

立法會
Legislative Council

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(These minutes have been
seen by the Administration)

Ref : CB1/PL/ITB/1

Legislative Council
Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting
Minutes of meeting
held on Monday, 13 March 2000, at 2:30 pm
in Conference Room A of the Legislative Council Building

Members present : Hon MA Fung-kwok (Chairman)
Hon SIN Chung-kai (Deputy Chairman)
Hon Kenneth TING Woo-shou, JP
Hon David CHU Yu-lin
Ir Dr Hon Raymond HO Chung-tai, JP
Hon Eric LI Ka-cheung, JP
Hon Fred LI Wah-ming, JP
Hon CHAN Kwok-keung
Hon Howard YOUNG, JP
Hon Timothy FOK Tsun-ting, SBS, JP

Members absent : Prof Hon NG Ching-fai
Hon James TO Kun-sun
Hon YEUNG Yiu-chung
Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP
Hon CHOY So-yuk
Hon LAW Chi-kwong, JP

Public officers attending : For Items III & IV
Mrs Jessie TING
Deputy Secretary for Information Technology and
Broadcasting (2)

For Item III

Mr K H LAU
Director of Information Technology Services
Department

Mr Victor LAM
Senior Systems Manager (E)2, Information
Technology Services Department

For Items IV & V

Mr K S WONG
Assistant Director of Telecommunications
(Operations), Office of the Telecommunications
Authority

For Item IV

Mr Frankie LAI
Chief Systems Manager (B)2, Information
Technology Services Department

Mr LEE Che Kit
Senior Electronics Engineer (Special Duty),
Electrical & Mechanical Services Department

For Item V

Ms Gracie FOO
Principal Assistant Secretary for Information
Technology and Broadcasting

Clerk in attendance : Miss Polly YEUNG
Chief Assistant Secretary (1)3

Staff in attendance : Mr Matthew LOO
Senior Assistant Secretary (1)7

I. Confirmation of minutes of meeting and matters arising
(LC Paper Nos. CB(1)1120/99-00 and 1140/99-00(01))

The minutes of the Panel meeting held on 14 February 2000 were confirmed.

2. Members noted the Panel's list of follow-up actions.

II. Date and items of discussions for next meeting

3. Members noted that the next regular meeting of the Panel was scheduled for 10 April 2000 at 2:30 pm. The Chairman invited members to inform the Clerk of any proposed items for discussion at the next meeting.

(Post-meeting note : With the concurrence of the Chairman, the following items were included in the agenda for the next regular meeting to be held on 10 April 2000:

- (a) Third generation mobile phone; and
- (b) Update on Film Development Fund)

III. Registration of Internet domain names (LC Paper No. 1125/99-00(01))

4. The Deputy Secretary for Information Technology and Broadcasting (2) (DS/ITB(2)) briefed members on the existing arrangements for the administration and assignment of Internet domain names in Hong Kong. In essence, the country-code top level domain for Hong Kong, i.e. ".hk" was registered by the University and Polytechnic Computer Centre in April 1990. The Hong Kong Network Information Centre (HKNIC) currently administered the assignment of domain names under ".hk" and the registration was on a first come, first served basis. HKNIC did not screen the domain names being applied for to determine whether they might infringe upon the rights of a third party. Under HKNIC's dispute resolution policy, the authority for resolving disputes on the use of ".hk" domain names rested with the courts in Hong Kong. A Task Force had been set up under the Information Infrastructure Advisory Committee (IIAC) in October 1999 to review the administration and assignment of Internet domain names and Internet protocol addresses in Hong Kong, with a view to recommending a framework of new arrangements which best suited Hong Kong's needs having regard to international developments. The Task Force would draw up a set of draft proposals on the future arrangements for public consultation in the first half of 2000.

5. Mr Kenneth TING was concerned about the suggestion to allow greater flexibility in the domain name registration system in Hong Kong. DS/ITB(2) advised that under the existing arrangements, HKNIC would only accept applications from entities registered with local public registries such as the Companies Registry. Each organization could register only one domain name and registration by individuals was not allowed. Given the rapid

development of the Internet and e-commerce locally, the Task Force would review the existing arrangements with a view to allowing greater flexibility in the registration of ".hk" domain names while at the same time minimizing the risk of cyber-squatting.

6. The Chairman enquired about the Administration's view, if any, on the subject of Chinese domain names and whether it would take steps to bring about a standard Chinese domain name system. In reply, DS/ITB(2) said that at present, as was the case for English domain names, the Administration was not directly involved in the provision of Chinese domain name registration services. She said that the development of a global standard for Chinese domain name would be contingent upon the acceptance of the global Internet community. She believed that a single international standard would emerge in the long run. Currently, there were two systems for Chinese domain name registration. The i-DNS.net International had partnered some companies in Hong Kong to offer registration service for Chinese domain names ending with ".公司", ".網絡" and ".組織". The China Internet Network Information Centre, on the other hand, had launched a test-bed project on the registration of Chinese domain names ending with the country-code top-level domain ".中國". The Task Force would monitor these new developments and their possible impacts on Hong Kong.

