Dear Chairman of the Panel, Panel Members,

Strongly Against the Proposal of Establishing a Unified Information and Communications Technology Professional Recognition Framework in HK

The Hong Kong Digital Analytics Association would like to express our concerns over the Government's proposal to establish a unified information and communications technology professional recognition framework in Hong Kong

We believe that it is questionable whether a new framework is necessary in Hong Kong. There are already several existing professional certification schemes.

Moreover, the Engineers Registration Board, which is set up under Engineers Registration Ordinance Cap 409, is able to recognize IT professionals as Registered Engineer (IT):

http://www.erb.org.hk/notestoapplicants.htm

In fact, every discipline or profession, such as surveyor, has an Ordinance to support the certification of their professionals in Hong Kong. In the case of Registered Engineer (IT), Professional Membership of existing IT professional bodies, including the Hong Kong Institution of Engineers, the British Computer Society, The China Association for Science & Technology and The Institution of Engineering and Technology, are all being recognized by the Engineers Registration Board. Therefore, there is already an ordinance to support the certification of IT professionals. We believe that there must be strong reasons to support the proposal that we need another organization to do the same qualification recognizing and awarding works.

We should also look in to how effective the existing schemes are. Should consideration be given to adopt these existing schemes to allow IT professionals the choice to obtain the related recognition from the institution of they prefer where they have more experience with, instead of from a newly established NGO with no operating experience in administering professional accreditation?

Furthermore, we are also concerned about the government commitment and public endorsement of the proposed scheme. Government departments such as OGCIO should take the initiative to promote it to their staffs but questions may raise on the number of the staffs would be willing to register to the scheme. Unless the Government is willing to actively promote the scheme to its staffs, the public will be largely remain hesitate to embrace the scheme.

On public endorsement, the recognition of employer is critical to the success of the framework. The administration must persuade the businesses that they need to endorse this framework but there is not enough incentive. In addition,ICT talents are known to be in shortage in HK. The framework will surely drive higher HR spending for businesses in recruiting ICT staffs. It seems that small and medium businesses will be affected the most.

In fact, there will be more questions on the scheme surfaced if we think twice. If we introduce this local framework as requirement of public tender, would that be unfair for foreign/international company to bid? Would that be complained by WTO? What is the plan for connecting the framework with International / Mainland standards? How about the readiness of Hong Kong for this proposed scheme, i.e. do we have enough accreditation experts in Hong Kong to support?

To conclude, we believe **the Government should conduct a deeper and wider consultation about the framework before acquiring financial support from Legco** and be ready to address the issues about it including the above ones. There is no need to launch the framework in such haste.

We are grateful for this opportunity to provide our comments. Should you have any questions regarding HKDAA's position above, please contact us.

Best regards,
Edmund Lee
Vice Chairman of Hong Kong Digital Analytics Association