Automatic Exchange of Financial Account Information in Tax Matters



Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau

Policy Objectives

- Expanding network of comprehensive avoidance of double taxation agreements (CDTAs) with major trading and investment partners, while signing tax information exchange agreements (TIEAs) on a need basis
- Fulfilling international obligations to enhance tax transparency by way of exchanging tax information

Tax Information Exchange Arrangements

- Existing Arrangement:
 - Exchange of Information (EOI) on request CDTA or TIEA
- Future Direction:

EOI on request + Automatic Exchange of Financial Account Information (AEOI)

Why Committing Now?

- Fulfilling international obligations
- 67 jurisdictions publicly committed (14 are among Hong Kong's top 20 trading partners)
- International consensus with unified standard
- Pre-condition for AEOI on a reciprocal basis with appropriate partners which can meet relevant requirements on protection of privacy and confidentiality of information exchanged and ensuring proper use of data

Key Components of AEOI Standard

Financial Institutions – To report the financial account information of their account holders, based on the Common Reporting Standard (CRS) to their competent authority

Competent Authority – To sign **Competent Authority Agreement** with partners to implement AEOI (bilateral or multilateral)

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Key Components of AEOI Standard (Cont'd)

(a) Common Reporting Standard (CRS)

Scope of information to be reported:

- · Personal data: name, address, tax residence, taxpayer identification number
- Financial data: account balance, investment income, sales proceeds from financial assets

Financial institutions required to report:

· Banks, custodians, insurance companies and investment entities

Scope of account holders subject to reporting:

- · Individuals
- Entities (including trusts and foundations)
- Controlling persons (i.e. beneficial owners) of entities

Due diligence procedures

· Different due diligence procedures for different accounts

Key Components of AEOI Standard (Cont'd)

(b) Model Competent Authority Agreement (Model CAA)

- Legal basis for financial account information to be exchanged
- Bilateral or multilateral
- Provides for the modalities of the exchange, specifying the content of exchange and the time that the competent authority should provide information
- Contains provisions on confidentiality and safeguards

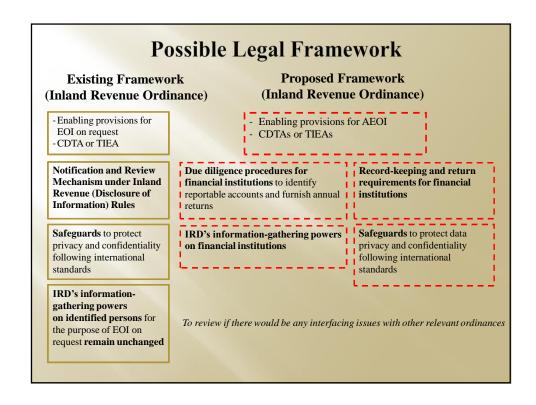
Key Components of AEOI Standard (Cont'd)

(c) Commentaries on CRS and Model CAA

 To ensure consistent application and operation of the standard

(d) Guidance on Technical Solutions

- A schema for exchanging information
- A standard in relation to IT aspects of data safeguards and confidentiality



Engagement with Relevant Stakeholders

Initial views from financial industry bodies, business chambers and professional associations –

- 1. In general support of Hong Kong's commitment
- 2. Concerns about actual implementation
- 3. Compliance costs
- 4. Exercise caution in identifying future AEOI partners
- 5. Safeguards to protect privacy and confidentiality of information exchanged

Work Ahead

International front

Oct 2014 — To commit to the new standard at the Global Forum

plenary

Oct 2015 — To submit initial implementation plan

2016 & 2017 — To provide annual report to the Global Forum on

progress of implementation

End 2018 — To commence the first automatic exchange (the latest)

Domestic front

2015 — To prepare detailed legislative proposals and engage

LegCo and stakeholders

2016 — To introduce relevant Bill into LegCo