



**平 等 機 會 委 員 會**

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES COMMISSION  
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15 September 2014

Clerk to Panel on Constitutional Affairs  
(Attn: Ms Joanne MAK)

Dear Madam,

Panel on Constitutional Affairs  
Written response to issues raised in Hon Cyd Ho Sau-lan's letter

Thank you for your letter dated 3 September 2014.

The Hon Cyd Ho's letter dated 29 August 2014 concerns recent news reports that remarks made by our officer in a religious meeting indicated a conflict with the stance of the Commission (EOC). It was also reported that he procured people to give responses inconsistent with EOC's stance to the Discrimination Law Review (DLR) Public Consultation currently undertaken by the EOC.

The EOC respects the freedom of speech and religion of its employees. However, all employees should avoid coming into conflict with EOC's stance or adversely affecting EOC's work. If their conduct or expressed views might contradict EOC's stance, they should seek approval in advance. The EOC is now conducting an internal investigation into the reported alleged incident. In order to alleviate public concerns over possible conflict affecting the conduct of the DLR consultation, the officer concerned has been relieved of his duties regarding the Discrimination Law Review. Separately, he was never involved in the work relating to the research or consultation of legislation on sexual orientation and gender identity (LGBTI).

The DLR consultation is largely concerned with current legislation on sex, disability, family status, and race discrimination. It does not

include legislating for LGBTI. While the consultation includes the issue of de facto marriages, the EOC is open on whether this should cover same-sex relationships. Despite the reported remarks, we will maintain our open and impartial stance to receive feedback from the public and different stakeholders.

The DLR work involved team efforts under the collective supervision by senior management as well as EOC Members. The officer involved in the reported remarks was only one of the team members. His personal religious views did not affect this work. In the public consultation sessions before the reported remarks, he did not deviate from EOC's stance. He is now no longer involved in the DLR consultation, and his personal view will not affect this work and EOC's position.

The feedback from the consultation will be reflected and reported accurately in terms of quantity and content. The EOC will consider what recommendations for law amendment after analyzing the feedback, based on logical reasoning, society values and legal principles.

In the light of the above, appropriate measures are in place to ensure the proper conduct of the DLR consultation and we will keep matters under review.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'York Chow', is written over the printed name and title.

York CHOW  
Chairperson  
Equal Opportunities Commission