

立法會
Legislative Council

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Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting

Minutes of meeting
on Monday, 8 May 2017, at 2:30 pm
in Conference Room 3 of the Legislative Council Complex

Members present : Dr Hon Elizabeth QUAT, JP (Chairman)
Hon James TO Kun-sun
Hon Jeffrey LAM Kin-fung, GBS, JP
Hon WONG Ting-kwong, SBS, JP
Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun, SBS, JP
Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-ye, GBS, JP
Hon Paul TSE Wai-chun, JP
Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung
Hon Claudia MO
Hon MA Fung-kwok, SBS, JP
Hon CHAN Chi-chuen
Hon Martin LIAO Cheung-kong, SBS, JP
Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan, JP
Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok, SBS, MH, JP
Hon Alvin YEUNG
Hon CHU Hoi-dick
Hon YUNG Hoi-yan
Hon CHAN Chun-ying
Hon HUI Chi-fung
Hon Nathan LAW Kwun-chung

Members absent : Hon Charles Peter MOK, JP (Deputy Chairman)
Hon Steven HO Chun-yin, BBS
Hon CHAN Han-pan, JP
Hon CHUNG Kwok-pan

Public officers attending : Agenda item III

Commerce and Economic Development Bureau

Ms Julina CHAN, JP
Deputy Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (Communications and Creative Industries)

Mr Patrick LEE
Principal Assistant Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (Communications and Creative Industries) B

Office of the Communications Authority

Mr Chaucer LEUNG
Deputy Director-General of Communications (Telecommunications)

Mr C K CHENG
Assistant Director (Operations)

Agenda item IV

Innovation and Technology Bureau

Dr David CHUNG, JP
Under Secretary for Innovation and Technology

Ir Allen YEUNG, JP
Government Chief Information Officer

Mr Victor LAM, JP
Deputy Government Chief Information Officer (Infrastructure and Operations)

Mr Ricky CHONG
Principal Assistant Secretary for Innovation and
Technology

Miss Donna CHAN
Assistant Government Chief Information Officer
(Governance and Resources)

Clerk in attendance : Mr Daniel SIN
Chief Council Secretary (4)3

Staff in attendance : Mr Ambrose LEUNG
Senior Council Secretary (4)3

Ms Peggy CHUNG
Council Secretary (4)3

Miss Mandy LAM
Legislative Assistant (4)3

Action

The Chairman invited Members to join the visit to Cyberport to be held on 16 May 2017.

(Post meeting note: The Chairman, Deputy Chairman and 3 members of Panel joined the visit on 16 May 2017.)

I. Information paper(s) issued since the last meeting

(LC Paper No. CB(4)915/16-17(01) -- Administration's written response dated 19 April 2017 on issue relating to the mobile television licences and service delivery (Chinese version only)

LC Paper No. CB(4)931/16-17(01) -- Administration's letter to the Chairman and the press release on application by TVB Network Vision Limited for termination of domestic pay television programme service licence)

2. Members noted that the above paper(s) had been issued for the Panel's information.

II. Date of next meeting and items for discussion

(LC Paper No. CB(4)950/16-17(01) -- List of outstanding items for discussion

LC Paper No. CB(4)950/16-17(02) -- List of follow-up actions)

Regular meeting on 12 June 2017

3. Members noted that the next regular Panel meeting would be held on Monday, 12 June 2017 at 2:30 pm to discuss the following items:

(a) Review of Broadcasting Ordinance (Cap. 562) and Telecommunications Ordinance (Cap. 106); and

(b) Progress report on Innovation and Technology Fund for Better Living and Digital Inclusion.

