

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(2)1904/08-09(04)

Ref : CB2/PL/AJLS

Panel on Administration of Justice and Legal Services

**Updated background brief prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat
for the meeting on 22 June 2009**

Criminal legal aid fees system

Purpose

This paper provides information on the past discussions of the Panel on Administration of Justice and Legal Services (the Panel) on the criminal legal aid fees system, including the recent discussions made at its meeting on 16 December 2008 as summarized in paragraphs 7 to 12.

Background

Existing criminal legal aid fees system

Prescribed level of fees

2. The Legal Aid Department (LAD) engages counsel and solicitors in private practice as defence lawyers in criminal legal aid cases. The scale of fees payable to these lawyers as well as the fee assessment mechanism are prescribed in Rule 21 of the Legal Aid in Criminal Cases Rules (LACCR), a subsidiary legislation of the Criminal Procedure Ordinance (Cap. 221). While legally the scale of fees only binds LAD, the Department of Justice (DoJ) adopts the same fee scale on an administrative basis in engaging lawyers in private practice to prosecute in criminal cases on behalf of the Government, with a view to ensuring that neither LAD nor DoJ would have any advantage in competing for lawyers. For the same reason, fees for duty lawyers providing legal representation under the Duty Lawyer Scheme¹ are also based on the brief fee payable by DoJ to engage counsel to appear in the Magistrates' Courts as prosecuting counsel. Since 1992, the Administration has been reviewing these fees on a biennial basis, having regard to changes in consumer prices during the reference period, actual or anticipated difficulties in engaging the services of private counsel and

¹ The Duty Lawyer Scheme of the Duty Lawyer Service was established in 1979 to supplement the legal aid services provided by the Legal Aid Department under the Legal Aid Ordinance (Cap. 91). The Duty Lawyer Scheme provides legal representation to eligible defendants who appear in Magistrates' Courts, Juvenile Courts and Coroners' Courts.

solicitors, and other factors such as the state of the economy and office rentals. According to the Administration, it has recently completed the 2008 biennial review of these fees. On the basis of the review, the fees will be raised by 8.3% in accordance with the movement in Consumer Price Index (CPI) (C) during the reference period from July 2006 to July 2008. The existing fees and the proposed fees are set out in **Appendix I**.

Criminal legal aid fees system vis-à-vis the prosecution fees regime

3. While the fees payable to lawyers in private practice engaged for criminal litigation work by DoJ and LAD follow the same scale on an administrative basis, the two systems operate differently in relation to the procedure and authority for increasing the fees payable to lawyers. In response to the Panel, the Administration has explained the differences between the two systems as follows –

(a) Determination of fees

The briefs of DoJ are “marked brief”, i.e. fees are marked before the work is done. For legal aid cases, LAD can only assess the fees “having regard to the work actually and reasonably done” in accordance with Rule 21(1) of LACCR and the scale of fees permitted under LACCR. The current approach is for LAD to agree with individual assigned lawyers the fees level after the conclusion of the cases.

(b) Fees payable at a level that exceeds the statutory limits

DoJ may pay an additional fee called "reading in refresher" calculated at daily refresher fee if the pre-trial preparation work required as assessed by counsel is substantially over and above that required for normal cases. For non-standard briefing out work involving more complex and lengthy cases, DoJ adopts a "tender" system whereby quotations are sought from practitioners and examined critically by a Selection Board.

LAD can increase the brief fee and refresher fee payable to an assigned counsel/solicitor beyond the maximum rates if the assigned solicitor or counsel obtains from the Court a certificate of exceptional complexity/length. LAD has explained that it cannot adopt a tender system partly because the fees have to be assessed on "work actually and reasonably done" basis, and partly because of time constraint. LAD has no control over when a legal aid applicant may come forward for assistance. He may lodge his application for legal aid shortly before hearing, and the urgency simply precludes the possibility of selecting counsel through a tender process. Where senior counsel are assigned nonetheless, their fees are subject to negotiation and are paid at non-standard rates.

