

For information
on 10 January 2000

**Legislative Council Information Technology
and Broadcasting Panel**

**Y2K Monitoring and Co-ordinating Arrangements
for Rollover to Year 2000**

Purpose

This paper reports on the operation of the territory-wide monitoring and co-ordinating mechanism during the rollover to year 2000.

Overall strategy in tackling the Y2K problem

2. In order to minimise the possible adverse impact of the Y2K problem, the inter-departmental Steering Committee on Year 2000 Compliance had closely monitored the progress of Y2K compliance work within Government and in essential service sectors. Before the rollover to 1 January 2000, all mission-critical systems within Government had been confirmed Y2K compliant or rectified. Similarly, the major essential service providers in the private sector had completed the Y2K compliance work on their mission-critical systems.

3. In addition, all government bureaux and departments and major non-government organisations which provide essential services had put in place comprehensive contingency plans to ensure the continuity of critical services provided to the public. In addition to institutional Y2K contingency plans, sector-wide Y2K contingency plans had been formulated for the 13 essential service sectors, i.e. food supply, transport, financial services, public order, fire and emergency services, environment, aviation, public health, telecommunications, port management, energy supply, border control and broadcasting.

Territory-wide monitoring and co-ordinating mechanism

4. To ensure a quick and co-ordinated response to any Y2K-induced failures with cross-sector or territory-wide implications, we had established a territory-wide monitoring and co-ordinating mechanism (see the Annex) for operation during the rollover to year 2000.

Arrangements for the rollover to year 2000

5. During the rollover to year 2000, the Y2K Central Coordinating Centre (CCC) was activated from 12:00 noon on 31 December 1999 to 7:00p.m. on 3 January 2000. During this period, the CCC worked closely with the sector-wide co-ordinating centres as well as individual Government bureaux and departments to monitor the territory-wide situation, with particular emphasis on how smoothly the essential service sectors had rolled over to the new year. Through the Information Services Department and the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Offices (HKETOs) overseas, the CCC also closely monitored the situation elsewhere in the world.

6. To facilitate monitoring of the local situation, sector-wide Y2K co-ordinating centres were required to submit regular reports to the CCC on the situation in the concerned sector after the rollover. In the event of any suspected or confirmed Y2K-induced incidents, these centres were required to report to the CCC immediately.

7. To ensure that public services would not be disrupted by the Y2K date change on the first working day in 2000 (i.e. 3 January 2000), all Government bureaux and departments with mission-critical systems were required to conduct wellness checks for these systems on 1 January 2000 and report the outcome to the CCC.

8. On 3 January 2000, all sector-wide co-ordinating centres, Government bureaux and departments were required to report to the CCC on whether their operation was affected by any Y2K-induced failures, including those encountered by their business partners.

Rollover performance

9. With thorough preparations made by Government and the essential service providers, Hong Kong has not encountered any major Y2K-related incidents since the rollover to the new year.

10. The CCC had received a report from the Hong Kong Police Force that 18 machines used for breath-testing drink-driving suspects, which were not mission-critical systems, did not function normally after the rollover to 1 January 2000 when the date of birth of the suspect was inputted. The problem did not, however, affect the accuracy of alcohol readings. As a fallback measure and pending rectification of the problem, the Police had issued instructions that the date of birth of drink driving suspects should be kept manually. The incident has subsequently been confirmed to be Y2K-induced. The affected machines are expected to be rectified before mid-January 2000.

11. Three other government departments, i.e. the Auxiliary Medical Services (AMS), Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD), and the Civil Service Training and Development Institute (CSTDI) reported that a very small number of their non-mission critical computers had minor problems with the on-screen date display on 3 January 2000. None of the incident affected public service provision. The incident in the AFCD was subsequently found to be caused by an operator who had inadvertently used an old version of an in-house application instead of the updated version. The problems encountered by AMS and CSTDI were resolved through re-setting the concerned computers. All the data files on the concerned computers were unaffected.

Dissemination of information during the rollover period

12. We had set up a press centre during the rollover period to disseminate information on the latest rollover situation in Hong Kong. From 1 to 3 January 2000, we had organised a total of six press briefings to keep the public informed of the latest developments.

13. Press releases issued by concerned Government bureaux and departments on the rollover situation were posted on Government's Y2K web site at <http://www.year2000.gov.hk>. In addition, we disseminated information on the rollover situation in Hong Kong to other governments through the dedicated web site set up by the International Y2K Co-operation Centre.

Situation of local small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)

14. Government has been working closely with the Hong Kong Productivity Council (HKPC) in assisting local SMEs in tackling the Y2K problem. To provide 24-hour support services to local companies during the rollover period and to help them handle any emergency Y2K-induced incidents, HKPC has set up a Y2K D-Day Support Centre since 15 December 1999. The Centre will continue to operate until early March 2000.

15. As of 6 January 2000, HKPC's Y2K D-Day Support Centre had received a total of 104 telephone calls through its Y2K hotline. The majority of these telephone calls were general enquiries about the Y2K problem and the rollover situation. 14 of them concerned computer failures which were suspected to be Y2K-induced.

16. To further assess the situation of local companies after the rollover, HKPC had approached over 1300 local companies (including SMEs) by phone after the rollover. According to the information collected, only four of the companies surveyed encountered minor Y2K-induced problems. The rest had rolled over to the new year smoothly.

Conclusion

17. The operation of the territory-wide Y2K monitoring and co-ordinating mechanism was effective and satisfactory during the rollover to year 2000. We shall re-activate the mechanism, with appropriate

adjustments, for the rollover to the next Y2K critical date, i.e. 29 February 2000.

**Information Technology and Broadcasting Bureau
January 2000**

Territory-wide Y2K Monitoring & Coordinating Structure

TOTAL

