



Dear Assignment / News / Business Section Editor

Hong Kong Institute of Certified Public Accountants takes disciplinary action against a certified public accountant

(HONG KONG, 10 November 2014) — A Disciplinary Committee of the Hong Kong Institute of Certified Public Accountants ordered on 27 October 2014 that the name of Szeto Ho Kei (membership number A30880) be removed from the register of certified public accountants for 6 months with effect from 8 December 2014. In addition, Szeto was ordered to pay costs of the disciplinary proceedings of HK\$19,207.

Szeto was convicted in the Magistrates' Court of one count of indecent assault and one count of loitering causing concern. Szeto was fined HK\$6,000 and ordered a probation order for 12 months with special conditions. Szeto notified the Institute of the conviction in accordance with his membership obligations. After considering the information available, the Institute lodged a complaint against Szeto under section 34(1)(a)(x) of the Professional Accountants Ordinance.

Szeto admitted the complaint against him. The Disciplinary Committee found that Szeto was guilty of dishonourable conduct.

Having taken into account the circumstances of the case, the Disciplinary Committee made the above order against Szeto under section 35(1) of the ordinance.

Under the ordinance, if Szeto is aggrieved by the order, he may give notice of an appeal to the Court of Appeal within 30 days after he is served the order.

The order and findings of the Disciplinary Committee are available at the Institute's website under the "Compliance" section at www.hkicpa.org.hk.

Disciplinary proceedings of the Institute are conducted in accordance with Part V of the ordinance by a five-member Disciplinary Committee. The majority (three members) of each committee, including the chairman, are non-accountants chosen from a panel appointed by the Chief Executive of the HKSAR, and the other two members are CPAs.

Disciplinary hearings are held in public unless the Disciplinary Committee directs otherwise in the interests of justice. A hearing schedule is available at the Institute's website. A CPA who feels aggrieved by an order made by a Disciplinary Committee may appeal to the Court of Appeal, which may confirm, vary or reverse the order.

The Disciplinary Committees have the power to sanction members, member practices and registered students. Sanctions include temporary or permanent removal from membership or cancellation of a practising certificate, a reprimand, a penalty of up to \$500,000, and payment of costs and expenses of the proceedings.

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About the Hong Kong Institute of Certified Public Accountants

The Hong Kong Institute of CPAs is the only body authorized by law to register and grant practising certificates to certified public accountants in Hong Kong. The Institute has more than 37,000 members and more than 18,000 registered students. Members of the Institute are entitled to the description *certified public accountant* and to the designation CPA.

The Hong Kong Institute of CPAs evolved from the Hong Kong Society of Accountants, which was established on 1 January 1973.

The Institute operates under the Professional Accountants Ordinance and works in the public interest. The Institute has wide-ranging responsibilities, including assuring the quality of entry into the profession through its postgraduate qualification programme and promulgating financial reporting, auditing and ethical standards in Hong Kong. The Institute has responsibility for regulating and promoting efficient accounting practices in Hong Kong to safeguard its leadership as an international financial centre.

The Hong Kong Institute of CPAs is a member of the Global Accounting Alliance – an alliance of the world's leading professional accountancy bodies, which was formed in 2005. The GAA promotes quality services, collaborates on important international issues and works with national regulators, governments and stakeholders.

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