

**Minutes of the Ninety-fifth Meeting of
The Equal Opportunities Commission
held on 14 June 2012 (Thursday) at 2:30 p.m. in the
Equal Opportunities Commission's Conference/Training Room**

Present

Mr. LAM Woon-kwong, G.B.S., J.P.	Chairperson
Ms CHAN Ka-mun, Carmen, J.P.	
Ms CHAN Man-ki, Maggie	
Ms CHIU Lai-kuen, Susanna (by telephone conference)	
Ms CHOI Hing-shi, M.H.	
The Hon FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick, S.B.S., J.P.	
Dr. KOONG May-kay, Maggie	
Mr. LEE Luen-fai	
Mr. LUI Tim-leung, Tim, B.B.S., J.P.	
Ms NG Wing-mui, Winnie	
Mr. Zaman Minhas QAMAR	
The Hon TSE Wai-chun, Paul	
Ms WONG Ka-ling, Garling	
Mr. YIP Siu-hong, Nelson, M.H.	
Mr. Michael CHAN Yick-man	Secretary Director, Planning & Administration [DPA]

Absent with apologies

Mr. Amirali Bakirali NASIR, J.P.
Dr. TSANG Kit-man, Sandra
Dr. TSE Wing-ling, John, M.H.

In attendance

Mr. Joseph LI Siu-kwai	Director, Operations [D(Ops)]
Mr. Herman POON Lik-hang	Chief Legal Counsel [CLC]
Dr. Ferrick CHU Chung-man	Head, Policy and Research [HPR]
Ms Shana WONG Shan-nar	Head, Corporate Communications & Training [HCCT]
Miss Gloria YU Wai-ling	Senior Equal Opportunities Officer, Administration & Personnel [SAP]
Miss Kerrie TENG Yee-san	Accountant [ACCT]

I. Introduction

1. The Chairperson (C/EOC) welcomed all Commission Members (Members) to the 95th Meeting. Ms CHIU Lai-kuen, Susanna, who joined the meeting via telephone conferencing had informed that she would wish to be excused earlier due to a clash of meeting schedule later in the same afternoon. Besides, The Hon Frederick FUNG, The Hon Paul TSE and Ms Winnie NG had also informed of their wishes to be excused earlier for the same reason.

2. Apologies for absence were received from Mr. Amirali Bakirali NASIR, Dr. TSANG Kit-man, Sandra and Dr. TSE Wing-ling, John, due to clash of meeting schedules/other business engagements.

3. C/EOC said that a press briefing would be held after the meeting in accordance with the usual practice. Since there were a number of Members who would need to leave the meeting earlier, the Meeting agreed to consider those Agenda Items requiring Members' decision first.

(The Meeting proceeded to consider Agenda Item 4 first followed by Agenda Item 1, Item 5, Item 7 and Item 9 which were all items requiring Members' decision.)

II. New Agenda Items

EOC Annual Forum

(EOC Paper No. 8/2012; Agenda Item No. 4)

4. Members noted that based on the views expressed at the last EOC Meeting, a proposal for organizing an EOC Annual Forum was drawn up and discussed at the Administration and Finance Committee (A&FC) meeting held on 21 May 2012. Members of the A&FC provided further suggestions and requested the EOC Office to refine the proposal for seeking endorsement from the EOC Board at this meeting. DPA briefed Members on the salient points contained in EOC Paper No. 8/2012. Ms Susanna CHIU supplemented that as

the proposed annual forum was the first one, to facilitate organization and management, the choice of venue and the target participants to be invited needed careful consideration. If the number of participants exceeded 100, a bigger outside venue would be warranted; otherwise, it could be held at the EOC Office for reasons of cost and better support.

5. Members deliberated on the format and the proceedings of the proposed annual forum, and the appropriate number of participants to be invited for the forum.

(The Hon Paul TSE left the meeting at this moment.)