4. The Chairman said that members of Panel on Commerce and Industry will be invited to attend discussion on item (b).

III. Implementation of the spectrum utilization fee charging scheme for spectrum assigned administratively

(LC Paper No. CB(4)950/16-17(03) -- Administration's paper on implementation of the spectrum utilization fee charging scheme for spectrum assigned administratively

LC Paper No. CB(4)968/16-17(01) -- Administration's paper on
(tabled at the meeting and implementation of the
subsequently issued via e-mail on spectrum utilization fee
8 May 2017) charging scheme for
spectrum assigned
administratively (power-
point presentation
materials) (Chinese version
only))

Presentation by the Administration

5. At the invitation of the Chairman, Deputy Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (Communications and Creative Industries) ("DS(CCI)") briefed members on the implementation of the spectrum utilization fee ("SUF") charging scheme for spectrum assigned administratively. Principal Assistant Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (Communications and Creative Industries) B and Assistant Director (Operations) gave a power-point presentation on the subject. Details of the presentation were set out in the Administration's papers (LC Paper Nos. CB(4)950/16-17(03) and CB(4)968/16-17(01)).

Discussion

6. Mr MA Fung-kwok supported the Administration's proposed implementation of SUF Charging Scheme for spectrum assigned administratively ("the Charging Scheme") in principle, but he also expressed concerns about how the Charging Scheme might affect services to the public.

7. Mr MA Fung-kwok enquired about the current occupancy rates of the eight designated frequency bands that should be subject to payment of SUF. He also asked whether any of the designated bands might not be subject to SUF if it became non-congested and whether other frequency bands might fall within the Charging Scheme if they became congested in future. DS(CCI) replied that the designated frequency bands that were subject to payment of SUF would be reviewed every five years following the implementation of the Charging Scheme, and might be subject to adjustments according to the occupancy rates at that time.

8. Deputy Director-General of Communications (Telecommunications) ("DDG(T)") said that the occupancy rate of the eight frequency bands concerned was over 75% in 2011. Following the expiry of the Asia Television Limited's

("ATV") domestic free TV programme service licence in 2016, the Communications Authority ("CA") had withdrawn all frequencies assigned to ATV accordingly and, as a result, the occupancy rates of two of the frequency bands had dropped below 75%. The current occupancy rates of these eight frequency bands ranged from 67% to 100%. The Office of the Communications Authority would examine the situation when finalizing the legislative amendment for the Charging Scheme in mid-2017.

9. Mr MA Fung-kwok noted that some electronic media did not agree with the Administration's proposal to impose SUF for the use of spectrums for electronic news gathering and outside broadcasting purposes, but their views were not accepted by the Administration. Mr MA enquired how the utilization of the frequency spectrum by electronic news gathering and outside broadcasting would vary following the withdrawal of ATV from TV broadcasting services and the emergence of ViuTV and the introduction of another new TV operator in future. He also asked what alternative means were available if current spectrum users found the level of SUF too high and decided not to use them.

10. DDG(T) explained that the Charging Scheme would apply to electronic media for electronic news gathering and outside broadcasting activities because there were alternative means for such transmission. For example, electronic media might make use of public mobile telecommunications services for transmission of their video signals taken on site. DDG(T) supplemented that, in determining whether a frequency band was congested, the Administration would look at the occupancy rate rather than the actual utilization of a spectrum.

11. Mr MA Fung-kwok asked how the Administration monitored the utilization of an assigned spectrum and whether the utilization could be boosted through share use of the spectrum. DDG(T) explained that some of the assigned spectrum were already shared among users if the transmissions through the spectrum would not cause interference with each other. The aim of the Charging Scheme was to encourage spectrum users to switch to an alternative means and hence alleviate congestion in the frequency bands.

12. The Chairman queried how the introduction of the Charging Scheme would lead to more efficient use of the spectrum and whether the charging of SUF would impose heavy burden on spectrum users. She expressed concern that if the amount of SUF payable was small, users might not have the incentives to optimize the use of spectrum or to return the excess spectrum to the Administration for reassignment. On the other hand, if the level of SUF charged was high, the additional cost might pass on to consumers.

