

APEC Workshop on Effective Strategies for IPR public education

The Intellectual Property Department, IP Australia and the Intellectual Property Office of Singapore have jointly organised a three-day regional workshop to equip developing APEC member economies with the skills, tools and resources to implement public education and awareness campaigns promoting the protection and enforcement of Intellectual Property Rights in the region.

Speaking at the workshop opening ceremony today (November 8), the Permanent Secretary for Commerce, Industry and Technology (Commerce and Industry), Miss Yvonne Choi, shared Hong Kong's experience in intellectual property protection. She said that attacking the suppliers of pirated and counterfeit goods without addressing the demand side would not be a sustainable policy.

“There was never a time or place where an activity could be eradicated if there was an unlimited market demand for it. This has led us to develop an ongoing and sophisticated public education programme for Hong Kong,” Miss Choi said.

“Our Intellectual Property Department has built up close partnership with the rights owners in Hong Kong on the public education front, to cultivate a culture of respect for Intellectual Property Rights in the community.”

She said different activities were organised, ranging from sector-specific programmes such as school-based visits and business-targeted events to territory-wide campaigns, to educate Hong Kong's younger generation against Internet Piracy.

On the enforcement front, Miss Choi said Hong Kong's effective enforcement efforts were backed up by a comprehensive legal framework for intellectual property protection.

“ We review our legislation from time to time to keep it in line with latest social and technological developments.”

Also speaking at the opening ceremony, Chairman of APEC Intellectual Property Rights Experts' Group, Mr Sivakant Tiwari, said recognising that public awareness and education was a key step to rally a positive national response to an economy's IP development agenda, the APEC Anti-Counterfeiting and Piracy Initiative aimed to help bolster capabilities among the APEC economies on how to design and implement effective public outreach campaigns.

“Economies need to understand the developmental cycle and over time, deploy appropriate strategies and tactics in their public awareness and education campaigns. You will also need to develop core professional competencies to carry on the work,” he said.

Entitled “Effective Strategies for IPR Public Education”, the workshop is one of the major IP events in the region and partly financed by APEC. It brings together government administrators and officials from 17 APEC member economies, representatives from APEC’s Intellectual Property Rights Experts' Group, as well as experts from local IP-related organisations to share experience, skills, tools, and resources in intellectual property protection and promotion.