6. Mr. LEE Luen-fai opined that it would be better for the EOC to organize the forum with a theme for arousing participants' interest and invitations should be extended to key stakeholder groups instead of individuals for obtaining broader views to steer EOC's work. The forum would be a platform for the EOC to highlight its performances, introduce future directions and initiatives, and obtain participants' feedback. An optimum size of the forum would be around 150 to 200 participants. Such size would be sufficiently representative and at the same time facilitate smooth forum proceedings. Moreover, special attention should be paid to cater for participants' language and/or other barrier-free access needs. The EOC could, after organizing this year's forum, review and consolidate the experience gained for improvements in future forums. The Meeting also noted that the forum would not form part of EOC Board's regular meetings.

7. The Hon Frederick FUNG added that invitations for participation in the forum should also be extended to appropriate Panel Members in LegCo, such as the Panel on Constitutional Affairs and the Panel on Welfare Services. This would help garner support from LegCo Members to help advance EOC's work. Furthermore, it should be the ultimate goal of the EOC to fully open its meetings to the public in time for complete transparency.

8. The Meeting endorsed the plan for the annual forum. The target number of participants should be within 200, an outside venue should be

considered, and a suitable theme for the forum should be proposed. The target date to hold the forum would tentatively be scheduled for the afternoon of **29 September 2012 (Saturday)**. The media would be invited to cover the forum as well as to attend a post-forum media conference. The EOC Office would follow up with the arrangements accordingly.

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

9. The Minutes of the 94th Meeting held on 15 March 2012 and issued to Members on 13 April 2012 were confirmed without amendment.

(The Hon Frederick FUNG left the meeting at this moment.)

II. New Agenda Items (continued)

Endorsement of Co-opted Membership of the Community Participation and Publicity Committee

(EOC Paper No. 9/2012; Agenda Item No. 5)

10. Members endorsed the appointment of Mr. WANG Kai-fung and Dr. Raees Begum BAIG as Co-opted Members of the Community Participation and Publicity Committee as detailed in EOC Paper No. 9/2012, for the term of office up till 19th May 2014.

EOC Participation in the 22nd RI World Congress

(EOC Paper No. 12/2012; Agenda Item No. 7)

11. Members considered EOC Paper No. 12/2012 which was to seek their advice on EOC's participation in the 22nd Rehabilitation International (RI) World Congress to be held from 29 October 2012 to 2 November 2012 in Incheon, South Korea. The EOC has previously participated in similar congresses organized by RI.

12. Members agreed that it would be worthwhile to attend the congress to

better understand the latest development of issues related to persons with disabilities, to exchange views and build network with delegates from over 100 countries and to promote EOC's work. The Meeting endorsed the EOC's participation in the congress as proposed in EOC Paper No. 12/2012. As the flying time was less than 4 hours, it was agreed that all EOC participants would travel on economy class to foster a greater sense of financial prudence. The Meeting also endorsed Ms Garling WONG's suggestion of sending 1 more staff to attend the congress. This brought the total suggested EOC participants to 2 EOC Members and 2 EOC staff. The EOC Office would follow up with the logistics and invite Members to indicate their interest to participate in the congress.

(Ms Susanna CHIU, who had been participating in the meeting by telephone conference asked to be excused and left the meeting at this moment.)

Invitation from Wellesley College and Ford Foundation to the Chairperson of the EOC to speak in Beijing

(EOC Paper No. 13/2012; Agenda Item No. 9)

13. C/EOC briefed Members on the details contained in EOC Paper No. 13/2012 which was to seek their advice on an invitation from Wellesley College and Ford Foundation to the Chairperson of EOC to speak in a symposium in Beijing on 6th July 2012. The theme of the symposium was on the functionalities of EOC / job segregation / and equal pay for equal work. Expenses for the visit including airfare and accommodation would be borne by the organizers.

14. Members endorsed C/EOC's acceptance of the invitation.

IV. Matters Arising (Agenda Item No. 2)

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

II. New Agenda Items (continued)

Progress Report on Formal Investigation on Accessibility in Certain Publicly Accessible Premises

(EOC Paper No. 7/2012; Agenda Item No. 3)

16. D(Ops) briefed Members on the latest progress on the Government's and the LINK's retrofitting programmes to rectify the access barriers identified in our Formal Investigation (Investigation) and their improvement programmes to enhance barrier-free facilities in premises under their management as contained in EOC Paper No. 7/2012.

