立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(1)1004/02-03
(These minutes have been
seen by the Administration)

Ref : CB1/PL/ITB/1

Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting

Minutes of meeting
held on Monday, 10 February 2003, at 2:30 pm
in Conference Room A of the Legislative Council Building

Members present	:	Hon SIN Chung-kai (Chairman)
		Dr Hon David CHU Yu-lin, JP
		Hon CHAN Kwok-keung
		Dr Hon Philip WONG Yu-hong
		Hon YEUNG Yiu-chung, BBS
		Dr Hon LAW Chi-kwong, JP
		Hon Timothy FOK Tsun-ting, SBS, JP
		Hon MA Fung-kwok, JP

Members absent	:	Hon Howard YOUNG, JP (Deputy Chairman)
		Hon Eric LI Ka-cheung, JP
		Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP
		Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip

Public officers attending	:	<u>Agenda Items IV</u>
		Mr Michael STONE, JP
		E-government Coordinator
		Commerce, Information and Technology Bureau
		Ms Joyce TAM
		Principal Assistant Secretary for Commerce, Industry and Technology (Information Technology and Broadcasting) EG

Mr Stephen MAK, JP
Deputy Director of Information Technology Services
Department

Mr S Y TAM
Assistant Director, Information Services Department
(Local Public Relations)

Agenda Items V

Mr Alan SIU
Deputy Secretary for Commerce, Industry and
Technology (Information Technology and
Broadcasting)

Miss Adeline WONG
Principal Assistant Secretary for Commerce, Industry
and Technology (Information Technology and
Broadcasting) D

Mr W H CHEUNG
Chief Systems Manager, Information Technology
Services Department

Clerk in attendance : Miss Polly YEUNG
Chief Assistant Secretary (1)3

Staff in attendance : Ms Debbie YAU
Senior Assistant Secretary (1)1

Ms Sharon CHAN
Legislative Assistant 6

I   Confirmation of minutes and matters arising

LC Paper No. CB(1)846/02-03   -   Minutes of the Special Panel
                                        meeting on 13 January 2003

The minutes of the special Panel meeting held on 13 January 2003 were
confirmed.

II   Date and items for discussion for next meeting

LC Paper No. CB(1)835/02-03(01) -   List of outstanding items for discussion

LC Paper No. CB(1)835/02-03(02) --   List of follow-up actions

Clerk

2.   Members noted that the Chairman, as well as some officers of the Commerce, Industry and Technology Bureau, would be attending an overseas event in the second week of March 2003 and agreed to advance the monthly Panel meeting previously scheduled for Monday, 10 March 2003 to Tuesday, 4 March 2003 at 10:45 am or 4:30 pm. The Chairman instructed the Clerk to invite members to indicate the availability for one or both of the time slots in order to finalize the meeting arrangement.

> (*Post-meeting note:* Having regard to members' availability, the Chairman decided to hold the next Panel meeting on Tuesday 4 March 2003 at 10:45 am.)

3.   Members also agreed to discuss the following items proposed by the Administration at the next Panel meeting:

(a)   The Administration's response on issues of concern to the development of the film industry;
(b)   Encouraging software development in Hong Kong; and
(c)   IT Manpower.

III   Papers issued since last meeting

LC Paper No. CB(1)819/02-03   - "Report of the Delegation to Study
    - the Information Technology and Related Sectors in the Republic of Korea "

LC Paper No. CB(1)827/02-03   - "Guide to Filming in Hong Kong
    - 2003"

4.   Members noted the above information papers issued since last meeting.

IV   Progress of the E-government Programme

LC Paper No. CB(1)627/02-03(01)	-	Information paper on "Progress
	-	Update on E-government Development" provided by the Administration

5.   With the aid of power-point presentation, <u>the E-government Coordinator, Commerce, Industry and Technology Bureau (EGC/CITB)</u> took members through the Administration's paper.   He outlined the vision of E-government programmes, key areas of work and key measures in

(a) enhancing the scope and quality of E-government services;
(b) enhancing communication between the public and the Government;
(c) accelerating the level of e-service provisions by joining up departments;
(d) reaping the full benefits of computerizations projects; and
(e) cultivating an e-culture within the Government.

