</p>	<p>Concerns raised by Mr TAM Yiu-chung about -</p> <p>(a) whether applications from "overage children" whose natural fathers or mothers</p>	

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		<p>obtained their Hong Kong identity cards after 31 December 1979 would be accepted under the first phase;</p> <p>(b) whether lower priority would be given to processing applications from provinces other than Guangdong;</p> <p>(c) of the 5 300 approved cases, the number of "overage children" had settled in Hong Kong; and</p> <p>(d) whether step child(ren) of Hong Kong resident parents would be eligible for application.</p> <p>The Administration's advice -</p> <p>(a) the Mainland authorities had promulgated that only applications from "overage children" whose natural fathers or mothers obtained their first Hong Kong identity cards on or before 31 December 1979 would be accepted under the first phase;</p> <p>(b) all applications, irrespective of provinces, would be processed in the same manner;</p> <p>(c) OWP applicants should be arriving Hong Kong within three months upon approval; and</p> <p>(d) the Mainland authorities would only accept applications from children whose natural fathers or mothers were Hong Kong residents.</p>	
004513 - 005202	Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung Chairman Administration	<p>Concerns raised by Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung -</p> <p>(a) the slow progress in processing OWP applications by "overage children" would delay the commencement of the second phase applications;</p> <p>(b) whether the Administration had drawn experience from Macau in processing OWP applications by "overage children" which had been implemented smoothly; and</p> <p>(c) whether there was any appeal system.</p> <p>The Administration's response -</p> <p>(a) despite an influx of application from the</p>	

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		<p>outset, the arrangement for applications by "overage children" to reside in Hong Kong had been implemented in a smooth and orderly manner. The processing time would be shortened having regard to the smooth implementation of the new arrangement;</p> <p>(b) the total number of eligible "overage children" of Macau residents was about 7 000. As it took one year to clear the applications in Macau, the processing time for "overage children" of Hong Kong residents was not particularly slow; and</p> <p>(c) applicants could make appeals against the decision of the approval authorities and reviews would be conducted by the Mainland authorities as appropriate.</p>	
005203 - 010009	Ms Cyd HO Chairman Administration	<p>Concerns raised by Ms Cyd HO -</p> <p>(a) the estimated number of eligible Mainland "overage children" and the lead time for processing all the applications from these eligible applicants; and</p> <p>(b) priority should be given to "overage children" applicants with ageing parents in Hong Kong.</p> <p>The Administration's response that it was difficult to estimate the exact number of eligible "overage children" applicants. Depending on the progress, the Mainland authorities would accept second phase applications.</p>	
010010 - 010536	Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che Chairman Administration	<p>Concerns raised by Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che -</p> <p>(a) whether Mainland "overage children" whose Hong Kong parents had passed away were eligible for OWP applications; and</p> <p>(b) the Administration should take into account the specific service needs of adult "overage children" in the provision of support services to these new arrivals.</p> <p>The Administration's advice -</p> <p>(a) Mainland children of Hong Kong parents might apply for OWP if they were the age of 14 when their natural fathers or mothers, on or before 1 November 2001,</p>	

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		<p>obtained their Hong Kong identity card, as long as their natural fathers or mothers still resided in Hong Kong on 1 April 2011; and</p> <p>(b) HAD would conduct surveys on service needs of new arrivals from the Mainland and would disseminate the statistical reports to relevant Government departments and non-government organisations for service planning.</p>	
010537 - 010618	SOCO Chairman	Supplementary views of SOCO that the Administration should work out with the Mainland authorities to obtain the demographic and social profiles of "overage children" when they submitted applications.	
010619 - 010727	The Association for Family Reunions Chairman	Supplementary views of the Association for Family Reunions that the application procedures should be as simple as possible such that the processing of applications by "overage children" would not be delayed.	
010728 - 010922	Justice and Peace Commission of the Hong Kong Catholic Diocese Chairman	<p>Supplementary views of Justice and Peace Commission of the Hong Kong Catholic Diocese that the Administration should -</p> <p>(a) make known the number of eligible "overage children"; and</p> <p>(b) set up an appeal channel in Hong Kong.</p>	
010923 - 011132	爭取居港權家長協會 Chairman	<p>Supplementary views of 爭取居港權家長協會 -</p> <p>(a) the relevant authorities should speed up the processing of applications according to the order of submitting applications; and</p> <p>(b) the Administration should make public the estimated time for clearing all the applications of eligible "overage children".</p>	
011133 - 011231	Right of Abode University Chairman	<p>Supplementary views of Right of Abode University that the Administration should -</p> <p>(a) announce the implementation details of the second phase application as soon as possible; and</p> <p>(b) consider open a channel of OWP applications of Mainland adult children of Hong Kong parents who were above the age of 14 when their parents obtained the Hong Kong identity cards and were not</p>	

