

Press release

LCQ9: Services of Companies Registry

Wednesday, July 9, 2008

Following is a question by the Hon Tam Heung-man and a written reply by the Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Professor K C Chan, in the Legislative Council today (July 9):

Question:

At present, counters of the Companies Registry provide only limited services during the mid-day session (i.e. between 12.30pm and 2pm) from Monday to Friday, during which each member of the public is allowed to only submit, for filing, a maximum of six documents at any one time. Some people who provide company secretarial services have told me that the arrangement is quite inconvenient for their operation. Moreover, the Companies Registry does not accept cash payments during the mid-day session, which also causes them inconvenience. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council whether:

(a) it will review the procedure adopted by the Companies Registry for handling the filing of documents, including abolishing the practice of providing only limited services during the mid-day session; if it will, of the details of the review; if not, the reasons for that; and

(b) it will consider reviewing the existing shroff practice of the Companies Registry, including accepting cash payments during the mid-day session or switching to issuing payment notices to members of the public and allowing them to pay later through other means, such as credit cards, electronic fund transfers or PPS; if it will, of the details of the review; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

Madam President,

(a) At present, members of the public may file documents (such as Annual Returns) together with the prescribed fees with the Companies Registry (CR) by post or in person at the Shroff counters of the CR. They may also choose to deposit the documents together with cheques into a Drop-in box provided at the CR's office.

The CR's current performance pledge for queuing in relation to the submission of documents is no more than 20 minutes. During lunch hours (i.e. from 12.30pm to 2pm), as the CR needs to carry out revenue reconciliation work while adhering to the performance pledge, given the manpower restraints, only limited services are provided and customers may submit up to six documents at a time. For customers who need to file more than six documents, subject to the prevailing circumstances, they may need to queue up again for submitting the remaining documents. The CR has reviewed the present procedure for the submission of documents and shroff officers have been instructed to accept and process all documents presented by the customer in one go if there is no other customer queuing for service. The CR will closely monitor the provision of service during lunch hours. It will keep the operation procedure in constant review and remind officers concerned to handle the submission of documents in a flexible manner with a view to providing quality and efficient services to customers.

(b) The CR does provide shroff services during lunch hours when members of the public may make payments by cash, cheque or EPS. As mentioned in (a) above, they may submit the documents for filing together with the prescribed payments by post or in person to the CR's office during office hours or deposit the documents and cheques into a Drop-in box.

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