

Panel on Commerce and Industry

List of outstanding items for discussion

(position as at 13 April 2005)

Proposed timing for discussion

1. New Strategic Framework for Innovation and Technology Development

At the Panel meeting on 18 January 2005, members were informed of the Administration's plan to –

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- (1) set up four R&D centres in automotive parts and accessory systems, logistics/supply chain management enabling technologies, nanotechnology and advanced materials, and textile and clothing; and
- (2) subsume R&D centres in five technology areas (namely communications technologies, consumer electronics, IC design, opto-electronics and Chinese medicine) under ASTRI's existing operation infrastructure.

The Administration will consider the R&D centre proposals in April and, depending on the amount of funding required, seek the Finance Committee's approval in the current legislative session. The Administration would like to brief the Panel on the details of the R&D centre proposals and the way forward.

2. Review of end-user liability, fair use and other provisions in the Copyright Ordinance

The review arises from the deliberation of the Copyright (Amendment) Bill 2003, after which the Administration undertook to discuss further with copyright owners and users on the end-user piracy liability, fair use provisions and other aspects of the Copyright Ordinance (Cap.528).

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The Administration issued a public consultation document on "Review of Certain Provisions of Copyright Ordinance" in December 2004 to solicit public views before formulating any proposals. The Administration has briefed the Panel on the consultation document in January 2005. It plans to report to the Panel on the outcome of the consultation exercise and consult the Panel on the Administration's proposals before mid-2005.

**Proposed timing
for discussion**

3. Review of the effectiveness of the Professional Services Development Assistance Scheme (PSDAS)

The PSDAS was established in February 2002. By January 2005, about one-third of the projects approved up to 2004 will have been completed. The Administration intends to conduct a review on the effectiveness of the Scheme and report findings to the Panel in May 2005.

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4. Briefing on the work of Invest Hong Kong

The Administration will update the Panel on the work of Invest Hong Kong in promoting inward investment in 2004.

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5. Reports by Heads of Hong Kong Economic and Trade Offices (ETOs)

The Heads of ETOs will meet in Hong Kong in the week commencing 20 June 2005. They will report their work to the Panel in June 2005.

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6. Draft Copyright (Prescription of Copyright Registers) Regulation

At the Panel meeting on 12 May 2003, members noted the Administration's proposal of prescribing the copyright registers maintained by the United States, Canada and India with a view to simplifying the proof of copyright ownership in legal proceedings under section 121(2) of the Copyright Ordinance (Cap.528). Members asked the Administration to consider the setting up of a copyright register in Hong Kong. The Administration undertook to consider members' views and revert to the Panel in due course.

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(tentative)

7. Measures for monitoring the operation of the AsiaWorld-Expo (AWE)

At the Panel meeting on 12 July 2004, it was proposed that the Panel might consider exploring the subject further with the Administration in the next term having regard to members' concern about the measures in place for monitoring and ensuring the effective operation of the AsiaWorld-Expo.

To be confirmed

**Proposed timing
for discussion**

8. Improving the business environment

Issues relating to improving the business environment were last discussed at the Panel meeting on 10 June 2002 and on 10 May 2004.

To be confirmed

The same subject was covered in paragraphs 16 to 18 and paragraph 61 of the Chief Executive's 2004 and 2005 Policy Address respectively. Mrs Sophie LEUNG expressed the view that the Government should strive to provide the business and industrial sectors with an "enabling environment".

The Subgroup on Business Facilitation under the Economic and Employment Council (EEC) has now been studying ways to remove outdated or unnecessary regulations on business sectors that have significant impact on the economy and employment. It is expected that solid recommendations will be available before the end of 2005.

At the Panel meeting held on 12 October 2004, Mrs Sophie LEUNG recapped her concern about the importance of an "enabling" business environment. She said that the Panel might wish to explore the subject further with the Administration and that in due course, the Panel might consider requesting the Research and Library Services Division of the Secretariat to conduct some research on the subject.