Review of the criminal legal aid fees system

4. The request for a comprehensive review of the remuneration system for lawyers engaging in criminal legal aid work was made by the two legal professional bodies in 2003. At the Panel meeting on 15 December 2005, members noted the following concerns raised by the two legal professional bodies over the existing criminal legal aid fees system -

- (a) the Director of Legal Aid (DLA) has no discretion to pay more than the maximum fees stipulated in LACCR. The fees stipulated in LACCR are unrealistically low and the brief fee is far from adequate to compensate preparation work in complex cases;
- (b) while the Court may grant certificates of exceptional complexity and/or length upon application by legal aid lawyers, and thus allow DLA to award a top-up fee, this is not entirely satisfactory as there are no guidelines for the trial judge to grant the certificate and for DLA to calculate the enhanced fee; and
- (c) compared with the relatively more flexible arrangements adopted by DoJ in the prosecution fees regime, the existing criminal legal aid fee system is not conducive to the principle of equality of arms between prosecution and defence, resulting in a situation whereby the legally-aided client would be represented by a far less experienced defence lawyer.

Past discussions of the Panel

Proposed structure of the criminal legal aid fees system

5. In response to the call for change by the two professional bodies, the Administration has reviewed the criminal legal aid fees system and has discussed the relevant issues with the Panel at five meetings held between December 2005 and December 2008. At the meeting on 26 February 2007, the Panel noted that the Administration had reached a broad consensus with the two legal professional bodies on the structure of the new criminal legal aid fee system (the new fee structure), which would operate on a marked-brief basis. According to the Administration, the new fee structure would bring about major improvements, i.e. proper recognition for preparation or pre-trial work, rationalization of fee items, and enhanced transparency for the fee setting and re-determination basis. A summary of the proposed changes in the new structure as provided by the Administration is in **Appendix II**.

Basis for setting the fee rates under the new fee structure

6. In March 2007, the Administration had proposed rates for various items for different levels of court under the new fee structure for the consideration of the two legal professional bodies. While the Bar Association was in general content with the proposal, the Law Society considered the fee rates for the new system unreasonable, particularly for the more experienced solicitors. The Law Society expressed concern that the low fee rates would discourage experienced lawyers from participating in criminal legal aid work and result in a significant shrinking of the pool of solicitors working on criminal legal aid cases.

7. When the issue was last discussed at the meeting on 16 December 2008, the Panel noted that the Administration had offered a revised proposal on fee rates for the consideration of the Law Society. Under the revised proposal, the maximum hourly rate for solicitors taking up criminal legal aid cases in the Court of First Instance was \$730, while that for instructing solicitors and solicitor-advocates at the District Court level were \$520 and \$1,136 respectively.

8. Representatives of the Law Society were dissatisfied that the Administration had failed to address the issues of principle relating to the determination of the fee rates for solicitors. They considered the huge discrepancy between the remuneration for solicitors undertaking criminal and civil legal aid work unjustifiable. The Law Society's position was that the hourly rates for solicitors undertaking criminal legal aid work should be on par with the civil taxation rates used for remunerating civil legal aid work. The revised fee rates proposed by the Administration were still far below the civil taxation rates for civil legal aid cases². Representatives of the Law Society pointed out that the Court would make reference to the civil taxation rates when conducting taxation on the costs of criminal proceedings, hence its proposal that the criminal legal aid fees should be based on the civil taxation rates. The Law Society also expressed dissatisfaction that the Administration had failed to explain the basis upon which the revised fee rates were arrived at. They considered it unjustifiable that the revised fee rate of \$520 for District Court proceedings was even lower than the pre-trial fee of \$670 for Duty Lawyers under the Duty Lawyer Scheme.

9. Members in general were of the view that the negotiation on fee rates between the Administration and the Law Society should be based on mutually acceptable principles if there was to be any material progress in the discussion. Some members also expressed agreement with the view of the Law Society that the fees for criminal legal aid work should be compatible with that for civil legal aid work, as criminal cases required no less legal expertise than civil cases, not to mention that personal liberty was at stake in criminal cases. They also considered that in determining the level of criminal legal aid fees, it was vital to ensure that there was equality of arms between the prosecution and defence in criminal litigation.

² Under the current civil taxation rate scale, the party-to-party taxation rates for High Court proceedings are \$1,600 to \$2,000 per hour for a newly admitted solicitor and \$2,400 to \$3,000 for a solicitor with five to six years' experience, while those for District Court proceedings are \$1,066 to \$1,280 per hour for a newly admitted solicitor and \$1,600 to \$2,000 for a solicitor with five to six years' experience.

