

Terms of reference of the Standing Committee on External Affairs

1. To make recommendations to the Council on the communications and external relations strategies of the Law Society in enhancing the public image of the Law Society locally, nationally and worldwide; and in establishing and maintaining good relationship with the media, the Government, Legislative Council, the Judiciary, professional bodies and other agencies and organizations.
2. To oversee the effective and efficient management of media relations and communication services, including but not limited to:
 - a) establishing a system of communications and a spokespersons policy in dealing with the media and public enquiries;
 - b) ensuring good relationship and close contact with the media;
 - c) arranging timely media interviews, briefings, receptions and press conference and issuing timely press releases;
 - d) ensuring regular and timely dissemination of media alerts on current issues affecting the Law Society, the legal profession, the rule of law etc. to the President and other spokespersons or representatives of the Law Society; organizing meetings or conferences for them to decide upon the lines to take in the media on the relevant issues; and
 - e) offering prior briefings for Law Society representatives on visits and conferences and other public functions;
3. To oversee the implementation of the strategies on fostering good public relations with the Government, Legislative Council, the Executive Council, the Judiciary; and the professional bodies, chambers of commerce, the Liaison Office of the CPG in HKSAR, the HKTDC and other local organisations.
4. To make recommendations to the Council on Greater China (including Mainland, Macau and Taiwan) strategies in building and fostering of good public relations with Greater China authorities, lawyers associations and other organisations in Greater China; and to oversee the implementation of these strategies, including but not limited to:
 - a) organising visits by the Council and other committees to Greater China;
 - b) establishing and maintaining channels of communication with relevant authorities in Greater China;
 - c) monitoring market access measures under the CEPA and other governmental initiatives;
 - d) liaising with Lawyers Associations in Greater China pursuant to the memoranda of understanding and the cooperation agreements entered into by the Law Society with these Associations;
 - e) liaising with the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office of the HKSAR Government in the Mainland, the HKTDC and other professional bodies in Greater China;
 - f) organising practice promotion events and networking activities for the profession in Greater China;
 - g) publishing promotional pamphlets and brochures and contributing articles for publications in the journals, magazines and newspapers in Greater China and for electronic dissemination; and
 - h) establishing a Greater China Desk in the Law Society

5. To make recommendations to the Council on the international strategies in building and fostering of good public relations with the international and regional organisations, government authorities and NGOs, international and regional bar associations, law societies, law councils and other legal profession related organisations in other countries or territories; and to oversee the implementation of these strategies, including but not limited to:
 - a) developing and maintaining the established relations with the bar associations, law societies and other associations overseas;
 - b) facilitating the profession to practise in collaborations with lawyers overseas;
 - c) negotiating new memoranda of understanding for cooperation with overseas bars and law societies and performing the obligations on the part of the Law Society to perform under the subsisting memoranda of understanding; and
 - d) establishing an International Desk in the Law Society.
6. To make recommendations to the Council on strategies relating to the enhancement of the public image of the Law Society and the solicitors' profession.
7. To oversee the implementation of the strategies approved by the Council and the adoption of the appropriate tools of communications to the media and external parties such as press statements, publications, electronic communications, and conferences.
8. To develop public education programme to promote legal awareness within the community in Hong Kong.
9. To oversee the coordination of all Law Society's public relations activities or functions with the Government, and other organisations, overseas associations and professional bodies, including the annual spring cocktail reception with judges, legislative councilors, government officials, representatives of professional bodies and other organisations; to oversee the reception of guests of the Law Society.
10. To oversee the review and updating of the Law Society web site layouts, and contents related to the matters under the remit of the Standing Committee on External Affairs, promotional materials and publications by the Law Society.
11. To oversee lobbying and publicity campaigns launched from time to time by the Law Society.
12. To review and approve the terms of reference of the committees under the Standing Committee, including but not limited to:
 - i) Media Relations and Communications Committee (new)
 - ii) Community Relations Committee
 - iii) Greater China Legal Affairs Committee
 - iv) International Relations Committee (new)
 - v) Committee on Image Building and Branding (new)
 - vi) Public Education Committee (new)
 - vii) Committee on Pro bono Legal Services Projects (new)
13. To set up new committees, sub-committees or working parties as it may consider necessary from time to time, subject to pre-approval by the Council or the Standing Committee on Policy & Resources; and to review and approve their terms of reference.
(Approved resolution of the Council on 22 July 2008)