

**New Companies Ordinance**  
**Briefing Notes on**  
**Companies (Words and Expressions in Company Names) Order**

**BACKGROUND**

Section 20 of the Companies Ordinance (Cap. 32) (“Cap. 32”) provides that prior approval is required should a company wish to register a name containing certain words or expressions. The words and expressions are set out in the Companies (Specification of Names) Order (Cap. 32E) (“Cap. 32E”). The above arrangement is re-enacted in section 100(2)(b) of the new Companies Ordinance (“new CO”). Section 101 of the new CO further provides that the Financial Secretary may make an order to specify such words and expressions.

**THE SUBSIDIARY LEGISLATION**

**Companies (Words and Expressions in Company Names) Order (“the Order”)**

2. The Order sets out the updated list of words and expressions for which prior approval is necessary should a company wish to register a name containing any of the words or expressions. It basically follows the list in Cap. 32E but with the addition of “levy” and “tourism board” (and their Chinese equivalents) to guard against the registration of a company name purporting to be responsible for collection of levies or to be connected in some way with the Hong Kong Tourism Board. In updating the list, several words and expressions in Cap. 32E have not been retained as they are either duplicative<sup>1</sup> or no longer required<sup>2</sup>. The list of words and expressions is at the *Schedule* to the Order.

Companies Registry  
August 2013

---

<sup>1</sup> The Chinese expressions “總商會” and “受託人” are considered duplicative as their usage will still be subject to approval under section 100(2)(b) of the new CO by virtue of the fact that “商會” and “受託” are retained on the list.

<sup>2</sup> These are “Cooperative”, “Building Society”, “Mass Transit”, “Underground Railway” and “Municipal” (and their Chinese equivalents).