10. The Administration explained that the revised fee rates were proposed having regard to the maximum increase in criminal legal aid expenditure that was considered feasible by the Administration. The Administration stressed that the revised fee rates alone represented an increase of some 70% over the current fee rates. Coupled with the introduction of the new fee structure, the expenditure in criminal legal aid was expected to increase by some 95% (i.e. around \$90 million), while the estimated increase in remuneration for criminal legal aid lawyers would amount to 120% to 400%, depending on the length and complexity of individual cases. The Administration stressed that any increase in the rates for criminal legal aid fees must accord with the principle of prudent utilization of public funds.

11. In view of the fundamental difference between the Law Society and the Administration on the approach towards the fee increase, the Panel urged the two parties to overcome their differences and work out a mutually acceptable basis for setting the fee rates to facilitate future discussion. The Administration was requested to report to the Panel on the progress in due course.

Proposal of delinking the implementation of the revised criminal legal aid system for barristers from that for solicitors

12. Regarding the Bar Association's proposal that the legislative amendments for barristers and solicitors be undertaken separately should the Law Society and the Administration fail to agree on the fee rates, with a view to expediting the implementation of the new remuneration system for barristers, the Administration explained that there would be immense difficulties in separating the legislative provisions into separate components on structure and on rates to provide different treatment for counsel and solicitors for different cases at different levels of courts. As broad consensus had been reached on the new fee structure, the Administration suggested embarking on the legislative amendments to implement the new fee structure and the revised rates proposed by the Administration immediately so that criminal legal aid lawyers could benefit from the improved remuneration under the new system as soon as possible. In the meantime, the Law Society and the Administration could continue to negotiate on the rates with a view to reaching a mutually acceptable proposal. Nonetheless, the Administration also undertook to further examine the Bar Association's delinking proposal and revert to the Panel in due course.

Taxation

13. At the meeting on 26 February 2007, members noted that the Law Society objected to the proposal of DLA being the final arbitrator on fee disputes between assigned lawyers and LAD, having regard to the principles of natural justice. The Law Society considered taxation the best way to resolve disputes on criminal legal aid fees. Alternatively, the jurisdiction of the Legal Aid Review Committee [a committee established under section 26A(1) of the Legal Aid Ordinance (Cap. 91)] could be expanded or a statutory body should be set up to adjudicate on fee disputes. The Bar Association and some members of the Panel concurred with the view of the Law

Society. It was pointed out that the civil legal aid fee system also adopted a taxation system. As there were very few disputes on civil legal aid fees being resolved by taxation, the same was envisaged for criminal legal aid fees.

14. The Administration explained that under the civil legal aid system, LAD and assigned lawyers had no prior agreement on the fees; hence taxation at the end of a case would be appropriate. However, under the proposed marked brief system for criminal legal aid cases, fees were agreed beforehand which rendered taxation for resolving disputes on criminal legal aid fees unnecessary. In addition, assigned lawyers could seek LAD's re-determination of fees both during and at the end of the case. Hence, the Administration did not see the need for a taxation system for resolving disputes on criminal legal aid fees. The Administration was requested to consult the Legal Aid Services Council on the Law Society's suggestion in paragraph 13 above and inform the Panel accordingly.

Latest developments

15. In its letter dated 24 April 2009 to the Law Society [LC Paper No. CB(2) 1439/08-09(01)], the Administration offered a further revised proposal on fee rates for the Law Society's consideration. The Administration has proposed to revise the rate for instructing solicitors undertaking criminal legal aid work at the District Court level from the previous offer of \$520 to \$620 per hour. The Administration has also offered to revisit the rates for solicitors in two years' time upon the effective implementation of the new rates. The current rates and the Administration's latest revised proposal on criminal legal aid fees for solicitors, which have taken into account the 8.3% CPI (C) adjustment as a result of the 2008 biennial review, are set out in **Appendix III**. The Administration will brief the Panel on the latest progress of the review on criminal legal aid fees system at the upcoming meeting on 22 June 2009.

