

**Minutes of the One Hundred and Forty-third Meeting of
The Equal Opportunities Commission
held on 19 September 2024 (Thursday) at 2:30 p.m. in the
Equal Opportunities Commission's Conference Room**

Present

Ms Linda LAM Mei-sau, SBS	Chairperson [C/EOC]
Ms Queenie CHAN Lai-kwan, MH	
Hon Vincent CHENG Wing-shun, MH, JP	
Miss CHOW Lily	
Mr FONG James Mathew	(via video-conferencing)
Mr Simon LAM Ken-chung	
Mr Vishal MELWANI	
Dr Henry SHIE Wai-hung, MH	
Ms Anna THOMPSON	(via video-conferencing)
Miss Shirley TO Shuk-yi	
Ms Linda TSANG Chi-man	
Dr Rizwan ULLAH, MH	(via video-conferencing)
Mr Gary WONG Chi-him, MH, JP	(via video-conferencing)
Dr Vincent WONG Wai-lun	(via video-conferencing)
Dr Kitty WU Kit-ying, JP	
Dr Ferrick CHU Chung-man	Secretary Executive Director (Operations) [ED/O]

Absent with apologies

Ms Rosanna CHOI Yi-tak, MH
Dr Theresa CUNANAN

In attendance

Mr Ivan LUK Chi-cheung	Executive Director (Enforcement) [ED/E]
Mr Oska LI Kam-hung	Director, Corporate Planning and Services [DCPS]
Mr Tony SIU Kit-hung	Director, Complaint Services [DCS]
Miss Lisa CHAN Kit-ching	Head, Corporate Communications [HCC]
Mr Allan MAN Sui-lun	Chief Legal Counsel [CLC]
Ms Doris TSUI Ue-ting	Head, Policy, Research and Training [HPRT]

Mr Raymond HO Wai-keung	Senior Equal Opportunities Officer, Ethnic Minorities Unit [SEOO(EMU)]
Ms Susana SOO	Senior Equal Opportunities Officer, Anti-Sexual Harassment Unit [SEOO(ASHU)]
Miss Gloria YU Wai-ling	Senior Equal Opportunities Officer, Administration & Personnel [SAP]
Ms Hollis LING Yin-har	Equal Opportunities Officer, Administration & Personnel [EAP]

I. Introduction

1. The Chairperson (C/EOC) welcomed all EOC Board Members (Members) to the 143rd Meeting. C/EOC informed Members that Mr James FONG, Ms Anna THOMPSON, Dr Rizwan ULLAH and Mr Gary WONG had joined the meeting via video conference. Dr Vincent WONG would also be joining the meeting via video conference at a later time. Apologies for absence were received from Ms Rosanna CHOI who was out of town and Dr Theresa CUNANAN due to a clash of meeting schedules.

II. Confirmation of Minutes (Agenda Item No. 1)

Confirmation of Minutes of the 142nd Meeting on 20 June 2024

2. The draft minutes of the 142nd EOC Meeting held on 20 June 2024 were issued to Members on 19 July 2024. No request for amendments was received. Members confirmed the minutes of the 142nd EOC Meeting without amendments.

3. A Member would like to be furnished with the updated progress of the matter relevant to the Education Bureau's responses to the recommendations made in the "Closing the Gap" Report of the Working Group on Education for Ethnic

Minorities mentioned in paragraph 20 of the Minutes when available. C/EOC said the progress update would be provided in the brief report of the Policy, Research and Training Committee as appropriate.

III. Matters Arising (Agenda Item No. 2)

4. There were no matters arising from previous meetings that required Members' attention in this meeting.

IV. New Agenda Items

Six Monthly Review of EOC's Work (January – June 2024)

(EOC Paper No. 7/2024; Agenda Item No. 3)

5. EOC Paper No. 7/2024 presented a statistical representation of the work of the Commission in the first half of 2024 and an update of the conduct of court actions.

6. Members noted EOC Paper No. 7/2024.

Chairperson's Quarterly Report

(EOC Paper No. 8/2024; Agenda Item No. 4)

7. EOC Paper No. 8/2024 contained the important work done of the Chairperson during the period from June to August 2024. C/EOC highlighted three key areas as contained in the paper for Members' information.

A. Major Events and Activities

8. Members noted that the Accessible for All @ Hong Kong Symposium was successfully held on 15 July 2024 at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre. Bringing together policymakers, pioneering researchers, and industry thought leaders from Hong Kong and the Greater Bay Area, the event provided a unique platform to examine the issue of accessibility from a holistic perspective and spearhead the conversation on improving the wellbeing and social participation of individuals of all abilities and ages. The Symposium received enthusiastic response from different sectors. Altogether 335 guests had registered for the event through the Symposium's website, and 290 attended.

(Ms Queenie CHAN joined the meeting at this juncture.)

