

LCQ19: Implementing e-Government services

Following is a question by the Hon Dominic Lee and a written reply by the Acting Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry, Ms Lillian Cheong, in the Legislative Council today (November 6):

Question:

In September this year, members of the Panel on Transport of this Council conducted a duty visit to Shanghai and Hangzhou. During the duty visit, I have learnt that the Shanghai Municipal People's Government accepts the presentation of electronic versions of identity cards on mobile phones by members of the public as legal identity documents. On implementing e-Government services, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether it will, by drawing reference from the experiences of some Mainland cities, consider amending the legislation to accept Hong Kong identity cards presented by members of the public on designated mobile applications (e.g. "iAM Smart") as legal identity documents, so that members of the public do not need to carry physical Hong Kong identity cards when they go out, thus making their daily lives more convenient; and

(2) as the authorities indicated in January this year that they planned to introduce electronic driving licenses between the middle of this year and early next year, of the specific implementation date for the measure, and how the authorities plan to promote it to motorists?

Reply:

President,

Having consulted the Security Bureau and the Transport and Logistics Bureau, a consolidated reply in response to the questions raised by the Hon Dominic Lee is as follows:

(1) Hong Kong Identity Card (HKIC) is a document widely accepted for proving the identity of the cardholder in Hong Kong. Section 17C of the Immigration Ordinance (Cap. 115) stipulates that every person who has attained the age of 15 years and is the holder of an identity card or is required to apply to be registered under the Registration of Persons Ordinance (Cap. 177) shall have with him at all times proof of his identity. According to Section 17B(1) of the Immigration Ordinance, proof of identity includes, but is not limited to, his valid HKIC.

Besides, citizens may need to produce ones' proof of identity for identity verification based on individual circumstances (such as assisting public officers to enforce the laws or accessing Government-related services).

As for the implementation of electronic HKIC, due to the need to consider many complicated factors, relevant government departments will study the feasibility to explore the way forward.

(2) Relevant departments, including the Transport Department (TD) and the Department of Justice, etc. are carrying out the law drafting work for implementing electronic driving licence (DL), and will strive to introduce the bill to the Legislative Council as soon as possible, with a view to launching electronic DL within 2025. DL holders can then choose to carry either a physical DL or log in to a dedicated mobile application through "iAM Smart" or e-licensing portal to be launched by the TD to display the electronic DL on their smartphones. Upon the passage of the legislative amendments, the TD will promote the electronic DL to the public, in particular the DL holders, which include providing tutorial video on the website of the TD and relevant departments, producing promotional banners and leaflets, etc.