

**立法會**  
**Legislative Council**

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by the Administration)

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**Panel on Commerce and Industry**

**Minutes of meeting**  
**held on Tuesday, 19 February 2013, at 2:30 pm**  
**in Conference Room 3 of the Legislative Council Complex**

**Members present** : Hon Vincent FANG Kang, SBS, JP (Chairman)  
Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan, JP (Deputy Chairman)  
Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP  
Hon Jeffrey LAM Kin-fung, GBS, JP  
Hon Andrew LEUNG Kwan-yuen, GBS, JP  
Hon WONG Ting-kwong, SBS, JP  
Dr Hon LAM Tai-fai, SBS, JP  
Hon Steven HO Chun-yin  
Hon MA Fung-kwok, SBS, JP  
Hon Charles Peter MOK  
Hon Dennis KWOK  
Hon Christopher CHEUNG Wah-fung, JP  
Hon SIN Chung-kai, SBS, JP  
Hon Martin LIAO Cheung-kong, JP  
Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok, BBS, MH, JP  
Hon CHUNG Kwok-pan

**Member attending** : Hon WONG Kwok-hing, MH

**Public officers attending** : Agenda item IV  
Miss Janet WONG, JP  
Commissioner for Innovation and Technology

Mr Johann WONG  
Deputy Commissioner for Innovation and  
Technology

Mr Frank TSANG  
Assistant Commissioner for Innovation and  
Technology (Funding Schemes)

Agenda item V

Mr Gregory SO, GBS, JP  
Secretary for Commerce and Economic  
Development

Mr David WONG  
Deputy Secretary for Commerce and Economic  
Development (Commerce and Industry)<sup>2</sup>

Miss Patricia SO  
Principal Assistant Secretary for Commerce and  
Economic Development (Commerce and Industry)<sup>3</sup>

Mr Peter K F CHEUNG, JP  
Director of Intellectual Property

**Clerk in attendance** : Ms Annette LAM  
Chief Council Secretary (1)<sup>3</sup>

**Staff in attendance** : Ms Connie HO  
Senior Council Secretary (1)<sup>3</sup>

Miss Rita YUNG  
Council Secretary (1)<sup>3</sup>

Ms May LEUNG  
Legislative Assistant (1)<sup>3</sup>

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**I. Confirmation of minutes of meeting**

(LC Paper No. CB(1)532/12-13 -- Minutes of meeting held on 18 December 2012)

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 December 2012 were confirmed.

**II. Information paper issued since last meeting**

(LC Paper No. CB(1)514/12-13(01) -- Administration's information paper on Hong Kong/Shenzhen Co-operation Meeting)

2. Members noted that the above paper had been issued since last meeting held on 23 January 2013.

**III. Date of next meeting and items for discussion**

(LC Paper No. CB(1)534/12-13(01) -- List of outstanding items for discussion

LC Paper No. CB(1)534/12-13(02) -- List of follow-up actions)

3. Members noted that the next regular Panel meeting would be held on 19 March 2013 at 2:30 pm to discuss the item "Economic and Trade Relations with the Mainland - Manpower Arrangement for Enhancing the Functions of the Mainland Offices of the HKSAR Government" proposed by the Administration.

4. At the suggestion of the Chairman, members agreed that an item on the difficulties facing the proprietary Chinese medicine industry in moving towards Good Manufacturing Practice be included in the agenda for the March meeting. The Panel would also receive views from relevant stakeholders on the subject.

**IV. Review of the Research and Development Cash Rebate Scheme**

(LC Paper No. CB(1)534/12-13(03) -- Administration's paper on review of Research and Development Cash Rebate Scheme

LC Paper No. CB(1)534/12-13(04) -- Paper on the Research and Development Cash Rebate Scheme prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (updated background brief))

Presentation by the Administration

5. At the invitation of the Chairman, Commissioner for Innovation and Technology (CIT) briefed members on the outcome of the review of the operation of the Research and Development (R&D) Cash Rebate Scheme (the Scheme) since its introduction on 1 April 2010, as well as recommendations on improvement measures to the Scheme, as set out in the Administration's paper (LC Paper No. CB(1)534/12-13(03)).

