

**For discussion on
2 June 2025**

**Legislative Council Panel on
Administration of Justice and Legal Services**

Promoting LawTech

Purpose

This paper seeks to brief Members on the latest progress for promoting the development of LawTech (including those powered by artificial intelligence and generative artificial intelligence (“AI / Gen AI”))¹ in Hong Kong and strategies to be undertaken by the Department of Justice (“DoJ”) to foster the growth of legal technology and its adoption by the legal and dispute resolution sector.

Background

2. LawTech presents compelling opportunities to enhance productivity, empowering efficiency and quality, thereby contributing to the development of new quality productive forces. Further, strong and up-to-date LawTech capabilities would provide a solid infrastructure for maintaining the long term competitiveness of Hong Kong, in line with national strategy, strengthening its position on the global stage and advancing sustainable development for Hong Kong under the principle of “One Country, Two Systems”.

DoJ’s policy initiatives in promoting and developing LawTech in Hong Kong

3. The DoJ supports the promotion of the wider use of LawTech to enhance the efficiency and competitiveness of the legal sector, and has been taking active steps to promote the development and adoption of LawTech in Hong Kong.

¹ Unless the context requires otherwise, references to LawTech in the following paragraphs include those powered by AI and Gen AI.

(a) Development of Online Dispute Resolution (“ODR”)

4. In line with society’s needs in an increasingly globalised economy and in the COVID-19 years, the initial focus was on the development of ODR and deal-making services. In the 2018 Policy Address, the then Chief Executive had supported the development of an online platform to facilitate the provision of efficient and cost-effective ODR services in Hong Kong as well as the development of an online platform for use by enterprises to facilitate deal-making and dispute resolution.

5. eBRAM International Online Dispute Resolution Centre (“**eBRAM**”) was accordingly established to serve as an efficient, cost-effective and secure ODR platform among parties in any part of the world. Since May 2022, eBRAM has developed a series of ODR platforms, including the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation ODR Platform, online arbitration platform, online mediation platform and the Deal-Making Portal, to facilitate business transactions and access to justice.

(b) LawTech Fund

6. To further enhance the legal industry’s readiness for further adoption of technology in their legal practice, the LawTech Fund was established in 2020 to facilitate some small and medium-sized law firms and barristers’ chambers to upgrade their information technology systems and related skills. The LawTech Fund received widespread support from the legal sector. By June 2020 when the application period came to an end, over 500 applications were received, covering 70% of the target firms and chambers.

(c) The Hong Kong Legal Cloud Services

7. The Hong Kong Legal Cloud Services provided by eBRAM is an advanced and user-friendly facility situated in Hong Kong to provide secure, quick and affordable storage of and access to files and information for the legal and dispute resolution profession. Eligible subscribers, including local solicitors, barristers, arbitrators, mediators, trainee solicitors, pupil barristers and full-time or part-time students studying Postgraduate Certificate in Laws programmes, were subsidised to subscribe for the services for up to three years from March 2022 to

February 2025. By February 2025, a total of 4,362 subscribers were subsidised for the services subscription. According to information provided by eBRAM, the services have been open for registration by individual users at an annual fee of HK\$3,600 since 1 March 2025. Further service plans will be operated and announced by eBRAM.

(d) Continuous Focused Study on Policy Measures on LawTech Development

8. In 2024, the Chief Executive announced in his Policy Address that the DoJ would set up a Consultation Group on LawTech Development (“**Consultation Group**”) to help the Government formulate policies and measures on LawTech, thereby encouraging the legal sector to enhance its efficiency and competitiveness with the use of LawTech.

The Consultation Group on LawTech Development

9. The Consultation Group, formally established in January 2025, comprises representatives from the legal and dispute resolution sector, law schools and experts on the application of LawTech. The Consultation Group meets regularly and the first meeting was held on 10 February 2025.

10. Since its establishment, the Consultation Group has been discussing strategies to promote the development and adoption of LawTech in Hong Kong, beyond ODR and online deal-making, with a vision of positioning Hong Kong as a leading local and international legal and dispute resolution centre which duly utilises LawTech in enhancing the efficiency, accessibility and quality of legal services. The objectives include:

- (i) To enhance the delivery of legal services through the appropriate adoption of technology;
- (ii) To promote access to justice by rendering legal services more affordable and accessible to the public;
- (iii) To identify the risk in association with the adoption of LawTech, ensuring that technological advancements uphold the principles of

justice and ethical practice of legal services; and

- (iv) To foster Hong Kong's competitiveness as a local and international legal and dispute resolution centre by integrating LawTech into its legal services delivery on par with global developments and technological advancements.

Strategies for Promoting the Development of LawTech

11. Taking into account the advice from the Consultation Group, the DoJ proposes to implement various strategies to pursue the objectives.

12. To foster a conducive foundation for the policy measures to take root, an immediate issue to tackle is to increase the knowledge and awareness of legal service providers of the availability, need and actionable next steps in adopting LawTech so as to encourage the legal practitioners to enhance their preparedness to update their mind-set and habits. To this end, the DoJ is planning to organise a roundtable series and other events related to LawTech within 2025, in order to enhance the industry's awareness and understanding of legal technology, and facilitate cross-fertilisation and sharing of expertise, experience, and innovative ideas amongst legal service providers and legal technology providers. The DoJ also recognises the importance to equip law students with a strong understanding of legal technology and would engage with other stakeholders on legal education and training through the platform of the Standing Committee on Legal Education and Training for enhancing law students' LawTech or AI readiness. The DoJ also plans to enhance the resources related to LawTech on its website, including the creation and publication of a "roadmap" for legal practitioners to embark on or further their journey in technology adoption, and ethical and security guidelines, to empower legal service providers to effectively adopt and utilize innovative technologies.

13. The DoJ will review the effectiveness of the above strategies after 2025 and, with reference to the then state of play of LawTech (which is rapidly developing), devise further actions to strengthen the connection between solution providers and legal practitioners, popularizing the use of LawTech and upskilling legal talents in 2026 and beyond. Actions under consideration include:

- (i) Organising more events to encourage further developments and showcase Hong Kong's LawTech capabilities and to cultivate an ecosystem favourable to their further development in Hong Kong;
- (ii) Facilitating the availability of AI / GenAI-powered tools for use by the legal and dispute resolution sector at affordable costs; and
- (iii) Reviewing the legal regime for better accommodation and support for, and regulation of innovations and emerging legal technologies.

Concluding Remarks

14. Going forward, the DoJ will continue to work closely with and consider the advice of the Consultation Group with a view to facilitating the use of LawTech and promoting a cultural shift in relation to technology within the legal profession. With the assistance of LawTech, the competitiveness of the legal and dispute resolution industry would be greatly enhanced, thereby consolidating Hong Kong's position as an international centre for legal services and dispute resolution in the Asia-Pacific region.

15. Members are invited to note the content above.

Department of Justice

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