



公 司 註 冊 處
COMPANIES REGISTRY

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金鐘道政府合署十五樓

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15 February 2005

COMPANIES REGISTRY EXTERNAL CIRCULAR NO. 1 / 2005

Implementation of Phase One of the Integrated Companies Registry Information System – Introduction of new Companies Registry Electronic Search Services on 28 February 2005

This circular is to announce the implementation of new electronic search services to be provided by the Companies Registry with effect from 28 February 2005 and to introduce the operation of the Companies Registry Electronic Search Services.

BACKGROUND

2. The Companies Registry (CR) is fully committed to continuously improving its services and facilities and providing customers with efficient, quality and cost effective services. In this respect, the CR has been implementing an Integrated Companies Registry Information System (ICRIS) which will replace all the existing application systems to support the department's core business activities and enable fully electronic service delivery. All microfilm records of documents registered and kept by the Registrar of Companies (the Registrar) have been converted into electronic images for online inspection.

IMPLEMENTATION

3. The new Companies Registry Electronic Search Services (the e-Search Services) will commence at 9:00 a.m. (Hong Kong time) on **28 February 2005**. Customers may conduct searches online in English or Chinese through the CR's Cyber Search Centre under ICRIS. Information search on the current data of companies and image records of documents registered and kept by the Registrar will be available.

Cyber Search Centre

4. Customers may visit the Cyber Search Centre on the internet (website: <http://www.icris.cr.gov.hk> or through a hyperlink on the CR's website: <http://www.info.gov.hk/cr/>) to obtain the e-Search Services anytime anywhere. Customers may also conduct company searches at the CR's Public Search Centre at the 13th Floor, Queensway Government Offices, 66 Queensway, Hong Kong.

SCOPE OF THE NEW SERVICES

Search Modes

5. The search modes provided are as follows:-

(a) ***Internet Search***

Customers can access the Cyber Search Centre on the internet on a 24 hour seven day week basis. Most of the search results can either be viewed online or downloaded from a designated and secure download area. Frequent online users can register with the Registrar as Registered Online Users to inspect or obtain documents and records kept by the Registrar. Unregistered Online Users can login and conduct searches on an ad hoc basis.

(b) ***On-site Search***

Customers may use the search facilities provided by the CR. Search stations with personal computers and printers have been set up at the CR's Public Search Centre which will open from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on weekdays and 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon on Saturdays, except public holidays. Search results, other than those conducted on the computerized indices, are mainly delivered in the form of hard copies. Computer print-out reports such as company particulars reports may be instantly printed upon payment (by Octopus) at the search stations, while others will be available for collection at the Collection Counter of the Public Search Centre on the specified date and time.

Services Available

6. The details of the e-Search Services available are as follows:-

(a) ***Company Name Search***

This search gives information on the names of both existing and dissolved companies incorporated and registered with the CR. Basic information such as date of incorporation / registration, company name change history, company status, winding-up mode, charges indicator and place of incorporation (for overseas companies only) will be provided. Customers can conduct a company name search by using the left partial search or exact name search which are both free of charge. Registered Online Users can, in addition to the above search methods, use keyword search (a payable service) to search company names.

(b) ***Document Index Search***

This is a free search which gives information on the description, filing date, file size, and the processing status of documents kept by the Registrar, whether registered or pending registration.

(c) ***Image Record Search***

Over 80 million images of company documents registered and kept by the Registrar are available for search. This search requires the payment of fees on a 'per document' basis.

(d) *Directors Index Search*

This search provides a list of all current directors of a selected company (company based search), a list of all the current directorships of a person in all registered companies (director based search) or the particulars of a selected director of a company (director particulars search). This is a payable search.

(e) *Company Particulars Search*

This search gives a summary of the key information of a selected company. In addition to the basic information available in the Company Name Search, a Company Particulars Report will provide information such as the company's registered office address, share capital structure (for local companies), names of current directors, particulars of secretary, particulars of authorized representatives (for oversea companies only), particulars of receiver and manager (if applicable) and particulars of liquidators (if applicable). This is a payable search.

(f) *Register of Disqualification Orders Search*

This search includes an Index of Disqualification Orders Search and a Disqualification Order Particulars Search. The Index displays the names of all individuals and corporate bodies who / which are currently disqualified to act as directors or in other specified offices. A search on the Index is free of charge. Particulars of the disqualification order made against a specific person or body corporate selected from the Index can be obtained after payment of the service fee.