7. The Deputy Chairman was concerned about measures to guard against cyber-squatting as he noted that there was no provision in the Trade Marks Ordinance (Cap. 43) to prevent cyber-squatters from registering brand names and then re-sell the rights. While the authority for resolving disputes on the use of domain names still rested with the courts in Hong Kong, DS/ITB(2) advised that HKNIC had stipulated in the registration agreement issued to its domain name applicant that in case of disputes involving alleged infringement of the trademark or service mark of a third party, HKNIC would request the domain name owner to provide evidence of ownership of a trademark or service mark and would terminate his registration if he failed to provide such evidence. DS/ITB(2) also pointed out that under the relatively restrictive registration system for ".hk" domain names at present, the problem of cyber-squatting was not serious in Hong Kong. As views had been expressed that too much restriction would hinder the growth of the Internet industry, the Task Force would review the existing mechanism and consider how it could be improved.

8. In reply to the Chairman's enquiry about the work schedule of the Task Force, DS/ITB(2) advised that the Task Force would draw up proposals for public consultation in the first half of 2000. Taking account of the views received during the consultation exercise, the Task Force would submit its final recommendations to IIAC for consideration. DS/ITB(2) also undertook to brief the Panel on the Task Force's recommendations in due course.

9. The Deputy Chairman asked if the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) had considered introducing more generic top level domains in view of the rapid development of Internet and e-commerce. In response, the Director of Information Technology Services advised that he had represented the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region on the Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC) under ICANN. GAC had set up working groups to study the need for more generic top level domains and a report was scheduled to be submitted to ICANN on 20 April 2000.

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10. Noting that more companies had used Internet domain names as their company names, Mr Eric LI enquired whether amendments to the existing legislation governing the registration of companies were required. In response, DS/ITB(2) advised that issues related to registration of companies were outside the purview of ITBB and she undertook to convey Mr LI's concerns to relevant bureaux/departments for consideration.

IV. Y2K monitoring and co-ordinating arrangements for roll-rover to 29 February 2000

(LC Paper No. 1125/99-00(02))

11. DS/ITB(2) briefed members on the local rollover to 29 February 2000, a Y2K critical date related to leap year recognition. She reported that in close liaison, the Y2k Central Co-ordinating Centre and the 13 service-wide co-ordinating centres were responsible for monitoring the territory-wide and sector-specific rollover situation respectively. On the whole, Hong Kong had a smooth rollover to 29 February 2000 with all essential services continuing uninterrupted. Based on feedback from the Hong Kong Productivity Council, the local business community had also rollovered to 29 February 2000 smoothly.

12. In reply to the Deputy Chairman on whether the Y2K problem was over, DS/ITB(2) advised that 1 January 2000 and 29 February 2000 were the most critical Y2K dates. Large-scale service-wide co-ordination for Y2K rollovers had been completed. However, as some computers and embedded systems the design of which might have problems and were unable to rollover smoothly to some specific dates other than the two most critical Y2K dates, the Administration would still monitor future development.

V. Allocation of radio frequencies

(LC Paper No. 1140/99-00(02))

13. At the Chairman's invitation, the Assistant Director of Telecommunications (Operations) (AD of Telecom) briefed members on the Administration's paper and highlighted that

- (a) Representative from Hong Kong would take part in the World Radio Conference (WRC) of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) to be held in May 2000 as members of the Chinese delegation. The Telecommunication Authority (TA) had consulted the telecommunications industries through the Radio Spectrum Advisory Committee (RSAC) on matters to be discussed at WRC and the Civil Aviation Department was a member of RSAC providing expert advice and views on aeronautical services;
- (b) the Administration would not support the sharing between radionavigation satellite service and mobile satellite service in the band 1559-1610MHz which was considered by ITU Study Group as technically infeasible; and
- (c) the Administration would not support using the band 2700-2900MHz for IMT-2000 expansion for third generation mobile phone as this band was currently used for the weather radar in Hong Kong.

14. On members' concern about the frequency layout of in-building coaxial cables, AD of Telecom advised that TA had already issued in July 1999 a statement "Frequency layout plan of in-building coaxial cable distribution systems".

15. Mr Howard YOUNG said that the aviation sector was satisfied with the Administration's position as described in the discussion paper and noted the existing channels through which views of the aviation industry were taken into account. Mr Howard YOUNG was also concerned whether the Office of the Telecommunication Authority (OFTA) had encountered any difficulty in liaison with their Mainland counterparts in the Ministry of Information Industry on views proposed to be put forward at WRC. In response, AD of Telecom confirmed that OFTA had maintained a good working relationship with counterparts in the Mainland since 1997.

16. The Chairman was concerned about the frequency interference from paging services industry in the Mainland on aeronautical services in Hong Kong. AD of Telecom in response advised that the frequency spectrum for paging services was different from those mentioned in the Administration's paper. Nevertheless, the Administration had worked closely with the Mainland Authority with a view to minimizing such interference and the situation had improved.

VI. Any other business

17. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 3:45 pm.

Legislative Council Secretariat
3 April 2000