

立法會
Legislative Council

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Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting

**Minutes of meeting
held on Friday, 4 February 2005, at 8:30 am
in Conference Room A of the Legislative Council Building**

Members present : Hon SIN Chung-kai, JP (Chairman)
Hon Albert Jinghan CHENG (Deputy Chairman)
Dr Hon LUI Ming-wah, JP
Hon Jasper TSANG Yok-sing, GBS, JP
Hon Howard YOUNG, SBS, JP

Member absent : Hon Timothy FOK Tsun-ting, GBS, JP

**Public officers
attending** : Agenda Item IV

Mrs Marion LAI, JP
Deputy Secretary for Commerce, Industry and
Technology (Communications and Technology)

Ms Lorna WONG
Commissioner for Television and Entertainment
Licensing

Miss Angela LUK
Assistant Commissioner for Television and
Entertainment Licensing (Entertainment)

Agenda Item V

Mr Tony LI
Principal Assistant Secretary for Commerce, Industry
and Technology (Communications and Technology)

Mr Lawrence KWAN
Acting Assistant Director of Telecommunications
(Support)

Agenda Item VI

Mr Stephen MAK, JP
Deputy Government Chief Information Officer
(Operation)

Mrs Eliza LEE
Chief Systems Manager
(Community and Industry Liaison)
Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

Mr Stephen LEUNG Kwan-chi
Senior Statistician (Sectoral Economic)
Census and Statistics Department

Mr SIU Yiu-choi
Senior Statistician (Social)
Census and Statistics Department

Agenda Item VII

Mr Francis HO, JP
Permanent Secretary for Commerce, Industry and
Technology (Communications and Technology)

Mr Howard DICKSON
Government Chief Information Officer

Mrs Betty FUNG, JP
Deputy Government Chief Information Officer
(Planning & Strategy)

Mr Stephen MAK, JP
Deputy Government Chief Information Officer
(Operation)

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

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

Ms Sharon CHAN
Legislative Assistant (1)6

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VI 2004 Surveys on IT Usage and Penetration in the Household and Business Sector

LC Paper No CB(1)813/04-05(05) -- Information paper provided by Administration

LC Paper No CB(1)474/04-05(01) -- Report on 2004 Annual Survey on Information Technology Usage and Penetration in the Business Sector

LC Paper No CB(1)474/04-05(02) -- Thematic Household Survey Report No. 20

LC Paper No. CB(1)859/04-05(01) -- Power-point presentation material on "2004 Surveys on IT Usage and Penetration in the Household and Business Sector"
(tabled and subsequently issued to members on 4 February 2005)

25. The Deputy Government Chief Information Officer (Operation) (DGCIO(O)) informed members that the Government had conducted annual surveys since 2000 to assess the usage and penetration of IT in the community and business sectors. With the aid of power-point presentation, the Chief Systems Manager (Community and Industry Liaison) of the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer presented the major findings of the two Survey Reports. On the comparison of IT penetration in Hong Kong with that of other economies, she highlighted that the relative rankings might not be strictly comparable because the IT surveys in other economies were carried out at different times and the latest available statistics of these economies had been used. Nevertheless, the statistics obtained from different sources generally indicated that Hong Kong compared well in household IT penetration and usage with other advanced economies.

Purpose and impact of the Surveys

26. In reply to Mr Jasper TSANG on the purpose of the two Surveys and whether the outcomes would have an impact on Government policies, DGCIO(O) informed members that the statistics had provided useful reference for the Government in formulating strategies and initiatives to promote IT development

and adoption in Hong Kong, in particular measures to bridge the digital divide in the community and to enhance the IT capabilities of small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Measures to raise public awareness and promote wider adoption of IT in the community included the provision of over 5 000 sets of personal computers (PC) for free use by members of the public, the establishment of cyber centres and the provision of free public enquiry service on general problems encountered in using IT.

Admin

27. Referring to the problem of digital divide, the Chairman advised that the Administration should forward the relevant survey findings to the Commission on Poverty for consideration and follow-up.

28. Referring to the Thematic Household Survey, Mr Jasper TSANG enquired about the relationship between households with PC and Internet connection and household income. In response, the Senior Statistician (Social) of the Census and Statistics Department confirmed that PC and Internet penetration rates for households correlated positively with household income, i.e. PC and Internet penetration rates were higher among those households with higher monthly household income.

Online purchasing services

29. Mr Jasper TSANG was concerned about the relatively low usage rate of online purchasing in Hong Kong vis-à-vis that of other advanced economies. In reply, DGCIO(O) informed members that the Government had already put in place the legal framework to enhance the certainty and security in conducting electronic transactions. At present, online purchasing was not very widely adopted locally probably because it was highly convenient for customers to shop around in Hong Kong. While he did not have the relevant statistics at hand, DGCIO(O) understood that in other advanced economies, there was not yet a great preference among users for the option of online purchasing.

30. Mr Howard YOUNG considered that owing to its geographical characteristics, Hong Kong might not need to be on par with other economies in the use of online purchasing services. He pointed out that the relatively slow adoption of online purchasing in Hong Kong might help sustain the business of retailers which sold their products or services through the conventional means or at physical outlets. For example, since not many customers would purchase air tickets online from the airlines companies, local travel agents could continue with their business of selling air tickets. Mr YOUNG suggested that the Administration should focus its efforts on promoting the wider use of other types of online services such as fee payments and e-government services.

31. The Deputy Chairman held a different view and considered that the retail sector should keep abreast of technological advancement, notably IT adoption. He urged the Administration to assist the retail sector to explore business opportunities arising from online purchasing services.

32. In response, DGCIO(O) remarked that while the Government would not seek to intervene into the business operation of individual sectors, it would continue with its effort to help various sectors of the economy to harness the full potential and benefits of IT, including the development of online purchasing, in advancing their business opportunities.

The way forward

33. In reply to the Chairman's question about the future direction of the two Surveys, DGCIO(O) confirmed that the two Surveys would continue to be carried out annually. However, the Administration would examine whether it was necessary to adjust the survey scope and types of respondents in line with the Government's IT strategies and policy initiatives and with reference to the outcomes of similar surveys in other advanced economies.

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