

# Corporate Governance Report

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## Corporate Governance Practices

The missions of the Corporation are to promote:

- stability of the banking sector
- wider home ownership
- development of the local debt market
- development of retirement planning market.

The Corporation operates on prudent commercial principles and is committed to ensuring a high standard of corporate governance to improve the overall accountability, transparency and long-term sustainability of its operations. The Corporation's corporate governance practices are set out in its Code approved by the Board. The Code is premised on the principles of fairness, transparency, accountability and responsibility to all stakeholders and has been issued to the sole shareholder, Directors and staff members. The Code is also available on the Corporation's website ([www.hkmc.com.hk](http://www.hkmc.com.hk)).

Monitoring of compliance with the Code starts with self-assessment by each department each year, which is to be followed by an independent review by the Chief Internal Auditor of the Control Self-assessment Forms completed by each department. A compliance report will then be submitted to the Board for review. The Board is empowered to require that appropriate action be taken in relation to any non-compliance.

In February 2023, the Chief Internal Auditor conducted an independent review of the Control Self-assessment Forms provided by each department in relation to the compliance with the Code for 2022. Based on the audit findings on the Corporation's internal controls systems and the completed Control Self-assessment Forms for the year, the Chief Internal Auditor was of the opinion that the Code had been complied with in all material respects.

## Enhancements to the Corporate Governance Code

Maintaining a robust and sensible framework of corporate governance for the effective and prudent management of the Corporation is always a top corporate priority. To ensure that the Corporation's corporate governance practices are commensurate with the best standards, the Corporation

will review the Code from time to time and will adopt any relevant development in corporate governance practices.

## Sole Shareholders

All the shares of the Corporation are held by the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region for the account of the Exchange Fund.

## The Board

The Board is responsible for leading the Corporation and promoting its success in an accountable and effective manner. To provide strategic leadership and effective control of the Corporation, the Board meets in person at least four times a year to oversee the Corporation's business strategy and policies, budgeting and planning, organisational and financial performance, risk management, human resources as well as community relations. In order to ensure that well-balanced decisions are made by the Board, the composition of the Board includes officials from the Government, and representatives from political parties, banking sector and the accounting and legal professions. Directors are encouraged to attend Board meetings to ensure that issues are properly discussed.

The Code requires that Directors are provided with appropriate information before Board meetings to enable them to be updated on the affairs of the Corporation, and make informed decisions at the meetings. During the year under review, four Board meetings were held.

The Code also requires Directors to avoid situations which may, or may be seen to, compromise their personal judgement or integrity in the performance of their duties as Directors of the Corporation or lead to conflict of interests.

Directors are requested to declare their or their respective connected entities' material interests in any matter to be considered by the Board. If a Director or any of his or her connected entities has a conflict of interests in a matter to be considered by the Board, such Director will abstain from, and not be counted in the quorum in respect of, voting on such matter at the Board meeting. In respect of each financial reporting period, the Corporation will seek confirmation from Directors in respect of their and their respective connected entities' material interests

in significant transactions, arrangements or contracts involving the Corporation or its subsidiaries or subsidiary undertakings. Material related-party transactions between the Corporation and its counterparties will be identified and disclosed in the notes to the financial statements each year in accordance with the Hong Kong Financial Reporting Standards.

As at 31 December 2022, there were 12 Directors all of whom were duly appointed by the shareholder of the Corporation. Information about Directors is set out in the Board of Directors section of the Annual Report and also available on the Corporation's website. All Directors, other than the four Executive Directors, are non-executive and are not actively involved in the day-to-day management of the Corporation. Non-Executive Directors, however, do play an important role in bringing their independent judgement, considerable knowledge and diverse expertise to the Board's deliberations which in turn provide effective steer to Management in pursuit of the Corporation's policies. The Corporation does not remunerate its Directors.

For newly appointed Directors, the Corporation will provide an induction briefing on the business activities, strategies and objectives of the Corporation.

The term of a Non-Executive Director is generally one year. Under the Articles of Association of the Corporation, all Non-Executive Directors will retire at the next Annual General Meeting following their appointment but are eligible for re-election.

The Corporation maintains a directors' and officers' liability insurance policy for its Directors and officers against legal proceedings and other claims arising in the course of discharge of their duties in respect of the Corporation.

### **Chairman and Chief Executive Officer**

During 2022, the Hon. Paul Chan Mo-po was the Chairman and Mr Raymond Li Ling-cheung was the Chief Executive Officer. The roles of Chairman and Chief Executive Officer were separate and not performed by the same individual, which ensured a clear division of responsibilities between the Board and the executive functions of the Corporation's Management. The Board is responsible for laying down

strategic direction and business guidelines, approving financial objectives and closely monitoring the Corporation's performance on an ongoing basis. The Chief Executive Officer, who is accountable to the Board, is responsible for leading Management in implementing the Board's decisions in a proper and efficient manner. The Chief Executive Officer also ensures that adequate information relating to the Corporation's business is reported to the Board on a regular basis.

