

BFAC appreciates Government's efforts in facilitating application of innovation and technology

The following is issued on behalf of the Business Facilitation Advisory Committee Secretariat:

The Business Facilitation Advisory Committee held its 40th meeting today (August 28). At the meeting, members received a briefing from the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department on the E&M InnoPortal.

The platform collects from government departments, public organisations and the electrical and mechanical trade their needs for various technologies for the innovation and technology (I&T) sector, including start-ups and academic institutions, to offer corresponding I&T solutions to match such needs. The platform not only promotes the commercialisation of the results of research and development, but also facilitates government departments and public organisations identify I&T solutions through the application of new technologies, thus promoting the development of a smart city.

The Committee appreciated the Government's efforts in promoting local I&T development, facilitating the application of I&T in the Government and enhancing public service through launching of the platform.

The Committee also noted the work of its three task forces:

Wholesale and Retail Task Force (WRTF)

- The Trade and Industry Department briefed members on the funding schemes administered by the department and the enhancement measures. The WRTF welcomed the funding schemes which assisted Hong Kong enterprises, in particular small and medium enterprises, in obtaining finance, exploring export markets and enhancing their overall competitiveness.
- The Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB) briefed the WRTF on its work plan for 2019-20. The WRTF appreciated the HKTB's initiatives and efforts in promoting diversified tourism and maintaining visitor satisfaction levels. The WRTF also considered that the Government should implement measures to facilitate the retail industry to boost sales.

Food Business and Related Services Task Force (FRSTF)

- The Labour Department explained to the FRSTF the statutory requirement of the relevant occupational safety and health law in regard to fire precautions to facilitate the trade's compliance.
- In light of the latest business operation, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) explained the relaxed licensing requirement for eating and drinking utensils for takeaway foods for relevant food

business licences. This allows the trade greater flexibility in meeting actual operational needs.

- In order to foster the trade to further apply innovation and technology to enhance efficiency in business operation, the Hong Kong Applied Science and Technology Research Institute introduced its service offerings and how businesses can partner with it on new research and development (R&D) initiatives.
- The FRSTF appreciated the departments' and organisation's efforts in explaining the various regulatory requirements, responding to their enquiries and listening to their concerns; as well as introducing the new channel to embark on R&D projects.

Task Force on Business Liaison Groups (BLGTF)

- The Innovation and Technology Commission briefed the BLGTF on the Technology Voucher Programme and a series of enhancement measures being introduced. The BLGTF welcomed the Government's enhancement measures, which could encourage wider adoption of technology solutions by the trades to improve efficiency and their services.
- The Home Affairs Department briefed members on the mechanism and arrangements for exemption of eligible e-sports venues from the requirements of the Amusement Game Centre Licence to promote the development of e-sports. The FEHD, in collaboration with the Buildings Department and the Fire Services Department, provided a briefing on the new business facilitation measures to respond to the trade's expectations to expedite the processing of cinema licence renewal applications.
- The BLGTF thanked the departments concerned for their efforts in implementing these measures to facilitate the development of the e-sports and cinema industry.

The Committee also expressed appreciation of the commitment and achievements of the bureaux and departments in further enhancing their business licensing services under the "Be the Smart Regulator" Programme.

Papers for the Committee meeting are available at www.gov.hk/en/business/supportenterprises/bf/advisory/index.htm for public access.