Relevant papers

16. A list of the relevant papers available on the LegCo website (<http://www.legco.gov.hk>) is in **Appendix IV**.

Appendix I

Biennial Review – Criminal Legal Aid Fees, Prosecution Fees and Duty Lawyer Fees

<u>Nature of fee</u>	<u>Department/ Service</u>	Current Maximum w.e.f. <u>4 July 2003</u> (\$)	With a 8.3% <u>increase</u> (\$)
1. Court of First Instance Cases			
(a) Counsel			
(i) brief fee	LAD/DOJ*	20,410	22,100
(ii) refresher fee per day	LAD/DOJ*	10,210	11,050
(b) Solicitor			
(i) brief fee	LAD^	6,790	7,350
(ii) refresher fee per day	LAD^	830 to 4,420	890 to 4,780
(c) Conference per hour (counsel)	LAD/DOJ	1,080	1,160
(d) Pre-trial review (per review)	DOJ	2,030	2,190
2. District Court Cases			
(a) Counsel			
(i) brief fee	LAD/DOJ*	13,600	14,720
(ii) refresher fee per day	LAD/DOJ*	6,800	7,360
(b) Solicitor (acting as instructing solicitor)			
(i) brief fee	LAD^	4,840	5,240
(ii) refresher fee per day	LAD^	1,160 to 2,900	1,250 to 3,140
(c) Solicitor (acting as advocate as well as instructing solicitor)			
(i) brief fee	LAD*	16,800	18,190
(ii) refresher fee per day	LAD*	9,310	10,080
(d) Conference per hour (counsel)	LAD/DOJ	880	950
(e) Brief fee for mention/sentence	DOJ	2,710	2,930
3. Magistrates' Court Cases			
(a) Counsel			
(i) brief fee	DOJ	8,160	8,830
(ii) refresher fee per day	DOJ	4,080	4,410

<u>Nature of fee</u>	<u>Department/ Service</u>	<u>Current Maximum w.e.f. 4 July 2003 (\$)</u>	<u>With a 8.3% increase (\$)</u>
(b) Counsel or solicitor (acting as advocate) in committal proceedings			
(i) brief fee	LAD	8,160	8,830
(ii) refresher fee per day	LAD	4,080	4,410
(c) Solicitor for instructing counsel in committal proceedings			
(i) brief fee	LAD	2,210	2,390
(ii) refresher fee per day	LAD	1,810	1,960
(d) Counsel or solicitor acting as advocate in preliminary inquiry			
(i) brief fee	LAD	8,160	8,830
(ii) refresher fee per day	LAD	4,080	4,410
(e) Brief in place of court prosecutor per day	DOJ	5,430	5,880
(f) Duty Lawyer Fee	DLS	a day 5,430	5,880
(g) Pre-trial fee per hour	DLS	half day 2,710 670	2,930 720
4. Appeals			
(a) Settling notice of appeal	LAD	2,710	2,930
(b) Instructing solicitors for appeals to the Court of Appeal			
(i) from the Court of First Instance	LAD	First day 9,160 1,150 to 5,910 Per subsequent day	9,920 1,240 to 6,400
(ii) from the District Court	LAD	First day 7,330 910 to 4,760 Per subsequent day	7,930 980 to 5,150
(c) Counsel for appeals to the Court of Appeal			
(i) from the Court of First Instance	LAD/DOJ	First day 27,210 13,610 Per subsequent day	29,460 14,730
(ii) from the District Court	LAD/DOJ	First day 21,760 10,880 Per subsequent day	23,560 11,780

<u>Nature of fee</u>	<u>Department/ Service</u>	<u>Current Maximum w.e.f. 4 July 2003 (\$)</u>	<u>With a 8.3% increase (\$)</u>
(d) Conference per hour (counsel)	LAD/DOJ	1,080	1,160

Note :

LAD Legal Aid Department

DOJ Department of Justice

DLS Duty Lawyer Service

* Subject to an increase of 10% on the base figures for each of the second to sixth defendant or appellant.

^ Subject to an increase of such amount as appears to the Director of Legal Aid to be proper in the circumstances.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED CHANGES IN FEE STRUCTURE

The proposed criminal legal aid fee structure will bring about the following major improvements – (a) proper recognition for preparation or pre-trial work; (b) rationalisation of fee items; and (c) enhanced transparency for the fee setting and re-determination basis. A comparison is set out below.

