

Standing arrangement for Mutual Recognition of Electronic Signature Certificates Issued by Hong Kong and Guangdong announced (with photo)

10 Aug 2012

The Mutual Recognition of Electronic Signature Certificates Issued by Hong Kong and Guangdong was made a standing arrangement today (August 10). Recognised certification authorities (CAs) in the two places can apply to issue electronic signature certificates with mutual recognition status starting from today.

Mutually recognised electronic signature certificates will be legally protected in Hong Kong and Guangdong within the scope of the related laws and regulations.

Electronic signatures generated from the certificates issued by Guangdong's recognised CAs and in compliance with the Certificate Policy for Mutual Recognition of Electronic Signature Certificates Issued by Hong Kong and Guangdong (Mutual Recognition Certificate Policy) shall have the same legal status as that of handwritten signatures within the applicable scope of the Electronic Transactions Ordinance in Hong Kong. Similarly, recognised electronic signature certificates issued by Hong Kong's recognised CAs and in compliance with the same Mutual Recognition Certificate Policy shall have a legal status within Guangdong Province equal to that of the certificates issued by Guangdong's recognised CAs within the applicable scope of the Electronic Signature Law of the People's Republic of China.

A spokesman for the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) said, "We hope that with the standing arrangement, and especially the legal protection, in place, the Mutual Recognition of Electronic Signature Certificates Issued by Hong Kong and Guangdong will be well received by the public and continue to thrive. The arrangement will help enhance the security and reliability of electronic information exchange between Hong Kong and Guangdong. This can further the development of e-commerce and cross-boundary trade, and drive Hong Kong's long-term economic development."

The Mutual Recognition of Electronic Signature Certificates Issued by Hong Kong and Guangdong is a measure under Supplement V to the Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement for early and pilot implementation in Guangdong. After the announcement of the Application Procedure for Pilot Project on Mutual Recognition of Electronic Signature Certificates Issued by Hong Kong and

Guangdong in April 2010, CAs in the two places launched pilot projects and gained experience in mutual recognition of electronic signature certificates.

With reference to the experience gained from the pilot projects, the governments of Hong Kong and Guangdong developed the Arrangement for Mutual Recognition of Electronic Signature Certificates Issued by Hong Kong and Guangdong (Arrangement), which provided the basis for the mutual recognition in the two places.

To tie in with the Arrangement, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government revised the Code of Practice for Recognized Certification Authorities (COP) published under the Electronic Transactions Ordinance (Cap. 553) and published it in the Government Gazette on July 6, 2012. Based on the revised COP, the OGCIO today published the [Arrangement](#) and the [Mutual Recognition Certificate Policy](#) as required under the Arrangement.

Recognised CAs in Hong Kong can now submit applications to the OGCIO (Certification Authority Recognition Office) for issuing recognised electronic signature certificates with mutual recognition status. For details of the application procedures and the Arrangement, please visit www.ogcio.gov.hk/en/business/mainland/hk_guangdong_ecert_recognition.htm.

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The Government Chief Information Officer, Mr Daniel Lai (second right), and the Deputy Director-General of the Economic and Information Commission of Guangdong Province, Dr Zou Sheng (second left), announced the standing arrangement for Mutual Recognition of Electronic Signature Certificates Issued by Hong Kong and Guangdong at a press conference in Guangzhou today (August 10).