



司法機構政務處

Judiciary Administration

電話 Tel: 2867 2101  
傳真 Fax: 2121 1895  
本函檔號 Our Ref.:  
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11 March 2021

Miss Judy YEE  
Clerk to the Establishment Sub-committee  
Legislative Council  
Legislative Council Complex  
1 Legislative Council Road  
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Miss YEE,

**Legislative Council Establishment Sub-committee  
Follow-up to the Meeting held on 17 February 2021**

I refer to your letter dated 25 February 2021 enclosing a letter from Hon Holden Chow dated 23 February 2021 to the Chairman of the Establishment Subcommittee on matters related to court security. I should like to provide the Judiciary's response in the ensuing paragraphs.

The Judiciary has all along been attaching great importance to maintaining the solemnity of court proceedings and ensuring a safe and secure environment to all court users. While it remains the Judges and Judicial Officers' jurisdiction to regulate the order and decorum of the courts and to make any directions so required for the proper administration of justice, the Judiciary Administration has been taking all possible measures to enhance the overall security of court premises having regard to all relevant considerations such as risk assessments, operational efficiency, practicality, and physical layout of court premises etc.

The rapid and substantial upsurge in court cases relating to social events since late 2019 has brought unprecedented challenges to the Judiciary, particularly in terms of court security and crowd management. Around 100 high-profile cases are being heard across different levels of courts every week.

Operational arrangements for such cases tend to be complex, mainly because quite a number of them involve multiple defendants and high public attendance (sometimes up to a few hundreds), giving rise to intensive media attention and large demand for courtroom seats, as well as order and security issues. There is a clear need for continual dedicated support at the directorate level for strategic and contingency planning to put in place timely and appropriate court security and crowd management measures for ensuring the smooth, orderly and safe operation of the courts. Examples of such measures include introducing security screening on court premises<sup>1</sup>, appropriate queuing and ticketing arrangements to ensure fair allocation of seats and orderly admission of a large number of people attending court proceedings, liaising with the Police and law enforcement agencies on court security issues, and supervising over 300 security personnel in support of venue managers in maintaining order and security in 14 Judiciary premises.

On top of the above measures, the Judiciary has been enforcing the House Rules for the Maintenance of Order and Security on Court Premises ([https://www.judiciary.hk/en/court\\_services\\_facilities/cs\\_house\\_rule.html](https://www.judiciary.hk/en/court_services_facilities/cs_house_rule.html)). If court users have any unruly behaviour such as causing nuisance or disorder, staging demonstration, threatening or intimidating others, or causing obstruction etc., the Judiciary's security teams will take appropriate actions including giving warnings, denial of entry, removal from court premises and/or denial of re-entry, in accordance with the House Rules. Where necessary, the Judiciary will also seek help from the Police.

With the creation of the supernumerary PEO post (retention of an existing post) as proposed in the paper to provide dedicated directorate support for strategic planning and implementation of court security measures, the Judiciary should be in a better position to adopt effective measures to maintain the solemnity of court proceedings and to ensure the order and security in court premises with adjustments as appropriate in light of changing circumstances.

Yours sincerely,



(Jock Tam)

for Judiciary Administrator

c.c.: Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau

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<sup>1</sup> Security screening is now in place for the Family Court and the court floors of the High Court Building. We are planning to extend security screening to the West Kowloon Law Courts Building and other court premises. Where necessary, case-based security screening is also performed on an ad hoc basis.