
Information Technology and Broadcasting Bureau

In the past year, we have been working on 27 pledges, of which :

- we have completed nine;
- we are on schedule with ten;
- two are under review; and
- we are pressing ahead with six on-going commitments.

The following sets out the detailed report for each main programme area.

Broadcasting

<i>Year</i>	<i>Pledge</i>	<i>Present Position</i>
Action Completed		
1997	1. To complete a review of satellite television broadcasting by the end of 1997, with a view to making the operating environment more conducive to new investments in satellite broadcasting, and to enhancing Hong Kong's attractiveness as a regional broadcasting hub.	The review was completed and a new policy adopted in January 1998. Two licences have been granted under the new policy.
Action in Progress : On Schedule		
1997	2. To firm up the parameters for technical trials and formulate policy proposals for the introduction of digital radio broadcasting.	The parameters have been firmed up and the trials should be completed by the end of 1998. We will start to formulate policy proposals in the last quarter of 1998.

- 1997 3. To conduct a review of the television environment in 1998, taking into account the latest developments in television broadcasting, viewers' interests, market conditions and technological development in the industry. To provide a favourable environment for the long-term development of quality television services in Hong Kong.
- We published on 3 September 1998 a consultation paper on our policy proposals arising from the Review of Television Policy. We plan to complete the consultation exercise in time for policy decisions to be made and announced by the end of 1998.

Action in Progress : Under Review

- 1995 4. To bring all forms of broadcasting within the purview of a comprehensive piece of legislation so as to make the regulatory framework more user-friendly and adaptable to the rapid changes in technology in the broadcasting industry.
- This is being reviewed as part of the review of television policy mentioned in item 3 above.

Film Services		
<i>Year</i>	<i>Pledge</i>	<i>Present Position</i>
Action Completed		
1997	1. To set up a Film Services Office under the Television and Entertainment Licensing Authority in 1998 to support and assist the film industry.	The Film Services Office was set up on 1 April 1998.
1997	2. To set up a Film Services Advisory Committee to provide a conduit for dialogue between the film industry and Government and to give advice on the work of the Film Services Office.	The Film Services Advisory Committee was set up on 1 May 1998.

- 1997 3. To make available a site for film production use in the 1998 land sale programme. A site in Tseung Kwan O (Area 106) for film production use was awarded to a successful tenderer in August 1998.

Action in Progress : On Schedule

- 1997 4. To review the Film Censorship Ordinance with a view to making the regulatory regime as user and business-friendly as possible. The review has been completed. The Amendment Bill effecting the improvement measures will be introduced into the Legislative Council in the 1998-1999 legislative session.

- 1997 5. To conduct a review in 1998 on the effectiveness of the Code of Practice developed by the industry for regulating obscene and indecent materials transmitted through the Internet. The effectiveness of the Code of Practice is being closely monitored. A review will be conducted in October 1998.

- 1996 6. To explore with tertiary educational institutions the possibility of developing training programmes for the film industry. The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts (HKAPA) has agreed in principle to conduct a short-term training programme on digital editing technology for the film industry in July 1999.

The film industry and the HKAPA will jointly organise a two-day conference on digital technology in April 1999.

- 1996 7. To consider measures to make it more convenient to shoot films in Hong Kong, such as providing a comprehensive database to facilitate film production. The Information Services Department has established a computerised database on all local rules and regulations on location shooting, which was launched on Government HomePage in October 1997. The Department also updated and published the "Guide to Filming in Hong Kong" in December 1997.

The Film Services Office established a resource centre on film production services in Hong Kong in June 1998.

Good progress has been made with the following commitments in the past year. We will continue to work on them on an on-going basis.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Pledge</i>
1996	8. To consider measures to make it more convenient to shoot films in Hong Kong, such as streamlining the procedures and regulations for location shooting in the territory.
1996	9. To extend our enforcement action against breaches of the law to cover electronic publishing such as Video Compact Discs and Digital Compact Discs. Our purpose is to protect public decency without compromising freedom of expression.
1996	10. To strengthen public education by producing Announcements of Public Interest, distributing publicity leaflets and organising briefings to enhance public awareness of the provisions of the Control of Obscene and Indecent Articles Ordinance.

