

Index Page

**Reply to initial written question raised by Finance Committee Members in examining
the Estimates of Expenditure 2025-26**

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development

Session No. : 18

Consolidated e-file name : IPD-1-e1.docx

Reply Serial No.	Question Serial No.	Name of Member	Head	Programme
<u>CEDB114</u>	0776	LIAO Cheung- kong, Martin	78	(2) Protection of Intellectual Property

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

CEDB114

(Question Serial No. 0776)

Head: (78) Intellectual Property Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) -

Programme: (2) Protection of Intellectual Property

Controlling Officer: Director of Intellectual Property (David WONG Fuk-loi)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development

Question:

As pointed out in the Aim of the Intellectual Property Department (IPD), particular attention is paid to providing support for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to help them identify, protect, manage, exploit and commercialise their intellectual property (IP) assets in Hong Kong and in the region. In this connection, please advise this Committee of:

- (1) the details of the publicity and educational activities to be organised in 2025-26 for SMEs with special emphasis on the protection, management and commercialisation of IP assets, as well as the expenditure and manpower arrangements involved; and
- (2) The Matters Requiring Special Attention by IPD in 2025-26 include continuing to provide support to the business community in strengthening their IP protection, management and commercialisation in the Mainland (including the Greater Bay Area) through the Guangdong/Hong Kong Expert Group on the Protection of IP Rights. What are the details of the relevant activities in 2024-25 and the results achieved? What are the main difficulties encountered by Hong Kong enterprises in the Mainland in relation to IP? Will enhancement measures be introduced in light of such difficulties? If yes, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon LIAO Cheung-kong, Martin (LegCo internal reference no.: 14)

Reply:

The Intellectual Property Department (IPD) has been organising intellectual property (IP) training courses and practical workshops for Hong Kong enterprises including small and medium enterprises (SMEs), and providing them with the free IP Consultation Service. The IPD has also collaborated with different stakeholders to promote IP protection, management and commercialisation through various activities. Details are as follows:

- The IPD launched the IP Manager Scheme in May 2015 with a view to enhancing SMEs' IP manpower capacity and boosting their competitiveness through IP management and commercialisation. To meet the development needs of the enterprises, the IPD launched the IP Manager Scheme PLUS in October 2020 to provide more comprehensive and in-

depth IP training courses and practical workshops. As at end-February 2025, more than 9 300 practitioners had participated in such training. The IPD will continue to enhance the above Scheme and training courses, and enrich their contents to provide suitable IP training to different sectors. It is expected that the training courses and practical workshops will continue to attract more than 1 000 participants in the 2025-26 financial year.

- Since December 2014, the IPD has been collaborating with the Law Society of Hong Kong to provide the free IP Consultation Service for SMEs. The Service has been enhanced since January 2023, with an increase in the number of lawyers on the team and an extension of the duration of each consultation session. As at end-February 2025, a total of 731 SMEs had used the relevant Service.
- The Government has continued to co-organise the annual Business of IP Asia Forum (BIP Asia Forum) with the Hong Kong Trade Development Council. The 2024 Forum was held on 5 and 6 December and attracted over 3 000 participants from 36 countries and regions, including leaders of the World Intellectual Property Organization and the China National Intellectual Property Administration, as well as IP experts from the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. The IPD will continue to support the BIP Asia Forum with the addition of new features to provide an excellent platform for IP authorities, experts, practitioners and trading partners from different regions around the world to exchange views on the latest developments of IP-related issues and explore more opportunities for co-operation and development for the industry. The 2025 Forum will be held in December 2025.
- To strengthen the promotion of the national support for Hong Kong to develop into a regional IP trading centre under the National 14th Five-Year Plan and Hong Kong's competitive edge in IP trading, the IPD has been working with the Radio Television Hong Kong since 2022 to produce a television series entitled "IP: New Opportunities" with a total of 22 episodes in 3 seasons. Another new season of television programme is being planned for broadcasting in 2025-26.

Guangdong-Hong Kong co-operation in IP protection

Under the framework of the Guangdong/Hong Kong Expert Group on the Protection of Intellectual Property Rights (the Expert Group), the IPD has been collaborating with various cities in the Guangdong Province in organising a variety of activities to support the business community (including SMEs) in strengthening IP protection and management for their Mainland operations, including the annual Guangdong/Hong Kong Seminar on Intellectual Property and Development of Small and Medium Enterprises. The seminar invites various expert speakers from Hong Kong and the Mainland specialising in different fields (including arbitration and mediation) to deliver speeches in cities in the Guangdong Province, with the aim of assisting the business community (including SMEs) in devising effective IP management, exploitation and commercialisation strategies, so as to better understand and capitalise on the opportunities offered by the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) as well as promote the enterprises' innovation and development, and also enhance their competitiveness. The feedback indicated that nearly 70% of the participants considered these seminars conducive to strengthening SMEs' awareness of IP protection.

Other key co-operation projects include promoting co-operation and exchanges in the high-quality development of the GBA; promoting the integration of public IP services into the process of research and development and innovation; jointly strengthening co-operation and exchanges in IP transformation; promoting diversified resolution of IP disputes; organising major annual events such as the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area High-value Patent Portfolio Layout Competition and the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area High-value Trade mark Cultivation Competition; and organising exchange activities relating to IP protection, trade marks, copyright and geographical indications.

In addition, the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Guangdong of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government also organises seminars from time to time to assist Hong Kong enterprises in the Guangdong Province to understand the relevant IP laws. For instance, a seminar entitled “New Trends in the Business Environment in Guangdong 2025” was held in Guangzhou on 14 January 2025. Expert speakers were invited to give an introduction of the latest amendments to the Mainland’s Trade Mark Law, recent development in trade mark protection and relevant cases.

In recent years, the Mainland has attached great importance to and vigorously strengthened IP protection, and optimised the environment for innovation and technology as well as business operation, which has significantly helped mitigate the IP protection issues encountered by the Hong Kong business community in running their businesses in the Mainland. So far, the Expert Group has not received any reports from the Hong Kong business community concerning major difficulties in IP protection, management and commercialisation in the Mainland (including the GBA). The HKSAR Government will continue to provide appropriate support to the Hong Kong business community in the Guangdong Province.

Promoting IP trading is part of the overall work of the IPD. It is therefore difficult to quantify the resources involved separately.

- End -