

Extract
立法會

Legislative Council

LC Paper No. FC 21/02-03
(These minutes have been
seen by the Administration)

Ref : CB1/F/1/2

Finance Committee of the Legislative Council

**Minutes of the 14th meeting
held at the Legislative Council Chamber
on Friday, 21 June 2002, at 2:30 pm**

X X X X X X X X

Item No. 7 - FCR(2002-03)28

**HEAD 55 - GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT :
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND BROADCASTING BUREAU
◆ Subhead 700 General other non-recurrent**

55. Members noted that the Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting had been consulted on the present proposal on 10 June 2002.

56. Mr Howard YOUNG welcomed the hosting of major international events such as the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) TELECOM Asia in Hong Kong. Noting that one of the reasons for seeking the proposed funding was the lower than expected commercial sponsorship, Mr YOUNG enquired about the commercial sponsorship obtained for the last ITU TELECOM in 2000. In reply, the Deputy Secretary for Information Technology and Broadcasting (DS(ITB)) advised that Hong Kong hosted the event for the first time in 2000 and the total value of commercial sponsorship, both in kind and in service, amounted to some \$6 million on that occasion. In this connection, Mrs Selina CHOW considered that for a prestigious event such as the ITU TELECOM 2002, the Administration should actively reach out to secure more commercial sponsorship. DS(ITB) responded that under a difficult economic climate, the Administration had only been able to obtain sponsorship in the region of \$4.8 million but it would spare no effort in seeking sponsorship.

57. Mr LEE Cheuk-yan considered the estimated expenditure of \$7.6 million on host city functions (comprising an opening reception for 2 000

Action

persons, a dinner for participating Ministers of Member States, a farewell reception for 1 000 persons, and free telecommunication services to ITU) on the high side and sought further clarification and breakdown on this expenditure item.

58. In reply, DS(ITB) elaborated that the estimated expenditure of \$7.6 million had been proposed based on that of the ITU TELECOM Asia 2000. The amount included expenditure on rental charges, food, performances and other incidental expenses such as crowd control and security services. The opening reception for 2 000 persons would be held at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (HKCEC), followed immediately by the dinner participated by over 400 guests including Ministers of Member States, senior executives of telecommunications corporations and local Consuls-General. DS(ITB) further pointed out that as the host city, Hong Kong was required under the Memorandum of Administrative Arrangements relating to ITU TELECOM Asia 2002 to provide the necessary hospitality functions and publicity. Notwithstanding the estimated expenditure, DS(ITB) remarked that ITU TELECOM Asia 2000 had brought in as much as \$260 million total spending by overseas visitors in Hong Kong.

59. Mr LEE Cheuk-yan asked whether the HKCEC had provided some form of financial sponsorship given that the event had taken up the entire venue of the HKCEC. In reply, DS(ITB) said that although the HKCEC had not provided any direct financial support, it had made some concessions in terms of venue rental and the Government had assisted ITU in negotiating for favourable rental terms with HKCEC. In this regard, DS(ITB) pointed out that ITU was a not-for-profit organization and the surplus from TELECOM events would be used to support specific telecom development projects primarily in less developed countries.

60. While expressing support for Hong Kong to host the ITU TELECOM Asia 2002, Ms Emily LAU enquired about the benefits which the event might bring to the local telecommunications industry. In reply, DS(ITB) said that according to the Administration's records, Hong Kong companies took up about 3 000 square metres of exhibition space during the 2000 event and some 80% of the companies obtained business orders. DS(ITB) agreed to provide further information on the business obtained by local firms at the ITU TELECOM Asia 2000 after the meeting.

Admin

61. Dr YEUNG Sum expressed support for the present proposal and appreciated the initiative of hosting a Youth Forum in which overseas students and two students selected from local universities would participate.

62. Mrs Selina CHOW expressed support and stressed that it was highly worthwhile for Hong Kong to host the international event again in view of the overwhelming success on the last occasion. As the event was participated by

many high-level overseas delegates, Mrs CHOW urged that the Administration should take the opportunity to promote the unique artistic and cultural characteristics of Hong Kong. In this regard, she considered that the best local groups/artists should be given the opportunity to perform at the opening ceremony.

Admin

63. In response, DS(ITB) advised that while Hong Kong was the host city, the programme for the opening ceremony was primarily a matter for ITU. Nevertheless, she undertook to convey to ITU the suggestion that the programme for the opening ceremony should display Hong Kong's unique characteristics. Notwithstanding, Mrs Selina CHOW reiterated her view that the Government should take more active steps to enrich the local contents of the programme for the opening ceremony. Her concern was shared by Dr YEUNG Sum.

64. DS(ITB) noted members' concern and added that during the 2000 event, lunch-time concerts performed by the Academy of Performing Arts had been organized and the Administration would likely arrange for similar programmes during the 2002 event to promote local arts and culture.

65. As regards the other contestants for hosting the ITU TELECOM 2002, DS(ITB) said that they included Japan, Singapore, Malaysia and South Korea. As to why Hong Kong was selected as the host city, DS(ITB) pointed out that the ITU was impressed by the overwhelming success of the 2000 event which had been actively participated with a record high number of visitors among the TELECOM events held in the Asian region so far. She added that it was not yet known at this stage who would be guests to officiate at the opening of the 2002 event.

66. The Committee approved the proposal.

67. The Committee was adjourned at 4:30 pm.