9. The Universal Design Award Scheme (UDAS) 2024/25 had been launched to recognise companies and organisations with outstanding performances and contributions in providing an accessible built environment. During the application period from February to April 2024, a total of 270 applications were received. Three judging sessions were conducted in early August to decide the level of award of each application. The final results would be announced in September 2024 and the Award Presentation Ceremony would be held on 1 November 2024 at the Hong Kong Palace Museum. The EOC office would invite Members to join the award presentation ceremony via email in due course.

(Ms Linda TSANG joined the meeting at this juncture.)

10. The Equal Opportunity Youth Ambassador Scheme 2023/24 was concluded with a recognition ceremony on 15 June 2024. The Youth Ambassadors had attended online and in-person the sexual harassment prevention training, and launched promotional initiatives for promulgating the anti-sexual harassment messages to their peers and on campuses.

11. The Racial Diversity and Inclusion Charter for Employers (the Charter) network had expanded to 470 organisations. Among the new signatories, the number of large companies, SMEs and local firms were steadily growing.

12. Regarding the promotion of equal opportunities for racially disadvantaged population, the second year of the EOC's Racially Friendly Campus Recognition Scheme (the Scheme) had attracted active participation from a total of 158 schools. They undertook various initiatives to promote racial inclusion on their campuses through student activities, teacher training and social media publicity. With the Education Bureau as the supporting organisation, the Scheme culminated in a ceremony on 5 July 2024 was officiated by the Secretary for Education and the President of the Education University of Hong Kong. Over 130 school representatives attended the ceremony and were acknowledged as School Champions and Partner Teachers. To encourage schools and campuses in the promotion of racial inclusion and diversity, the EOC would launch the Scheme again in 2025/26 academic year.

13. On 21 June 2024, in observance of the International Domestic Workers Day, a graduation event was organized to celebrate the successful completion of the latest round of the "Are You OK?" anti-discrimination and anti-harassment training course by 21 foreign domestic workers.

14. On the work of promoting and raising anti-sexual harassment awareness, the Commission continued to invite university students and staff members to join the online training module developed jointly by the EOC and an overseas animation company. Also, the Anti-Sexual Harassment Unit continued to handle enquiries relating to sexual harassment from potential complainants, employers and human resources practitioners and bystanders including potential witnesses, friends and family.

(Dr Vincent WONG joined the meeting via video conference at this juncture.)

B. Release of Guidelines and Reports of the Commissioned Research Projects

15. Members noted that the “*Media Guidelines for Reporting on Mental Health Issues*” (the Guidelines) released on 7 June 2024 had set out five principles for media coverage of mental health related topics, including ensuring accuracy, minimising harm, protecting privacy, using proper language and images, and offering help and support. The promotion of the Guidelines had attracted extensive and positive media coverage, with 25 reports by 20 media outlets, including 6 print media, 11 online media and 3 electronic media. The media reports also helped increase public awareness and understanding of the issues.

16. The release of the findings of the “*Study on Breastfeeding at Publicly Accessible Premises in Hong Kong*” had revealed the insufficiency of breastfeeding facilities in public arenas. To support breastfeeding mothers, the EOC advocated for enhancing family-friendliness in the community and upgrading the premises with public facilities to create a supportive environment.

C. External Collaboration

17. Members noted that the EOC had hosted a Singapore Delegation in July 2024, which comprised representatives of the Singapore Ministry of Manpower, Tripartite Alliance for Dispute Management and Tripartite Alliance for Fair and Progressive Employment Practices, to share about EOC’s work and exchange views and experience in promoting equal opportunities in the workplace. Moreover, C/EOC, ED/O and other EOC representatives met the officials of the Research Center for the Development for the Cause of Persons with Disabilities in the Pilot Demonstration Zone of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics at Shenzhen University in June and August 2024.

18. In response to a Member’s question, C/EOC and ED/E said the Commission would seek Members’ advice and directives on major legislative amendment proposals to the Government, like the Discrimination Law Review conducted in

2016. Concerning the legislative amendments mentioned in paragraph 35 of Appendix to EOC Paper No. 8/2024, in the light that discussions with the Government were still in the early stage, Members would be briefed on the matter when more concrete progress was made.

19. Members noted EOC Paper No. 8/2024.

Reports of the Legal & Complaints Committee, Community Participation & Publicity Committee, Policy, Research & Training Committee and Administration & Finance Committee

(EOC Paper No. 9/2024; Agenda Item No. 5)

20. EOC Paper No. 9/2024 presented the important matters raised and decisions made at the recent meetings of the four committees held during the period from June to August 2024.

21. Members noted EOC Paper No. 9/2024.

Collaboration with the Mainland on Organising Annual Forum from 2025-2027:

Research Center for the Development of the Cause of Persons with Disabilities in the Pilot Demonstration Zone of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics, Shenzhen University (“the Base”)

Greater Bay Area Forum on Synergistic Development of Disability Rights and Welfare (“the Forum”)

(EOC Paper No. 10/2024; Agenda Item No. 6)

22. C/EOC invited Members to consider the cooperation initiative between the EOC and the Base from 2025 to 2027 as proposed in EOC Paper No. 10/2024.