13. DS(CCI) said that the objective of implementing the Charging Scheme was to encourage spectrum users to make more efficient use of spectrum or leave the congested frequency bands by switching to alternative technologies and return excess spectrum to CA which might subsequently assign the spectrum to other users. SUF would accordingly be applicable to the spectrum assigned administratively in the designated frequency bands that were considered congested. In response to members' enquiry, DS(CCI) added that the median amount of SUF payable by affected users, who mainly used the spectrum for telecommunications services, TV broadcasting or satellite uplink purposes, would be around \$300,000 per year.

14. DDG(T) supplemented the total amount of SUF the Government might receive each year was estimated to be around \$20 million, and the Charging Scheme was estimated to cover around 20 users. When asked if the charging of SUF would have impact on end-users, DS(CCI) said that the additional operating cost incurred by the implementation of the Charging Scheme was expected to be small compared with the total operating cost incurred by users. Besides, there would be a five-year transition period before the Charging Scheme was fully implemented. The impact of the Charging Scheme on end-users would likely be small.

15. The Chairman queried if the Charging Scheme would be effective in encouraging spectrum users to return excess spectrum to the CA given the level of SUF was low compared with their operating cost. Mr MA Fung-kwok shared the Chairman's views. DDG(T) said that it would be a commercial decision for spectrum users whether or not they would opt for not paying SUF by using spectrum of non-congested frequency bands, making use of optical fibre or other network services available in the market, having taking into account factors such as cost and reliability.

16. Mr MA Fung-kwok commented that the Charging Scheme was unlikely to achieve the effects as the Administration envisaged. He asked if the Administration would consider introducing a progressive charging method. DDG(T) said that the Administration sought to encourage spectrum users to switch to alternative means or use spectrum in non-congested frequency bands, while avoiding imposing too heavy a level of SUF at the launch of the Charging Scheme. DS(CCI) added that the Administration would monitor the effect of the Charging Scheme and would consider whether and how the Charging Scheme should be improved in the next review.

IV. E-Government services

- (LC Paper No. CB(4)950/16-17(04) -- Administration's paper on E-Government services
- LC Paper No. CB(4)950/16-17(05) -- Paper on e-Government development prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (Updated background brief))

Presentation by the Administration

17. At the invitation of the Chairman, Under Secretary for Innovation and Technology ("US for IT") briefed members on the measures and initiatives to enhance e-Government services to support government bureaux/departments ("B/Ds") in achieving their policy objectives through wider and better adoption of information technology. Details of the briefing were set out in the paper provided by Administration (LC Paper No. CB(4) 950/16-17(04)).

Discussion

Online submission of government forms

18. Mr CHAN Chi-chuen asked what role the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer ("OGCIO") played vis-à-vis respective departments in digitizing the process of online submission of government forms, and when could all government forms be submitted online. Mr CHAN Chi-chuen noted that at present, more than 1 300 government forms could be submitted electronically. He asked what the portion of these types of forms was among all government forms.

19. Deputy Government Chief Information Officer (Infrastructure and Operations) ("DGCIO") said that there were altogether 1 800 types of government forms which were amenable to electronic submission and about 14 million of these forms were received each year. Currently, 1 300 types of form could be submitted electronically. The Administration would continue to make more electronic forms available for public use. However, some forms might not be digitized because they might either need to be submitted in person or it might not be cost effective due to low transaction volume.

20. Government Chief Information Officer ("GCIO") supplemented that respective departments were primarily responsible for digitizing the government

forms under their purview. OGCIIO would share technology updates through promotion and training, as well as provide technical support, professional advice and computer resources through common platforms (such as the government cloud).

21. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung asked how many of each type of the government forms were filed electronically and what incentives were available to encourage people to submit government forms online. DGCIIO said that different types of government forms had different rates of submission by electronic means. More than half of the forms submitted by students were through electronic means while about 20% of tax returns were submitted online. As regards incentives, DGCIIO said that tax payers submitting tax returns online were allowed extension of the deadline by one month. In response to an enquiry from Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung, DGCIIO said that with further promotion and public education, more government forms were expected to be submitted by electronic means.

