

香港特別行政區政府
政府資訊科技總監辦公室



OFFICE OF THE
GOVERNMENT CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER
THE GOVERNMENT OF THE HONG KONG SPECIAL
ADMINISTRATIVE REGION

1 June 2020

By e-mail

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Mr Anthony Chu
Panel Clerk
Public Accounts Committee
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Road
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Mr Chu,

**Public Accounts Committee
Consideration of Chapter 4 of the Director of Audit's Report No. 74
Government's efforts in implementing electronic recordkeeping system**

I refer to your letter dated 22 May 2020. As requested by the Committee, information regarding Questions 1 to 8 in the Appendix of your letter, we have compiled a detailed response at **Annex** for Members' reference.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Daniel', written over a light blue horizontal line.

(Daniel Cheung)

for Government Chief Information Officer

Encl.

c.c.

Secretary for Innovation and Technology
Director of Administration
Commissioner for Efficiency
Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development
Director of Marine
Secretary for Financial Services & the Treasury
Director of Audit

(Attn: Ms Eva YAM)
(Attn: Mr Bobby CHENG)
(Attn: Mr Simon LAM)
(Attn: Ms Deanie YIP)
(Attn: Ms Lisa CHIU)
(Attn: Mr Mike CHENG)
(Attn: Mr Edmond CHAN)

**Public Accounts Committee
Consideration of Chapter 4 of the Director of Audit’s Report No. 74
Government’s Efforts in Implementing Electronic Recordkeeping System
Questions and Requested Information**

Questions responded by the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer

| | Question and Requested Information | Response |
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| | Part 2: Planning for the Service-Wide Implementation of Electronic Recordkeeping System | |
| 1 | <p>The Director of Audit’s Report No. 57, published in October 2011, reviewed the records management work of the Government Records Service (GRS). Part 5 of the Report examined the development of an electronic recordkeeping system (ERKS), in which Audit identified a number of issues and put forward recommendations to address them. However, the issues identified in 2011 were again found in this round of Audit review, e.g. records management standards, confidential records, slow progress in the planning and development of preservation of electronic records:</p> <p>(a) According to paragraph 2.2, the full implementation of ERKS in all B/Ds is targeted to be completed by end-2025. In the light of current implementation progress, the full implementation of ERKS may not be completed as scheduled. What specific support will be provided to assist B/Ds in implementing ERKS?</p> | <p>The Policy Address Supplement published in October 2019 announced that the Government decided to roll out ERKS to all government B/Ds by end-2025. On 20 April 2020, we consulted the Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting of the Legislative Council and intend to submit a funding proposal to the Finance Committee in the current term. Prior to the funding approval, the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) will prepare for the infrastructure setup of the central</p> |

ERKS to be hosted on the Government's private cloud platform. GRS will also conduct briefings and trainings for B/Ds on government records management and the procedures for reviewing the records classification scheme.

(b) According to paragraph 2.7, implementation plans from bureaux/departments (B/Ds) were not submitted on time. Of the 75 B/Ds, 17 (23%) had not yet submitted their implementation plans as of 6 February 2020. It was mentioned in the response from the Government (paragraph 2.12a(iii)) that the Government would further liaise with the relevant bureaux to request submission of the outstanding ERKS implementation plans by 15 April 2020. Please advise if the above-mentioned 17 B/Ds have submitted their ERKS implementation plans; if not, what are the reasons for the delay; will there be any penalties for failure to submit the plans as scheduled; and

With OGCIO's follow-up actions, the ERKS implementation plans of all B/Ds were received in April 2020. OGCIO, GRS and the Efficiency Office (EffO) will arrange meetings with the individual B/Ds' implementation teams to further discuss the details of their ERKS implementation, including their timetables.

