

MANDATORY PROVIDENT FUND SCHEMES AUTHORITY

I.3 Guidelines on Custodians

INTRODUCTION

Section 68(4) of the Mandatory Provident Fund Schemes (General) Regulation (“the Regulation”) provides that an approved overseas bank, an approved overseas insurer or an approved overseas trust company, which provides continuous financial support to a registered trust company acting as a custodian, must satisfy a minimum credit rating set by the Mandatory Provident Fund Schemes Authority (“the Authority”) based on the credit rating as determined by an approved credit rating agency.

2. Section 71(1) of the Regulation provides that a person is not eligible to be a delegate of a custodian of scheme assets unless the person:

- (a) would be eligible to be a custodian of scheme assets;
- (b) is an approved overseas bank or approved overseas trust company which complies with section 68(4) of the Regulation; or
- (c) is an overseas bank or overseas trust company which is a wholly-owned subsidiary of an approved overseas bank, an approved overseas trust company, an authorized financial institution, or a registered trust company incorporated in Hong Kong, which-
 - (i) has a paid up capital of not less than US\$200,000,000 or an equivalent amount in another currency; and
 - (ii) satisfies a minimum credit rating set by the Authority based on a credit rating determined by an approved credit rating agency.

3. Section 6H of the Mandatory Provident Fund Schemes Ordinance (“the Ordinance”) provides that the Authority may issue guidelines for the guidance of approved trustees, service providers and other persons concerned with the Ordinance.

4. The Authority hereby issues guidelines to set out the minimum credit rating requirements with respect to the relevant entity (an approved overseas bank, an approved overseas insurer, an approved overseas trust company, an authorized financial institution or a registered trust company incorporated in Hong Kong) for the purposes of sections 68(4) and 71(1)(c)(ii) of the Regulation. Guidelines I.9 set out the names of approved credit rating agencies.

MINIMUM CREDIT RATING REQUIREMENTS

5. For the purposes of sections 68(4) and 71(1)(c)(ii) of the Regulation, the minimum credit rating, as determined by the respective approved credit rating agencies are as follows:

Approved Credit Rating Agency	Minimum Credit Rating on Short-term Debt
Fitch Ratings	F1
Rating & Investment Information, Inc.	a-1+
Moody’s Investor Service, Inc.	Prime-1
Standard & Poor’s Corporation	A-1

6. An approved overseas bank, an approved overseas insurer, an approved overseas trust company, an authorized financial institution, or a registered trust company incorporated in Hong Kong needs to comply with only one of the minimum ratings.