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		eligible for "overage children" OWP application.	
011232 - 012116	Mr WONG Kwok-hing Chairman Administration	<p>Concerns raised by Mr WONG Kwok-hing -</p> <p>(a) the Administration should take concrete measures to expedite the processing of OWP applications of "overage children"; and</p> <p>(b) whether the second phase application could commence by mid 2012.</p> <p>The Administration's advice -</p> <p>(a) the approval and processing of OWP applications were within the remit of the Mainland authorities. Depending on the progress, the Mainland authorities aimed to accept the second phase applications in the first half of 2012;</p> <p>(b) approval of OWP would be granted if the relationships between the eligible "overage children" applicants and their Hong Kong parents were established; and</p> <p>(c) the present priority of both the Mainland authorities and the Administration was to process the applications received in the first phase as soon as practicable.</p>	
012117 - 012419	Ms Cyd HO Chairman Administration The Association for Family Reunions	<p>Views of Ms Cyd HO that the Administration should make a projection on the number of eligible "overage children".</p> <p>The Chairman's concluding remarks.</p>	
<i>Agenda item II – Immigration arrangement for Mainland single mothers visiting Hong Kong to take care of their children</i>			
012420 - 012740	Administration Chairman	Briefing by the Administration on the immigration arrangement for Mainland single mothers visiting Hong Kong to take care of their children [LC Paper No. CB(2)718/11-12(03)].	
012741 - 013104	SOCO Chairman	<p>Presentation of views -</p> <p>(a) single Mainland mothers of Hong Kong children were not accepted for OWP applications and "one-year multiple" exist endorsement for visiting relatives in Hong Kong; and</p> <p>(b) the relevant authorities to take into account</p>	

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		the special circumstances of Mainland single mothers and consider making use of the unused OWP quota to facilitate these women to settle in Hong Kong to take care of their young children.	
013105 - 013601	Concern Group on Cross Border Split Families Chairman	<p>Presentation of views -</p> <p>(a) Mainland single mothers had genuine need to stay in Hong Kong to take care of their Hong Kong children, but they were not eligible for OWP applications because their spouses were deceased or they had divorced; and</p> <p>(b) Mainland single mothers were usually granted 7-day visit permit to stay in Hong Kong and had to rely on the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance of their Hong Kong children for a living.</p>	
013602 - 014014	Cross-border Children Concern Coalition Chairman	<p>Presentation of views -</p> <p>(a) the Immigration Department ("ImmD") should take into account the special circumstances of families comprising Mainland single mothers and Hong Kong young children and extend the limits of stay of these single mothers in Hong Kong to enable them to take care of their children; and</p> <p>(b) the Administration should discuss with the Mainland authorities to ensure the consistency of processing and approval of exit endorsement.</p>	
014015 - 014347	Mainland-Hong Kong Families Rights Association – Single Mother Concern Group Chairman	<p>Presentation of views -</p> <p>(a) most applications from Mainland single mothers for "one-year multiple" exit endorsement for visiting relatives in Hong Kong were rejected; and</p> <p>(b) when Mainland single mothers returned to the Mainland to renew their exit endorsement, their young children were left attended in Hong Kong. To obviate the need to travel frequently back to the Mainland, these Mainland mothers should be allowed to stay for a longer period of time, say, six to 12 months, to take care of their young children.</p>	

