

**立法會**  
***Legislative Council***

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**Paper for the House Committee meeting on 12 March 1999**

**Late membership of the Financial Affairs Panel**

**Purpose**

This paper seeks the House Committee's agreement to the acceptance of Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming as a member of the Financial Affairs Panel.

**Background**

2. According to Rule 77 (4) of the Rules of Procedure, the manner and timing of the signification of membership for Panels are determined by the House Committee. The arrangements determined by the House Committee are reflected in House Rule 22 (b) (c) (d) and House Rule 23, as reproduced in **Appendix I**. Under these arrangements, any Member who has not indicated his intention to join a Panel before the prescribed deadline will not be accepted as member. But the chairman of the Panel has the authority to decide whether to accept late membership on grounds of indisposition or absence from Hong Kong.

3. At the beginning of this session, Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming informed the Chairman of the Panel that due to a mistake made on the signification form filed by his personal assistant, his name had appeared on the membership list of the Economic Services Panel rather than the Financial Affairs Panel which he intended to join. He therefore sought the Chairman's agreement for him to join the Panel.

4. The Panel Chairman, after consulting the Secretariat and the relevant provisions in the House Rules, noted that he had no authority to accept Mr LEE as member because the reason for late membership in this particular case was outside the scope of House Rule 23. As the House Committee was at that time considering the possible re-alignment of duties among economy-related Panels for undertaking issues relating to the overall economic development of Hong Kong, the matter had been held in abeyance pending the decision of the House Committee in this respect. In the meantime, Mr LEE continued to attend meetings of the Financial Affairs Panel as a non-member.

### **Panel's views**

5. On 1 March 1999, the Financial Affairs Panel deliberated on Mr LEE's request to become a member of the Panel. The Panel accepted that the mistake Mr LEE made on the signification form in July 1998 was a genuine clerical error and therefore supported that Mr LEE be accepted as member of the Panel subject to the House Committee's endorsement. The Panel also agreed that the acceptance of late membership should not have any bearing on Panel's earlier decision on the chairmanship and deputy chairmanship. In other words, no re-election of chairman or deputy chairman would be required as a result of the acceptance of late membership.

6. Furthermore, the Panel also considered it cumbersome for the House Committee to deal with every late membership case outside the scope of House Rule 23, and suggested that a provision should be made in the House Rules on the arrangements for the consideration of late membership on grounds other than indisposition or absence from Hong Kong.

### **Advice sought**

7. Members are invited to consider Financial Affairs Panel's recommendation that Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming be accepted as a member of the Panel.

Legislative Council Secretariat  
9 March 1999

**22. Panels**

- (b) A Panel shall consist of not less than six members including the chairman. Members may join a Panel by submission of returns to the Secretariat before the deadline set before the first meeting of the Panel in the session of the Council. Panel membership lasts until the Panels are dissolved upon the dissolution of the Council.
- (c) A Member who does not wish to remain as member of the Panel may resign from the Panel.
- (d) A Member who joins the Council after the start of the legislative session should signify membership for the Panels of his choice within one month of the date at which he is declared elected as Member of the Council.

**23. Late Membership of Committees**

It is for the chairman of a committee to decide whether to accept late membership on grounds of indisposition or absence from Hong Kong.