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18 January 2011

Mr Stephen Lam
Clerk to Establishment Subcommittee
Legislative Council Secretariat
3/F Citibank Tower
3 Garden Road,
Hong Kong

By Fax & By Post
Fax No: 2869 6794

Dear Mr. Lam,

**Establishment Subcommittee
Follow-up to meeting on 5 January 2011**

I refer to your letter of 10 January 2011 addressed to Ms. Alice Lau of the Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau on the captioned subject.

At the meeting of the Establishment Subcommittee of Finance Committee held on 5 January, Members considered LC Paper No. EC(2010-11)12 on the proposal submitted by the Department of Justice (DoJ) to create a new rank of Assistant Principal Government Counsel (APGC) (Directorate (Legal) Point 1) (DL1) and 15 new APGC posts in DoJ and the Development Bureau, to be offset by deletion of 15 posts of Senior Government Counsel (SGC). Members asked whether there were any corresponding measures for strengthening the support, for example, staffing support to the DL1 officers; and if yes, what were the details of such measures.

The workload of the Department has increased in breadth and depth in recent years and we have been devoting additional resources to cope with the increasing volume of work. In 2010-11, for example, we created 39 posts, among

which 25 were counsel grade posts and 14 were from other grades including five Law Clerks, two Executive Officers, two Personal Secretary I and five clerical/supporting staff. In 2011-12, we have also sought additional resources to create additional posts of various grades and ranks to further strengthen staffing support to the DL1 officers as well as other senior officers in DoJ. To help meet service needs that are time-limited, short term or seasonal in nature, we will employ non-civil service contract staff to provide the necessary manpower support.

In line with the general civil service policy, secretarial and clerical support are provided to counsel grade officers in DoJ through a pooling/sharing system. Para-legal support is also provided in the same manner by Law Clerks. The same pooling arrangement will apply to the newly created APGC officers. As the proposal will involve the creation of new APGC posts to be offset by the deletion of the same number of SGC posts, the latter move would release the demand of secretarial support to these SGC and such manpower resources would be redeployed to serve the new DL1 officers. We would keep the situation under review and where appropriate, employ contract staff to meet any sudden surge of workload.

I should be grateful if you would bring this letter to the attention of the Members. Please also circulate the letter to the Panel on Administration of Justice and Legal Services for reference as requested by the Subcommittee.

Yours sincerely,



(Susie Ho)

Director of Administration and Development
Department of Justice

c.c. Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury
(Attn : Ms. LAU Yim, Alice)

Secretary for the Civil Service
(Attn: Mrs. YEUNG HO Poi Yan, Ingrid)