

For information

Legislative Council Home Affairs Panel

Year 2000 Compliance within the Home Affairs Bureau and in related departments and Non-Government Organisations

Purpose

This paper updates the Panel of the latest position of Year 2000 (Y2K) compliance within the Home Affairs Bureau (HAB), departments within its purview and related non-government organisations (NGOs) that provide essential services.

2. As mentioned in the first report, the organisations covered in this paper operate discrete systems that are not interlinked. Each has its own programme for achieving compliance. The Bureau's role is to monitor their progress towards that goal. It does not dictate strategies or direct departments and NGOs on the implementation of their programmes.

The Home Affairs Bureau

3. HAB has no mission critical¹ computer or embedded systems. Our building services, telephone and fax facilities are all compliant. We were ready with a contingency plan in July 1999.

Departments

4. The Home Affairs Department (HAD) is under HAB's direct purview. Additionally, HAB is 'housekeeping' bureau for the Information Services Department (ISD), though it does not direct that department's policies. Their Y2K progress is explained in paragraphs 5 to 6 below.

¹ Critical systems are those whose proper functioning is related to public health and safety, the provision of critical services to the public or the payment and revenue collection.

Home Affairs Department

5. The Department has only one critical embedded system - the telephone system at Tai Po Government Offices – which was found to be non-compliant. Rectification work was completed by the end of May 1999. The contingency plan will be finalised in these two weeks.

Information Services Department

6. Three of ISD's six mission critical systems were found to be non-compliant. These were the Government News Information System, the News Services Support System, and the Interactive Voice Response System. Remedial work was completed in late May 1999. The Department was ready with a contingency plan in July 1999.

NGOs providing essential services

7. None of the NGOs within HAB's purview provide services that are essential in the strictest sense of the term. That is, the public would suffer no adverse consequences in terms of life, health, or livelihood were they to cease operating. However, the Equal Opportunities Commission and the Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data perform functions that are essential to the promotion of equal opportunities and the right to privacy.² The following paragraphs describe their progress in regard to Y2K compliance.

Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC)

8. Two of the EOC's systems were found to be non-compliant. These were the telephone voice mail system and the LAN system. Rectification works on these systems were completed in February and May 1999 respectively. In case of problems during the rollover, EOC will switch to two respective contingency systems which are Y2K compliant.

² Other organisations under HAB's purview provide services that, while of value, cannot be considered essential. They are the Outward Bound School, the Academy for Performing Arts, the Arts Development Council, and the Sports Development Council.

Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data (PCO)

9. The PCO's computer system comprises two hardware components - the Office Automation System (OAS) and the telephone hotline system. Both systems were found to be Y2K non-compliant. Following an independent assessment report prepared by the Hong Kong Productivity Council (HKPC), all Y2K non-compliant hardware and software systems were upgraded or replaced in January 1999. The testing on PCO's Complaint Handling System - the most important system for the PCO's operations - was also completed in early June 1999. The contingency plan was ready in mid-August 1999.

**Home Affairs Bureau
1 November 1999**