Application of Information Technology within Government

<i>Year</i>	<i>Pledge</i>	<i>Present Position</i>
Action Completed		
1996	1. To complete the first batch of the second phase of the Government Office Automation (GOA) Programme, involving 22 departments, by the end of 1996.	Roll out to the first batch of 22 departments under the second phase of the GOA Programme was completed in June 1998.

Action in Progress : On Schedule

1997	2. To strengthen the use of Internet technology for improving communication within Government and for providing better services to the public, in the light of the results of the studies on the legal, security and technical issues involved in the wider use of the Internet for the delivery of government services.	<p>We issued the technical standards and guidelines for the use of Internet technology within the Government in September 1998.</p> <p>We also launched the pilot scheme on providing Internet e-mail services on the Government Communication Network in August 1998.</p>
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| 1997 | 3. | To extend the GOA Programme to cover the whole of Government by 2000. By the end of 1998, seven more government departments will join the Programme. | Funding approval for seven departments has been obtained. Implementation work for two of the departments has been completed and that for the other five departments will be completed by December 1998. |
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Good progress has been made with the following commitment in the past year. We will continue to work on it on an on-going basis.

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| <i>Year</i> | <i>Pledge</i> | |
| 1997 | 4. | To accept, starting from 1998, on-line applications for certain licences through the Internet. |

Telecommunications

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| Action Completed | | |
| 1997 | 1. | To implement by 1 January 1998 all Hong Kong's commitments in the agreement on the liberalisation of trade in telecommunications services under the auspices of the World Trade Organisation. |
| | | All commitments had been implemented by 1 January 1998. |
| 1997 | 2. | To continue to monitor and review developments in the international accounting rate system for international telephone services and modify the regulatory framework where necessary to cope with the changes to safeguard the interests of operators and consumers. |
| | | A review of the delivery fee system in Hong Kong to cope with future development of the international accounting rate system was conducted in February 1998. The Telecommunications Authority (TA) promulgated his initial decisions in September 1998. |

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| 1996 | 3. | To consider in 1997-1998 auctioning off special telephone numbers for charitable purposes. | The proposal to empower the TA to auction off special telephone numbers has been included in the consultation paper on the Review of Fixed Telecommunications published on 3 September 1998. |
| 1996 | 4. | To enter into a dialogue with Hong Kong Telecom International Limited (HKTI) on the existing arrangements for Hong Kong's international telecommunications sector and whether these are conducive to maintaining Hong Kong as the pre-eminent telecommunications hub in the Asia-Pacific region. | HKTI surrendered its exclusive licence to Government on 31 March 1998. |

Action in Progress : On Schedule

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| 1997 | 5. | To develop and implement a regulatory framework for telecommunications services in 1998 to ensure that Hong Kong will continue to have a world class telecommunications infrastructure capable of meeting the needs of the community. | Proposals relating to improvements to the regulatory framework have been included in the consultation paper on the Review of Fixed Telecommunications published on 3 September 1998. |
| 1997 | 6. | To conduct a feasibility study in late 1997 on "number portability" with a view to introducing a new service which will enable mobile telephone customers to change service providers without the need to change telephone numbers. | Following a decision by the TA in June 1998, it is now planned to introduce the service in March 1999. |

Action in Progress : Under Review

1995	7.	To grant licences to operate the new Cordless Access Services.	Suspended due to inadequate consumer demand for these services.
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Good progress has been made with the following commitments in the past year. We will continue to work on them on an on-going basis.

<i>Year</i>		<i>Pledge</i>	
1995	8.	To review current arrangements for allocating and managing radio frequencies to ensure their optimal use.	
1993	9.	To encourage the flow of a wider range of telecommunications services across the boundary.	