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5 August 2013

Clerk to Panel on Public Service
(Attn.: Ms Anita SIT)
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central
Hong Kong

Dear Ms SIT,

Panel on Public Service
Updated list of outstanding items for discussion

Thank you for your letter of 26 July 2013 attaching an updated list of outstanding items for discussion. We would like to provide our views on Item 6 of the list in the ensuing paragraphs, and propose that the item be taken out from the list.

In response to Hon SIN Chung-kai, Hon Charles Peter MOK and Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok's joint letter of 28 June 2013 proposing discussion of issues relating to the creation of the Regulatory Affairs Manager (RAM) grade and its impact on the Telecommunications Engineer (TE) grade in the Office of the Communications Authority (OFCA), the Administration replied on 5 July 2013 that creation of a new rank in a department is normally discussed in the relevant Panel that oversees the policies of that department, as that Panel would be in the best position to consider the justifications for creating the rank.

We would like to recap that the proposal on the creation of RAM grade in OFCA was discussed and supported by the Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting (ITB Panel) on 9 May 2011. Taking into account the views of

TE grade members and also the views of Members of the Establishment Subcommittee and Finance Committee, OFCA undertook to commission an external consultant to initiate a review to critically examine whether the functions of the TE grade should be subsumed under the RAM grade. Following the completion of the review in June 2013, OFCA submitted the paper on the "Review of the Telecommunications Engineer grade in the Office of the Communications Authority" to ITB Panel for discussion on 8 July 2013. The management of OFCA informed Members at the meeting that OFCA has decided to adopt the "Non-Subsuming Option". Under this option, OFCA will retain 25 TE grade posts requiring in-depth engineering knowledge, and will resume recruitment of the TE grade when the number of serving grade members falls close to the target establishment. Since the ITB Panel has all along been looking at the RAM proposal and related matters, it is more appropriate for this matter to continue to be discussed in the ITB Panel rather than the Panel on Public Service.

At the Panel on Public Service meeting held on 15 July 2013, we note that Hon Charles Peter MOK expressed worry that the Government would gradually disregard professional qualifications in the civil service and thus requested that the issue be included in the list of outstanding items for discussion. We would like to clarify that there is no general policy to disregard professional qualifications or replace professional grades in the civil service. Nor do we have any plan to consider such a policy. The RAM proposal and related matters should be considered on their own merits and have no read-across implications within the civil service.

We trust the above has made clear the Administration's position on the matter which should have addressed Members' concern.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Raymond NG". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a distinct loop at the end.

(Raymond NG)
for Secretary for the Civil Service

c.c. Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-ye, GBS, JP
Chairman, Legislative Council Panel on Public Service

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