Discussion

*Scope of the Scheme*

6. While welcoming the increase of the cash rebate level from 10% to 30% with effect from 1 February 2012, Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok and Mr Charles MOK expressed concern that under the current funding scope of the Scheme, only R&D projects funded under the Innovation and Technology Fund (ITF) and Partnership Projects conducted in partnership with designated local public research institutions would be eligible for a 30% cash rebate on the amount of R&D investment outlay. Pointing out that some small and medium enterprises (SMEs) had the required R&D capabilities to undertake independent R&D projects, Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok enquired if the Administration would consider relaxing the eligibility criteria of the Scheme and extending its coverage to SMEs' in-house R&D projects to help enhance their technological levels. In response, CIT explained that in view of the manpower and resource constraints, it would be difficult for the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) to verify individual participating companies' expenditures on R&D projects to ensure accountability and proper use of public funds. CIT advised that at present, a separate Small Entrepreneur Research Assistance Programme (SERAP) under the ITF had been providing financing to support technology entrepreneurs and small enterprises to carry out R&D work in which participating companies were not required to partner with designated research institutions.

7. Mr Charles MOK appreciated that the partnership arrangement with designated research institutions would facilitate the Administration's monitoring to ensure prudent spending. He was however of the view that such a restrictive system with partnership requirement was not conducive to the development of the innovation and technology industry. He urged the Administration to be more open-minded instead of confining the Scheme to projects conducted in collaboration with designated research institutions. He also called on the ITC to consider extending the Public Sector Trial Scheme (PSTS) to cover the conduct of trial schemes in the private sector. He opined that the Administration should widely consult industry stakeholders in the comprehensive review of the Scheme in 2015 with a view to formulating effective policies to meet the industry's needs. Concurring with Mr MOK, the Chairman said that the Administration should be more forward-looking and innovative in planning and policy formulation, making reference to overseas experience as appropriate.

8. CIT noted members' concern about the constraints of the current funding schemes. While highlighting the importance to ensure accountability and proper use of public money, she said that the ITC would explore the feasibility of extending the scope of PSTS and enhancing SERAP to strengthen Government support for SMEs' in-house R&D initiatives. The Administration would further seek members' views on how to strike the right balance between accountability and flexibility during formulation of the related policies to better meet the needs and expectations of the industry.

#### *Financial commitment of the Scheme*

9. Mr WONG Ting-kwong said that he was glad to note that the Administration had been increasingly proactive in its support to the development of innovation and technology industry in recent years. Noting that the \$200 million commitment of the Scheme was meant to cover its operation for 5 years until 2014-2015, and that the financial commitment of cash rebate disbursement under the Scheme had already reached \$133.8 million as of 31 December 2012, Mr WONG was concerned that the cumulative financial commitment of the Scheme was likely to reach \$200 million before 2015 should the rising trend of applications in 2012-2013 continued. He enquired whether the Administration would advance the timeframe of the comprehensive 5-year review scheduled for 2015, and seek additional funding when necessary to avoid disrupting the Scheme's operation due to early depletion of the total funding commitment. He also enquired at what time would the improvement measures recommended in the review be implemented.

10. CIT responded that while the \$200 million commitment was projected to be sufficient to meet the cash flow requirement of the Scheme in the coming few years, the Administration would monitor the application trend and apply for additional funding from the Finance Committee in good time to ensure continuity of the Scheme. The Administration would also seek the Panel's support for injection of additional funds prior to the review scheduled for 2015 once the cumulative funding commitment of the Scheme had reached the region of \$160 - \$170 million. Regarding the proposed enhancement measures to the Scheme, CIT said that subject to the Panel's support, the improvement measures would be implemented with effect from 1 April 2013.

