

**Forty-fifth Meeting of
the Business Facilitation Advisory Committee**

***Agenda Item 4 : Report on the progress of the
“Be the Smart Regulator” Programme
– May 2021 update***

Purpose

This paper updates on the progress of the “Be the Smart Regulator” Programme (the Programme) since the last Business Facilitation Advisory Committee (BFAC) meeting held on 29 January 2021.

Latest progress

Overview

2. All the 29 participating bureaux and departments (B/Ds) continue to sustain their momentum in enhancing business licensing services. Good progress has been made on various fronts to further improve the overall regulatory environment for business in Hong Kong and its long-term competitiveness. Major progress is highlighted below.

World Bank’s Doing Business Report

3. World Bank has not yet announced the publication date of last year’s report. Meanwhile, it has started a new survey cycle. The Business Facilitation Team under the Efficiency Office (EffO) is working closely with relevant B/Ds on targeted measures to continue enhancing Hong Kong’s business environment.

Major progress in various departments

4. The participating B/Ds have developed a total of 398 new business facilitation measures in the past three years from 2018-19 to 2020-21 to continue improving the efficiency and transparency of licensing services and reducing compliance costs to trades through streamlining procedures, proactive use of information technology, enhancing regulatory requirements, as well as strengthening support and guidance to the trades. Examples of the

business facilitation measures implemented since the last meeting are highlighted as follows –

- (a) The Electrical and Mechanical Services Department has developed an online booking system to facilitate contractors to arrange for inspection of lifts and escalators after major alterations, thereby expediting the resumption of lift and escalator operation.
- (b) The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department has set performance pledges on the time required in issuing Dog Licence to increase the transparency of the licence service.
- (c) The Hong Kong Police Force has provided e-licence/e-authorisation services for application for specific arms licences such as Authorisation as a Range Officer, Authorisation as an Arms Instructor and Approved Agent for Arms Dealers, Shooting Clubs and Security Companies to enhance the efficiency and business-friendliness of the application process.
- (d) The Planning Department has made the full set of submissions of planning applications available online for public inspection thereby easing applicants' burden of preparing voluminous hard copies and CD/DVD ROM copies for this purpose and making it easier for the public to access the applications for comments.
- (e) The Transport Department has extended the use of iAM Smart to cover online booking of road tests and online appointment booking of counter services at licensing offices (such as for making driving licences related applications) to enhance the user-friendliness of the online booking process.

Commitments in 2021-22 Budget Speech on e-Government

5. Further to the pledge in the 2020 Policy Address Supplement to implement e-licensing for all licensing applications by mid-2022 as reported in the last update, it is further committed in the 2021-22 Budget Speech that by mid-2022, unless there are legal or operational constraints, all government forms and licence applications can be submitted electronically. Besides, e-payment options (including the Faster Payment System) will be available for making payments in respect of most government bills and licences starting from mid-2022. These e-services initiatives would make it easier for enterprises and individuals to submit applications, make payments, obtain licences and use government services.

Promotion of Innovation & Technology (I&T) Adoption among B/Ds

6. To promote wider adoption of I&T among B/Ds in continuously improving government's licensing and other services, EffO, in collaboration with the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation, hosted an I&T Solution Day on 31 March 2021 to introduce I&T solutions ready for B/Ds' adoption, showcase advanced technologies and their potential applications, share exemplary cases in e-initiatives implemented by B/Ds, and provide an opportunity for colleagues to interact with I&T solution providers. Over 220 representatives from 40 participating B/Ds of the "Be the Smart Regulator" and the "Streamlining of Government Services" Programmes joined the event. EffO and the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer of the Information and Technology Bureau will provide assistance to B/Ds in their journey of implementation and transformation.

Way forward

7. Members are invited to note the progress of the Programme.

**Business Facilitation Team
Efficiency Office
Innovation and Technology Bureau
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