

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(1)290/13-14(06)

Ref. : CB1/PL/CI

Panel on Commerce and Industry

Meeting on 19 November 2013

**Updated background brief on promoting the development of
the testing and certification industry in Hong Kong**

Purpose

This paper provides background information on the development of the testing and certification industry in Hong Kong and the work of the Hong Kong Council for Testing and Certification (HKCTC). It also summarizes previous discussions by the Panel on Commerce and Industry (the Panel) on the subject matter in the 2012-2013 session.

Background

2. In 2009, testing and certification was identified by the Task Force on Economic Challenges (TFEC) as one of the six economic areas where Hong Kong enjoys clear advantages and has good potential for further development.

3. Following the recommendation of TFEC, HKCTC was established in September 2009 to spearhead the development of the testing and certification industry and to advise the Government on the overall development strategy and initiatives for promoting the growth of the industry in Hong Kong. A supernumerary Administrative Officer Staff Grade C (AOSGC) (D2) post, designated as Secretary-General (Testing and Certification) (SG(TC)), was created in the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) for a period of two years from 16 March 2010 to 15 March 2012 to provide support to HKCTC in formulating and implementing a development plan for the testing and certification industry. The supernumerary AOSGC post was later extended to 31 March 2014.

4. In April 2010, the Government endorsed the three-year market-oriented development plan¹ formulated by HKCTC with a view to developing Hong Kong into a testing and certification hub in the region by reinforcing the branding of "Tested in Hong Kong, Certified in Hong Kong". Since then, HKCTC has been working closely with ITC to implement the development plan, targeting efforts at four selected trades, namely Chinese medicines (CM), construction materials, food and jewellery where there were potential strong demand for testing and certification services.

5. In the 2012-2013 Budget, the Financial Secretary (FS) announced that the Administration would step up the promotion of Hong Kong's testing and certification services outside Hong Kong. Two new panels were set up under HKCTC in 2012 to explore with the industry new business opportunities in environmental protection, and information and communications technologies. In the 2013-2014 Budget, FS reiterated that the Government would continue to focus efforts on the six selected industries with potential demand for testing and certification services.

Previous discussions

6. The Panel was briefed on the Administration's effort on the promotion of testing and certification of CM at its meeting on 18 December 2012, and the implementation progress of the three-year market-oriented development plan for the testing and certification industry, as well as the recommendations made by the HKCTC in its Review Report² to support the further development of the industry at its meeting on 16 April 2013.

7. Members generally supported the recommendations made by the HKCTC in its Review Report to further promote the development of the testing and certification industry and the way forward in implementing these recommendations. The HKCTC was advised to closely monitor the market trend and assess the development potential of other trades for inclusion in its development plan. The Administration advised that the selection of the six specific trades for focused effort was a consensus reached after wide consultation with stakeholders in the related industries having regard to the growth forecast of the respective trades. While keeping a close look at the market trend to identify other trades with high potential demand for testing and certification services, the HKCTC would also see to the possibility of winding up projects for existing selected trades after all reasonable possibilities had been explored.

¹ A copy of the report was distributed to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)1529/09-10(01)

² A copy of the Review Report was distributed to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)832/12-13(05).

8. The Panel called upon the Administration and the Hong Kong Accreditation Service (HKAS) to seek wider recognition of Hong Kong's testing and certification services in the international and regional arena, in particular the Mainland. The HKCTC was also urged to capitalize on Hong Kong's advantages and seize the opportunities under the Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement (CEPA) to proactively secure further opening up of the Mainland market to Hong Kong's testing and certification industry. Some Panel members were of the view that efforts should be focused on the testing and certification services in the trades of CM and food, in particular services for the nutrition labels of pre-packaged food products. The Administration advised that the Mainland had been gradually opening up its market to Hong Kong's testing and certification industry since the signing of Supplement VII to CEPA. Product testing for the China Compulsory Certification system was extended to cover all the existing 22 types of products processed in Hong Kong under Supplement VIII to CEPA with effect from 1 April 2012. The scope of certification that could be undertaken by Hong Kong-accredited testing organizations was further expanded to cover food products on a trial basis in Guangdong Province under Supplement IX to CEPA starting from January 2013.

