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Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting

Meeting on 11 May 2009

Updated Background Brief on E-government Programmes

Purpose

　　This paper gives an account of the development of the E-government programmes and also a summary of views and concerns expressed by the Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting (the Panel) in recent years.

Development of the E-government programmes

2.　　On 4 May 2001, the Government promulgated "Digital 21" Information Technology (IT) Strategy (the Strategy) to update and revise Hong Kong's IT strategy to keep pace with the changing technological landscape and the global E-business development, so as to develop Hong Kong into a leading digital city in the globally connected world.　One main focus in the Strategy was to develop E-government to modernize Government operations, enhance efficiency and optimize the use of limited resources, as well as improve the quality of service delivery to the community so as to meet the increasing aspirations and demand in the Information Age.

3.　　In the first phase of the E-government programmes launched in 2001, the Government put in place a secure and reliable infrastructure and provided an e-Option for 90% (or 1 200 services) of the public services amenable to the electronic mode of delivery.　In March 2005, the Administration announced the implementation of the next wave of E-government which focused on "integrating and transforming E-services".　Government bureaux and departments were required to move from a government-centric way to a "whole-of-government" and customer-oriented approach in providing E-services.　In this regard, the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) was established within the then Commerce, Industry and Technology Bureau which sought, among other things, to provide more visible and proactive leadership for the

Government to drive the development of E-government.

GovHK

4.	At its meeting on 3 March 2006, the Finance Committee approved a commitment of $170.8 million for developing GovHK and enhancing the central infrastructure to support the implementation of the new strategy. GovHK was officially launched in August 2007 to gradually reprovision the E-government services provided through other platforms, such as the Electronic Service Delivery (ESD) portal and the Government Information Centre[1]. In 2008, more than 1 200 Government services were provided with e-Options, and over 98% of the Government forms (about 2 740 forms) were available online through the Government Forms website (http://www.info.gov.hk/forms/) and/or the departmental websites.

Progress of the implementation of E-government programmes

5.	According to the Administration, it made good progress in the past year on the implementation of E-government programmes as highlighted below:

> (a)	completion of an overhaul of the delivery of E-government services;
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> (b)	increase in usage of Smart Identity (ID) card;
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> (c)	completion of programme of making Government forms available online;
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> (d)	roll out of the Government Wi-Fi programme at some 120 Government premises;
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> (e)	roll out of eTAX to taxpayers for handling tax affairs;
>
> (f)	roll out of E-procurement initiatives to pilot departments;
>
> (g)	provision of Government-to-citizen, Government-to-employee and Government-to-Government services;
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> (h)	unification of the sign-on process for different E-government services;
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> (i)	enrichment of the content of GovHK;
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> (j)	private sector participation in GovHK;

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[1]	The Government's services on the ESD*life* portal have been migrated to GovHK after the expiry of the Government's contract with the operator of the ESD Scheme in January 2008. The Government Information Centre was retired in May 2007.

(k) extension of electronic billing services;

(l) development of electronic health record;

(m) improvement of delivery of transport information;

(n) implementation of an electronic advance cargo information system for customs clearance of road cargoes;

(o) provision of one-stop access of property information hub;

(p) implementation of a new Government Financial Management Information System; and

(q) adoption of electronic information management strategy.

Discussion by the Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting

6.　　The ITB Panel received regular reports from the Administration on the implementation of the E-government programmes.　Panel members generally supported the development of E-government in Hong Kong.　Nevertheless, they raised the following concerns at the Panel and Council meetings.

Smart ID Card

7.　　Panel members noted that the Registration of Persons Ordinance (Cap. 177) had set out clearly the non-immigration information that could be included in the Smart ID Card.　Legislative amendments would be required for any changes or additional inclusion.　Members opined that the potential of the Smart ID card and the data storage capability of the chip embedded in the Smart ID card had not been fully realized and utilized.　Members urged the Administration to make good use of the Smart ID card as a platform to develop a wide spectrum of digital applications for improving departments' efficiency and productivity.　However, some other members were of the view that for security and privacy reasons, personal information stored in the Smart ID Card should be kept to the minimum.　They urged the Administration to strike a balance between making wider use of the Smart ID Card and protecting privacy of the personal data therein.