(g) *Register of Charges Search*

This search includes an Index on Register of Charges Search and an Image Record Search. The Index gives a list of the registered charges of a selected company and provides basic information on each charge such as a brief description and the date of creation and registration. Customers can choose to view the descriptions of the documents relating to the registered charges on the list. The Index Search is free of charge. Images of the selected documents can be obtained after payment of the service fees.

(h) *Ordering Certified copies*

Certified copies will be printed on A4 size papers specially printed by the CR and issued with the Registrar's printed signature on the back page of the last sheet. Customers can order certified copies of image records or reports online. However, the certified copies either have to be collected in person from the CR's Public Search Centre or delivered by post or by courier subject to the payment of handling charges.

(i) *Ordering Other Products*

This service allows customers to place orders online for designated products such as a certificate under section 305(1) of the Companies Ordinance, a list of a specific company type, a list of newly incorporated / registered companies, a list of oversea companies of a selected place of incorporation etc.

(j) *Ordering Transaction Listing Statement*

The transaction listing statement shows the transaction details including the search keys and the charges for each transaction. Registered Online Users can order the statement for a specific period up to the last three months. Onsite Users and Unregistered Online Users can order this statement before they log out the system. This is a payable service.

SERVICE CHARGES

7. The service charges for online searches conducted on the internet will generally be lower than those for searches conducted on-site at the CR's Public Search Centre. The price list for e-Search Services is at *Annex 1*.

REGISTRATION

8. Customers conducting searches on a regular basis are encouraged to register with the Registrar to use the e-Search Services. Applications for registration can be made by post or on the internet. Application forms are now available at the Information Counter of the Public Search Centre at the 13th Floor, Queensway Government Offices. The form can also be downloaded from the CR's website (<http://www.info.gov.hk/cr/>).

9. Customers who wish to start using the e-Search Services on 28 February 2005 as Registered Online Users are advised to submit their applications online. Applicants can settle payment of the initial annual fees and the prepayment (amount to be determined by the applicants) through online payment channels to enable instant clearance of payment and complete the registration process.

ELECTRONIC PAYMENT

10. Payment for services provided or ordered at the Cyber Search Centre can be made electronically on the internet. Service fees payable by Registered Online Users can be deducted from the prepayment kept in their accounts. Unregistered Online users can pay service fees by using VISA / MasterCard or by direct debit through PPS or JETCO on the internet. On-site Users can pay by using their Octopus cards at the search stations or pay at the Shroff Office in the Public Search Centre by cash, cheque, Octopus or EPS.

EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS

11. Customers conducting internet searches will need a personal computer with internet access, preferably broadband connection as the time for downloading image records will be affected by the connection bandwidth. The details are set out in *Annex 2*. Please refer to the CR's website for updated requirements or changes in the future.

CUSTOMER SERVICE SUPPORT

12. A CD-ROM with step-by-step demonstration on the use of the search functions and services (English version) is now available at the Information Counter of the Public Search Centre at the 13th Floor Queensway Government Offices until stock lasts. A Help Desk Support Service Team will be available from 28 February 2005 to assist customers in using the e-Search Services around the clock. Online Users can also obtain information of the search methods at the Cyber Search Centre by choosing "Online Tutorial" from "About e-Search" on the user's menu. Initially, the "Online Tutorial" will be provided in English only. The Chinese version will be released later. On-site users may contact CR's staff at the Public Search Centre for assistance.

TERMINATION OF SERVICES

13. Public search services under the existing search system and the Companies Registry On-line Public Search System (CROPS) will continue until the close of the respective service hours on Saturday, 26 February 2005.

