

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 15 January 2018

Promotion of the Basic Law

Purpose

This paper summarizes the past discussion of the Panel on Constitutional Affairs ("the Panel") on the promotion of the Basic Law.

Background

2. According to the Administration, the Government has been promoting the Basic Law through civic education, school education and training for civil servants. In January 1998, the Government established the Basic Law Promotion Steering Committee ("BLPSC") to provide the necessary steer on the overall programme and strategy for promoting the Basic Law, and provides an organizational focus for coordinating the efforts of various parties concerned. There are five working groups under BLPSC, namely Working Group ("WG") on Local Community, WG on Teachers and Students, WG on Civil Servants, WG on Industrial, Commercial and Professional Sectors, and WG on Overseas Community. The Home Affairs Bureau, the Education Bureau, the Civil Service Bureau ("CSB"), the Trade and Industry Department and the Information Services Department provide secretariat services to the five WGs respectively and assist them in planning and organizing activities to promote the Basic Law to the respective sectors.

Relevant discussions of the Panel

3. The Panel discussed the promotion of the Basic Law during various policy briefings by the Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs over the years. The major concerns expressed by members are set out below.

Effectiveness of promotion of the Basic Law

4. Some members expressed concern about the effectiveness of the

Administration's efforts in promoting the Basic Law, and suggested that additional measures should be taken to assist people from different walks of life in gaining a more in-depth understanding of the "one country, two systems" principle and the Basic Law. Some members considered that although the Basic Law had been in force for many years, some people emphasized only the "two systems" and neglected the "one country" principle. Some other members considered that the Administration should promote the relevant provisions of the Basic Law which safeguarded human rights and various kinds of freedom of Hong Kong people.

5. The Administration advised that BLPSC was set up to map out strategies for promoting the Basic Law. A wide range of Basic Law promotional activities were organized by the five WGs established under BLPSC, such as territory-wide inter-school quiz competitions, producing Basic Law visual learning packages for upper primary and junior secondary students, thematic talks on the Basic Law organized by CSB, as well as thematic seminars and a souvenir design competition on the Basic Law organized by the Trade and Industry Department. Besides, a community participation scheme was organized by the Committee on the Promotion of Civic Education and the Basic Law Promotion Sponsorship Scheme was launched by the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau ("CMAB") to encourage community organizations to stage activities at the district level to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the promulgation of the Basic Law. In addition, the Education Bureau subsidized educational groups and tertiary institutions to carry out Basic Law promotion activities through the Quality Education Fund and the Basic Law Promotion Funding Scheme for Tertiary Institutions.

6. Some members suggested that more innovative measures, such as mobile app games and short videos, should be taken to promote the Basic Law in a lively manner to attract young people, and called on the Administration to adopt a more interactive approach, such as the use of multimedia, to promote the Basic Law. The Administration advised that publicity on the Basic Law also included the use of new media, such as the Internet, smart-phone applications and online interactive games, to appeal to the younger generation.

7. At the policy briefing cum meeting held on 25 January 2017, the Administration informed the Panel that it was building up an online database on Basic Law court cases. It was hoped that by introducing the court cases and judgments relevant to the Basic Law provisions in an easy-to-understand and more interesting manner, the general public and students could appreciate the content of Basic Law provisions and deepen their understanding of the constitutional foundation of "one country, two systems", and its implementation in accordance with the law. The online database would comprise about 60 court cases and was expected to be launched in mid-2017 for public use.

8. Some members suggested that cases relating to the rights of Hong Kong citizens under "one country, two systems", the principle of state sovereignty, reasons for seeking an interpretation of Basic Law provisions as well as election-related court cases should be included in the database. Relevant materials could be used for production of short videos to facilitate students' learning in their Liberal Studies lessons. Some other members suggested that documents on discussion about the future of Hong Kong and the drafting of the Basic Law since the 1960s should be included. The Administration advised that the relevant excerpts on Basic Law-related court cases between 1997 to 2010 would be provided. There would be a content search function, as well as questions and answers to enrich public understanding of the Basic Law in an interactive manner.

Financial provision for promoting the Basic Law

9. Members noted that in 2017-2018, CMAB continued to set aside about \$16 million for enabling the public to have a more comprehensive and thorough understanding of the "one country, two systems" principle and the Basic Law via various means of organizing or sponsoring various types of promotional activities. At the policy briefing cum meeting held on 25 January 2017, some members expressed concern about whether sufficient resources were allocated for promotion of the Basic Law. The Administration advised that it had increased allocation of resources in this area by almost five times since 1997, and additional resources would be provided to strengthen the work if necessary.

Recent development

10. The Administration will brief the Panel on the promotion of the Basic Law at the next meeting on 15 January 2018.

Relevant papers

11. A list of relevant papers which are available on the LegCo website is in the **Appendix**.

Appendix

Relevant papers on promotion of the Basic Law

Committee	Date of meeting	Paper
Panel on Constitutional Affairs	19.1.2015 (Item IV)	Agenda Minutes
	18.1.2016 (Item III)	Agenda Minutes
	25.1.2017 (Item V)	Agenda Minutes

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