

Submitted via Qualtrics

(Anonymous)

Company/Organisation view

Law Firm

Question 1

Do you agree with our proposal to introduce a new Code Provision (CP) under the Corporate Governance Code (CG Code) requiring issuers without an independent board chair to designate one independent non-executive director (INED) as a Lead INED to enhance engagement with investors and shareholders?

Yes

Please provide reasons for your views.

We agree that the designation of a Lead INED will facilitate communication between investors, shareholders and the company.

Question 2(a)

Regarding continuous professional development for directors, do you agree with our proposal to make continuous professional development mandatory for all existing directors, without specifying a minimum number of training hours?

Yes

Please provide reasons for your views.

We agree with the proposal. However, we suggest a minimum of 3-hours of training within a 2-year period for all existing directors (other than First-time Directors).

Question 2(b)

Regarding continuous professional development for directors, do you agree with our proposal to require First-time Directors to complete a minimum of 24 hours of training within 18 months following their appointment?

Yes

Please provide reasons for your views.

We agree with the proposal, but view the minimum of 24-hours within 18 months as being excessive (which could have an unintended deterrent effect

on otherwise well-qualified candidates). A more reasonable figure would be a minimum of 12-hours within 12 months following their appointment.

We note the revised MDR paragraph B(i) and while we agree with the proposed revisions, we do not think that it is necessary (or helpful to a reader) to disclose the name(s) of the external training provider(s). This also adds an administrative burden to the issuer – having to seek consent and confirmation to disclose the names of the external provider(s).

Question 2(c)

Regarding continuous professional development for directors, do you agree with our proposal to define “First-time Directors” to mean directors who (i) are appointed as a director of an issuer listed on the Exchange for the first time; or (ii) have not served as a director of an issuer listed on the Exchange for a period of three years or more prior to their appointment?

Yes

Please provide reasons for your views.

We agree this is sensible.

Question 2(d)

Regarding continuous professional development for directors, do you agree with our proposal to specify the specific topics that must be covered under the continuous professional development requirement?

No

Please provide reasons for your views.

Issuers should have the flexibility to structure training around areas of importance for their business and allow them to arrange/deliver training to meet the specific needs of their directors. For that reason, a rigid specification of topics to be covered is undesirable. We note the proposed consequential changes to Principle C.1 (concerning directors continuous professional development) and agree that the scope of training described therein is sufficient for these purposes.

Question 3

Do you agree with the proposed consequential changes to Principle C.1 and CP C.1.1 of the CG Code?

Yes

Please provide reasons for your views.

We agree with the proposed changes to Principle C.1 and CP C.1.1.

Question 4

Do you agree with our proposal to upgrade the current Recommended Best Practice (RBP) in the CG Code to a CP requiring issuers to conduct regular board performance reviews at least every two years and make disclosure as set out in CP B.1.4?

Yes

Please provide reasons for your views.

We agree with the proposed changes.

Question 5

Do you agree with our proposal to introduce a new CP requiring issuers to maintain a board skills matrix and make disclosure set out in CP B.1.5?

Yes

Please give reasons for your views.

We agree with the proposed changes.

Question 6(a)

In relation to our proposal to introduce a “hard cap” of six listed issuer directorships that INEDs may hold, do you agree with the hard cap to ensure that INEDs are able to devote sufficient time to carry out the work of the listed issuers?

Yes

Please provide reasons for your views.

We agree the hard cap is sensible.

Question 6(b)

In relation to our proposal to introduce a “hard cap” of six listed issuer directorships that INEDs may hold, do you agree with the proposed three-year transition period to implement the hard cap?

Yes

Please provide reasons for your views.

We agree with the proposed three-year transition period.

Question 7

Do you agree with the proposal to introduce a new Mandatory Disclosure Requirement (MDR) in the CG Code to require the nomination committee to annually assess and disclose its assessment of each director's time commitment and contribution to the board?

Yes

Please provide reasons for your views.

We agree this change is sensible.

Question 8(a)

In relation to our proposal to introduce a "hard cap" of nine years on the tenure of INEDs, beyond which an INED will no longer be considered to be independent, do you agree with the proposed hard cap to strengthen board independence?

Yes

Please give reasons for your views.

We agree the hard cap is sensible.