11. Mr CHUNG Kwok-pan questioned whether the amount of cash rebate approved in 2012-2013 was in reality less than that in 2011-2012 taking into account the increase of the cash rebate rate from 10% to 30%. Assistant Commissioner for Innovation and Technology explained that the enhanced rebate rate of 30% was implemented on 1 February 2012 (i.e. 2 months before the end of 2012-2013) and its effect on the number of applications and amount of cash rebate approved could not be truly reflected by a year-on-year comparison between 2011-2012 and 2012-2013. Referring to the comparison on the number of applications and amount of cash rebate approved during the 11-month period after the increase in cash rebate level from 1 February 2012 up to end-December 2012 with the same period in 2011 set out in Table 3 of the discussion paper, he pointed out that the number of applications had increased 13% from 164 cases to 186 cases while the amount of cash rebate approved had increased 376% from \$5.5 million to \$26.2 million, which was greater than the 3-fold increase in the cash rebate level. He further explained that the substantial increase in the amount of cash rebate approved was mainly due to companies applying for cash rebate of larger value as investment in projects increased. He added that the effectiveness of the Scheme was also validated by the rising trend in the application of Partnership projects and the increased amount of cash rebate per application after the increased cash rebate level was implemented. The number of Partnership project pre-registrations had increased by 147% from 47 in the same 11-month period in 2011 to 116 in 2012, reflecting that the Scheme had promoted more collaboration between companies and designated local public research institutions in R&D.

#### *Commercialization of R&D results*

12. Mr WONG Ting-kwong enquired about the effectiveness of the Scheme in respect of the realization and commercialization of research results of projects sponsored by the Scheme. Citing a number of successful cases, Deputy Commissioner for Innovation and Technology shared with

members that the advanced radar satellite remote sensing technology for monitoring urban ground deformation developed by the Chinese University of Hong Kong in 2008 had been applied by the Highways Department in the construction project of the Hong Kong section of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link project. Another successful example was the Interactive Intention-Driven Upper-Limb Training Robotic System developed by the Hong Kong Polytechnic University which won the Grand Prix award in the "40<sup>th</sup> International Exhibition of Inventions of Geneva – 2012". In addition, negotiations were underway with local companies regarding the licensing and technology transfer arrangements of the Pedestrian Warning & Protection System developed by the Hong Kong Productivity Council in 2011.

13. Mr SIN Chung-kai opined that the ITC should provide more information on successful cases of commercialization of R&D results and technology transfer in the future application for funding and submission of the 5-year review report. CIT noted the suggestion and said that audio-visual aids would be used to facilitate members' understanding of the related projects.

#### *Promoting R&D*

14. Reiterating the long-standing industry request for the provision of more tax incentives to encourage R&D investment by private enterprises, Dr LO Wai-kwok called on the Administration to conduct an overall review of the various schemes currently in place to enhance the effectiveness of the programme initiatives. Sharing a similar view, Mr Jeffrey LAM commented that the Administration's spending on innovation and technology was relatively small as compared with the Government's overall expenditure. He said that the Business and Professionals Alliance for Hong Kong had long requested for tax relief measures, such as doubling the tax deduction for investment in R&D, so as to further stimulate private investment in R&D. Noting that neighbouring countries had introduced effective tax concessionary measures to drive their enterprises to pursue excellence in innovation and technology, Mr LAM urged the Administration to seriously consider if similar taxation policy, or other additional measures, could be introduced to support R&D initiatives of local enterprises and young entrepreneurs.

15. CIT said that the Administration had taken note of the industry's request for tax concession on R&D investment. As taxation policy was not under the purview of ITC, she would convey members' views to the Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau for consideration. Highlighting one of Hong Kong's competitive strengths in its simple tax regime, CIT said that the proposed additional tax deduction for R&D investment would need to be

considered prudently in light of its implications on the overall taxation policy. She assured members that the Administration had commenced a comprehensive review on the various funding support programmes under the ITF, in particular the SERAP and the incubation programmes operated by the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation which targeted at nurturing technology start-up companies and young entrepreneurs. The review would form the basis for exploring if further alignment of or enhancements to these initiatives could be made to strengthen support for innovation and upgrading of technology for local enterprises and young entrepreneurs.

16. Mr Jeffrey LAM further enquired whether the Administration would consider setting up a "Young Entrepreneur Park" to provide the necessary support, such as office accommodation and technical advice, for university graduates to enable them to continue with their R&D projects upon graduation and to facilitate commercialization of their research deliverables, which would in turn facilitate the upward mobility of young people. In reply, CIT said that the absence of national defense expenditure and the limited manufacturing base in Hong Kong had posed a structural limitation to the development of R&D in Hong Kong. Nevertheless, the Administration would strive to enhance the support for university graduates and young entrepreneurs to inspire their interest and assist them to pursue a career in innovation and technology.

