

RESTRICTED

(cleared for publication)

**Minutes of the Ninety-ninth Meeting of
The Equal Opportunities Commission
held on 20 December 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	
Ms CHOI Hing-shi, M.H.	
Dr. KOONG May-kay, Maggie	
Mr. LEE Luen-fai	
Mr. LUI Tim-leung, Tim, B.B.S., J.P.	
Mr. Amirali Bakirali NASIR, J.P.	
Ms NG Wing-mui, Winnie	
Mr. Zaman Minhas QAMAR	
Dr. TSANG Kit-man, Sandra	
The Hon TSE Wai-chun, Paul	
Dr. TSE Wing-ling, John, M.H.	
Ms WONG Ka-ling, Garling	
Mr. YIP Siu-hong, Nelson, M.H.	
Mr. Michael CHAN Yick-man	Secretary Director, Planning & Administration [DPA]

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 Officer [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]
Mr. Robert LI	Consumer Search Hong Kong Ltd. [CSG]
Miss Peggy WONG	Consumer Search Hong Kong Ltd. [CSG]

I. Introduction

1. The Chairperson (C/EOC) welcomed all Commission Members (Members) and the representatives of Consumer Search Hong Kong Limited (CSG), the external consultant engaged by the EOC to conduct the Customer Satisfaction Survey 2012, Mr. Robert LI and Miss Peggy WONG to the 99th Meeting.

2. C/EOC said that a press briefing would be held after the meeting in accordance with the usual practice.

3. C/EOC proposed and Members agreed to consider Agenda Item No. 4 on “Findings of the Customer Satisfaction Survey on EOC’s Complaints Handling Mechanism” first before “Confirmation of Minutes”, “Matters Arising” and other new Agenda Items, so that representatives from CSG could leave the meeting when discussion on this item was finished.

(The Hon Paul TSE joined the meeting at this juncture.)

II. Findings of the Customer Satisfaction Survey on EOC’s Complaints Handling Mechanism (EOC Paper No. 20/2012; Agenda Item No. 4)

4. EOC Paper No. 20/2012 presented the key findings of the Customer Satisfaction Survey on EOC’s Complaint Handling and Enquiry Service conducted for the period from 1 April 2011 to 31 July 2012 (CSS-2012).

5. Members noted that the customer satisfaction surveys on EOC’s complaint handling mechanism were previously conducted in-house. Taking into account the suggestions by the Efficiency Unit of the Hong Kong Government in its study on EOC’s complaint handling procedures in 2011, CSG, an independent consultancy company, was engaged to conduct the CSS-2012. Representatives from CSG, Mr. Robert LI and Miss Peggy WONG were invited to attend this meeting to present the key findings to Members and answer their questions and queries.

6. Mr. Robert LI presented to Members the methodology, enumeration results and the key findings of the CSS-2012. Some verbatim feedback obtained from respondents to the survey on areas where EOC might further improve and the suggestions by CSG for service improvement based on the findings in the survey, including suggestions on the administration of future surveys were shared in the meeting.

(The Meeting took a 5-minute break for taking a group photo at this juncture. The meeting resumed immediately after taking the group photo.)

7. In response to questions posed by The Hon Paul TSE and Ms Maggie CHAN, Mr. Robert LI said that Respondents and Complainants had different levels of expectation when they came into contact with the EOC, hence their ratings on the overall satisfaction as well as individual survey items should not be compared directly. Instead, the change in rating of the same survey items over time could be used for comparison and performance monitoring if the same survey model was adopted.

8. Ms Winnie NG commented that the CSS-2012 survey was conducted with a high standard. In response to her question on the cost for the survey, DPA replied that the total cost was less than \$130,000. He added that as a new survey model was used with expanded survey items in CSS-2012, if Members found it acceptable, the same model would be used in future surveys to facilitate comparison and monitoring on the performance trend. Similarly, as the rating scale-points adopted in CSS-2012 were significantly different from EOC's previous CSSs conducted, the ratings in CSS-2012 should be used for crude reference only and not for direct comparison. Overall speaking, there was a general drop in Complainants ratings on EOC's complaint handling service and a general increase in Respondents ratings compared with 2011 and 2010. On enquiry service, it was also observed that there was a general drop in ratings compared to the previous two years.

9. Dr. Sandra TSANG expressed that the model used in CSS-2012 was clear and easy to understand. The survey items had covered most of the areas

that were of concern. She suggested CSG to elaborate in the survey report on how the model was different compared with other models used for a similar purpose and why it was adopted for use in CSS-2012.

(Ms Winnie NG left the meeting at this juncture.)

10. Dr. John TSE thanked Mr. Robert LI for his clear presentation. He expressed that if possible more detailed analysis on the survey findings would be useful so as to identify specific areas for improvement, and one of the options would be to conduct focus group discussions in addition to the survey in future. Mr. LEE Luen-fai also expressed concerns on the percentage of survey respondents who said that they would not use EOC's service again. Drawing from his past experience, Mr. Robert LI responded that around 80% of survey respondents expressed that they would use EOC's service again was not a bad result. Regarding the specific areas for improvement, CSG had made some suggestions in the survey report for EOC's consideration.