On the way forward, <u>EGC/CITB</u> advised that the Administration would continue to build on the solid foundation and also look to the future direction of E-government; extend service coverage; provide more joined-up public services; exploit more business process re-engineering opportunities; and start a fundamental evaluation of the Administration's efforts and direction.

6.   <u>The Assistant Director, Information Services Department (Local Public Relations)</u> also conducted a demonstration on the newly launched online news bulletin.   He highlighted that technically speaking, the news bulletin could be updated round the clock.   Apart from incorporating the interactive features of e-mail subscription and public forum, the online news bulletin also provided a special page for children aged 12 and under.

7.   <u>The Chairman</u> enquired on the target number of Information Technology Management Units (ITMUs) to be set up under E-government programmes.   In reply, <u>the Deputy Director of Information Technology Services Department</u> advised that the Information Technology Services Department (ITSD) intended to assist all bureaux and departments to set up their own ITMUs in order to establish an e-culture and support users to further exploit IT in their core business. However, for those bureaux and departments that were small in size or had less need in using IT to deliver public services, ITMUs could be set up on a shared basis provided that the requirements of the sharing bureaux/departments were compatible.   As such, there were currently 26 ITMUs serving 32 bureaux and departments, as compared to 16 ITMUs last year.   ITSD would continue to assist and encourage those bureaux and departments that were yet to set up ITMUs to do so in 2003-04.

8.   The Chairman sought objective statistics on the ranking and usage rate of E-government services when comparing Hong Kong with other advanced economies.   In response, EGC/CITB pointed out that absolute benchmarking was not possible because some countries were ahead in some areas while some e-services available in Hong Kong might not be found in other economies.   He pointed out that unlike other countries with a vast area where e-services served useful purposes, Hong Kong's small geographic area had made it easy for the public to avail themselves of government services through the conventional means. He therefore considered that the assessment should focus on how far e-government services could meet the needs of the community.

9.   On the rate of utilization, EGC/CITB remarked that the patterns of utilization varied among different services.   For example, e-form filling requiring the application of digital certificates and scanning of those documents that needed to be attached to the form were less popular.   In general, it was found that the public preferred to use the conventional means for services which required the completion of forms.   On the other hand, e-payment of Government bills was more popular.   For example, about 40% of Government bills had been settled electronically via ATM or PPS while some 48% of tax payments had been effected through e-channels. For services requiring compulsory electronic applications such as trade declaration, the utilization rate was 100%.   Besides, the electronic library index covering the catalogues of all public libraries administered by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department was also extensively utilized.   The Administration would continue to improve the customer-friendliness of various e-government services with a view to giving impetus to the use of e-services and to improving efficiency.

10.   In reply to the Chairman's enquiry, EGC/CITB confirmed that the supernumerary post of EGC would expire in August 2004.

Admin   11.   Summing up, the Chairman requested the Administration to provide a status report after the meeting showing the lists of bureaux and departments which had or had not established ITMUs, and the target dates for the establishment of ITMUs in bureaux/departments which had not set up such units.   The Administration was requested to update members accordingly in the next progress report to be submitted for the Panel's consideration in about September 2003.

V   **Promotion of IT Adoption in the Business Sector**

LC Paper No. CB(1)835/02-   -   Information paper provided by the
03(03)   -   Administration

12.   At the invitation of the Chairman, the Principal Assistant Secretary for Commerce, Industry and Technology (Information Technology and Broadcasting)D (PASCIT(ITB)D) briefed members on the measures taken by the

Government to promote the adoption of IT and e-business in the business sector, especially by small and medium enterprises (SMEs).   With the aid of power-point presentation, the Chief Systems Manager, Information Technology Services Department also gave an account of the adoption of IT in various industries.

13.   Noting that the SME Development Fund had approved funding for a project proposal to set up a Linux Resources Centre to promote and encourage the use of open source software among SMEs, Mr CHAN Kwok-keung sought information on the mode of operation of the Centre and the level of charges, if any, for its services.