(c) In response to Audit's recommendations, the Government pointed out in paragraph 2.12(c)(i) that it has been taking measures to enhance senior management support on the service-wide implementation of ERKS and arranging briefings for senior management of B/Ds. However, it is stated in paragraph 2.10(b) that 59 (70%) of the 84 Electronic Information Management (EIM) coordinators had not

OGCIO, GRS and EffO have been taking measures to encourage the middle and senior management officers of B/Ds to adopt ERKS as soon as possible. As mentioned in paragraph 2.9 of the Report, the Government arranged briefings for senior management officers from time to time, including the Heads of Departments Meeting in August 2019 where the Government Chief Information Officer and the Director of Administration introduced the latest way forward on ERKS implementation. At the Stakeholders' Engagement Meeting in September 2019,

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| | <p>attended the briefing sessions in person. This revealed that senior management did not attach importance to ERKS. Will the Government advise this Committee on the attendance records of the briefings since July 2019 and whether there are any concrete measures to enlist the support of senior management?</p> | <p>OGCIO also introduced the work arrangements of the related system to B/Ds' senior / directorate officers.</p> <p>OGCIO, GRS and Effo have conducted over 20 briefings-cum-meetings from July 2019 to May 2020, including some meetings specially arranged for individual B/Ds. A total of over 5 000 officers from all B/Ds attended the briefings-cum-meetings, including more than 150 directorate officers.</p> |
| 2 | <p>According to paragraph 2.15, a number of B/Ds still do not have dedicated IT systems to manage their human resources processes and need to keep personnel records on paper files.</p> <p>(a) According to paragraph 2.15(b), at present, not all B/Ds had implemented ERKS. If an officer was transferred between B/Ds with and without ERKS implemented, the officer's personnel records would have to be printed out from ERKS as paper records for use by B/Ds without ERKS, or the personnel records in paper form would have to be scanned into the receiving B/D's ERKS. This arrangement is time-consuming and inefficient. Please explain why some B/Ds cannot use ERKS for managing personnel records; and</p> <p>(b) According to paragraph 2.16, upon Audit's enquiry, OGCIO said that the Government Human Resources Management Services (GovHRMS) was a shared common service</p> | <p>B/Ds can choose to use ERKS to store personnel records, or implement their departmental human resources management services system. For B/Ds which have not implemented such systems, they still need to continue to use paper records in records exchange for transfer.</p> <p>Upon the service-wide implementation of ERKS, GRS will request all B/Ds to store personnel records in the system.</p> <p>Currently, B/Ds will consider adopting the GovHRMS developed by OGCIO according to their operational needs and HRM initiatives implemented.</p> |

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| | <p>provided by OGCIO for adoption by B/Ds on a voluntary basis. While the Government intends to implement ERKS on a service-wide scale, please advise why a voluntary approach in human resources management (HRM) is still adopted? If some B/Ds do not adopt GovHRMS, it may give rise to situations that the system and records in one B/D are incompatible with those in other B/Ds, thereby causing confusion. How will the Government do with this? What is the Government's plan on full implementation of GovHRMS?</p> | <p>In the long run, OGCIO will proactively promote the adoption of GovHRMS to B/Ds, and provide technical support to assist B/Ds in modifying individual functions to meet the needs of their personnel management work.</p> |
| 3 | <p>According to paragraphs 2.17 and 2.18, remote access to records at confidential level is not supported by ERKS being used by the 11 B/Ds under the pilot programme. A user can only retrieve confidential records in ERKS when connected to government network in government offices. This arrangement is different from the government e-mail system, which supports remote access to confidential e-mails. As the epidemic may last for some time, when will the Government consult the Security Bureau (SB) on remote access to confidential records so that the work from home arrangement can be put into full implementation when necessary to reduce the risk of the novel coronavirus spreading in the community?</p> | <p>OGCIO is discussing with the Security Bureau the security design requirements of ERKS, including the introduction of security measures required for remote access to confidential records. Relevant design and technical requirements will be incorporated in the tender documents.</p> |

