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12 May 2011

Mr Thomas WONG
Clerk to Legislative Council Panel on Home Affairs
Legislative Council Building
8 Jackson Road
Central
Hong Kong
(Attn: Ms Alice LEUNG)

Dear Ms Leung,

Library Automation System and Printing Charges of Public Libraries

We thank the Panel for referring the e-mail from Mr CHU King-yuen dated 29 March 2011 to us. Our response to his views on the services of public libraries is as follows:

As for the two complaints (Case No.: OMB2002/0534 and OMB2008/4220) lodged with the Office of The Ombudsman, Hong Kong (the Ombudsman's Office) in relation to the Library Automation System (LAS) of public libraries mentioned in paragraph 2 of Mr Chu's e-mail, our response to the cases and our follow-up actions have been presented to the Ombudsman's Office and improvement measures have been adopted accordingly as recommended. The Ombudsman's Office has already completed investigation into both cases. In the mean time, since we have detailed our explanation regarding the two cases in our reply to the Panel in August 2010 in response to Mr Chu's views in his e-mail to the Panel last year, we will not repeat them in this letter.

We are actively carrying out the LAS Replacement Project with a view to replacing the obsolete modules of the current system, further enhancing library services and meeting the community's needs for library services. We expect to launch out the first phase of the main system functions by the end of this year. More upgraded functions and services will be launched gradually afterwards. Since the project aims to introduce a brand new system rather than solely renovating the current system, in-depth studies, system developments and repeated testing are required owing to its size and complexity. As a result, the whole project is scheduled for completion in 2013.

In regard to the issue on the printing charges mentioned in Mr Chu's e-mail, a review on the fees and charges of different facilities and services, including the library printing service, is in progress with a view to standardising the service charges of libraries in urban

area and the New Territories. As the study and review cover a wide range of items and the review results and suggestions are subjected to examination by relevant bureaux and departments, there is no concrete timetable for the implementation of new initiatives for the time being.

We hope that the above will provide the Panel with a clearer and fuller understanding of the issues brought up by Mr Chu. Please contact Mrs Mary CHENG, Chief Librarian (Administration and Planning), on 2921 1244 for further enquiries.

Yours sincerely,

Signed
(LEE Yuk-man)
for Director of Leisure and Cultural Services

c.c.
Secretary for Home Affairs
(Attn: Mr Herman LAW)