### **Company Secretary**

The Company Secretary is accountable to the Board and its main duty is to ensure that all company secretarial procedures are followed by the Corporation and the Board. In addition, the Company Secretary ensures that Board Papers are provided to Directors in a timely manner prior to each Board meeting. Directors have access to the advice and services of the Company Secretary with a view to ensuring that applicable laws, rules and regulations are complied with in respect of Board proceedings.

The schedule for 2022 Board meetings was provided to Directors in advance to facilitate Directors' attendance at Board meetings. The Code requires that Board Papers should generally be sent to Directors at least seven days before the relevant Board meeting so that Directors could be properly briefed before the Board meeting. Board Papers typically contain comprehensive background or explanatory information about the agenda items and include supporting documents, analyses, research findings, projections, budgets and forecasts, where appropriate. However, any Director adjudged to have a conflict of interests in an agenda item for the Board meeting will not be provided with the relevant Board Paper.

All the minutes of Board meetings and Audit Committee meetings are generally taken in sufficient detail, including the matters considered, decisions reached, concerns raised by Directors and dissenting views expressed at the meetings. All minutes of Board meetings and Audit Committee meetings are kept by the Company Secretary and made available for inspection by any Director, except where a Director has a conflict of interests in any matter discussed under an agenda item, the relevant minutes or materials would be withheld from such Director.

## Audit Committee

During the year under review, the Audit Committee comprised the following members:

- Mr Clement Chan, Non-Executive Director (Chairman of the Audit Committee)
- Mr Howard Lee, Executive Director
- The Hon. Paul Tse, Non-Executive Director
- Ms Margaret Kwan, Non-Executive Director (appointed on 14 July 2022)
- Ms Anita Fung, Non-Executive Director (membership ceased upon retirement as Non-Executive Director on 27 June 2022)

The Audit Committee is responsible for reviewing the Corporation's financial statements, the composition and accounting principles adopted in such statements, the results of the financial audits, and the Corporation's management procedures to ensure the adequacy and effectiveness of its internal controls systems.

The Audit Committee holds regular meetings with Management, the Chief Internal Auditor and external auditor. The Audit Committee also meets on an ad hoc basis to consider special issues requiring its attention. The Chairman of the Audit Committee summarises the reviews conducted by the Audit Committee, and highlights any major issues in a report for submission to the Board for Directors' consideration. In 2022, the Audit Committee held two meetings.

## Internal Auditor

The Group Internal Audit (**GIA**) Department operates independent of Management and plays a major role in assessing the internal controls systems of the Corporation. The GIA Department is led by the Chief Internal Auditor who reports directly to the Chairman of the Audit Committee on all matters relating to the Corporation's internal controls. The Chief Internal Auditor also reports to the Chief Executive Officer on day-to-day administrative matters of the GIA Department, and has authority to communicate directly with the Chairman of the Audit Committee without reference to Management.

Each year, the Audit Committee formally approves the annual Internal Audit Work Plan drawn up by the Chief Internal Auditor based on his independent risk assessment and observations of relevant risk management topics discussed at meetings of the Operational Risk Committee and the Corporate Risk Management Committee. In accordance with the annual Internal Audit Work Plan, the GIA Department adopts a risk-based audit approach in conducting its independent reviews of the Corporation's internal controls systems. After each review, the GIA Department discusses the audit findings and recommendations with the relevant department heads, Senior Management and Executive Director. Internal audit reports are submitted to the Audit Committee for review and, thereafter, to the Board for information.

Over the years, Management has adopted an active approach in considering audit findings and recommendations made by the Chief Internal Auditor and closely monitored their implementation.



Audit Committee

## External Auditor

The Corporation's external auditor is PricewaterhouseCoopers. Detailed information in respect of the auditor's remuneration is disclosed in the Corporation's financial statements. The auditor is allowed to communicate freely with the Chief Internal Auditor and the Audit Committee. To ensure its independence with respect to the Corporation, the auditor would issue a letter, on an annual basis, to the Audit Committee to confirm its independence based on the requirements under Part 4A of the Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants of the Hong Kong Institute of Certified Public Accountants. For the purpose of the audit of the Corporation's financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2022, PricewaterhouseCoopers has confirmed its independence to the Audit Committee.

## Financial Reporting

The Corporation aims to present a clear, balanced and comprehensible assessment of its performance, financial position and prospects to its stakeholders and the general public. Directors are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements, and there is a statement by the auditor regarding its reporting responsibilities in the Independent Auditor's Report on such financial statements. Directors are to ensure that financial statements are prepared so as to give a true and fair view of the financial status of the Corporation. The annual and interim results of the Corporation are announced in a timely manner after the end of each relevant period.