Question 8(b)

In relation to our proposal to introduce a "hard cap" of nine years on the tenure of INEDs, beyond which an INED will no longer be considered to be independent, do you agree that a person can be re-considered as an INED of the same issuer after a two-year cooling-off period?

Yes

Please provide reasons for your views.

We agree with the two-year cooling-off period.

Question 8(c)

In relation to our proposal to introduce a "hard cap" of nine years on the tenure of INEDs, beyond which an INED will no longer be considered to be independent, do you agree with the proposed three-year transition period in respect of the implementation of the hard cap?

Yes

Please provide reasons for your views.

We agree with the three-year transition period.

Question 9

Do you agree with the proposal to require all issuers to disclose the length of tenure of each director in the CG Report?

Yes

Please provide reasons for your views.

We agree this is sensible.

Question 10

Do you agree with our proposal to introduce a CP requiring issuers to have at least one director of a different gender on the nomination committee?

Yes

Please provide reasons for your views.

We agree with the proposed change.

Question 11

Do you agree with our proposal to introduce a Listing Rule to require issuers to have and disclose a diversity policy for their workforce (including senior management)?

Yes

Please provide reasons for your views.

We agree with the proposed changes.

Question 12

Do you agree with our proposal to upgrade from a CP to a MDR the requirement on the annual review of the implementation of an issuer's board diversity policy?

Yes

Please provide reasons for your views.

We agree with the proposed upgrade.

Question 13

Do you agree with our proposal to require as a revised MDR separate disclosure of the gender ratio of: (i) senior management; and (ii) the workforce (excluding senior management) in the CG Report?

Yes

Please provide reasons for your views.

We agree with the proposed changes.

Question 14

Do you agree with our proposal to codify the arrangements during temporary deviations from the requirement for issuers to have directors of different genders on the board as set out in draft Main Board Listing Rule 13.92(2) in Appendix I?

Yes

Please provide reasons for your views.

We agree with the proposed changes.

Question 15(a)

Do you agree with our proposal to emphasise in Principle D.2 the board's responsibility for the issuer's risk management and internal controls and for the (at least) annual reviews of the effectiveness of the risk management and internal control systems?

Yes

Please provide reasons for your views.

We agree with the proposed changes.

Question 15(b)

Do you agree with our proposal to upgrade the requirement to conduct (at least) annual reviews of the effectiveness of the issuer's risk management and internal control systems to mandatory and require the disclosures set out in MDR paragraph H?

Yes

Please provide reasons for your views.

We agree with the proposed changes.

Question 16

Do you agree with our proposal to refine the existing CPs in section D.2 of the CG Code setting out the scope of the (at least) annual reviews of the risk management and internal control systems?

Yes

Please provide reasons for your views.

We agree with the proposed changes.

Question 17

Do you agree with our proposal to introduce a new MDR requiring specific disclosure of the issuer's policy on payment of dividends and the board's dividend decisions during the reporting period?

Yes

Please provide reasons for your views.

We agree with the proposed change.

Question 18

Do you agree with our proposal to introduce a Listing Rule requirement for issuers to set a record date to determine the identity of security holders eligible to attend and vote at a general meeting or to receive entitlements?

Yes

Please provide reasons for your views.

We agree with the proposed change.

Question 19

Do you agree with our proposal to codify our recommended disclosures in respect of issuers' modified auditors' opinions into the Listing Rules?

Yes

Please provide reasons for your views.

We agree with the proposed changes.

Question 20

Do you agree with our proposal to clarify our expectation of the provision of monthly updates in CP D.1.2 and the note thereto?

Yes

Please provide reasons for your views.

We agree with the proposed changes.

Question 21

Do you agree with our proposal to align requirements for the nomination committee, the audit committee and the remuneration committee on establishing written terms of reference for the committee and the arrangements during temporary deviations from requirements as set out in draft Main Board Listing Rules 3.23, 3.27, 3.27B, 3.27C and 8A.28A in Appendix I?

043

Yes

Please provide reasons for your views.

We agree with the proposed changes.

Question 22

Do you agree with the proposed implementation date of financial years commencing on or after 1 January 2025, with transitional arrangements as set out in paragraphs 182 to 183 of the Consultation Paper?

Yes

Please provide reasons for your views.

We agree with the proposed implementation date and transitional arrangements.