8.　　The Administration responded that efforts were being made to encourage and work with bureaux and departments to link up their back-end data bases through the card face data and the secure personal identification number embedded in the Smart ID card.　Such a move would enable bureaux and departments to make available more of their services on the GovHK portal.　In fact, various initiatives on information security had been launched to help

promote public confidence in conducting electronic transactions, which would in turn facilitate E-government, e-Commerce and the use of digital-certificates.

Support for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs)

9.   On the adoption of information communication technology (ICT) among SMEs, Panel members expressed disappointment over the low penetration rate and urged the Administration to identify barriers in this respect.   The Administration advised that a task force would examine the barriers to ICT adoption and measures to promote the wider use of ICT among SMEs.   The Administration would report the findings to the Panel in due course.

E-procurement

10.   On the implementation of pilot E-procurement programme conducted at OGCIO, the Immigration Department and the Environmental Protection Department, Panel members suggested that E-invoice be considered for the pilot programme to drive supplier adoption.   Panel members also requested the Administration to assess and apprise the Panel of the increase in percentage, if any, of SME suppliers having Internet connection as a result of the implementation of E-procurement, and SMEs' response to and their degree of participation in the E-procurement programme.   The Administration should also assess the actual benefits of the pilot programme and the extent to which green procurement was adopted.

11.   According to the Administration, the scope for the pilot programme encompassing four E-procurement initiatives (namely Procurement Portal, E-catalogue, E-sourcing and internal workflow system) with a commitment of $49.2 million was a prudent and pragmatic way to proceed.   Nevertheless, the Administration would keep in view opportunities for trying out the E-invoice function when circumstances was conducive and would assess the actual benefits of the E-procurement pilot programme at the review stage.

Integration of E-government

12.   Panel members noted that those Government bureaux/departments which were experienced in computerization and integration of E-government into their overall operation were more ready to go further towards automation and electronic solutions, while other departments which had little or no experience in IT development and application had lagged much behind.   Members were concerned that following the setting up of the Information Technology Management Unit and the Government's policy of devolving management responsibilities for IT projects to bureaux/departments, some departments in need of automation might be limited by insufficient manpower and impeded by the lack of management and technical know-how to embark on IT initiatives.   This would have the effect of delaying the implementation of E-government initiatives for better delivery of services and higher operational efficiency.   The

Administration advised that a consultancy study had been conducted to examine this issue and come up with recommendations, which would be taken forward to facilitate integration of E-government and the adoption of E-business solutions in bureaux/departments.

Latest position

13.   The Administration will update the Panel on E-government development, including the future development of GovHK at the Panel meeting on 11 May 2009.

Relevant papers

14.   A list of relevant papers is at the **Appendix**.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
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List of relevant papers

Committee	Paper	LC Paper No.
Meeting of Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting (ITB) on 28 May 2001	Administration's paper : "E-government Strategy " Minutes of meeting	CB(1)1332/00-01(02) CB(1)1814/00-01
Meeting of ITB Panel on 10 December 2001	Administration's paper : "Institutional arrangements for implementation of the Digital 21 Strategy and E-government initiatives" Minutes of meeting	CB(1)487/01-02(03) CB(1)703/01-02
Meeting of ITB Panel on 14 January 2002	Administration's paper : E-government programme for 2002" Minutes of meeting	CB(1)756/01-02(03) CB(1)1010/01-02
Meeting of ITB Panel on 8 April 2002	Administration's paper : "Realignment of leisure facilities booking systems and introduction of booking service under Electronic Service Delivery Scheme" Minutes of meeting	CB(1)1421/01-02(04) CB(1)1642/01-02
Meeting of ITB Panel on 8 July 2002	Administration's paper : "Progress update on the E-government programme for 2002" Minutes of meeting	CB(1)2172/01-02(03) CB(1)2429/01-02
Meeting of ITB Panel on 7 November 2002	Administration's paper : "Common look and feel for Government web sites" Minutes of meeting	CB(1)185/02-03(06) CB(1)425/02-03
Meeting of ITB Panel on 9 December 2002	Administration's paper : "The interoperability framework – an enabler for joined-up E-government services" Minutes of meeting	CB(1)421/02-03(04) CB(1)670/02-03
Meeting of ITB Panel on 10 February 2003	Administration's paper : "Progress update on E-government development" Minutes of meeting	CB(1)627/02-03(01) CB(1)1004/02-03

