

Hon. Andrew LEUNG Kwan-yuen
Chairperson
Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting
Legislative Council

26 November 2008

Dear Chairperson,

Formation and Governance of Board of Directors of HKIRC

IT Voice would like to express our concern in the formation and governance of the Hong Kong Internet Registration Corporation, and seek your Panel to review the following concerns.

1. There is a huge increase of Government appointed directors to the Board of Directors of HKIRC to 50%, and the Government also appoints the Chairperson of the Board. But in most other countries and regions of the world, domain names are managed by the industry and end users who have Internet experience and international perspectives. Is there any rationale behind for this drastic change for .hk against international practices? How can the Government justify a strong expertise on the subject when there is such decreasing participation of the industry and users?
2. How can the Government ensure an open and transparent process for the appointment of Government appointed directors? Will there be an industry led panel to interview and review the candidates? What is the process of accepting nomination of candidates? What are the criteria of appointment? Will the Government appointed directors be accountable to the Government, or to the public? Is there any process for the Government to remove a Government appointed director?
3. The subscription fees of .hk domain names are about 300% higher than .com domain names. Is HKIRC making a profit? And if it is, is there any plan to reduce the profit that it takes from domain name subscribers? How can the right of domain name subscribers be rightly protected if the representation of users is reduced to 25%, and Government appointed directors increased from 1/13 to 4/8?
4. Will there be any censorship, or any possibility of such, on Internet domain names

in the future after the Government taking over the control of HKIRC?

5. ICANN may question why Hong Kong is moving backward in the composition of the Board of Directors by re-introducing Government appointed members. Did the Government send any delegate to the ICANN GAC meetings recently to solicit feedback from the international community on the reform of the HKIRC Board? When was the last time the Government had delegates participate in the ICANN GAC meetings?

We are open to discuss this with you face to face should you found it necessary. If you need to contact us, please email to itvoice@itvoice.hk or phone Chester Soong or S.C. Leung.

Regards,

The IT Voice Team

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