(Mr. Nelson YIP joined the meeting at this moment.)

17. Members noted that 20% of the 47 government premises / facilities inspected in the Investigation were rectified and over 76% of the work had already started. Judging from the progress, it remained to be seen whether 100% of the work would be completed by June 2012 though the Government was still confident in meeting the deadline.

18. Members also noted that in response to the EOC's recommendation calling for access audit in all its facilities, the Government had conducted the audit and undertook to improve the barrier-free facilities. This improvement exercise covered about 3,500 premises / facilities. 3,094 of them belonged to Class A projects of which around 73% had been completed as at April 2012. The remaining items, about 400 in total, which fell into Class B projects were mostly footpaths, subways, recreational grounds, post offices, etc. They were expected to be completed by June 2016.

19. As regards the progress of improvement works by the LINK, Members noted that the deficiencies identified in the 9 commercial complexes and 2 car parks were rectified. The LINK had also launched a 5-year programme commencing from 2011/12 to improve the barrier-free facilities in 160 sites, with revamping works to be conducted in 30 to 35 sites each year. According to its work schedule, improvement works in 60 sites had commenced. The

EOC had asked the LINK to provide more concrete information on the progress of its improvement programme. The EOC would continue to monitor the improvement work progress of both the LINK and the Government.

20. In response to a question raised by Ms Garling WONG, D(Ops) said that the EOC would not send staff to check on the completed works of the Government nor the LINK in view of manpower constraint. As such, Ms WONG suggested that the EOC could put details of the completed improvement works of both of them on EOC's website so that interested parties and the public might help in the monitoring. Ms WONG's suggestion was agreed.

21. Members noted EOC Paper No. 7/2012.

Reports of the Legal & Complaints Committee (LCC), Community Participation & Publicity Committee (CPPC), Policy and Research Committee (PARC) and Administration & Finance Committee (A&FC)
(EOC Paper No. 10/2012; Agenda Item No. 6)

22. Members considered EOC Paper No. 10/2012 which presented important matters raised and decisions made at the meetings of the 4 committees established under the EOC.

23. With regard to the post meeting note under paragraph 9 of Appendix 3 to the paper reporting on the matters discussed and decisions made at the 12th and 13th Meeting of the Policy and Research Committee (PARC), C/EOC reported that Members of the PARC together with some other EOC Members had met with the Chief Executive-elect (CE-elect) on 5 June 2012 to exchange views on ways to follow up on the issue of equal education for Ethnic Minorities (EM). The CE-elect was also strongly urged to follow through on his election pledge to correct the learning gap and devise appropriate and effective support measures for EM students. It was noted that positive feedback was obtained from the meeting.

24. Members noted EOC Paper No. 10/2012.

Half Yearly Report of EOC's Financial Position as at 31 March 2012

(EOC Paper No. 11/2012; Agenda Item No. 8)

25. ACCT highlighted to Members the major variance of the actual income and expenditure against the original budget for the financial year 2011/12 and the related reasons, the position on EOC's reserves and the capital expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2012 as detailed in EOC Paper No. 11/2012.

26. In response to questions raised by Mr. Zaman Minhas QAMAR, CLC said that some EOC assisted cases might not incur the full budgeted expenditure, for reasons such as settlement reached before court action, or after considering outside legal advice, the case was found not worth pursuing, etc, resulting in a decrease in actual expenses for legal fees. On the overall subvention from the Government in 2011/12, C/EOC said that there had been a slight increase in real term. He also said that the surplus noted for 2011/12 was mainly due to savings from staff turnover and filling the vacant posts at a later date.

27. Members noted EOC Paper No. 11/2012.

V. Any Other Business

28. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:40 p.m.

VI. Date of Next Meeting

29. The next regular EOC meeting was scheduled for 13 September 2012 (Thursday) at 2:30 p.m.