11. Members in general appreciated EOC staff's hard work to endeavour to provide quality service and agreed that the findings in CSS-2012 could be used as a baseline benchmark for comparison and monitoring of EOC's complaint handling and enquiry service against the findings in future surveys. For continuous improvement and as identified from the findings in CSS-2012, the EOC should give consideration to strengthening the training to staff, particular on how to deliver professional service with more empathy and enhancing the promotion on EOC's complaint handling/enquiry service and procedures so as to make the service more user-friendly. Details on what could be done would be mapped out by the EOC Office accordingly.

12. C/EOC thanked Mr. Robert LI and Miss Peggy WONG for their attendance.

(Mr. Robert LI and Miss Peggy WONG left the meeting at this moment.)

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

13. The Minutes of the 98th Meeting held on 13 September 2012 and issued to Members on 11 October 2012 were confirmed without amendment.

IV. Matters Arising (Agenda Item No. 2)

Verbal Report from Mr. Nelson YIP and Ms Garling WONG on their Attendance at International Events

14. Mr. Nelson YIP and Ms Garling WONG, who had attended respectively the 8th Session of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on 18 – 19 September 2012 in Geneva and the 22nd Rehabilitation International World Congress on 30 October – 2 November 2012 in Incheon, gave Members a verbal report on their observations, benefits derived and suggestions for follow up actions from attending the events.

(Ms Susanna CHIU left the meeting as this juncture.)

15. Members noted that participation in these international events could help bring EOC to the international arena and promote its work, learn best practices and keep abreast of latest developments in combating discrimination. It was agreed that it would be beneficial to both EOC and its staff for the EOC to continue participate in similar events in the future.

V. Other New Agenda Items

EOC Forum 2012 – Post-event Review

(EOC Paper No. 19/2012; Agenda Item No. 3)

16. The EOC Forum 2012 had been smoothly held on 29 September 2012. Members noted that the EOC Office had conducted a post-event review consolidating the experience gained and feedback obtained from organizing the Forum and provided suggestions for improvement when organizing similar

forums in the future for consideration of the Administration and Finance Committee (A&FC). The A&FC considered the matter in its 63rd Meeting and proposed further suggestions for improvement. Details were presented in EOC Paper No. 19/2012.

17. In response to comments expressed by Dr. Maggie KOONG and Ms Garling WONG, C/EOC said that the venue for the 2012 Forum, though fairly accessible was not totally barrier-free and other better venues would be considered when organizing future forums. On the feedback received after the 2012 Forum, Mr. Nelson YIP said it was very positive. He opined that it was worthwhile to organize similar events again.

18. The Meeting agreed that a similar event could be considered in 2013 and the suggestions in EOC Paper No. 19/2012 should be taken into account when organizing the event. In addition, Mr. A B NASIR suggested that live streaming of the event proceedings via internet could be considered.

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

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. 21/2012; Agenda Item No. 5)

19. Members considered EOC Paper No. 21/2012 which presented important matters raised and decisions made at the meetings of the 4 Committees established under the EOC.

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

Report of EOC's Financial Position as at 31 October 2012
(EOC Paper No. 22/2012; Agenda Item No. 6)

21. ACCT briefed Members on the major variance of the actual and estimated expenditure against the original budget for 2012/13 as contained in

EOC Paper No. 22/2012. Members noted that the actual and estimated expenditures for 2012/13 were closely monitored. It was expected that \$5M would still be available for use. After taking into account the actual and committed expenditures of \$4.31M which was proposed to be committed mainly for publicity and public education expenses in line with past years' patterns to be carried forward for use in the following year, there was an estimated surplus of \$0.69M for 2012/13 under recurrent expenditures. Members also noted that the estimated balance of reserves as at 31.3.2013 was \$23.34M which was the same as the permitted reserve ceiling.

22. Members noted EOC Paper No. 22/2012.

Tentative EOC Meeting Schedule for 2013

(EOC Paper No. 23/2012; Agenda Item No. 7)

23. Members noted the tentative meeting schedule for 2013 as contained in EOC Paper No. 23/2012.

V. Any Other Business

Vote of Thanks

24. As this would be the last EOC Meeting chaired by C/EOC in his term of service, Mr. W K LAM thanked Members for their dedication, professionalism and hard work in the past 3 years. He was particularly thankful to Members for taking over the convenership of the Legal and Complaints Committee (used to be assumed by the EOC Chairperson) and meeting with the press to report on EOC's work after the Committee meetings, reflecting EOC Members' shared responsibility as a governing board. Members also expressed their vote of thanks to Mr. LAM for his leadership in the past 3 years.

25. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

[Post-meeting note: As the recruitment process of Mr. W K LAM's successor

is still ongoing and now at its final stage, Mr. LAM has accepted an offer from the Government to extend his term as Chairperson for two months until 31 March 2013 to ensure the continuation of effective leadership at the EOC and that there will be as little disruption as possible to the work of the Commission.]

VI. Date of Next Meeting

26. The next regular EOC meeting was scheduled for 21 March 2013 (Thursday) at 2:30 p.m.

Equal Opportunities Commission
January 2013