

**COMMENTS OF THE HONG KONG BAR ASSOCIATION ON
JUDICIARY'S INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY STRATEGY PLAN:
PROVISION OF IDENTIFICATION NUMBERS FOR CIVIL CASES**

The Hong Kong Bar Association has the following comments:

- All litigants should be asked to provide their proper Hong Kong address for service (physical address); this should be incorporated into the Forms.
- For individual litigants, they are required to provide an identification number. For local residents they will (in all likelihood) use their HKID card whose number is unique and constant to each person. However, there is the possibility that he/she may use a passport, etc (say, if the litigant is not a Hong Kong resident and/or does not have HKID card). Passports (or foreign identification documents) are not necessarily uniquely numbered nor constant to each person in the sense that (for example) if a passport is renewed the new passport may not bear the same number as the expired/replaced passport even though it is the same person / holder. If a litigant provides his/her passport number upon registration and then renews his/her passport, then the new passport number may not match the number in the Court's record. A mechanism should be worked out to address this possibility (e.g. by reminding litigants that if their passports are renewed with a new number, they should still produce or use the passport/passport number of the original "registered" passport when identifying themselves to the court subsequently).
- We note that stating HKID detail is provided for in a number of forms. HKID is a sensitive and private matter in Hong Kong, as compared to say Company Numbers that can easily be found at the Companies Registry; the same is not true of HKID's. Are there concerns that persons who lay their hands on these documents would have access to full (unredacted) HKID details?
- An alternative method would be that - (1) the litigant physically presents himself/herself at the Registry, together with his/her HKID, (2) the Registry then gives him/her a newly generated random but unique username, which is paired up with the litigant's name and HKID on the internal databases only (but not shown publicly or on documents). The litigant will in general be using this newly generated random unique username, and if verification is required, Court Staff can check his/her HKID against the username's information within the Court system / database.

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HONG KONG BAR ASSOCIATION