

SCIT launches IPD Open Days

The Government was working on a package of legislative amendments to improve the Copyright Ordinance, the Secretary for Commerce, Industry and Technology, Mr Joseph WP Wong, said today (February 28).

In formulating legislative proposals to strengthen Hong Kong's intellectual property regime, the Government will strike the right balance between providing effective protection for the rights of copyright owners and the legitimate uses of copyright works by the public, Mr Wong said.

Speaking at the opening ceremony of the Intellectual Property Department Open Days, Mr Wong noted that to enable our economy to benefit from innovations and creativity, the Government needed to provide a robust IP protection regime.

To this end, the Government was continuing our efforts to safeguard the interests of IP owners on three fronts.

"Firstly, we are committed to providing a legal framework for the protection of IP rights which reflect the latest social and technological developments. In this regard, we are working on a package of legislative amendments to improve the Copyright Ordinance.

"In coming up with the legislative proposals, we have received a lot of valuable feedback and comments from stakeholder groups, including owners and users of copyright works. We aim to present a package of legislative amendments which we will strike the right balance between providing effective protection for the rights of copyright owners on the one hand and not undermining the legitimate uses of copyright works by members of the public on the other.

"Secondly, we have been taking vigorous enforcement action against piracy and counterfeiting activities," Mr Wong said, adding that the third component was to increase the awareness of and respect for IP rights in the community.

The theme of the Open Days is "Intellectual Property and Education". They run from today (February 28) to Thursday (March 2) for invited guests.

At today's opening ceremony, Mr Wong also endorsed IPD's efforts to create a

community value for IP, with work targeting schools, SMEs, young people, the general public, businessmen and trainee IP professionals.

Another trendsetting activity for IPD is its e-business model. IPD's e-business model has the vision of bringing together rule-based processes, IT and users for the best possible outcome. Requests for renewal of trademarks and patents as well as changes of a registrant's name are now executed instantaneously online.

"IPD first rolled out its electronic services in 2003 and has been enhancing these services over the years," said Mr Wong. IPD's system can now provide web-based electronic searches of the register, electronic filing of applications for registration, electronic publication for applications for registration, as well as real-time renewal of trademarks and patents and changes of a registrant's names.

The IPD held its third Open Day today during which 20 e-filers were awarded "Top e-Filers" plaques at a presentation ceremony in recognition of their high volume in electronic filing. Use of e-filing for trademark applications has reached 62%.

During the Open Days, the Chairman of the Hong Kong Intellectual Property Society, Mrs Selina Chow, presented practising certificates to four Hong Kong residents who had passed the Chinese National Qualification Examination for Patents Agents following the opening up of the Mainland patent agency services under the CEPA.

About 240 guests participated in the first Open Day today. They included the major stakeholders in IP industry (legal community and related IP associations), academics, guests from Guangdong Province, consulate staff and representatives from the public sector. This is the first time the IPD Open Day is extended to three days, so that more stakeholders in the education, business and government sectors can have a chance to take part.

For details of the Open Days, please visit the IPD's website at www.ipd.gov.hk.

Ends

Tuesday, February 28, 2006