

**Notes of Discussion of the
Fifth Sexual Minorities Forum
held on 13 February 2006 at 3:00 p.m.
in the Conference Room, 30/F, Southorn Centre, Wanchai**

Present

Home Affairs Bureau (HAB)

Deputy Secretary for Home Affairs (Chairman)	Mr Stephen FISHER
Principal Assistant Secretary for Home Affairs	Mr Anthony LI
Principal Assistant Secretary for Home Affairs	Miss Joanna CHOI
Assistant Secretary for Home Affairs	Miss Vivian CHAN
Senior Statistician	Miss Julia HUI
Research Manager	Miss YAM Ho-kwan
Unit Manager	Mr LAI Wing-yiu
Unit Officer	Miss Kate CHOY
MVA Hong Kong Ltd	Mr Wayne YEH
MVA Hong Kong Ltd	Miss Augusta HO

Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs)

AIDS Concern	Mr Paul LOUEY
Amnesty International Hong Kong Section	Ms Liz WHITELAM
Association for the Advancement of Feminism	Ms Ashley KO
Chi Heng Foundation / Satsanga	Mr Albert LUK
Civil Human Rights Front	Ms Baig Raees BEGUM
Civil Rights for Sexual Diversities	Mr Roddy SHAW Kwok-wah
Equal Opportunities Commission	Mr Ferrick CHU
	Ms Esther CHAN
F'Union	Ms Connie CHAN
Gender Rights Research Group	Mr Mark KING
	Ms Jessica PARK
Hong Kong Human Rights Monitor	Ms Valerie CHAN
New Creation Association	Mr CHUNG Kam-fai
	Mr CHAN Ka-leung
Queer Sisters	Ms Eleanor CHEUNG
Rainbow Action	Ms YEO Wai-wai

The Transgender Equality and Acceptance
Movement (TEAM)
Transgender Asia Research, Education &
Advocacy Centre
Women Coalition of HK

Ms Robin BRADBEER
Ms Robyn EMERTON
Dr Sam WINTER

Ms WEI Siu-lik

Welcoming remarks

1. The Chairman welcomed all participants.

Confirmation of notes of last meeting

2. In response to a member's enquiry on paragraph 10 of the notes of last meeting, the Chairman said that there was no requirement for the sponsored organization to submit publication to HAB for approval before publishing.
3. The notes of the meeting on 28 October 2005 were confirmed without amendments.

Matters Arising

4. In response to a member's question on the grounds for allowing New Creation Association (NCA) to become a member of the Forum, the Chairman said that NCA was allowed to join the Forum as it provided services to sexual minorities. The representative of NCA introduced the organization and said that NCA's service targets belonged

to the “minority within the sexual minorities” whose rights should also be respected.

5. A member opined that NCA’s presence might adversely affect discussions at the Forum and suggested to review NCA’s participation in the Forum and discuss the issue at the next meeting.

Survey on Public Attitudes Towards Homosexuals

(Paper No.: SMF 1/2006)

6. The Chairman invited representatives of MVA Hong Kong Ltd, Mr. Wayne YEH and Miss Augusta HO, to brief members on the preliminary findings of the Survey. Mr. YEH took members through the key findings of the Survey.

7. In response to a member’s observations regarding the Survey findings on discrimination faced by homosexuals in Hong Kong, the Chairman explained that the Survey aimed to gauge the public’s perception of the problem of discrimination faced by homosexuals, but not its prevalence in Hong Kong. The Chairman added that more public discussion would be needed before considering legislating against discrimination on the ground of sexual orientation.

8. A member requested that the analysis on respondents’ perception of discrimination faced by homosexuals should be based on

the views of those who had contact with homosexuals. Mr. YEH indicated that such analysis was covered in the Survey report.

9. In response to a member's query on whether the order of the questions in Section D had been rotated during the telephone interviews to minimize bias on the negative question, Mr. YEH said that the order of the questions was endorsed by the Advisory Group, and rotation of questions was not necessary. The Chairman added that the Advisory Group, when finalizing the design of the questionnaire, had taken into account the views expressed by various concern groups.

10. A member cast doubt on the Survey's findings for Section C, pointing out that while about 30% of the respondents considered the overall situation of discrimination on the ground of sexual orientation in Hong Kong "very serious / serious", a significantly lower number of respondents considered the situation problematic in specific situations such as employment, renting accommodation and club membership. The Chairman said that the above findings were understandable, especially when taken in conjunction with the notably higher percentage of respondents who considered the situation "very serious / serious" in school. The findings reflected the general perception of the respondents that students were more vulnerable than adults and that any discrimination in schools was more difficult to deal with than in job seeking and renting accommodation. Mr. YEH added that response relating to the overall situation reflected the respondents' overall view on discrimination in Hong Kong, which could possibly cover other

discriminatory situations in addition to those covered in the questionnaire.

11. The Chairman said that the Survey results would be presented to the Legislative Council Panel on Home Affairs at its meeting on 10 March 2006 and the Survey report would be uploaded to HAB's website for public information on the same day.

Public Education and Publicity Programme

(Paper No.: SMF 2/2006)

12. The Unit Manager introduced the paper.

13. A member expressed disappointment at the low turnout in the Awareness Day on 14 January 2006. Members opined that for similar events in future, location with higher people flow should be chosen; and enhanced publicity should be arranged: timely press releases, and posters and signage in and around the venue a few days before the event.

14. The Chairman agreed that there was room for improvement in organizing similar events in future, and suggested that a working group comprising 2 to 3 Forum members and HAB staff be set up to coordinate such events.

Review of the Corporate Governance of the Equal Opportunities Commission

(Paper No.: SMF 3/2006)

15. The Chairman introduced the paper. A member opined that the proposed non-executive Chairperson of the EOC should not be a part-time post in view of the additional workload of the EOC after it had taken on the duties of implementing the proposed legislation against racial discrimination. The Chairman noted the member's view.

Application for Entry of Foreign Partners of Same-Sex Couples into Hong Kong

(Paper No.: SMF 4/2006)

16. A member expressed disappointment at the absence of the representative from Security Bureau (SB). The member opined that it was both necessary and desirable for responsible officials to listen and respond to the questions and views made by the Forum members. The member proposed to withdraw the paper and postpone the discussion to the next meeting when the presence of the representative of the Bureau had been secured. The Chairman agreed to relay the member's views to SB for further consideration.

Arrangements for Transfer of Transgender Patients from Sex Clinic to District Hospitals/Clinics

(Paper No.: SMF 5/2006)

17. A member suggested that the item be deferred likewise. The Chairman explained that the situation was different because representatives of the Hospital Authority already attended the previous meeting and the paper provided only supplementary information.

18. Upon members' request, discussion of the item was deferred and the Chairman agreed to follow up with the Hospital Authority on this item.

(Post-meeting notes: Representatives of the transgender groups subsequently agreed to discuss the item separately in a private meeting among transgender community, the Hospital Authority and HAB. The item would not be discussed at the next meeting.)

Any other business

19. A member expressed worries that many religious institutions had the freedom and made use of such freedom to try to influence people in the community on how to behave according to the institutions' moral standard. The Chairman noted the member's views.

20. A member expressed that some Forum members such as representatives of transgender groups might not want to be identified with their photos taken by the press. In reply, the Chairman said the meeting was open to members of the public and the media. Nevertheless, if there was personal safety reason to restrict discussion of a particular item to Forum members only, special arrangement could be made on the merits of each case.

Date of next meeting

21. There being no other business, the discussion ended at 5:40p.m. Members would be notified of the date of the next Forum nearer the time.

Home Affairs Bureau

June 2006