Use of big data analytics by departments

22. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung asked how the use of electronic forms would facilitate the use of big data analytics by departments in improving services. GCIIO said that the Administration would introduce a platform to facilitate the adoption of big data analytics by departments. DGCIIO added that OGCIIO was collaborating with different departments, such as the Hong Kong Observatory and the Transport Department, to apply big data analytics to examine how weather or rainfall would affect the traffic situation.

23. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung suggested that the Administration should consider applying big data analytics to develop contingency measures that should be introduced in the event of suspension of train services along MTR routes. US for IT said that there were regular dialogues between the Administration and MTRC on the matter.

Opening up of public sector information

24. Mr CHAN Chun-ying noted that the Government's "data.gov.hk" portal disseminated close to 7 000 datasets of government information in 18 categories. He asked how far the Administration was from full dissemination of all available datasets. GCIIO said that while the Administration had not taken stock of how many datasets of public sector information ("PSI") that could be open up, the Administration would encourage various sectors to develop innovative applications using the open datasets.

25. Mr CHAN Chun-ying asked how many types of government bills and fees there were and whether the Administration had set a target of when all these government bills and fees could be paid through electronic and mobile payment services. DGCIO said that OGCIO had worked out mobile payment technology options which supported smartphone e-wallet, thereby allowing relevant B/Ds to adopt these options shortly having regard to their business needs to further facilitate public use of e-government services.

26. Mr CHAN Chun-ying referred to a recent incident where government information was leaked from the computer of a government's contractor of a major infrastructure project due to hacker's attack. He asked what measures the Administration would introduce to ensure security and protection of Government information in future. DGCIO said that OGCIO had conducted penetration test on government's computer systems to ensure security and protection of Government information. As regards the case in question, DGCIO said that the information was leaked from a contractor's computer, which was not subject to the same level of protection as other Government information technology systems. No personal data or Government confidential information was lost. DGCIO added that the department concerned would follow up with contractors to remind them of the need to exercise care to ensure safe custody of Government information.

27. Mr MA Fung-kwok commented that the 7 000 datasets of public sector information that had been disseminated through the Government's "data.gov.hk" were not "user-friendly" and some were in a format that the relevant data could not readily be extracted for other research purposes or analyses. He suggested that the Administration should examine how the situation should be improved.

28. GCIO said that to facilitate the public to access the required information from the datasets, the "data.gov.hk" portal began to provide various Application Programming Interfaces ("APIs") since the end of 2016. Around 1 000 APIs would be available to cater for different applications by mid-2017.

29. Mr Alvin YEUNG enquired about the policy objective and progress of opening up public sector information. He was also concerned about the difficulties encountered by the Administration. GCIO said that the Administration aimed at releasing useful information to the community in an orderly manner. He added that the identification of public sector information and making them available to the relevant sectors or industries was an interactive process. OGCIO would collect suggestions and requests from the community, and explore with the departments concerned for the release of requisite data. Meanwhile, the Administration would have to ensure adequate protection of personal information.

30. In response to a comment from the Chairman, GCIO said that the consultancy on smart city development would address the issue of opening up of public sector information and would put forward recommendations. The Administration would invite the views of the Panel on the consultancy's recommendations in due course.

Online submission of government forms

31. Mr MA Fung-kwok commented that there should be certain common fields (such as age, address, family status) among the 1 300 government forms that had been digitized. Mr MA suggested that the Administration should create a common database that collect these data and which could be shared and used by relevant departments. This would save time and efforts of users when completing and submitting different forms online.

32. GCIO said that when collecting data from members of the public, the Administration needed to state the purposes for collecting personal information and how the information was to be used. Explicit consent had been sought from individuals for collection and use of such information. If any of the information collected was to be shared with other departments, consent would have to be sought afresh. OGCIO would liaise with relevant department on how to take forward Mr MA Fung-kwok's suggestion, subject to adherence to relevant privacy legislation.