## Internal Controls

The Board has the overall responsibility for the Corporation's internal controls systems and, through the Audit Committee, conducts periodic reviews on the adequacy and effectiveness of the systems.

Various committees have been established to ensure the efficient operation and prudent risk management of the Corporation. These include the Corporate Risk Management Committee and Infrastructure Financing and Securitisation Investment Committee which are both chaired by an Executive Director to oversee the risks of the Corporation from an enterprise-wide perspective, and the Operational Risk Committee, the Credit Committee, the Transaction

Approval Committee, the Asset and Liability Committee, the Longevity Risk Committee and the Environmental, Social and Governance Committee, each chaired by the Chief Executive Officer. Each of these committees has clear and well-defined terms of reference. The risk management framework of the Corporation is set out in the Risk Management section of the Annual Report.

The internal controls systems are designed to provide reasonable assurance against material misstatement or loss, manage risks of failure in the operational processes and the attainment of business objectives, safeguard assets against unauthorised use, ensure the maintenance of proper accounting records for internal use and publication, and ensure compliance with policies and applicable legislation and regulations.

## Compliance Reporting

The Compliance Function is part of the Legal Office and is established for focused management of regulatory and compliance risk.

The Compliance Function is led by the Chief Compliance Officer who reports to the Chief Executive Officer through the General Counsel. In accordance with the Group Compliance Policy and the Group Compliance Manual of the Corporation, the Compliance Function monitored and advised departments of the Corporation on their compliance practices with a focus on conflict of interests, anti-corruption, competition, privacy and personal data protection, anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing matters for 2022. The Compliance Function conducted compliance audits in 2022 to help ensure that departments of the Corporation maintain robust compliance practices.

To provide transactional support, the Compliance Function undertook reviews of and participated in the sign-off of key programmes and programme enhancements during the year. It also organised training to strengthen staff knowledge on compliance matters. To enhance staff knowledge on compliance matters, Compliance Function implements an annual compliance test with different modules for relevant staff from different departments and subsidiaries of the Corporation.

## Code of Conduct

The Corporation requires the highest standards of integrity and conduct from its staff members. The requirements and the relevant legal obligations are clearly set out in the Corporation's Code of Conduct which forms part of the Staff Handbook. The Code of Conduct sets out, in particular, provisions in regard to potential conflict of interests that may arise between personal interests of staff members and the interests of the Corporation, and other provisions designed to ensure that staff carry out their job duties properly, ethically, impartially and free from improper influence.

A copy of the Code of Conduct is available on the Corporation's intranet to all staff members.

Staff members are required to give confirmation of their compliance with the Code of Conduct on an annual basis. Based on the confirmation received from the staff members, Management was satisfied that staff members had complied with the Code of Conduct in 2022.

## Communication

The Corporation attaches great importance to communication with the public. The Annual Report of the Corporation contains comprehensive information on its business strategies and developments. The Corporation's website ([www.hkmc.com.hk](http://www.hkmc.com.hk)) offers timely access to the Corporation's press releases and its business information. The Corporation also maintains a telephone hotline to service enquiries from the public.

## HKMCI and HKMCA

The Corporate Governance Codes of the HKMCI and the HKMCA (wholly-owned subsidiaries of the Corporation and authorised insurers under the Insurance Ordinance to carry on general insurance business and long term insurance business in or from Hong Kong respectively) closely follow the Corporation's Code, incorporating best corporate governance practices. During the year, the Board of each such subsidiary comprises members from the Board of the Corporation and from the Senior Management of each such subsidiary. Directors of the HKMCI and the HKMCA were appointed by the Financial Secretary as shareholder's representative of both subsidiaries. The Audit Committee of each subsidiary provides regular reporting to the Corporation's Audit Committee.

In February 2023, the Chief Internal Auditor of the Corporation and the Head of Internal Audit of the HKMCA conducted independent reviews of the Control Self-assessment Forms provided by each department or function of the HKMCI and the HKMCA in relation to the compliance with the Corporate Governance Codes of the HKMCI and the HKMCA for 2022 respectively. Based on the audit findings on both subsidiaries' internal controls systems and completed Control Self-assessment Forms for the year, the Chief Internal Auditor of the Corporation and the Head of Internal Audit of the HKMCA were of the opinion that the Corporate Governance Codes of the HKMCI and the HKMCA had been complied with in all material respects respectively.

## Conclusion

The Board was satisfied with the corporate governance practices of the Corporation during 2022. In 2023, the Corporation will continue to review its corporate governance framework and improve those practices as appropriate in the light of ongoing experience, regulatory changes, international trends and developments in order to enhance the Corporation's efficiency and effective management in pursuit of its missions.