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014348 - 014716	關注中港家庭權利聯席 Chairman	<p>Presentation of views -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the Administrative should give an account of the progress of discussions with the Mainland authorities on the immigration arrangement relating to the cross-boundary families; (b) the Administration should maintain regular dialogue with the stakeholders on the concerns and problems of cross-boundary families; and (c) the Administration should make clear its stance on the population policy relating to family reunion in its response to the motion debate on the subject at the Council meeting of 11 January 2012. 	
014715 - 015012	New Women Arrivals League Chairman	<p>Presentation of views -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Mainland wives of Hong Kong residents were denied from the issue of OWP if their husbands were deceased or missing; (b) the limits of stay of Mainland single mothers were getting shorter and shorter upon renewal; (c) Mainland single mothers entered Hong Kong on strength of Two Way Permit ("TWP") were not eligible for subsidised housing and welfare benefits, and thereby they were in great financial hardship in taking care of their young children in Hong Kong; and (d) it strongly urged the Administration to open a channel for Mainland single mothers to settle in Hong Kong. 	
015013 - 015401	Hong Kong Christian Institute Chairman	<p>Presentation of views that the Administration should take into account the special circumstances of Mainland single mothers who had minor children in Hong Kong and consider using the unused OWP quota to enable these single parents to settle in Hong Kong from the perspective of the rights of and healthy development of their children.</p>	
015402 - 020547	Administration Chairman	<p>The Administration's response -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the objective of the OWP Scheme was to facilitate family reunion in an orderly manner; 	

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		<p>(b) although application and approval of exit endorsement were within the ambit of the Mainland authorities, the Administration had maintained on-going exchanges with the Mainland authorities and conveyed to the latter the exceptional circumstances of individual cases for their active consideration. Some applications from Mainland single mothers for OWP and "one-year multiple" exit endorsement for visiting relatives in Hong Kong had been approved;</p> <p>(c) ImmD would exercise the discretion to allow TWP holders to extend their limits of stay having regard to the own merits of individual cases; and</p> <p>(d) ImmD would follow up each complaint case about the performance of immigration staff.</p>	
020548 - 021339	Mr WONG Kwok-hing Chairman Administration	<p>Concerns raised by Mr WONG Kwok-hing -</p> <p>(a) Mainland women who had genuine need to stay in Hong Kong to take care of their families should be issued with the "one-year multiple" exit endorsement for visiting relatives in Hong Kong as a transitional arrangement while they were waiting for the issue of OWP; and</p> <p>(b) to streamline the application procedures, arrangement should be made for holders of exit endorsement to submit renewal application in Hong Kong.</p> <p>The Administration's advice that to its understanding, Mainland residents with spouses and young children in Hong Kong might apply for "one-year multiple" exit endorsement. Other types of applicants, such as Mainland single mothers who had young children in Hong Kong and whose Hong Kong husbands were either dead or divorced, would be considered on individual merits. It would continue to reflect to the Mainland authorities the exceptional circumstances of individual cases for their active consideration under the category of special family difficulty.</p> <p>The Chairman directed that the meeting be extended beyond the appointed time.</p>	

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021340 - 022345	Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung Chairman Administration	<p>Concerns raised by Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) having regard to special circumstances of Mainland single mothers with Hong Kong children, the former should be allowed to apply for OWP to settle in Hong Kong to take care of their children; and (b) the Secretary for Security ("S for S") should convey to the relevant Mainland authorities to approve applications of OWP and "one-year multiple" exit endorsement from Mainland single mothers with Hong Kong children. <p>The Administration's advice -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) it had all along reflected to the Mainland authorities the exceptional circumstances of individual cases for their active consideration of the issue of OWP and "one-year multiple" exit endorsement; and (b) it had from time to time exercised discretion to allow TWP holders to extend their limits of stay to minimise the impact on the families concerned. 	
022346 - 023208	Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che Chairman Administration	<p>Concerns raised by Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) instead of exercising the discretion to extend the limits of stay of Mainland single mothers to facilitate them to take care of their Hong Kong children, it should be a matter of policy to allow these Mainland women to apply for OWP even though their husbands were died or they had divorced; and (b) the Administration should enhance the transparency of the consideration factors taken into account in exercising discretion to extend the limits of stay of TWP holders. <p>The Administration's advice -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the processing and approval of OWP fell within the remit of the Mainland authorities; (b) it had reflected to the Mainland authorities the special circumstances of Mainland single mothers. Some applications from Mainland single mothers for OWP had 	