Part 3: Implementation of Electronic Recordkeeping System Pilot Programme

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| 4 | <p>According to Note 38 in paragraph 3.4, OGCIO obtained funding for two projects concerning the implementation for the three base systems while the participating B/Ds obtained funding for the deployment services. The project vote of GovCloud (funding approved by the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council in 2012) covered the hardware and support service as well as the software licence costs. Please advise this Committee on the following:</p> <p>(a) What is the number of B/Ds currently using GovCloud platform?</p> <p>(b) Will the GovCloud platform be used by all B/Ds?</p> <p>(c) Why didn't some B/Ds use the GovCloud platform?</p> | <p>Currently, eight pilot B/Ds adopting ERKS (viz. GRS, Communications and Creative Industries Branch (CCIB) of the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau (CEDB), Administration Wing, Intellectual Property Department (IPD), OGCIO, Architectural Services Department (ArchSD), Marine Department (MD) and Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD)) are using GovCloud to host their ERKSs. The remaining three B/Ds (viz. EffO, Drainage Services Department (DSD) and Rating and Valuation Department (RVD)), which implemented their pilot ERKSs from 2009 to 2012 respectively, are not using the GovCloud platform which was launched in December 2013.</p> <p>With the service-wide implementation of ERKS, the remaining 75 B/Ds will use the Government's private cloud to implement ERKS. It is expected that the above-mentioned three pilot B/Ds (viz. EffO, DSD and RVD) will consider migrating their ERKSs from their departmental platforms to the GovCloud</p> |
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| | <p>(d) What is the annual maintenance cost for the GovCloud platform?</p> <p>(e) Has OGCIO developed security measures and departmental guidelines on using the GovCloud platform? If yes, please provide the relevant measures and guidelines.</p> | <p>platform in the coming few years taking into account the technical feasibility and cost-effectiveness.</p> <p>Upon the service-wide implementation of the central ERKS, the annual estimated system maintenance costs of the GovCloud platform will be about \$192 million.</p> <p>All information technology (IT) systems (including the GovCloud platform and the systems and e-Government services running on the platform) of B/Ds have to comply with the Government IT Security Policy and Guidelines formulated by OGCIO to ensure information security. The relevant policies and guidelines are available for public reference at the following link (https://www.ogcio.gov.hk/en/our_work/information_cyber_security/government/).</p> |
| 5 | <p>According to paragraph 3.10, there were delays in 8 out of the 11 projects under the ERKS pilot programme. Among the 5 early adopters, CCIB of CEDB recorded the longest delay (18 months). In March 2020, CCIB of CEDB replied to Audit that the original ERKS implementation plan was unrealistic because of unexpected technical and operational issues. The time spent was unavoidable and should not be considered as a delay.</p> <p>(a) As there were delays in 8 B/Ds, can the Government sum up the reasons for the delay and come up with improvement measures so that the full implementation of ERKS can be delivered more smoothly in future; and</p> | <p>Projects were delayed because of poor performance of individual contractors on the one hand, as well as the relative complexity of system customisation and integration works and the longer-than-expected time required for implementation on the other hand.</p> |

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| | <p>(b) Regarding the remaining 3 B/Ds with ERKS delivered as scheduled, has the Government reviewed the practices adopted by the B/Ds during the pilot stage to serve as references for extending the pilot programme in future?</p> | <p>With reference to the pilot B/Ds' experiences, OGCIO will adopt a "common service platform" approach to conduct standardised tendering and development for the new central ERKS to ensure the stringent requirements on the overall system capabilities and project management and to expedite B/Ds' system implementation timetable.</p> |
| 6 | <p>According to paragraph 3.11 to paragraph 3.13, the delays in the implementation of ERKS common base system for MD and ArchSD and in the system live-run for MD were 39 months and 19 months respectively. Due to many system errors reported repeatedly, the longest time in fixing the errors identified in critical test incident reports was 518.5 days.</p> <p>(a) According to paragraph 3.16 and paragraph 3.17, Audit revealed that there were inadequacies in project monitoring from OGCIO and MD. Meetings of Project Steering Committee (PSC) and Project Assurance Team (PAT) were not conducted regularly to follow up with Contractor B and to oversee the performance of Contractor B. Regarding the undesirable delay encountered in OGCIO's two-tier project governance structure and MD's three-tier project governance structure at present, will the Government consider re-organising the project governance structures? If not, what are the reasons?</p> | <p>Under the current project governance structure, OGCIO and MD are required to submit progress reports on a monthly basis to PSC and PAT, which will arrange meetings when necessary. OGCIO and MD have been closely monitoring Contractor B's progress. The project is now on track and is expected to be completed in June 2021.</p> |

