

委聘專家顧問  
Appointment of specialist advisers

**立法會**  
**Legislative Council**

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From : Assistant Secretary General 1  
To : All Members of the Legislative Council

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**Appointment of Specialist Advisers for Panels**

At its meeting on 21 October 2003, The Legislative Council Commission (the Commission) endorsed the arrangements for the appointment of specialist advisers for Panels. This circular provides the background and details of the arrangements.

**Background**

2. A Panel provides a forum for the exchange of views on Government policies and issues of public concern, and for the Administration to consult Members on major legislative and financial proposals before these are formally introduced into the Council or the Finance Committee. In considering a policy matter or an issue of public concern, a Panel requires background information for its deliberation. In addition to receiving briefings from the Administration, the Panel may invite public views on the policy matter or issue, including those of the trades/industries and professional bodies concerned and the academia. Where feasible, the Panel Clerk and/or the Research and Library Services Division (RLSD) of the Secretariat may provide a background brief or information note to the Panel on the subject concerned prior to deliberation. The Panel may also request the RLSD to undertake research studies, making references to the relevant practices and experiences of other places.

3. Such a mode of operation has so far proved effective. However, given the rapid development and advancement in fields or areas such as information technology, financial systems, medicine, ecology and environmental conservation, physics, engineering and other sciences, Panels may from time to time come across policy matters or issues which are highly technical. It may be necessary for a Panel to seek the assistance of an independent specialist adviser in understanding a subject, so as to facilitate members' consideration of the policy proposal put forward by the Administration and the views presented by deputations.

## **Arrangements for engagement of Specialist Advisers**

4. In reviewing the organization and structure of the Legislative Council Secretariat, the Commission considers it appropriate to appoint experts as specialist advisers to provide independent advice to Panels if and when the circumstances so warrant. Specialist advisers should be appointed only on an ad hoc basis and for a defined period to give objective specialist advice on specific issues which are highly technical in nature. Specialist advisers may prepare papers and/or give internal briefings to the Panel.

### **Selection of specialist advisers**

5. It would be for a Panel to decide on whom should be appointed as specialist advisers for the Panel. Where necessary, a Panel may form a working group to deal with matters relating to the appointment of specialist adviser(s) for the Panel. Specialist advisers to be appointed should have up-to-date knowledge about the issue on which he will advise the Panel. Therefore, prospective candidates for appointment should not be confined to academics or retired professionals/practitioners.

### **Remuneration**

6. Specialist advisers should be granted an honorarium at a standard rate to be determined by the Commission for each hour of attendance at meetings/briefings of Panels. Where the service requires extensive research and analytical work, a lump-sum fee may be negotiated subject to normal procedure in the procurement of service. A specialist adviser may choose not to receive any honorarium for his/her service. For the 2003-04 legislative session, the Commission has agreed to the rate of HK\$1,100 per hour for a specialist adviser's attendance of meetings with Panel members. Appointment of specialist advisers should be made by the Commission.

### **Declaration of interest and confidentiality undertaking**

7. To ensure the impartiality and integrity of specialist advisers, the person to be appointed should be asked to declare his/her interest, real, apparent or potential, in the subject concerned for the relevant Panel's consideration in the selection process. Specialist advisers, once appointed, should be required to report any interest that may arise in the course of their service to Panels. To avoid role conflict, the specialist advisers should not at the same time give views on the field or subject to the Panel in the capacity of a deputation.

8. Specialist advisers should keep confidential all information which comes to their knowledge or possession in the course of their service to Panels, and should not divulge or communicate to any other person any advice he/she provides to Panels.

9. Further details on the appointment procedures are separately provided to the Panel Clerks. Any questions on this circular may be directed to me or Ms Anita SIT at 2525 3331.



(Ms Pauline NG)  
Assistant Secretary General 1