

Our Ref : (2) in S/F(1) to HAB/CR/1/9/38 Pt. 2

Tel : 2835 1368

Fax : 2591 6002

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Miss Flora Tai
Clerk to Panel on Home Affairs
Legislative Council
(Fax No : 2509 9055)

Dear Miss Tai,

Panel on Home Affairs
Follow-up Actions to Previous Meetings

Thank you for your letter of 18 March 2003. Our response to item (c) regarding Internet Computer Services Centres (ICSCs) is set out below.

At the special meeting of the Panel held on 25 September 2002, Members noted the interim findings of the public consultation on the possible regulatory options of ICSCs (as set out in paragraph 44 of the notes of that meeting). The consultation exercise has since been completed and the findings are largely in line with those reported at the meeting on 25 September. To recapitulate, fire and building safety was considered of utmost importance; majority of the respondents supported the filtering of undesirable internet content; but views were diverse on whether and how youth patronage should be restricted.

There is general consensus that ICSCs should be regulated. At this stage, we consider that regulation should be done administratively by way of a Code of Practice. The Code is aimed at minimising any adverse impact of ICSCs on our young people while not hampering the healthy development of a new business. Taking into account various safety and public concerns over the operation of ICSCs, we are drafting

the Code in consultation with the trade (represented by the Hong Kong Association of Cyber Media) and relevant government departments. We will brief Members when the draft Code is finalised. We aim at issuing the Code for trial before the summer holidays.

Yours sincerely,

(KWAN Wing-wah)
for Secretary for Home Affairs