

For discussion
on 6 December 2001

Panel on Security of the Legislative Council

Implementation of projects of an updated Information Systems Strategy in the Immigration Department - updated implementation plan

Introduction

At the meeting of the Panel on Security of the Legislative Council held on 1 November 2001, Members discussed the Administration's paper on the updated Information Systems Strategy (ISS-2) of the Immigration Department (ImmD), and requested the Administration to provide an updated implementation plan for ISS-2 taking into account the views and concerns of Members, and details on the deletion of posts resulting from the implementation of the ISS-2 and the timing as well as the number of new posts created as a result of the opening of new boundary control points. Our response is set out in this paper.

Updated Implementation Plan for ISS-2

2. We have reviewed the implementation timetable for ISS-2 (Annex A), taking into account the views and concerns of Members, as well as such factors as urgency of projects, inter-dependence of applications and manageability of changes brought about by the projects. As a result of the review, we will advance the feasibility study on the Automated Vehicle Clearance (AVC) project (Project No. 12 at Annex A) from early 2004 to early 2002 and its roll-out from 2006-07 to 2004-05, to tie in with the introduction of smart ID card in phases starting from mid-2003 and the implementation of Immigration Control Automation System Enhancement Programme in April 2004. As a parallel development to achieve optimum project management, we will defer the feasibility study on Data Warehousing project (Project No. 24 at Annex A) from December 2001 to December 2003, hence its roll-out from 2004-05

to 2005-06.

3. We have carefully considered the suggestion of expediting the delivery of AVC by doing away with its feasibility study, which is normally required for information systems projects, and concluded that this would not be advisable for such a complex project. The proposed feasibility study would not only define the project scope and business requirements, but also identify the technical options and the associated process re-engineering opportunities, determine the project impact and risks, and quantify the cost and benefit of each of the options. It would also provide a reliable base for submission of funding applications to the Finance Committee.

4. We fully recognize the importance of enhancing the efficiency of customs and immigration clearance for cross-boundary goods vehicles. In this connection, the Customs and Excise Department plans to roll out the Automatic Vehicle Recognition System at Lok Ma Chau, Man Kam To and Sha Tau Kok control points starting from March 2002. The system will replace human input of vehicle registration numbers by capturing automatically the license plate numbers and front image of passing vehicles in real time so as to reduce customs clearance time and to eliminate human error in data entry. Also, starting from 1 October 2001, we have implemented a trial scheme of "One-Stop-Shop" arrangement at the Lok Ma Chau Control Point whereby Customs and Immigration officers are co-located inside one kiosk to conduct customs and immigration clearance for vehicles simultaneously. By doing so, the cross-boundary drivers can be cleared by stopping at one kiosk, thus reducing the waiting time for clearance. Depending on the results of the trial run, we may consider implementing the arrangement on a wider basis.

Manpower Savings Arising from ISS-2

5. According to the rough estimate of the consultant which carried out the ISS review, the implementation of ISS-2 will bring about tangible savings of \$445 million per annum at 2001-02 price level¹. This

¹ The price level has been updated from 1999-2000 price level quoted in the previous LC paper No. CB(2) 1984/00-01(03) issued on 28 June 2001 to 2000-2001 price level quoted in this paper.

comprises savings of \$174 million per annum arising from deletion of 425 posts, savings of \$20 million per annum in accommodation cost arising from conversion of paper records to digital format and redesign of training courses by using computer-based training, and savings of \$251 million per annum sustained from deletion of 613 posts under the first ISS. Such strategic level estimate is indicative and will be subject to results of feasibility studies on individual ISS-2 projects.

6. Of the 425 posts identified for deletion (Annex B) in the above estimate, some 60% or 253 posts are the General and Common grades posts. Arrangements will be in place to re-deploy the extra bodies within the Administration when savings are progressively realized from 2005-06 onwards. As for the remaining 40% or 172 Immigration Service grade posts, no redundancy will arise from these posts as the staff concerned will be redeployed within ImmD to meet other operational needs such as manning the new control points at Shenzhen Western Corridor and Lok Ma Chau Spur Line.

