To: Information Technology and Broadcasting (ITB) Panel, Legco

From: Dr. KF Tsang, Chairman of Specialised Section in Electronics, The Institution of Electrical Engineers Hong Kong

Date: 6 November, 2003

Subject: The IEE HK view on "Building a Digitally Inclusive Information Society and Related Issues"

Foreword

The Institution of Electrical Engineers Hong Kong agrees to the continuous deployment of an ICT infrastructure and would like to propose to make use of the ICT infrastructure and use the Kyoto Protocol as a reference to build up a "Green Hong Kong" city.

"ICT" means "Information and Communication Technology"

Background

Hong Kong has been suffering from economic turmoil since 1997. It is believed that the building-up of our ICT infrastructure will help Hong Kong to pick up its economy. In Hong Kong, there are almost 6 million mobile phone subscribers and about 1 million broadband subscribers. With the existing setups and the additional and continuous deployment of wireless "hotspots" such as wireless LAN in many strategic positions and the emergence of 3G services, most people in Hong Kong are well connected to the Internet world. The provision of fixed and mobile multi-media platforms certainly will boost business activities and help the Hong Kong economy to migrate towards an *"economic boom"* direction. We also see the need to make use of the developed platform to foster and further enhance a *"green"* environment.

Mission for ICT development

1) To achieve the objective of ICT and Digitally Inclusive Information City
2) To build up an image of an advance in technology and a caring international city
3) To benefit entrepreneurs, ICT professionals, tourists and house-holds by providing them with IT information conveniently around the city
4) To enhance the building-up of a Green City by using the ICT platform

Description

In line of the ICT society, we would like to draw attention to the issue of environmental protection by reducing the discharge of harmful gases. Hong Kong should strike to be a "Green City" by making use of the already-developed regulation and our digitally inclusive society. The Kyoto Protocol should be used as the reference directive (http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/convkp/kpeng.html).
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The Green House Gas Emissions

Consumption of electricity will discharge hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons and sulphur hexafluoride etc. to the atmosphere and thus causing environmental threatens. The greenhouse gas emissions by sources and removals by sinks associated with related activities shall be reported in a transparent and verifiable manner and reviewed in accordance with the Kyoto Protocol. The Protocol only allows an 8% increase of electricity consumption per year. Thus we must look into the issue and keep our electricity consumption rate to the captioned limit.

Kyoto Protocol

The Kyoto Protocol shall be open for signature and subject to ratification, acceptance or approval by States and regional economic integration organizations which are Parties to the Convention. This Protocol shall be open for accession from the day after the date on which it is closed for signature. Instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession shall be deposited with the Depositary. Many countries including China, Australia, many European countries, Canada etc. have signed the Protocol. Since Hong Kong is a SAR of mainland China, we should also comply with the Protocol.

ICT Development in Hong Kong

Hong Kong has been equipped with excellent information and telecommunication infrastructure and is one of the most advanced ICT societies amongst Asia-Pacific countries. Our mobile phone penetration and smart card utilization are also amongst the highest in the world and our personal computer and Internet penetration rates are comparable to advanced economies in the world. A substantial proportion of the Hong Kong population already have the opportunities to access ICT and thus the use of the Internet. Digital divide is less a problem in Hong Kong but there is still room for further development. It is the right time that we should make use of the structure to create better economy and define the way forward for a "Green Hong Kong".

<u>Future development</u>

We should strengthen our community for the exploitation of opportunities and to build a "Green Hong Kong" in the Digital 21 IT world. In line with the captioned need for ICT development, more wireless LAN hubs should be installed in most strategic locations in Hong Kong. Thus, bringing about LAN and internet connection and hence associated services to most people. Groups of people likely to be benefited includes tourists, business executives, teachers and students, civil servants, disabled persons (including visually impaired persons), …. etc. It is believed that a well-developed ICT infrastructure will facilitate formation exchange. Such exchange will in turn foster good technological idea and cooperation between companies and IT developers and ICT incubatees. Thus such platform will possibly bring about successful brainstorm of business, technological ideas and ICT developments. We believe such achievement will deeply root the ICT foundation of Hong Kong which in turn will bring about revenue in the future. In addition, as an international metropolitan area, Hong Kong should define its way forward to achieve a "Green Hong Kong" by imposing more regulation on the environmental protection in regard to the discharge of hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons and sulphur hexafluoride etc. to the atmosphere and thus causing environmental threatens. More ICT development should be encouraged to gear towards the control of inappropriate consumption of electricity in Hong Kong. Such move will definitely benefit Hong Kong and make Hong Kong more prosperous and respectable if we can be determined to move toward the theme of a "Green Hong Kong".