17. Summing up, the Chairman called on the Administration to take note of members' concerns and to seek additional funding as and when necessary to avoid any disruption to the Scheme.

**V. Review of the patent system in Hong Kong**

(LC Paper No. CB(1)534/12-13(05) -- Administration's paper on review of the patent system in Hong Kong

LC Paper No. CB(1)534/12-13(06) -- Paper on the patent registration system in Hong Kong prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (updated background brief)



Presentation by the Administration

18. At the invitation of the Chairman, Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (SCED) briefed members on the way forward following a review of the patent system in Hong Kong as set out in the Administration's paper (LC Paper No. CB(1)534/12-13(05)).

Discussion

*Introducing an Original Grant Patent (OGP) system*

19. Mr Charles MOK supported the introduction of an OGP system and called on the Administration to take forward the implementation as soon as practicable, including public education to promote the OGP system. He enquired whether the Administration had made any estimates on the potential demand for the OGP system upon implementation.

20. SCED responded that while the Administration had evaluated the number of applications for standard patents under the current re-registration system, it would be difficult to estimate the number of OGP applications. He supplemented that public education to promote awareness of the OGP system would be conducted to dovetail with the implementation of the OGP system.

21. Mr WONG Kwok-hing welcomed the Administration's decision to introduce an OGP system. He said that the Government should explore closer cooperation with the Mainland on patent-related matters, such as using the State Intellectual Property Office (SIPO)'s database or entrusting substantive examination of patent applications to SIPO. While supporting the outsourcing of substantive examination of patent applications to other patent examination authorities in the short to medium term, he suggested that the Administration should enlist the help of the relevant Mainland authorities to develop in-house substantive examination capability in the long run. Mr Dennis KWOK said that Hong Kong should take the opportunity of introducing OGP to progressively develop Hong Kong's own substantive patent examination capability and build up local expertise in drafting and processing patent applications.

22. SCED responded that recourse to domestic substantive examination would not be viable at the initial stage, and some outsourcing arrangements were necessary. Citing Singapore as an example, he said that it had taken Singapore more than 17 years to start conducting its own substantive examination after adopting an OGP system in 1995. He added that setting up an OGP system with substantive examination capability would take a

substantial amount of time as it required, among other things, training up technical expertise, building up comprehensive databases and infrastructure, drafting procedures and manuals for examination, and setting up a review mechanism. Legislative amendments were also necessary in introducing an OGP system in Hong Kong. Depending on users' acceptance of the new regime and the extent of the positive outcome that OGP would bring about, the Administration would consider developing in-house substantive examination capability in incremental stages, focusing on some specific technological areas in which Hong Kong had acquired considerable expertise. The Administration would meanwhile identify the preferred outside patent office(s) that would undertake substantive examination and work out the appropriate outsourcing arrangements.

23. On cooperation with the Mainland, Director of Intellectual Property (DIP) said that under the current re-registration system, the number of applications for standard patents was about 13 000 a year, of which about 60% were based on a patent granted by the SIPO. The Administration had had initial exchanges with SIPO last year about the possibility of some outsourcing arrangements. DIP observed that SIPO might have concern over its capacity for conducting substantive examination, as the number of patent applications it received in 2010 amounted to over 390 000, bringing SIPO to the second place in terms of filing volume among patent authorities across the world.

24. Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok, Mr Jeffrey LAM and Mr Andrew LEUNG said that the Business and Professionals Alliance for Hong Kong supported the introduction of an OGP system. They were of the view that an OGP system tailor-designed to meet the specific local needs would facilitate the development of Hong Kong into an innovation and technology hub in the long run and promote the long-term economic development of Hong Kong. They urged the Administration to explore the possibilities of fostering mutual recognition of patents between Hong Kong and other jurisdictions, in particular, the Mainland.

25. SCED and DIP responded that the Administration would further explore international cooperation opportunities in facilitating local patentees to obtain patent protection in other jurisdictions. With the establishment of an OGP system in Hong Kong and enhanced credibility of the patent agency profession, Hong Kong would be in a better position to negotiate mutual facilitation of patent applications with the Mainland and other jurisdictions.