Electronic and mobile payment services

33. Mr MA Fung-kwok said that many people were reluctant to use electronic and mobile payment services to settle government bills and fees because they were worried about the security and privacy of personal information that would be transmitted electronically. The Administration would have to assure the public that using electronic and mobile payment services were secure. GCIO responded that the electronic and mobile payment services were operated by third party service providers. The Administration would explore whether the use of e-Cert and e-ID in these payment services would enhance data security.

Format of electronic documents issued by the Administration

34. Mr Nathan LAW commented that he had received soft copies of documents from the Administration but they were not in a format that allowed computer search of words. He asked if the Administration had issued guidelines

requiring departments to distribute computer searchable documents when delivering softcopies.

35. DGCIO said the OGCIO had issued guidelines to B/Ds that documents made available for public access should be in a machine-readable format that was recognizable by screen-readers used by visually-impaired people. Such documents would be computer-searchable. DGCIO said OGCIO would remind B/Ds of the guidelines as appropriate.

Smart city development

36. Mr Nathan LAW asked about the timetable for completing the consultancy study on smart city and what major directions of development the consultancy study might drive at. Mr LAW expressed concern that even if the consultancy study had made sensible recommendations, OGCIO might not have the power to ensure B/Ds to implement such recommendations.

37. GCIO said that the consultancy report was expected to complete in end June/early July. The recommendations might include internal coordination mechanism among B/Ds in the implementation of the recommendations. The Administration would report the findings and recommendations of the consultancy study at the Panel meeting in July if the report could be finalized in time.

Implementation of e-Government services

38. The Chairman commented that members were generally concerned about the slow progress in the implementation of e-Government services. She said that OGCIO was rather passive and often left it to the respective B/Ds to adopt OGCIO's advice and the recommended technology solutions in improving departmental operations. However, by the time the B/Ds implemented the solutions, the technology might have been outdated. The Chairman asked how OGCIO would encourage the provision of e-Government services among B/Ds.

39. US for IT said that OGCIO had been encouraging B/Ds to take forward IT development. OGCIO would provide a central platform that facilitate share use of resources, as well as providing training and promoting sharing of knowledge, skills, experience and best practice so as to expedite adoption of new technologies to improve public service.

40. In response to the Chairman's enquiries, DGCIO said that most B/Ds would adopt cloud technologies in their new services. OGCIO would engage a

consultant this year to review the usage of various government cloud platforms and make proposals on building the next generation of government cloud infrastructure in accordance with technological advancement and business needs. DGCIO added that OGCIO would also explore measures for more timely adoption of advanced technologies and relevant standards in information systems developed by B/Ds.

41. The Chairman asked the progress in introducing "single sign-up" so that a person could register his or her information once and could access to all e-Government services. DGCIO said that any member of the public could sign-up to the "MyGovHK" and could then enjoy one-stop access to multiple government online services through the "MyGovHK" account. GCIO added that to allow the personal information to be shared across B/Ds, consent would have to be sought from the account holders. In response to the Chairman, GCIO said that further details would be given in the "Smart Government" chapter of the consultancy study on smart city development.

42. Mr CHAN Chun-ying observed that the development cost of mobile apps launched by the Transport Department was rather high, and yet they were not amongst the most popular government apps. He asked how the Administration would improve the situation. DGCIO said that B/Ds were required to submit post-implementation departmental returns to OGCIO on the usage rate, updates and enhancements made to the apps to improve public services. DGCIO added that in the case of the Transport Department, public sector information had been released and there were third party apps that made use of such information. That might explain the lower than expected download or usage rates of Transport Department's own mobile apps.

43. Mr HUI Che-fung asked how different B/Ds made use of Facebook pages and blogs to improve communication with the public and how much resources were put into maintaining the media. GCIO said that it would be up to individual B/Ds to determine how much resources and staffing should be put into maintaining and updating their Facebook pages and blogs. OGCIO would, however, provide technical support, including security advice to safeguard against hacking or other cyber attacks.

V. Any other business

44. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 4:17 pm.

Council Business Division 4
Legislative Council Secretariat
6 July 2017