23. HCC presented to Members the background of the collaboration and the proposed cooperation plan between the EOC and the Base. Members noted that in advancing its work on equal opportunities, the EOC had been looking for opportunities for collaboration with relevant bodies in the Mainland. To this end, the EOC participated in the 2nd Greater Bay Area Forum on Synergistic Development of Disability Rights and Welfare organised by the Base from 17 to 19 November 2023. The event included plenary and breakout sessions, roundtable discussion and closed-door meeting. Building on the exchange and the excellent collaboration in 2023, the Base invited the EOC to be one of the permanent organisers of the Forum, with a view to strengthening cooperation and establishing a regular partnership with the EOC.

24. Members noted that in order to explore and discuss details of the proposed collaboration, the EOC engaged in discussions with the Base both online and offline, and met on 19 June 2024 at the EOC's office and on 20 August 2024 at Shenzhen University. At the meetings, both parties expressed their intention to cooperate on organising the Forum and clarified the arrangements of the partnership. The understandings on the cooperation arrangements between the EOC and the Base were set out in Annex I to EOC Paper No. 10/2024.

25. In gist, as one of the permanent organisers of the Forum, the EOC would:
- i. take part in the discussion and decision-making regarding the organisation of the Forum. This would include collaborating with other permanent organisers, rotating organisers and supporting organisers on the theme and proposed agenda each year;
 - ii. nominate case studies from Hong Kong for the annual showcase of case studies on disability services in the Greater Bay Area (GBA);
 - iii. be responsible for contacting representatives of organisations serving persons with disabilities in Hong Kong, and inviting them to join the Forum to share their experience and engage in exchange;

- iv. provide a sum every year to cover the costs of accommodation, food and beverage, and transportation incurred during the Forum by the HKSAR participants invited by the EOC; and
- v. be the rotating organiser of the Forum to be held in Hong Kong in 2027 and cover the expenses of organising the Forum, including the cost of the venue, technical and manpower support, as well as accommodation and transportation of the speakers.

26. Subject to Members' approval, the EOC would request funding support from the Constitutional and Mainland Bureau (CMAB) and sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the Base and relevant Mainland organisations. Furthermore, the EOC would review the collaboration after conclusion of the Forum in 2027.

27. Members expressed their strong support for this worthwhile collaboration. A Member enquired about the funding requirements for organising the Forum in 2027 and another Member enquired how participants supported by the EOC would be selected to join the Forum to be held in rotating cities. In response, HCC said the estimated expenditure for the Forum in 2027 would hinge on such factors as the scale of the Forum and the venue selected. The EOC would hold further discussions with the Base to work out the funding requirements, and seek funding support from CMAB for this new initiative. Upon securing CMAB's funding support, the Commission would sign the Memorandum of Understanding with the Base and relevant organisations. As for participants supported by the EOC to join the Forum every year, they would be invited to share their experiences in serving PWDs and engage in exchange in the Forum for advancing the equal opportunities of PWDs. A Member suggested that those participants supported by the EOC could share the insights obtained during the Forum with their respective sectors after attending the event.

28. Members approved the proposed cooperation between the EOC and the Base as detailed in EOC Paper No. 10/2024. The EOC office would proceed to

seek CMAB's funding support and coordinate with relevant parties to conduct the cooperation arrangement from 2025 to 2027.

V. Any Other Business

Racial Diversity & Inclusion Events in Q4/2024

29. C/EOC and SEOO(EMU) invited Members to participate and support the three major events in the promotion of racial diversity and inclusion to be held in October and November 2024 as detailed in the email sent on 16 September 2024. The EMerging Talent Internship Programme on 16 October 2024 would be a certificate presentation ceremony to acknowledge companies that offered and hosted internship placements and students who completed their internships. The Racial Diversity & Inclusion Recruitment Fair held in Sikh Temple on 20 October 2024, offering more than 50 job vacancies spanning various skills and qualification levels, would be graced by Deputy Chief Secretary for Administration. The Reception in Celebration of 6th Anniversary of the Racial Diversity & Inclusion Charter for Employers scheduled for 29 November 2024 at HKEX Connect Hall would be a significant event commemorating the Race Discrimination Ordinance 15th Anniversary (RDO 15A) milestone. The event would include chit-chat sessions with committed Charter partners and an introduction of the upcoming Racial Diversity & Inclusion Employer Award Scheme. Mrs Regina Ip, Convener of Executive Council Non-official Members, would grace the event as the Guest of Honour.

30. There being no other business, the Meeting was adjourned at 3:15 pm.

VI. Date of Next Meeting

31. The next regular EOC Meeting was scheduled for **19 December 2024**
(Thursday) at 2:30 p.m.

Equal Opportunities Commission
October 2024