

DoJ notes Ombudsman's suggestion on apology legislation

A spokesman for the Department of Justice (DoJ) said today (July 22) that the DoJ notes the Ombudsman's suggestion concerning the need to consider introducing legislation to enable public agencies to apologise without fear of incurring extra legal liabilities.

The DoJ acknowledges the importance of considering the need to introduce apology legislation in Hong Kong. In November 2012, the DoJ set up the Steering Committee on Mediation. Chaired by the Secretary for Justice, the Steering Committee has established three Sub-Committees including the Regulatory Framework Sub-Committee (the Sub-Committee). As set out in its Terms of Reference, the Sub-Committee is tasked to consider the need to introduce apology legislation in Hong Kong.

The Sub-Committee, chaired by Ms Lisa Wong, SC, is in the course of studying the position in Hong Kong and will also conduct a comprehensive comparative study of the position in other jurisdictions with a view to considering, amongst others: (a) whether to recommend the introduction of apology legislation in Hong Kong, and (b) if yes, the contents of such statutory provisions, and whether such provisions shall be included as part of the Mediation Ordinance or in the form of a stand-alone legislation.

The Sub-Committee is making good progress in its work concerning apology legislation. The Secretary for Justice, Mr Rimsy Yuen, SC, as Chairman of the Steering Committee, will closely follow the progress so as to ensure that a report can be released for consultation as soon as the study is completed.

Ends/Monday, July 22, 2013