Committee	Paper	LC Paper No.
Meeting of ITB Panel on 21 July 2003	Administration's paper : "Progress update on E-government development" Minutes of meeting	CB(1)2214/02-03(03) CB(1)2385/02-03
Meeting of ITB Panel on 12 January 2004	Administration's paper : "Progress update on E-government programme" Information note on the Electronic Service Delivery Scheme Minutes of meeting	CB(1)710/03-04(04) CB(1)723/03-04 CB(1)1044/03-04
Meeting of ITB Panel on 10 May 2004	Administration paper : "Review of the Government institutional structure for delivering the information technology function" Minutes of meeting	CB(1)1713/03-04(03) CB(1)2108/03-04
Meeting of ESC on 16 June 2004	Administration's paper : "Proposed merger of the Information Technology Services Department and the IT-related divisions of the Commerce, Industry and Technology Bureau (Communications and Technology Branch) to form a new entity entitled Office of the Government Chief Information Officer in the Commerce, Industry and Technology Bureau with effect from 1 July 2004 Minutes of meeting	EC(2004-05)8 ESC37/03-04
Meeting of FC on 25 June 2004	Administration's paper Minutes of meeting	FCR(2004-05)17 FC110/03-04
Meeting of ITB Panel on 12 July 2004	Administration's paper : "Progress update on the E-government programme" E-government booklet on "Creating value for all" Minutes of meeting	CB(1)2317/03-04(01) CB(1)2326/03-04(01) CB(1)2469/03-04
Meeting of ITB Panel on 14 March 2005	Administration's paper : "E-government – The next wave of development"	CB(1)1052/04-05(04)

Committee	Paper	LC Paper No.
	Minutes of meeting	CB(1)1197/04-05
Meeting of ITB Panel on 9 January 2006	Administration's paper : "New strategy for E-government service delivery"	CB(1)596/05-06(07)
	Background brief on E-government programme	CB(1)597/05-06
	Minutes of meeting	CB(1)821/05-06
Meeting of ITB Panel on 13 February 2006	Meeting with deputations and the Administration on new strategy for E-government service delivery	--
	Minutes of meeting	CB(1)1004/05-06
Meeting of FC on 3 March 2006	Administration's paper on "Capital Works Reserve Fund Head 710 - Computerisation Subhead - Enhancing the E-government Infrastructure to Support the New Strategy for E-government Service Delivery"	FCR(2005-06)46
Meeting of ITB Panel on 12 June 2006	Administration's paper : "Progress Update on the E-government Programme"	CB(1)1688/05-06(04)
	Background brief on E-government programme	CB(1)1692/05-06
	Minutes of meeting	CB(1)2100/05-06
Meeting of ITB Panel on 14 May 2007	Administration's paper : "Report on Project Governance and Results"	CB(1)1552/06-07(03)
	Minutes of meeting	CB(1)2282/06-07
Meeting of ITB Panel on 9 July 2007	Administration's paper : "Update on implementation of Digital 21 Strategy and the E-government Programme"	CB(1)2034/06-07(03)
	Minutes of meeting	CB(1)2396/06-07
Meeting of ITB Panel on 16 October 2007	Minutes of meeting	CB(1)325/07-08
	Follow-up paper	CB(1)430/07-08

Committee	Paper	LC Paper No.
Meeting of ITB Panel on 12 November 2007	Administration's paper : "Capital Works Reserve Fund Head 710 Computerisation Subhead A007GX – New administrative computer systems"	CB(1)203/07-08(05)
	Minutes of meeting	CB(1)461/07-08
	Follow-up paper	CB(1)404/07-08(01)
Council meeting on 19 December 2007	Question No. 15 raised by Hon SIN Chung-kai on computerization of various bureaux and departments	Hansard
Council meeting on 23 January 2008	Question No. 7 raised by Hon WONG Kwok-hing on functions of smart identity cards	Hansard
Meeting of ITB Panel on 13 May 2008	Administration's paper : "Progress Update on the E-government Programme"	CB(1)1456/07-08(03)
	Background brief on E-government programme	CB(1)1456/07-08(04)
	Minutes of meeting	CB(1)2151/07-08