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| | <p>(b) What are the respective roles, power and responsibilities of OGCIO and the project owners? Will the monitoring power of OGCIO be strengthened to oversee the implementation by B/Ds?</p> | <p>Of the pilot programmes of five B/Ds (viz. IPD, OGCIO, CEDD, ArchSD and MD), OGCIO is responsible for developing and providing support to the base system, and the participating B/Ds are responsible for providing their users with implementation services and local support. Currently, OGCIO is also responsible for the overall monitoring of contractors' performance. Apart from MD, four B/Ds have completed system implementation. It is expected that MD will complete all implementation work in June 2021 as scheduled.</p> |
| 7 | <p>According to paragraph 3.18, the ERKS pilot programme involved 13 projects. Of the 10 Post Implementation Departmental Returns (PIDRs), despite the issue of monthly reminders by OGCIO, 8 were submitted late or still outstanding for 1 month to 23 months. Apart from the reminders, will the OGCIO take other specific measures to urge B/Ds to complete the PIDRs in a timely manner? If no reasonable explanation was given by B/D for the late submission, will additional penalty be considered to be imposed on the B/D concerned?</p> | <p>When approving funding applications for IT projects, OGCIO will remind B/Ds via the approval notification of the timeframe for submitting PIDRs. For outstanding PIDRs, apart from issuing monthly reminders, OGCIO will urge the e-Business Coordinators of the B/Ds concerned to follow up on long overdue cases, requesting them to submit the PIDRs as soon as possible. B/Ds are required to properly account for the late submission of PIDRs. We will continue to closely monitor the situation and remind B/Ds to submit PIDRs in a timely manner.</p> |
| 8 | <p>According to paragraph 3.37, Audit selected four B/Ds under the ERKS pilot programme and two from the next-stage adopters for examining the records management functionalities and practices in ERKS environment.</p> <p>(a) According to paragraph 3.38(a), OGCIO failed to provide Audit with access rights to</p> | <p>The new central ERKS will incorporate the relevant design element to meet Audit's requirement.</p> |

ERKS. OGCIO had not taken this into account when designing the user profiles of its ERKS. To enhance public accountability, should requirement be included in the service-wide implementation of ERKS to provide read-only access rights to ERKS to meet Audit's requirement?

(b) According to paragraph 3.38(b), the issue of low usage of some users was generally observed in all four selected B/Ds. 306 (30%) of ERKS users in OGCIO, which promotes ERKS, were found not using ERKS for over one year. The response from the Government did not explain the reason for the low usage. Why didn't the four selected B/Ds use ERKS? Were the users with low usage senior management officers or other staff members?

(c) According to paragraph 3.38(c), the four selected B/Ds did not specify in their departmental guidelines the time limit for capturing a record into ERKS. For example, 44% of the records in OGCIO and 38% of those in CCIB of CEDB were captured into ERKS over one year after the emails were sent/received. Since the Audit review, how many records in these B/Ds have not yet been captured? When will the capturing be completed?

As far as OGCIO is concerned, those ERKS users who were found not using ERKS for over a year involve staff members of different ranks. Their low usage of ERKS may be attributed to the internal operation and division of responsibilities of their respective sections. For example, some departmental officers may change the designated staff members for filing and retrieval work or the filing arrangements. OGCIO will follow up these cases and strengthen management in this respect when implementing the new ERKS.

OGCIO does not have the statistics on the capturing of records into ERKS by these B/Ds. In response to the Audit's recommendations, OGCIO has reviewed and updated the departmental guidelines on records management and reminded departmental staff that records should be captured into ERKS as soon as practicable. Under normal circumstances, records should be captured into ERKS within 30 days and under exceptional circumstances (such as when it takes longer time for the documents to be processed), records should be captured into ERKS within three months.