26. Referring to the problem of pirated goods in the Mainland, Mr CHUNG Kwok-pan asked how the Administration would protect the patent and intellectual property (IP) rights of Hong Kong enterprises in the Mainland. SCED responded that patent registration was territorial. Most countries, including the Mainland, ran their own patent offices to determine the grant of patents and to maintain autonomy of their patent systems. The Administration would continue to foster a close partnership between the IP-related authorities in the Mainland and Hong Kong so as to enhance mutual understanding and respect for the patent and IP systems in the two places.

27. Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok opined that it was well recognized that innovation and technology was an engine for sustained economic growth, and the industrial sector focusing on high value-added activities, such as research and development (R&D), design and innovation, technology transfer, etc, remained a key player in Hong Kong's economy. In his view, a robust IP system, with patent protection as a key component, was instrumental in promoting innovation and technology. Echoing Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok's view, Mr Andrew LEUNG enquired how the introduction of an OGP system could underpin the development of home-grown brands and promote IP trading in Hong Kong. Mr CHUNG Kwok-pan also enquired about Hong Kong's advantages in promoting itself as a regional IP trading hub.

28. In response, SCED advised that under a knowledge-based economy, IP rights were increasingly commercialized and traded around the world. A sound IP protection system was conducive to IP trading and would in turn help promote branding development and spur the development of innovation and technology as well as creative industries. Moreover, developing an OGP system might attract and encourage local and foreign enterprises to make R&D and related investments in Hong Kong. With overseas IP owners eagerly eyeing the Asian market, Hong Kong was well placed to develop into a regional IP trading hub providing professional services in licensing, franchising and registration in the IP fields by leveraging on its sound financial and legal systems, a low-tax regime and a pool of world-class business professionals.

29. Mr Andrew LEUNG commended the good work of the Advisory Committee on Review of the Patent System in Hong Kong (Advisory Committee) and said that the Administration should continue to work closely with the Advisory Committee to take forward the implementation of the OGP system. SCED responded that the Advisory Committee, comprising government officials and non-official members drawn from a wide cross section of the patent-related fields, including legal professionals, patent

practitioners, as well as members of the academic, R&D and industrial sectors, would continue to advise the Administration on how best to implement changes to the patent system. The Administration would work out a detailed implementation plan in consultation with the Advisory Committee on the introduction of an OGP system.

30. Mr WONG Ting-kwong said that the Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong welcomed the early introduction of an OGP system. Noting that an OGP system in Hong Kong would help stimulate the growth of patent agency business in Hong Kong, he enquired about the Administration's plan for human capital development to build up local expertise in this respect. Mr Dennis KWOK, Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok, Mr Jeffrey LAM, Mr Andrew LEUNG and Mr Martin LIAO shared the same concern and urged the Administration to step up efforts to nurture and attract talents and to broaden the career paths for local graduates with science, engineering and other technical background.

31. SCED responded that the introduction of an OGP system with substantive examination outsourced to other patent offices in the short to medium term was a modest approach that could help strengthen Hong Kong's IP infrastructure. An OGP system would help to accumulate expertise and experience, nurture Hong Kong's own human capital, especially in science and engineering disciplines that support certain industries or sectors, and encourage development of the patent agency business. One key factor to realize such a development was the supply of talents and expertise in various professional services, in particular IP practitioners. SCED further advised that some educational institutions in Hong Kong had started conducting courses relating to patent agency services. The introduction of an OGP system would provide a demand-driven incentive for more education institutions in Hong Kong to provide courses in this area to nurture the requisite human capital. The Administration would explore issues on patent-related training and development with the education sector and patent industry.

32. While supporting the introduction of an OGP system, Mr SIN Chung-kai was concerned that higher operation costs for the OGP system might translate into higher fees for users. Mr SIN, Mr Jeffrey LAM and Mr Martin LIAO enquired about the estimated registration fees for an OGP application as compared with the application for a standard patent under the current re-registration system, and whether the Administration would provide subsidy to the applicants. Mr SIN cautioned that public funds should be spent on more worthy causes than providing subsidy to patent applicants.

