

**For information**

**Legislative Council Panel on  
Administration of Justice and Legal Services**

**Use of Chinese in Court Proceedings**

**PURPOSE**

This paper informs Members of the work to facilitate the use of Chinese in court proceedings by the Legal Aid Department (LAD) and the Duty Lawyer Service (DLS).

**PRESENT SITUATION**

2. The following sets out the work to facilitate the use of Chinese in court proceedings by the LAD and the DLS which are under the policy purview of the Home Affairs Bureau.

*Legal Aid Department*

3. For the purpose of processing legal aid applications, the LAD has prepared the application forms, notices, certificates and other relevant documents in both Chinese and English. Most communication with the legal aid applicants is done in Chinese unless the applicants are non-Chinese or have indicated a preference for English as the medium for communication.

*Duty Lawyer Service*

4. The DLS runs the Duty Lawyer Scheme to provide legal representation by qualified lawyers in private practice to eligible defendants appearing in all Magistrates Courts, Juvenile Courts and Coroners Courts. According to the DLS, the use of Chinese in court proceedings is very prevalent in Hong Kong and the majority of duty lawyers of the DLS are proficient in both Chinese and English. Translation assistance with regard to the witness statements and other

relevant documents will be provided by the DLS to the expatriate duty lawyers as necessary.

**Home Affairs Bureau  
November 2011**