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		<p>been approved; and</p> <p>(c) allowing Mainland single mothers to settle in Hong Kong was a complicated issue that required further consideration. The present priority of the Administration and Mainland authorities was to expedite the smooth implementation of the OWP applications by eligible Mainland "overage children".</p>	
023209 - 023904	<p>Cross-border Children Concern Coalition Chairman Administration Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung</p>	<p>Concerns of Cross-border Children Concern Coalition about the criteria adopted by the Administration for approving applications for extending the limits of stay from TWP holders.</p> <p>The Chairman's view that the Administration should exercise discretion to extend the limits of stay of Mainland single mothers.</p> <p>The Administration's response that the limits of stay of Mainland visitors entering Hong Kong on strength of TWP would normally not be extended, but ImmD had from time to time exercised discretion to allow TWP holders to extend their limits of stay having regard to the merits of individual circumstances.</p> <p>In response to Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung's request for the estimated number of Mainland single mothers in Hong Kong, the Administration advised that it did not have such statistics. It had since 2009 received requests from some 130 cases concerning Mainland single mothers with Hong Kong children and it had endeavoured to provide assistance to these single mothers as far as possible.</p>	
023905 - 024621	<p>Ms Cyd HO Chairman Administration</p>	<p>Concerns raised by Ms Cyd HO -</p> <p>(a) the immigration arrangement was discriminatory against Mainland single mothers whose spouses and children were Hong Kong residents;</p> <p>(b) ImmD should undertake not to curtail the limits of stay of the TWP holders;</p> <p>(c) ImmD should provide assistance to Mainland single mothers to apply for "one-year multiple" exit endorsement while they were awaiting the issue of OWP; and</p> <p>(d) S for S should convey the Subcommittee's</p>	

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		<p>concern in writing to the Mainland immigration authorities, and the Chief Secretary for Administration should follow up the subject matter from the perspective of population policy and its impact on Mainland-HKSAR families.</p> <p>The Administration's response -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) opening a channel for Mainland single mothers to settle in Hong Kong was a complicated issue and required further consideration of its read-across implications on whether similar arrangement would be applicable to Mainland parents of Hong Kong born children; (b) under normal circumstances, ImmD would not curtail the approved limits of stay of TWP holders; and (c) the Administration would continue to reflect to the Mainland authorities the difficulties of Mainland single-parent families for their active consideration of issue of OWP or "one-year multiple" exit endorsement. 	
024622 - 024830	SOCO Chairman	<p>Supplementary views of SOCO -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) it was possible for the Administration to obtain personal particulars of Mainland single mothers who had to stay in Hong Kong to take care of their children when these women applied for extension of limits of stay; (b) S for S should reflect the difficulties of Mainland single mothers with Hong Kong children to the Mainland authorities for their active consideration to issue "one-year multiple" exit endorsement; and (c) ImmD should exercise discretion to extend the limits of stay of Mainland single mothers so as to look after their children in Hong Kong. 	
024831 - 025529	關注中港家庭權利聯席 Chairman Administration	<p>關注中港家庭權利聯席's reiteration of view that the Administration should follow up with the Mainland authorities the request of opening a channel for Mainland single mothers to apply for OWP to settle in Hong Kong to take care of their Hong Kong children.</p>	

Time marker	Speaker(s)	Subject(s)	Action required
		<p>The Administration's response that it noted the difficulties faced by Mainland single mothers with Hong Kong children and would endeavour to provide assistance to these families as far as practicable. It had all along conveyed deputations' views and concerns to its Mainland counterparts. Indeed, some applications from Mainland single mothers for OWP and "one-year multiple" exit endorsement had been approved.</p> <p>The Chairman's view that apart from exercising discretion to extend the limits of stay of individual cases having regard to the merits of each case, the Administration should actively follow up with the Mainland authorities the suggestion of opening a channel for Mainland single mothers to apply for OWP to settle in Hong Kong.</p>	
025530 - 025715	Concern Group on Cross Border Split Families Chairman Administration	Concerns raised by Concern Group on Cross Border Split Families about the handling of application for extension of limits of stay of a few individual cases.	
<i>Agenda item III – Any other business</i>			
025716 - 025720	Chairman	Closing remarks.	