

立法會 *Legislative Council*

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Panel on Constitutional Affairs

Background brief prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat for the meeting on 21 November 2016

Revision of fees under the Registration of Local Newspapers Ordinance

Purpose

This paper summarizes the previous discussion of the Panel on Constitutional Affairs ("the Panel") on the last revision of fees under the Registration of Local Newspapers Ordinance (Cap. 268) ("RLNO") in 2014.

Background

2. Under RLNO, the Office for Film, Newspaper and Article Administration registers local newspapers and news agencies, and issues licences for newspaper distributors. Fees are levied for providing these services and for searching, inspecting and obtaining certified extracts from the registers of local newspapers and news agencies.

3. According to the Administration, the fees are revised from time to time with reference to a set of guidelines¹ to recover the full cost of providing the related services in line with the "user pays" principle and to avoid a steep fee increase. The 11 fee items under RLNO (**Appendix I**) were last revised in November 2014.

Concerns raised by Panel members

4. When the Panel discussed the last revision of fees under RLNO at its meeting on 17 February 2014, members in general did not raise objection to the

¹ The guidelines are: (a) for those fees with an existing cost recovery rate of less than 40%, adopt an increase of about 20%; (b) for those fees with an existing cost recovery rate of between 40% and 70%, adopt an increase of about 15%; and (c) for those fees with an existing cost recovery rate of over 70%, adopt an increase of 10% or lower.

proposed fee revisions. However, a concern was raised about the large discrepancy in the cost recovery rate for various fee items after the proposed fee revisions, which ranged from 43% to 85% as shown in Appendix I. It was suggested that a standard cost recovery rate should be set and fee revisions be conducted on a more regular basis to avoid a steep fee increase in one go. For those fees with a cost recovery rate below the standard rate, they should be increased on a gradual basis to achieve the standard rate. The Administration agreed to give thought to the suggestions.

5. The two relevant Amendment Regulations² to implement the proposed fee revisions under Cap. 268A and Cap. 268B respectively were tabled at the Council meeting of 30 April 2014 for negative vetting. According to the relevant Legislative Council Brief, the proposed fee revisions were effective from 1 November 2014.

Latest development

6. The Administration will brief the Panel on the latest round of review and proposed fee revisions under RLNO at the next meeting on 21 November 2016.

Relevant papers

7. A list of the relevant papers on the Legislative Council website is in **Appendix II**.

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² The News Agencies Registration (Amendment) Regulation 2014 (L.N. 55) and the Newspapers Registration and Distribution (Amendment) Regulation 2014 (L.N. 56)

**Proposed fee revisions under the Registration
of Local Newspapers Ordinance (Cap. 268)**

Fee Item	Existing fee	Full cost	Existing cost recovery rate	Proposed fee	Proposed amount of increase (% increase)	Cost recovery rate after the proposed fee revision
(1) First registration of local newspaper	\$905	\$1,511	60%	\$1,040	\$135 (15%)	69%
(2) Annual renewal of registration of local newspaper	\$680	\$1,300	52%	\$780	\$100 (15%)	60%
(3) Change of particulars of local newspaper registration	\$100	\$278	36%	\$120	\$20 (20%)	43%
(4) Search for a newspaper register	\$33	\$81	41%	\$38	\$5 (15%)	47%
(5) Certified true copy of a newspaper register	\$130	\$313	42%	\$150	\$20 (15%)	48%
(6) Newspaper distributor's licence	\$865	\$1,123	77%	\$950	\$85 (10%)	85%
(7) First registration of a news agency	\$905	\$1,252	72%	\$995	\$90 (10%)	79%
(8) Annual renewal of registration of news agency	\$725	\$1,042	70%	\$835	\$110 (15%)	80%
(9) Change of particulars of a news agency	\$100	\$278	36%	\$120	\$20 (20%)	43%
(10) Search for a news agency register	\$32	\$81	40%	\$37	\$5 (16%)	46%
(11) Certified true copy of a news agency register	\$125	\$263	48%	\$145	\$20 (16%)	55%

Source: Annex to the Administration's paper entitled "Revision of certain fees under the policy areas of the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau" [LC Paper No. CB(2)850/13-14(03)]. The paper was discussed at the Panel on Constitutional Affairs meeting on 17 February 2014.

**Relevant papers on
Revision of fees under the Registration of
Local Newspapers Ordinance**

Committee	Date of meeting	Paper
Panel on Constitutional Affairs	17.2.2014 (Item III)	Agenda Minutes

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