Manpower Requirement of New Control Points

7. Two new control points, namely, the Shenzhen Western Corridor and Lok Ma Chau Spur Line, are scheduled for commencement of operation in 2005-06 and 2006-07 respectively. The operation of each of these two control points is roughly estimated to require about 400 ImmD staff taking into account automated passenger and vehicle clearance systems to be put in place. The exact manpower requirement for these two control points will be assessed nearer the time. The implementation of ISS-2 projects, including Automated Passenger Clearance (Project No. 11 at Annex A) and AVC, will be taken into account in the development of human resources solutions to align with the dynamic business needs of ImmD.

Security Bureau
November 2001

List of projects and macro implementation plan of the updated ISS

Phase	Project No.	Name of Project & Description	Implementation	Status
Phase 0 (1999-2000)	1	HKSAR ID Card^D To develop and implement the necessary infrastructure and application system for issuing new ID cards to the public.	May 2003	FS was completed in June 2000. With the funding approval obtained from the Finance Committee in March 2001, implementation of the first phase of the project has started.
Phase I (2000-01)	2	Business Process Re-engineering^E To streamline and centralise work processes with the aim of significantly improving productivity, and bringing the greatest benefit from new and improved information systems.	Throughout the implementation of the updated ISS	Business process re-engineering studies have been conducted on application for extension of stay and visas; validation of right of abode claim; management of birth, death and marriage records. Studies on other areas will be mounted prior to implementation of the related information systems.
	3 (Part I)	Electronic Visit Permit Application System (Pilot)^D To introduce a new computer system (called iPermit System) for handling applications and issue visit permits to Taiwan visitors through electronic means. (The experience gleaned from this pilot scheme will be useful for subsequent implementation of Part II of the scheme to cover other categories of visitors.)	April 2002	FS was completed in November 2000. With the funding approval obtained from the Administrative Computer Projects Committee in August 2001, development of the project has started.

Notes :

E denotes that the project is one of the 18 enabling projects.

D denotes that the project is one of the 12 delivery projects.

Phase I (2000-01)	4	Infrastructure Upgrade Programme Mainframe Investment^E To upgrade the processing and storage capacity of the mainframe to meet the needs of the updated ISS applications.))	FS was completed in March 2001. Implementation of these projects is subject to funding approval from the Finance Committee.
	5	Midrange Investment^E To upgrade the server computers (which link the mainframe computer in the headquarters and the personal computers in outstations) to the current technology platform and to enhance processing power and storage capacity.))	
	6	Desktop Investment^E To provide suitable modern personal computers on the desktop for immigration officers handling various applications in the headquarters and to the officers manning the clearance counters and kiosks at immigration control points to facilitate their daily work.))	
	7	Communications Network Investment^E To upgrade the communication network (a core IT infrastructure component shared by all ImmD applications now serving the immigration headquarters, 30 branch offices and 10 control points) to support the updated ISS applications and new offices and control points.))	
)	August 2003	

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Phase I (2000-01)	8	Immigration Control Automation System (ICAS) Enhancement Programme ICAS Enhancement^D To enhance the existing system to address the aging and obsolescence problems and system limitation; and to raise the technology platform to support and interface with other initiatives of the updated ISS to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of operation of the immigration control points.	April 2004	FS was completed in April 2001. Implementation of the project is subject to funding approval from the Finance Committee.
	9	Improvement on Information Security^D The opportunity will also be taken to improve data security of ICAS.		
	10	IS Branch Organization Restructuring^E To restructure IS Branch (comprising 342 staff as at 1 April 2001) and strengthen it with IT staff professionals to make it ready to undertake the implementation of the updated ISS.		
Phase II (2001-02)	11	Automated Passenger Clearance^D To enable the clearance of passengers securely using smart card and biometrics technologies without the aid of an Immigration Officer with a view to speeding up passenger flow and optimising staff usage.	2004-05	FS will be conducted in early 2002. Implementation of the project is subject to availability of funds.
	12	Automated Vehicle Clearance^D To automate vehicle clearance at land crossing points through the establishment of self-service kiosks using vehicle identification and biometrics technologies with a view to raising the overall vehicle throughput and reducing traffic congestion.	2004-05	FS will be conducted in early 2002. Implementation of the project is subject to availability of funds.