14.   In response, PASCIT(ITB)D highlighted that apart from providing information and reference materials on open source software through the Internet, the project proposal of establishing a Linux Resources Centre (LRC) included setting up a physical centre to be equipped with personal computers installed with open source software for live demonstration to visiting SMEs.   The Administration undertook to provide further information on the charging arrangements, if any, after the meeting.

Admin

> (*Post-meeting note*: The supplementary information provided by the Administration indicating that the use of LRC services were entirely free was issued to members on 17 February 2003 vide LC Paper No. CB(1)924/02-03(01))

15.   Recalling that a sum of about $2.5 million had been allocated to the Hong Kong Computer Society (HKCS) to provide a community IT user support service in the form of a help desk service to the general public, the Chairman enquired whether the scope of the service had covered SMEs.   In reply, PASCIT(ITB)D remarked that the service, called "IT Easy Link", jointly provided by the Commerce, Industry and Technology Bureau, ITSD and HKCS, aimed at building a digitally inclusive society by providing advice on general problems that members of the community might encounter in using basic IT applications. According to the short telephone survey conducted at the end of enquiry calls randomly selected, about half of the enquiries had been made by employed persons.   A possible reason for this usage pattern was that the callers worked in SMEs without an IT support unit.   Enquiries from employed people were usually received in the morning and afternoon whereas enquiries received in the evening more often came from students and elderly people.   In view of the demand from employed people, the Administration was currently reviewing with HKCS the feasibility of extending the scope of the help desk service to the business sector, especially the SMEs.   The Administration would revert to the Panel on the review result in one to two months' time.

Admin

16.   The Chairman reflected the concerns of the industry that some SMEs, due to their inexperience in using IT, might have been offered substandard quality of products in the process of IT adoption.   He enquired about the assistance which

the Government could render in this aspect. In response, <u>PASCIT(ITB)D</u> informed members that the Administration was exploring with HKCS and other IT bodies ways to assist SMEs in the use of IT.   Although the Administration would not recommend any specific products in any support services to be launched, it would, where appropriate, propose options to help SMEs in IT adoption.

17.   In this connection, <u>the Deputy Secretary for Commerce, Information and Technology (Information Technology and Broadcasting)</u> stressed that the Administration was mindful of the need to stay clear from competing for business opportunities with the private sector.   In fact, the Administration would only seek to fill the gap by providing SMEs with services which were not available in the market, such as services to facilitate those SMEs which had just started to adopt IT to convert some of their manual operation to the electronic mode.   SMEs which had been up and running in adopting IT might obtain their required services from private suppliers in the market.

VI   Any other business

18.   <u>The Chairman</u> referred to the Panel's overseas duty visit to the Republic of Korea in September 2002 and remarked that the report of the visit, which had been endorsed by the delegation earlier on, had been issued to Panel members on 28 January 2003.

19.   <u>The Chairman</u> recapped that the purpose of the visit was to acquire first-hand understanding into Republic of Korea's fast growing IT and related sectors. Members of the delegation were particularly concerned about the current state of development in the country's IT landscape, as well as the government's policy and initiatives in promoting IT and related sectors.   Members of the delegation in general agreed that the four-day visit had achieved its intended purpose.   They had met with the relevant government departments, the relevant committee of the National Assembly, regulatory bodies, industry organizations and market players to discuss and exchange views on issues of mutual concern on telecommunications, IT, games and film industries etc.

20.   <u>The Chairman</u> highlighted that although the Korean experience might not be directly or readily applicable to Hong Kong, members had made a number of concluding observations, including:

   (a) The role of government in supporting IT development;
   (b) Collaborative effort in promoting IT;
   (c) The inter-relationship between the IT sector and other economic sectors; and
   (d) Hong Kong's competitive edge.

The delegation understood that certain issues, such as the role of government in

economic activities, were controversial.   Notwithstanding, the delegation considered that the concluding observations would serve as useful reference for policy makers and legislators.   The Chairman said that subject to any comments from Panel members on the report, he would present the report to the House Committee on 14 February 2003.   Members took note of the report and did not raise any question.

21.   There being no other business, the meeting ended at 3:30 pm.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
28 February 2003