ENQUIRIES

14. Enquiries concerning this circular should be directed to any of the following officers of the Companies Registry:-

Officer	Post	Subject	Telephone No.
Ms D Y LUK	Assistant Registry Manager (Customer Services)	for enquiries on general matters	(852) 2867 4570
Miss Nancy YAU	Assistant Registry Manager (Public Search)	for enquiries on the use of the e-Search Services	(852) 2867 2567
Mrs Alison KWOK	Deputy Registry Manager (Public Search)		(852) 2867 2594
Mr B S FUNG	Deputy Business Manager	for enquiries on the registration procedures and payment for the e-Search Services	(852) 2867 4906

G W E JONES
Registrar of Companies

c.c. CR/HQ/1/110/43/3 (III)

Companies Registry Electronic Search Services

Price List

(Effective 28 February 2005)

1. Free Search

- Company Name Search (left partial match or exact name match)
- Document Index Search
- Register of Disqualification Orders Index Search
- Register of Charges Index Search

2. Registration as a Registered On-line User

HK\$

- Principal account, per year 500
- Each subsequent account, per year 100

3. Screen Search

- Company Particulars Search, per company 22
- Directors Index Search (Company Based), per company 11
- Director Particulars Search, per director 11
- Directors Index Search (Director Based), per director 22
- Disqualification Order Particulars Search, per disqualified person 11

4. Image Record Search (per document)

(A) For Registered On-line Users

(1) Downloading an image record of:

- prospectus, accounts, memorandum, articles, memorandum and articles, charter, statutes or the like 21
- an annual return or a form for application for registration of an oversea company 16
- a document in the register of charges 9
- any other document 9

(2) On-line viewing an image record of:

- prospectus, accounts, memorandum, articles, memorandum and articles, charter, statutes or the like 26
- an annual return or a form for application for registration of an oversea company 21
- a document in the register of charges 12
- any other document 12

(B) For Unregistered On-line Users

(1) Downloading an image record of:	
- prospectus, accounts, memorandum, articles, memorandum and articles, charter, statutes or the like.....	23
- an annual return or a form for application for registration of an overseas company	18
- a document in the register of charges	10
- any other document	10
(2) On-line viewing an image record of:	
- prospectus, accounts, memorandum, articles, memorandum and articles, charter, statutes or the like.....	29
- an annual return or a form for application for registration of an overseas company	23
- a document in the register of charges	13
- any other document	13

(C) For On-site Users

Obtaining a copy of an image record of:	
- prospectus, accounts, memorandum, articles, memorandum and articles, charter, statutes or the like.....	35
- an annual return or a form for application for registration of an overseas company	30
- a document in the register of charges	20
- any other document	20

(D) Inspecting any document where an image record is not available, per document	20
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5. Certificates / Certified Copies

(A) Obtaining a certificate issued under s.305(1)	170
(B) Obtaining a certified copy of or extract from a document, report or print out	
- Certifying fee (excluding the fee for the document, report or print out)	130

Note:

This is only a summary of the major service fees charged for using the Companies Registry Electronic Search Services and is not meant to be comprehensive.

Companies Registry Electronic Search Services Equipment Requirements

Minimum Configuration		
Hardware		Software
CPU	Pentium III 500MHz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Microsoft Windows 2000 or Microsoft Chinese Windows 2000 ▪ Microsoft IE 6.0 SP1 ▪ Installed with Microsoft Hong Kong Supplementary Character Set (HKSCS) (downloadable from Microsoft's website) ▪ To view an image record on-line, TIFF viewer plug-in for browser is required. ▪ Unzip tool ▪ For payment by direct debit through JETCO or PPS on the internet, Sun JVM / Microsoft JVM is required.
Memory	128MB	
Available Hard Disk Space	256MB	
Modem	56K dial-up	
Display	800 x 600 resolution	
Suggested Configuration		
CPU	Pentium III 1GHz or above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Microsoft Windows XP or Microsoft Chinese Windows XP ▪ Microsoft IE 6.0 SP1 ▪ Installed with Microsoft Hong Kong Supplementary Character Set (HKSCS) (downloadable from Microsoft's website) ▪ To view an image record on-line, TIFF viewer plug-in for browser is required. ▪ Unzip tool ▪ For payment by direct debit through JETCO or PPS on the internet, Sun JVM / Microsoft JVM is required.
Memory	256MB or above	
Available Hard Disk Space	500MB or above	
Modem	Broadband	
Display	800 x 600 resolution	

Notes:

1. Customers are responsible for installing their own computer equipment and software, and arranging internet connection to access the electronic search services provided by the Companies Registry at the Cyber Search Centre (website: <http://www.icris.cr.gov.hk>).
2. Customers with computer equipment that meets the minimum configuration should be able to use the electronic search services. However, customers are strongly recommended to use computer equipment that meets the suggested configuration if they need to download document images and records of considerable file sizes.