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**Bio & Policy Statement from  
A Nominee for Associate Member Governor  
Board of Governors 2018-2019**

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Dear Fellow FCC Members,

**A Fresh Perspective**

It is my privilege to put myself forward as a candidate in the election of Governors, to represent the interests of the Associate Members; while appreciating the intrinsic role of the Correspondent and Journalist members to whom the Club owes its existence and international reputation.

I have lived and worked in Hong Kong for 30 years. I have been married to Leirife Roberts for 10 years. I have been a member of the Club for 16 years. I am an architect with interests in several businesses in real estate in Hong Kong, China, South East Asia as well as the United Kingdom and I am also an Authorised Person appointed under the Hong Kong Buildings Ordinance. With my fellow business partners, I have recently taken over the operation of “Carnegies” Bar and Restaurant in Wanchai, an iconic 24, year old establishment. I hope my professional and business experience will be of value to the Club in addressing the issues and ideas I describe below:

**1. Fiscal Responsibility**

**The Club is currently running at a loss – approximately HK\$1.7M in the past 12 months and I understand deficits have accumulated over 3 years.** While the Club has considerable capital reserves, to continue running the Club at a loss is not prudent or sustainable in the long term. Furthermore, in my view there is no need for losses to continue to accrue - members should be encouraged to use the Club more often by a gradual increase in the stipulated “minimum spend”, prices should be analysed and if necessary increased and new members should be admitted who will pay the full admission fee and use the Club on a regular basis. Staff costs should be reviewed and sub-contracting certain functions should be considered.

**2. Licensing**

**I have considerable experience in this area.** I understand that the Club’s license administered by the Home Affairs Department, under the Clubs (Safety of Premises) Ordinance, may not fully reflect the potential usage of the Club by its members – the prescribed limit has most likely been set too low, taking into account usage optimisation by some members is very low or nearly zero and many members are overseas at any point in time. I would recommend this be addressed by the relevant Club committee(s) and if then appropriate the Government department(s) and seek a review. Further I do understand that the membership cap stipulated by the current Club License may be somewhat arbitrary and if it were to be sensibly increased so

as not to compromise any potential congestion, it would allow more new members to be admitted.

### 3. Management

We have been blessed by the service of the loyal and hard-working General Manager and Head Chef who will shortly enter well-deserved retirement. The appointment of their replacements is to my mind the key decision for the Board over the next few months. **The decision is so important that interim appointments should be considered so a comprehensive recruitment process can be implemented and with my experience I believe I can assist the Board in finding the right people to take the Club forward.** I am a strong believer in letting managers manage and once appointed I hope that the Board will allow the new senior managers to flourish without the micro-management which I have unfortunately witnessed Gilbert being subjected to on several occasions.

### 4. Staff

**It has always been disappointing to me that talented younger members of staff often move on without being given the opportunity of a long rewarding career at the FCC.** It will be my mission to ensure that an efficient staff appraisal system is implemented which will reward talent by promotion rather than emphasizing time served.

### 5. Relationships with other Clubs

**I am keen to establish closer relationships with the other FCCs in the region, particularly in Cambodia and Japan.** I would like the Club to consider establishing a fund to send young members on visits to our affiliated Clubs with the provide that they take on speaking engagements and act as ambassadors of our Club in establishing those closer ties.

### 6. Utilisation of Space

I know we have an old building at our Club house but what a building it is! We are so fortunate to have it. **I believe I can pass on a few ideas about better utilisation of space with particular emphasis on commercial opportunities.** For example I believe a monthly Film Club, meeting in the Dining Room to watch a movie say on the first Monday of each month, would attract many members and their guests who would spend more than the usual dining clientele on that day. In addition the use of “Bert’s” as a venue for sports viewing has met with criticism and should be reviewed. Whilst I appreciate that the Club is not a “Sports Bar”, many members enjoy watching sports in the main bar and the financial benefits of a packed bar for big events has to be a key priority in selecting which events to show. That selection process by a sub-committee of the House Committee is far too cumbersome and has resulted in many poor decisions which have frankly cost the Club money. It is one of the examples of unfortunate micro-management I mentioned earlier. A trusted, sports “guru” making recommendations of which events should be broadcast to a senior member of staff, a system which worked entirely satisfactorily for many years, should, in my view, be restored.

Those are just a few of my ideas. Thank you for taking the time to read them and for considering me as your representative on the Club’s Board of Governors. It would be a true honour to be elected to represent all members.