

29 December 2020

Our Ref: INS/TEC/10/48
By Email

To: Chief Executives of all authorized insurers and Responsible Officers of all licensed insurance broker companies

Dear Sirs,

Launch of iAM Smart

I am writing to inform you that the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) launched the initiative of iAM Smart (formerly known as eID) on 29 December 2020. With the introduction of iAM Smart, it would facilitate the verification process of a customer's identity. We strongly encourage authorized insurers and licensed insurance broker companies to support and consider the adoption of iAM Smart to enhance customers' digital experience and help promote the further development of our smart city.

iAM Smart initiative

As one of the key infrastructure projects for smart city development announced in the 2017 Policy Address, iAM Smart provides all Hong Kong residents with a single digital identity and authentication to conduct government and commercial transactions online. All Hong Kong residents can apply for iAM Smart accounts free of charge on a voluntary basis. Details of the initiative are set out on the iAM Smart website (<https://iamsmart.gov.hk>) with major functionalities and applications highlighted in the following paragraphs.

Functionalities of iAM Smart

With an iAM Smart account, users can make use of the biometrics in their personal mobile devices to authenticate their identities, which have been verified against their HKID cards during iAM Smart registration, and log in to online services. As such, users can enjoy convenient access to various online services without the need to manage different groups of usernames and passwords or carry multiple security tokens.

In addition to logging in to online accounts of the government and public / private organisations, iAM Smart supports digital signing with legal backing under the Electronic Transactions Ordinance (Cap. 553) for statutory documents and procedures, as well as conducting important commercial transactions.

iAM Smart users can choose to store commonly used personal data in their own “e-ME” profile so that they can save time and effort by not having to fill in the same data when making different online applications. Data provided by the users will be encrypted and stored in government data centre facilities to protect data security and personal privacy. iAM Smart users may also give consent to provide such data to other entities for different online services.

Applications of iAM Smart

With the launch of iAM Smart platform, over 20 commonly used online government services will be accessible through the platform. It is expected that iAM Smart users will be able to access over 100 online government services through the platform by mid-2021.

To promote the use of iAM Smart in the financial sector, the IA has been working with the OGCIO and other peer financial regulators to explore how iAM Smart can assist financial institutions (including authorized insurers and licensed insurance broker companies) in providing online financial services. Subject to the progress of the adoption by government online services, and the readiness of the companies in the financial sector to adopt iAM Smart, the OGCIO will arrange for rolling out iAM Smart to these companies.

Consideration on Adoption of iAM Smart

As iAM Smart is a cornerstone for promoting the development of the Fintech ecosystem in Hong Kong and transformation to a smart city, authorized insurers and licensed insurance broker companies are highly encouraged to consider adopting iAM Smart in their business to enable customers to use online services (such as authentication to log in to online accounts and sign documents) and to conduct online transactions more conveniently and efficiently, without compromising statutory and supervisory requirements.

iAM Smart Sandbox Programme

To enable private organisations to conduct simulated tests on Application Programming Interface (API) functions under iAM Smart, the OGCIO in collaboration with the Cyberport introduced the first phase of Pilot Sandbox Programme for iAM Smart (Phase 1) in early 2020. The second phase of the Pilot Sandbox Programme (Phase 2) was launched in September 2020, for financial institutions intending to adopt iAM Smart to test their applications under an integration testing environment similar to the production setting.

Authorized insurers and licensed insurance broker companies who would like to participate in the Pilot Sandbox Programme but have not registered for it can do so by nominating a contact person of their organisations and provide the following information

by email to the IA mailbox iam_smart@ia.org.hk for registration.

- Name of authorized insurer / licensed insurance broker company
- Name of contact person
- Company phone number of contact person
- Company email address of contact person
- Types of applications for which APIs are currently in use (if applicable)

Upon successful registration, Cyberport will send a confirmation email to the contact person with a hyperlink for him/her to activate his/her user account. A maximum of two user accounts will be provided to each participating organisation. Authorized insurers and licensed insurance broker companies interested in participating in the Phase 2 iAM Smart Pilot Sandbox Programme are required to submit an application to the Cyberport. Details can be found in the website (<https://iamsmart.cyberport.hk>).

Should you have any questions on the Pilot Sandbox Programme, please contact the Cyberport at iamsmart@cyberport.hk or 3166 3978.

Yours faithfully,

Tony Chan
Associate Director
Policy and Development Division
Insurance Authority

c.c. The Hong Kong Federation of Insurers
The Hong Kong Confederation of Insurance Brokers
Professional Insurance Brokers Association