

Outcome of supplementary application exercise for space in the legal hub announced

The Department of Justice (DoJ) announces today (June 9) the outcome of the supplementary application exercise for allocating certain space in the West Wing of the former Central Government Offices (CGO) and the former French Mission Building (FMB) in Central to law-related organisations (LROs) for the provision of legal and dispute resolution services.

A spokesman for the DoJ said that pursuant to the policy objective of consolidating Hong Kong's status as a leading centre for international legal and dispute resolution services in the Asia-Pacific region, the Government will provide certain space to LROs in the West Wing of the former CGO and the former FMB. Together with the DoJ offices in the Main Wing, the East Wing and part of West Wing of the former CGO, the whole area is intended to form a legal hub at the heart of Hong Kong.

The spokesman said, "Following the conclusion of the Stage 1 application exercise, a supplementary application exercise had been held under which a total of 10 applications were considered. After assessing the applications based on the relative merits of the respective organisations, the Committee on Provision of Space in the Legal Hub (the Committee) recommended that the application of 5 LROs (list attached at Annex) should be supported."

Under the two exercises, a total of 17 LROs (including 12 LROs recommended under the Stage 1 application exercise) have been recommended by the Committee. These LROs, all of which have confirmed acceptance of the offer of space in the legal hub, cover a good mix of reputable local, regional and international organisations, specialising in different legal or dispute resolution services or functions, thereby reflecting Hong Kong's status as a leading centre for international legal and dispute resolution services in the Asia-Pacific region. The DoJ will liaise with these LROs on the detailed arrangements for the allocation of space, with a view to making available the space concerned in the legal hub to them starting from around early 2019 at the earliest.

Looking ahead, the Committee plans to launch a Stage 2 application exercise in around 2018.

The provision of space to LROs in the legal hub will enable existing ones to further develop their services and create a favourable environment to attract reputable international legal and dispute resolution institutions to set up offices in Hong Kong, which will further enhance the competitiveness of Hong Kong as a leading centre for international legal and dispute resolution services in the Asia-Pacific region.

[Ends/Friday, June 9 2017]

**List of LROs recommended
under the supplementary application exercise**

1. Asian Academy of International Law Limited
2. Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (East Asia Branch)
3. Hong Kong Advocacy Training Council Limited
4. International Advocacy Training Council Limited
5. Mainland – Hong Kong Joint Mediation Center