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Phase II (2001-02)	17	Communication^E To communicate to the staff within ImmD to keep them informed of the progress of the implementation of the updated ISS and of the potential effects on business and people. The aim of this programme is to educate and inform all interested parties on a 'no surprises' basis to facilitate smooth implementation of the updated ISS.	2001-02	The communication has started and the effort will be sustained throughout the implementation of the updated ISS.
Phase III (2002-03)	18	Enhancement of Processing Automation System (PAS)^D To enhance the system to meet the current business requirements and address current deficiencies of the PAS and to raise its technology platform to support the introduction of imaging for more efficient handling of applications for visas, entry permits and extension of stay.	2005-06	FS will be conducted in August 2002. Implementation of the project is subject to availability of funds.
	19	Integration of Supplementary Labour Scheme Information Management System (SIMS) into PAS^D The SIMS will be integrated with PAS to enable more effective maintenance of information on quotas of the importation of labour schemes.		
	20	Electronic Records Programme File Conversion^E A programme of work to progressively convert a colossal volume of essential non-electronic records into electronic machine-readable format to support and enable business process re-engineering activity and new systems implementations. The records include visa, travel document and civil registration applications.	2005-06	FS will be conducted in April 2003. Implementation of the project is subject to availability of funds.

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Phase IV (2003-04)	3 (Part II)	Electronic Visa/Permit & Advance Passenger Processing [Full Version]^D To provide alternative means for travellers to Hong Kong to apply for and be issued with permits or visas which may be electronic or in hard copy to be delivered by new and more efficient methods. To utilise data captured at airline check-in to allow pre-checking of passengers and to facilitate passenger processing.	2006-07	Subject to availability of funds, FS will be conducted in February 2004
	27	Business Information^E To provide secure electronic access to essential documents required by ImmD officers in their day-to-day duties, and to the public via Electronic Services Delivery.	2006-07	Subject to availability of funds, FS will be conducted in April 2004.
	28	Chinese Language Support^D To introduce Chinese language facilities into ImmD information systems wherever feasible and affordable.	2006-07	Subject to availability of funds, FS will be conducted in April 2004.
	29	Personnel Support^E To provide systems, tools and facilities to support the ongoing training of ImmD personnel in both IT and business matters through the personnel training system and to provide a personnel information system in order to manage career progression and handle duty rostering for about 4,000 service staff.	2006-07	Subject to availability of funds, FS will be conducted in April 2004.
	30	Additional Long Range Strategic Studies^E To explore in detail other possible strategic opportunities identified in the ISS Review with a view to bringing about cost saving and cost avoidance.	2006-07	ImmD will conduct these long range studies after implementing the time- and mission-critical initiatives under the updated ISS.

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**Savings Arising from
Implementation of Updated Information Systems Strategy**

	Rank	No. of posts saved
Immigration Service Grade	Senior Immigration Officer	9
	Immigration Officer	59
	Chief Immigration Assistant	11
	Senior Immigration Assistant	81
	Immigration Assistant	12
	<i>Sub-total</i>	<i>172</i>
General & Common Grades	Clerical Officer	10
	Assistant Clerical Officer	37
	Clerical Assistant	156
	Office Assistant	5
	Workman II	2
	Statistical Officer II	2
	Data Preparation Supervisor	2
	Assistant Data Preparation Supervisor	2
	Data Processor	7
	Senior Photographer	1
	Photographer I	9
	Photographer II	20
	<i>Sub-total</i>	<i>253</i>
Total	425	