



Dear Assignment / News / Business Section Editor

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

(HONG KONG, 27 November 2014) — A Disciplinary Committee of the Hong Kong Institute of Certified Public Accountants ordered on 30 October 2014 that the name of Chau Li Shan (membership number A14671) be removed from the register of certified public accountants for 24 months with effect from 11 December 2014. In addition, Chau was ordered to pay costs of the disciplinary proceedings of HK\$20,352.

Chau was an accounting manager of a listed company in Hong Kong. Chau failed to report her employer's unlawful acts to an appropriate level of management or to the relevant third party authorities. She was also aware that the information provided to the auditors was either misrepresented or false and she did not do anything to rectify the situation. Chau's silence and failure to take any action was incompatible with the professional ethical expectations placed upon a member of the Institute. After considering the information available, the Institute lodged a complaint against Chau under section 34(1)(a)(vi) of the Professional Accountants Ordinance.

Chau admitted the complaint against her. The Disciplinary Committee found that Chau failed or neglected to observe, maintain or otherwise apply the then applicable Statement 1.200 "*Professional Ethics – Explanatory Forward*", Statement 1.290C "*Professional Ethics – Unlawful Acts or Defaults By or On Behalf of a Member's Employer*" and Statement 1.291 "*Professional Ethics – The Ethical Responsibilities of Members in Business*".

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

Under the ordinance, if Chau is aggrieved by the order, she may give notice of an appeal to the Court of Appeal within 30 days after she 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 practicing 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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