

The Companies Registry (“the Registry”) administers and enforces the provisions of the Companies Ordinance and related ordinances. The Registry registers local and non-Hong Kong companies and documents required to be filed under the Companies Ordinance and related ordinances; de-registers defunct solvent private companies and provides the public with services and facilities for inspecting and obtaining company information kept by the Registry. The Registry also advises the Government on policy, regulatory and legislative issues regarding company law and related legislation, corporate governance and other matters affecting the commercial sector.

The Registry has always been fully committed to providing efficient, quality and cost-effective services to customers. In late February 2005, the Registry implemented the Integrated Companies Registry Information System which transformed its core business activities and enabled the delivery of 24x7 electronic search services through the Cyber Search Centre (www.icris.cr.gov.hk). The online search services have been well received by customers and more than 99 per cent of all company searches are conducted online. The roll-out of the company search mobile service (www.mobile-cr.gov.hk) in June 2012 marks another milestone in the technological enhancement of the Registry’s services.

With the introduction of the one-stop electronic company incorporation and business registration service at the e-Registry portal (www.eregistry.gov.hk) in March 2011, an electronic Certificate of Incorporation and Business Registration Certificate can normally be issued in one go in less than an hour after receipt of an application. In February 2012, the Registry extended its e-Filing services to include the submission of specified forms for reporting changes of company information (including changes of registered office address, directors/company secretaries and their particulars and share capital). The electronic service for submission of annual returns for local private companies and the Annual Return e-Reminder Service have been available since August 2012.

The new Companies Ordinance was passed by the Legislative Council on 12 July 2012. It modernises the legal framework for the operation of companies in Hong Kong, thereby increases Hong Kong’s competitiveness as an international business and financial centre. The implementation of the new Companies Ordinance will entail a number of new roles and functions for the Registry. The new Companies Ordinance will commence operation in 2014.

