

LCQ9: Government officials' attendance at advisory and statutory bodies meetings

Following is a question by the Hon Martin Lee and a written reply by the Secretary for Home Affairs, Dr Patrick Ho, in the Legislative Council today (May 23):

Question:

Regarding the attendance at the meetings of various statutory bodies, advisory bodies and the committees under these bodies by directors and permanent secretaries of bureaux in their capacity as members, will the Government inform this Council:

(a) of the details of the cases in which the attendance rates at the meetings concerned of such bodies/committees in the past two years by the aforesaid officials in their capacity as members were lower than 50%, including the names of the statutory bodies/advisory bodies/ committees concerned, the post titles of the officials and their respective attendance rates;

(b) whether it had reviewed in the past two years the relevant attendance rates of the aforesaid officials; if so, of the department which conducted the review, and the outcome of the review; if not, the reasons for that, and whether it will conduct such a review; and

(c) whether there are measures in place to improve the relevant attendance rates; if so, of the details of such measures?

Reply:

Madam President,

(a) At present, there are 70 advisory and statutory bodies (ASBs) the membership of which comprises Directors of Bureaux or Permanent Secretaries. In general, these ASBs give Directors of Bureaux or Permanent Secretaries the flexibility to assign representatives to attend meetings on their behalf if and when necessary. Details of the cases in which the attendance rates of those officials or their representatives falling below 50% at the meetings of such ASBs/committees in 2005 and 2006 are set out at Annex.

(b) and (c) Of the cases included in Annex, the Directors of Bureaux concerned have reviewed the arrangement of attending the meetings, including the need to maintain their standing membership status in the ASBs/committees concerned. In general, the relevant Directors of Bureaux/Permanent Secretaries will, having regard to the agenda of the meeting, decide whether his/her attendance to the meetings is necessary. For meetings with relevant items, they will attend the meetings themselves as far as possible; and, depending on the actual circumstances of the case, assign suitable representatives to attend the meetings if they are unable to attend because of other official commitments. In such cases, the representatives will brief the Directors of Bureaux/Permanent Secretaries concerned on matters discussed and issues to be followed up after the meetings.

Ends/Wednesday, May 23, 2007