

Press release

LCQ8: Scheme \$6,000

Wednesday, November 2, 2011

Following is a question by the Hon Leung Kwok-hung and a written reply by the Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Professor K C Chan, in the Legislative Council today (November 2):

Question:

I have received complaints from Hong Kong people residing abroad that there are problems with the Government's implementation arrangements for giving a sum of \$6,000 to eligible persons. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(a) given that some Hong Kong permanent residents, who are holders of Hong Kong SAR passports and reside in the United Kingdom, hold only the old identity cards issued before June 23, 2003 and have not obtained the smart Hong Kong Permanent Identity Card, whether such persons are eligible for receiving the sum of \$6,000; if not, of the justifications; and

(b) given that some eligible Hong Kong people residing abroad do not have any local bank account and the authorities also do not accept their using local joint accounts to receive the sum of \$6,000, thus compelling them to return to Hong Kong in person to collect the sum of money, why the authorities cannot give them the sum of money by cheque; whether the authorities have assessed if the relevant measures will hinder Hong Kong people residing abroad from applying for the sum of \$6,000; if they have, of the results?

Reply:

President,

(a) Scheme \$6,000 needs to adopt clear and practicable criteria for determining eligibility for payment. We proposed in the papers submitted to the Panel on Financial Affairs and the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council that a person must meet two criteria to be eligible under the Scheme, ie aged 18 or above and holding a valid Hong Kong Permanent Identity Card (HKPIC) on March 31, 2012.

(b) Under Scheme \$6,000, eligible persons are subject to the same payment arrangements irrespective of whether they are in or outside Hong Kong. Regardless of where they are, eligible persons may choose the timing and platform for making registration according to their own needs. Eligible persons who have a local Hong Kong dollar bank account in their sole name may register through banks and receive payment through their specified bank account. Those who do not have a local Hong Kong dollar bank account in their sole name may register through the Hongkong Post and collect an order cheque, which may then be encashed.

To avoid dispute and prevent fraud, joint bank accounts are not accepted for receiving payment under Scheme \$6,000. This is in line with the practice of other government schemes that use bank accounts for disbursing payment (eg Comprehensive Social Security Assistance and Social Security Allowance Schemes).

Eligible persons who register through the Hongkong Post need not submit the registration form in person, but are required to collect their cheques in person at the post office. We will ensure that the personal particulars of the persons who come forth to collect the cheques tally with the information on the cheques before giving the cheques to them. The purpose is to prevent fraud and safeguard the interest and personal data privacy of registrants.

Ends