

CSO/ADM/CR 6/3221/98(03)

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*(By fax and by post)*

17 June 2003

Mrs Percy Ma  
Clerk to Panel on Administration of  
Justice and Legal Services  
Legislative Council  
Legislative Council Building  
8 Jackson Road, Central  
Hong Kong

Dear Mrs Ma,

### **Review of the Jury System**

I am writing to update the Panel on the progress in respect of the review of the jury system in Hong Kong.

The Administration undertook to review the qualifying criteria of jurors following the enactment of the Jury (Amendment) Bill 1997 and the introduction of jury trials conducted in Chinese in the High Court. In consultation with the Judiciary, the Administration has identified a number of issues for further consideration including the present education requirement at Form 7, the need for a residency requirement, the age requirement, and the eligibility of persons with certain disability, e.g. blindness and deafness, to serve as a juror. In view of the fact that the jury system is an essential and important feature of our criminal justice system, and following further consultation with the Judiciary, the Administration considers that the best way forward would be for a comprehensive review on the subject to be undertaken by an expert group, with representation from both the legal profession and the wider community. With this consideration in mind, the Administration has decided to refer the subject to the Law Reform Commission.

Taking into account its current caseload, the Law Reform Commission is expected to complete its study in about 12 months' time. We shall consult the Panel on the Commission's recommendations once the Commission has completed its deliberations.

I should be grateful if you could circulate this letter for the information of Panel Members.

Yours sincerely,

( Andrew H Y Wong )  
Director of Administration

c.c. The Honourable Margaret Ng  
Chairman, AJLS Panel