

**Minutes of the Special Meeting (60<sup>th</sup> Meeting) of  
The Equal Opportunities Commission  
held on 23 February 2006 (Thursday) at 4:00 p.m. in the  
Equal Opportunities Commission's Conference Room**

**Present**

Mr. Raymond TANG Yee-bong	Chairperson
Dr. CHENG Kwok-kit, Edwin	
Mrs. CHONG WONG Chor-sar, MH, J.P.	
Dr. LAW Koon-chui, Agnes, JP	
Mr. LIU Luk-por, Desmond	
Dr. LO Wing-lok, J.P.	
Mr. Saeed Uddin, M.H.	
Ms. WONG Fung-yee, Margaret	
Mr. Michael CHAN Yick-man	Secretary [Director, Planning & Administration]

**Absent with apology**

Prof. Randy CHIU  
Ms CHOI Wai-kam, Virginia  
Mrs. KOO CHEUNG Man-kok, Christine  
Ms LAM Kam-yi  
The Hon TAM Heung-man, Mandy  
Mr. YIP Kin-man, Raymond

**In attendance**

Mr. Joseph LI Siu-kwai	Director, Operations
Ms Betty LIU	Head, Corporate Communications & Training
Mr. Ferrick CHU Chung-man	Head, Policy & Research
Ms Wendy LEE Wai-yee	Chief Legal Counsel (Acting)
Ms Fanny LEUNG Sui-ping	Equal Opportunities Officer Administration & Personnel
Ms Yvonne LAU Siu-yung	Personal Assistant (Policy Co-ordination)

**I. Introduction**

1. C/EOC welcomed Members to the 60<sup>th</sup> EOC Meeting.
2. Apologies for absence were received from Prof. Randy CHIU, Ms CHOI Wai-kam, Virginia, Mrs. KOO CHEUNG Man-kok, Christine, Ms LAM Kam-yi, The Hon TAM Heung-man, Mandy and Mr. YIP Kin-man, Raymond.

**II. Agenda Item 1**

**Follow-up actions on recommendations of EOC's Organizational Review, HRM Review and Independent Panel of Inquiry and EOC's Work Priorities**

(EOC Paper No. 18B/2005(06), Agenda item no. 1)

3. This special meeting was a continuation of the discussion on the same agenda at EOC's 55<sup>th</sup> (Special) Meeting (held on 1 December 2005) and the 57<sup>th</sup> (Special) Meeting (held on 30 December 2005).

4. The follow-up actions taken / proposed on recommendations 1 – 43 in EOC Paper No. 18A/2005, related to the Government, Governance, Culture and Office Management and Internal Operation, were considered at the above two meetings.

5. EOC Paper No. 18A/2005 has been updated incorporating what was discussed at the above two meetings and progress to-date, to form a new EOC Paper No. 18B/2005(06). This meeting discussed recommendations 44 – 49 of EOC Paper No. 18B/2005(06) which were all policy items.

6. *[Recommendation 44]* Regarding setting up a Liaison Committee with Government Bureaux and Departments to formalize communication, promote mutual understanding and enhance partnership on the subject of mainstreaming of equal opportunities, Members noted that the EOC Office had been in liaison with the HAB on a regular basis, and also with other Bureaux on specific issues such as education for ethnic minorities and concessionary fares for persons with a disability.

7. Members, however, expressed concern about a recent incident in which Government had spoken with the press concerning its intention and proposal to split the post of the EOC Chairperson without informing EOC beforehand and asked whether currently there was any formal mechanism for communication with the HAB.

8. C/EOC said that at present HAB and EOC met regularly at the liaison meetings at the working level and six-monthly progress review

meetings with the Chairperson to consider EOC's operational and financial performance and other important issues. C/EOC undertook to reflect Members' concern to HAB and to explore the necessity of setting up a liaison committee at the next progress review meeting.

9. *[Recommendation 45]* To further explore income generating initiatives for the purpose of generating more resources for expanding services, it was suggested to adopt a more proactive approach to promote EOC's training and consultancy services to the private sector and to identify and target promoting EOC's services to specific groups and organisations, including employers associations and unions in need of such training. The meeting noted that EOC also had an "affordability" policy concerning fee-charging for training services and fees for NGO's could be waived, where applicable.

10. *[ Recommendation 46 ]* To be more sensitive to social issues and quick to respond to show EOC's stance on the subject concerned in order to facilitate understanding on the issues and buy-in by the public, Members noted that a mechanism had been put in place whereby the Corporate Communications team in collaboration with Heads of Division / Unit would draw to the Chairperson's attention, on a daily basis, any issue that would warrant a quick response from EOC and a decision would be made on whether a response should be issued. This would be an ongoing work item of the EOC Office.

11. *[ Recommendation 47 ]* To review the policy and practice of granting legal assistance, it was suggested that LCC should conduct a review to look at the possibility of recovering costs and expenses from

successful cases and to review the existing criteria, e.g., to consider providing legal assistance if the case concerned had significant public education value even though principles involved might already have been established. It was noted that recovering costs might entail legislative amendments in the existing EO laws. In conducting the review, a Member suggested that reference be made to the operation of Consumer Council's litigation fund and in sharing compensation amounts with complainants upon successful litigation.

12. DPA pointed out that though there was currently minimal allocation of funds for litigation purpose, EOC could set aside an additional amount from Government's subvention for such purposes and it would be up to EOC to decide the amount to be set aside, viz-a-viz other priorities and fundings required. EOC Office would prepare a paper on this subject for consideration at the LCC meeting to be held in August.

13. [ *Recommendation 48* ] To take a more proactive approach to make good use of its power to conduct formal investigation, Members noted that EOC intended to conduct a formal investigation on accessibility and a proposal would be put to the LCC for consideration in April before seeking endorsement from the full Board.

14. [ *Recommendation 49* ] Regarding developing a strategic corporate plan for a 3 to 5-year term to provide a framework for functional divisions / units to develop their annual work plan, Members were informed that the EOC Office had prepared a Corporate Statement of Values, Strategies and Objectives for consideration by the

Board at its meeting to be held in March. It was suggested that a theme and strategy of work should be developed and to be considered, say, annually in December at the Board level. This could also be an interactive exercise between the Board and the Office to cultivate understanding and build up shared ownership.

15. It was also agreed that as the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary was coming up, special programmes and functions should be organized to mark this milestone year. The opportunity should also be taken to highlight EOC's major achievements and areas requiring improvement. Further thoughts would be given by the EOC Office on this.

**III. Any Other Business**

16. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:00 pm.

**IV. Date of Next Meeting**

17. The next regular meeting would be held on 16 March 2006 (Thursday) at 2:30 p.m.

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*Equal Opportunities Commission  
(Minutes confirmed by the EOC at its meeting in June 2006)*