9. In view of the huge business opportunities in the Mainland for Hong Kong-made CM, some members urged the Administration to explore with the Mainland authorities the feasibility of developing a common standard of CM testing and to seek acceptance of testing reports issued by HKAS-accredited laboratories for proprietary CM (pCm) registration. The Administration advised that the Hong Kong Chinese Materia Medica Standards (HKCMMS) developed by the Department of Health served as a supplement to the Pharmacopoeia of the People's Republic of China (the Chinese Pharmacopoeia) adopted in the Mainland, providing detailed references for testing laboratories in authenticating Chinese materia medica. Members also noted that laboratories in Hong Kong had the capability of providing testing services for Chinese materia medica according to both HKCMMS and the Chinese Pharmacopoeia. The Administration would discuss with the Mainland authorities through CEPA to seek acceptance of testing reports issued by the HKAS-accredited laboratories for pCm registration.

10. In light of the food safety concern in the Mainland, some members suggested to explore the possibility of extending Hong Kong's testing and certification services to food produced in the Mainland, using milk products as a trial item. Suggestion was made to consider setting up designated retail outlets in the Mainland for sale of products certified by Hong Kong to help promote the Hong Kong brand and expand Hong Kong testing and certification services in the Mainland. The Administration advised that the HKCTC would continue to use the various Hong Kong Trade Development

Council platforms, including local and overseas trade fairs, to promote the "Tested in Hong Kong, Certified in Hong Kong" brand to potential service users.

Latest position

11. The Administration will update the Panel on the work progress of the HKCTC, and to propose converting the existing supernumerary AOSGC post of SG (TC) in the ITC to a permanent post with effect from 1 April 2014.

Relevant papers

12. A list of relevant papers is set out in the **Appendix**.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
15 November 2013

**Promoting the development of
the testing and certification industry in Hong Kong**

List of relevant papers

Date of meeting	Committee	Minutes/Paper	LC Paper No.
17/11/2009	Panel on Commerce and Industry	Administration's paper	CB(1)341/09-10(06) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr09-10/english/panels/ci/papers/ci1117cb1-341-6-e.pdf
		Background brief	CB(1)341/09-10(07) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr09-10/english/panels/ci/papers/ci1117cb1-341-7-e.pdf
		Minutes of meeting	CB(1)781/09-10 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr09-10/english/panels/ci/minutes/ci20091117.pdf
20/4/2010	Panel on Commerce and Industry	Report of the Hong Kong Council for Testing and Certification	CB(1)1529/09-10(01) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr09-10/english/panels/ci/papers/ci0420cb1-1529-1-e.pdf
17/5/2011	Panel on Commerce and Industry	Administration's paper	CB(1)2147/10-11(03) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr10-11/english/panels/ci/papers/ci0517cb1-2147-3-e.pdf
		Updated background brief	CB(1)1893/10-11(08) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr10-11/english/panels/ci/papers/ci0419cb1-1893-8-e.pdf

Date of meeting	Committee	Minutes/Paper	LC Paper No.
		Minutes of meeting	CB(1)2960/10-11 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr10-11/english/panels/ci/minutes/ci20110517.pdf
18/12/2012	Panel on Commerce and Industry	Administration's paper Updated background brief Minutes of meeting	CB(1)299/12-13(03) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/ci/papers/ci1218cb1-299-3-e.pdf CB(1)299/12-13(04) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/ci/papers/ci1218cb1-299-4-e.pdf CB(1)532/12-13 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/ci/minutes/ci20121218.pdf
16/4/2013	Panel on Commerce and Industry	Administration's paper Updated background brief Minutes of meeting	CB(1)832/12-13(05) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/ci/papers/ci0416cb1-832-5-e.pdf CB(1)832/12-13(06) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/ci/papers/ci0416cb1-832-6-e.pdf CB(1)1280/12-13 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/ci/minutes/ci20130416.pdf