33. SCED replied that setting up an OGP system with in-house substantive examination capability would take a substantial amount of time and financial resources. The Advisory Committee recommended that whilst introducing an OGP system with substantive examination outsourced to other patent offices, the current re-registration system should be retained, thus offering users a choice of the two systems. It would be difficult to estimate the level of fees for an OGP application at the present stage as the amount of fees charged would depend on the patent-related services required. DIP supplemented that with more innovations and inventions being originated domestically, Hong Kong might be promoted as the place of first-filing of patent applications. An OGP system would allow local applicants to obtain patent protection in Hong Kong directly, without first going through another designated office. For those applicants who wanted to obtain patents in Hong Kong only, such as some start-up companies, this direct filing route was more efficient and user-friendly. Besides, applicants could communicate directly with the Patents Registry or local agents, doing away with the need to engage foreign patent agents for communicating with the designated office.

34. SCED further advised that in order to encourage enterprises and inventors to protect their technological research results and transfer their innovation results into assets, the Innovation and Technology Commission had been administering a Patent Applicant Grant which provided a maximum of 90% sponsorship for the application cost (subject to a cap of \$150,000) per application to locally incorporated companies and individual applicants for first time patent application in Hong Kong or overseas.

35. In response to Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok's enquiry about the target commencement date of the OGP system, SCED advised that the prospective commencement of the OGP system in 2016-2017 was a very rough timetable, subject to the detailed implementation plan to be prepared in consultation with the Advisory Committee and stakeholders including patent users and agents.

#### *Refining short-term patent system*

36. Mr Charles MOK pointed out that since substantive examination was not required in the current short-term patent system, there had been abuse cases of non-patentable inventions being registered and the making of groundless threats of infringement proceedings particularly in relation to patents which had not been examined. Mr MOK enquired how the short-term patent system would be refined to prevent such kind of abuse.

37. SCED and DIP responded that on the recommendation of the Advisory Committee, substantive examination would be made a pre-requisite to commencement of infringement proceedings. A short-term patentee, when making a threat of infringement proceedings, would be required to furnish the person to whom the threat was made the full particulars about the short-term patent in question, including all relevant supporting documentation, in particular the search report(s) and any amendment to the patent. Failure to comply with the above requirement would render the threat legally groundless, thus enabling the party aggrieved by the threat to seek a legal remedy.

38. In response to Mr WONG Kwok-hing's enquiry about the difference between the short-term patent system in Hong Kong and the utility model patent system in other jurisdictions, DIP advised that the two systems shared a number of similarities albeit under different nomenclature. Both systems supplemented the standard patent system by offering a fast and inexpensive means of protecting inventions with a limited commercial life span in the market. The term "short-term patent" was used by English-speaking jurisdictions, including Hong Kong, whereas the term "utility model patent" was used by non-English-speaking jurisdictions, including the Mainland. In the Mainland, "utility model" referred to new technical solutions proposed for the shape and structure of a product, or the combination thereof, which were fit for practical use. Short-term patents in Hong Kong protected inventions of both product and process, thus providing relatively wider protection coverage than a utility model patent system.

#### *Regulating the patent agency services*

39. Referring to some public views calling for early regulation of the provision of patent agency services to enhance the credibility of the patent agency profession and provide better protection for patent owners, Mr Dennis KWOK enquired about the Administration's policy stance in this regard. SCED responded that a considerable amount of time was required to build up the local patent agency profession as well as set up a regulatory body to administer an accreditation scheme and to uphold professional discipline. The Advisory Committee recommended and the Administration agreed that the ultimate goal should be to set up in the long run a full-fledged regulatory regime on patent agency services under which only qualified persons or firms might provide regulated patent-related services, and only qualified persons might use a particular professional title such as "patent agent" and "patent attorney". This long-term goal should be achieved in stages, upon the commencement of the OGP system, with suitable transitional arrangements put in place.

*Summing up*

40. The Chairman concluded that the Panel supported the introduction of an OGP system and the strategic directions recommended by the Advisory Committee on developing the patent system in Hong Kong. He called on the Administration to draw up the detailed implementation plan in consultation with the Advisory Committee and the relevant stakeholders, and to seek the necessary funding for implementation as soon as practicable.

**VI. Any other business**

41. The Chairman consulted members' views on the timing of the proposed duty visit to Taiwan. Members agreed to put on hold the proposal for the time being.

42. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 4:18 pm.