Fee Structure

	Types of fees payable	Existing Structure		Proposed Structure	
		Solicitor	Counsel and solicitor advocate	Solicitor	Counsel and solicitor advocate
1	Brief fee	= refresher fee for 2 days		Retitled as – - “Reading fee” payable on an hourly basis, to cover reading of bundle; and	Brief fee. To cover 1 st 8 hrs of preparation + 1 st day of court hearing
2	Additional preparation fee	x		- “Preparation fee”, to cover pre-trial preparation after reading ¹ .	✓ (assessment: ½ day basis; re-determination : hourly basis)
3	Refresher fee	✓ (full day / half day / short)		Retitled as “court hearing day fee”. To cover 1 st day of court hearing and onward (full day basis)	Refresher fee. To cover 2 nd court hearing day and onward (full day basis)
4	Pre-trial review fee (per review)	✓		✓	
5	Mention hearing fee (per hearing)	✓		✓	
6	Conference fee (per hour)	x	✓	✓	✓
7	Uplift per defendant (10% increase to brief fee, refresher fee / court hearing day fee and other court attendance related fees for each additional aided client, up to a max of 50% where 6 or more aided clients are represented).	✓ (not for Magistrates Court)	✓ (not for Magistrates Court)	✓ (including Magistrates Court)	✓ (including Magistrates Court)

¹ To be paid for each stretch of hours to be specified.

Operational: Assignment

Existing Structure	Proposed Structure
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Legal Aid Department (LAD) verbally advises basic particulars of case.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- To facilitate lawyers' consideration and to enhance transparency, lawyers will be allowed to view bundle before accepting assignment, whenever circumstances permit. In any case, LAD will advise the lawyers particulars of the case verbally.

Operational: Re-determination

Existing Structure	Proposed Structure
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- If the assigned lawyer considers that the case is of exceptional length or are exceptionally complex, they may, in accordance with the Legal Aid in Criminal Cases Rules, apply to court at the conclusion of the case and the court may so certify.- With the certificates, (LAD) may pay additional fees to the lawyers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- No need to apply to court for certificates of exceptionality.- Re-determination allowed before the conclusion of the case.- For transparency, circumstances that may require re-determination will be spelt out in more detail. For instance, where there is voluminous amount of additional evidence provided by prosecution after case is assigned; where research on special / peculiar legal issues that are not identified at the time of assignment is required; where the legally aided defendant withdraws legal aid or requests for re-assignment of lawyers, etc.

**Comparison of Current Rates and Proposed Rates for Solicitors
Undertaking Criminal Legal Aid Cases**

	(a) Current Rates <i>(simplified as hourly rate)</i>	(b) Proposed Rates under New Structure and New Rates for Solicitors (taking into account the 8.3% price adjustment as a result of biennial review) <i>(simplified as hourly rate)</i>
District Court		
Instructing Solicitor	Not exceeding \$300	Not exceeding \$620 (Original proposal: Not exceeding \$520)
Solicitor- Advocate	Not exceeding \$1,050	Not exceeding \$1,136
Court of First Instance		
Instructing Solicitor	Not exceeding \$425	Not exceeding \$730
Court of Appeal		
Instructing Solicitor	Not exceeding \$570	Not exceeding \$990

Criminal legal aid fees system

Relevant documents

<u>Meeting</u>	<u>Meeting Date</u>	<u>Paper/Question</u>
Panel on Administration of Justice and Legal Services	27 October 2003	<p>Director of Administration's letter dated 20 October 2003 responding to the issues raised by the Panel at the meetings on 23 June and 29 July 2003 [LC Paper No. CB(2)159/03-04(03)]</p> <p>Minutes of meeting [LC Paper No. CB(2)387/03-04]</p>
Legislative Council	11 May 2005	Official Record of Proceedings of the Council on an oral question raised by Hon Margaret NG on "Payment of fee to the defence counsel in criminal legal aid cases in respect of preparation work"
Panel on Administration of Justice and Legal Services	--	<p>An Executive Summary and the submission on "Review of legal aid in criminal cases" from the Special Committee on Legal Aid Reform of the Hong Kong Bar Association to the Legal Aid Services Council [LC Paper No. CB(2)1588/04-05(01)] (English version only)</p> <p>Law Society of Hong Kong's letter dated 1 June 2005 and a position paper on "The System of Remuneration of Solicitors for Conducting Criminal Legal Aid Work" to the Director of Administration (Annex 7 to the position paper is confidential) [LC Paper No. CB(2)1793/04-05(01)] (English version only)</p> <p>Administration's letter dated 8 July 2005 to the Hong Kong Bar Association on "2004 Biennial Review of Criminal Legal Aid Fees, Prosecution Fees and Duty Lawyer Fees" [LC Paper No. CB(2)2268/04-05(01)] (English version only)</p>

