

香港司法機構
司法機構政務處



JUDICIARY ADMINISTRATION
JUDICIARY
HONG KONG

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22 July 2015

Clerk to the Establishment Subcommittee
Legislative Council Complex,
1 Legislative Council Road,
Central, Hong Kong
(Attn: Mr Jason KONG)

Dear Mr Kong,

**Establishment Subcommittee
Follow-up to meeting on 29 June 2015**

**Proposed Creation of a Supernumerary Administrative Officer Staff
Grade C in the Judiciary Administration of the Judiciary
(EC(2015-16)6)**

I refer to your letter of 8 July 2015 to the Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau, requesting the Judiciary Administration to provide supplementary information on the following –

- (a) details of the Information Technology Strategy Plan (“ITSP”), including the deliverables, tasks and timetables for various stages of ITSP, and expected service improvement to users; and
- (b) the plans for reviewing ITSP and related initiatives and reporting the results to the relevant Panel of the Legislative Council (“LegCo”) for consideration of necessary additional resources support.

This letter provides the requisite information.

Overview

2. With the funding support of the LegCo, the Judiciary created a new commitment in 2013 to take forward the ITSP to achieve the following objectives –

- (a) to replenish the existing Information Technology (“IT”) systems with the latest technologies to ensure sustainable operation in the long run;
- (b) to provide more effective and efficient services of a higher quality to all stakeholders in support of the administration of justice through process re-engineering with the use of IT;
- (c) to facilitate active case management throughout the entire litigation/adjudication and ancillary process in improving access to justice for the benefit of all stakeholders; and
- (d) to respond positively to the rising expectations from court users and the community.

Deliverables and Tasks

3. Under the ITSP, the Judiciary will develop an integrated court case management system to streamline and standardize court processes across different levels of court as appropriate and put in place a number of non-court systems to meet the operational requirements of the Judiciary. The specific key deliverables are as follows –

- (a) to implement an integrated court case management system to support the litigation processes of courts and tribunals by enabling appropriate data sharing, data driven workflow and support the use of electronic documents;
- (b) to standardize processes across different court levels and across non-court sections as appropriate;
- (c) to streamline operations through business process re-engineering by the use of IT and improved automation of work processes as appropriate;

- (d) to establish an integrated data architecture with centralized governance to support the operations of the Judiciary;
- (e) to enable and encourage electronic services for various types of transactions to be introduced in phases in many of the court processes in which court users interact with the Judiciary, including –
 - (i) launching a new webpage for court users and the public to obtain information from the Judiciary and to conduct electronic transactions;
 - (ii) allowing electronic submission of documents to the Judiciary as an option, such as case initiation documents for civil cases and charge sheets for criminal cases;
 - (iii) exploring the feasibility of accepting the use of various payment means, including electronic payment methods;
 - (iv) introducing electronic mode of listing as appropriate to support scheduling of case hearing right from the stage of making a request up to the ultimate fixing of hearing dates; and
 - (v) gradually expanding the scope of information and documents to be made available for electronic search.
- (f) to enable electronic court records in court proceedings and move towards a “less paper” environment; and
- (g) to enhance courtroom technologies with appropriate IT infrastructure, necessary equipment and communication network to support court hearing.

Timetable

Six-Year Action Plan

4. The Judiciary is implementing the ITSP in a few phases. The first phase of implementation (i.e. the Six-year Action Plan), expected to run up to around 2019 (assuming the progress is smooth), is further

broken down into the following two stages, each lasting for about three years –

- (a) the first stage focuses on building up the technical and infrastructure foundation components and implementing the integrated court management system in the District Court and the Summons Courts of the Magistrates' Courts; and
- (b) the second stage will mainly include rolling out the new system to the Court of Final Appeal, the High Court, the Competition Tribunal, the Small Claims Tribunal and the non-summons Courts of the Magistrates' Courts.

5. Not all components of the ITSP require legislative amendments. To facilitate court users, the Judiciary aims at rolling out as soon as possible ITSP components which do not require legislative changes, such as electronic submissions of skeleton arguments, use of electronic bundles and electronic listing of cases etc. The Judiciary aims to do so by late 2016. After that, subject to the actual progress of the legislative amendments, the Judiciary will endeavour to work towards the target of substantially completing the ITSP components for the first stage by 2017 and those for the second stage by 2019.

Beyond the Six-Year Action Plan

6. The Judiciary expects that the ITSP will then be implemented in the remaining courts and tribunals (including Family Court, Labour Tribunal, Obscene Article Tribunal and the Coroner's Court) as the second phase of implementation, after completion of the Six-year Action Plan above. The details for this final phase will very much depend on the progress of the two stages of the first phase and will be the subject of a separate submission for funding to the LegCo in due course.

Service Improvements

7. It is anticipated that the implementation of the ITSP will bring about the following service improvements –

- (a) the Judiciary's services will be more accessible, hence improving the access to justice;

- (b) the standardized data architecture and streamlined work process across the Judiciary will bring about a greater degree of workflow automation, leading to a reduction in manual work in many operational and support functions;
- (c) Judiciary's internal operational efficiency will be improved by using IT to facilitate staff collaboration and information sharing across different court levels and sections as staff carry out their duties;
- (d) the security of data in information systems will be more effectively supported by the setting up of a centralized and integrated data architecture, the formulation and enforcement of data policies and procedures and the provision of data encryption technologies and backup facilities;
- (e) the Judiciary will be equipped with appropriate IT facilities to provide more effective, efficient and environmental friendly services to all stakeholders, and to respond responsibly to the rising expectation of users and the community;
- (f) case management and resource management will be improved by using automatic alerts, integrated workflows, and improved case monitoring mechanisms;
- (g) the capability to handle increasingly-complex cases, with growing volumes of documents and data, will be improved;
- (h) court information will be transmitted and stored more securely;
and
- (i) communications with external stakeholders such as the legal profession, institutional and individual court users, etc., will be enhanced.

Review of ITSP for Resource Considerations

8. While the first phase of the ITSP implementation is expected to take six years or so, for prudence's sake, the Judiciary has now only proposed to create a supernumerary Administrative Officer Staff Grade C ("AOSGC") post for three years first. By the end of this period, it is

expected that the legislative process for the amendments needed for the implementation of the first stage may have been completed, while those amendments needed for the second stage may be at a fairly advanced stage.

9. The Judiciary will review the overall situation well before the expiry of the proposed AOSGC post to see if the post needs to be extended, having regard to the outstanding legislative work for the second stage of the ITSP and other legislative work for the Development Office as a whole. If extension is needed, the relevant Panel (i.e. the Panel on Administration of Justice and Legal Services) will be consulted.

10. Besides, the Judiciary will be reporting progress of the ITSP and consulting the relevant Panel at appropriate junctures as necessary, e.g. consultation with the Panel on the proposed legislative changes.

Yours sincerely,



(Ms Wendy Cheung)
for Judiciary Administrator

c.c. Deputy Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury) 1