<u>Meeting</u>	<u>Meeting Date</u>	<u>Paper/Question</u>
		<p>Chairman of LASC's letter dated 26 October 2005 to the Director of Administration on "Review of criminal legal aid fees" [LC Paper No. CB(2)260/05-06(01)] <i>(English version only)</i></p> <p>Panel Chairman's letter dated 27 October 2005 to the Director of Administration on "Review of criminal legal aid fees" [LC Paper No. CB(2)260/05-06(02)] <i>(English version only)</i></p>
	15 December 2005	<p>An extract from the Official Record of Proceedings of the Council meeting on 11 May 2005 on an oral question raised by Hon Margaret NG on "Amendments to Legal Aid in Criminal Cases Rules" [LC Paper No. CB(2)658/05-06(01)]</p> <p>Administration's paper on "Criminal legal aid fees system" [LC Paper No. CB(2)658/05-06(02)]</p> <p>Minutes of meeting [LC Paper No. CB(2)1198/05-06]</p>
	--	<p>Director of Administration's letter dated 15 May 2006 concerning the progress of the review of criminal legal aid fees system [LC Paper No. CB(2)2058/05-06(01)]</p> <p>Administration's paper on "2006 Biennial Review of Criminal Legal Aid Fees, Prosecution Fees and Duty Lawyer Fees" [LC Paper No. CB(2)563/06-07(01)]</p>
	26 February 2007	<p>Background brief prepared by the LegCo Secretariat on "Criminal legal aid fees system" [LC Paper No. CB(2)1127/06-07(01)]</p> <p>Administration's paper on "Review of criminal legal fees system" [LC Paper No. CB(2)1127/06-07(02)]</p>

<u>Meeting</u>	<u>Meeting Date</u>	<u>Paper/Question</u>
		<p>Law Society's paper on "Review of criminal legal aid fees" [LC Paper No. CB(2)1127/06-07(03)] <i>(English version only)</i></p> <p>Draft minutes provided by the Law Society of a meeting held between the Administration and the legal professional bodies on 21 December 2006 [LC Paper No. CB(2)1127/06-07(04)] <i>(English version only)</i></p> <p>Law Society's letter dated 16 February 2007 to the Administration [LC Paper No. CB(2)1127/06-07(05)] <i>(English version only)</i></p> <p>Minutes of meeting [LC Paper No. CB(2)1393/06-07]</p>
	25 June 2007	<p>Administration's paper on "Review of criminal legal aid fee system" [LC Paper No. CB(2)2221/06-07(05)]</p> <p>Law Society's submission on "Criminal legal aid fees system" [LC Paper No. CB(2)2264/06-07(01)] <i>(English version only)</i></p> <p>Minutes of meeting [LC Paper No. CB(2)2654/06-07]</p>
	25 February 2008	<p>Background Brief prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat on "Criminal legal aid fees system" [LC Paper No. CB(2)1143/07-08(01)]</p> <p>Administration's paper on "Criminal legal aid fees system" [LC Paper No. CB(2)1143/07-08(02)]</p> <p>Society for Community Organization's submission [LC Paper No. CB(2)1143/07-08(03)] <i>(Chinese version only)</i></p>

<u>Meeting</u>	<u>Meeting Date</u>	<u>Paper/Question</u>
		<p>Law Society of Hong Kong's submission [LC Paper No. CB(2)1176/07-08(02)] (English version only)</p> <p>Hong Kong Human Rights Monitor's submission [LC Paper No. CB(2)1245/07-08(01)] (English version only)</p> <p>Law Society of Hong Kong's letter dated 22 February 2008 enclosing a letter from its President to the Secretary for Home Affairs concerning the criminal legal aid fees system [LC Paper No. CB(2)1247/07-08(01)] (English version only)</p> <p>Minutes of meeting [LC Paper No. CB(2)1697/07-08]</p>
	20 October 2008	<p>Paper provided by the Home Affairs Bureau [LC Paper No. CB(2)71/08-09(01)] (paragraphs 4 to 7)</p>
	16 December 2008	<p>Background Brief prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat on "Criminal legal aid fees system" [LC Paper No. CB(2)438/08-09(06)]</p> <p>Administration's paper on "Review of criminal legal aid fees system" [LC Paper No. CB(2)438/08-09(05)]</p> <p>Minutes of meeting [LC Paper No. CB(2)837/08-09]</p>
	--	<p>Administration's letter dated 24 April 2009 to the Law Society of Hong Kong on a revised proposal on criminal legal aid fees [LC Paper No. CB(2)1439/08-09(01)] (English version only)</p>