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*Please feel free to duplicate and distribute this brochure.
Copies may also be obtained from HKLII.*

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Hong Kong Legal Information Institute

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Hong Kong Legal Information Institute



www.hklai.hk
www.hklai.org
www.hklai.org.hk

Free access to HK legal information

■ HKLII - Free law via the Internet

The Hong Kong Legal Information Institute (HKLII) aims to provide free access to Hong Kong legal information via the Internet. HKLII is a project of the Law and Technology Centre, which is jointly established by the Faculty of Law and Department of Computer Science of The University of Hong Kong (HKU). HKLII gratefully acknowledges the assistance of the Australasian Legal Information Institute (AustLII) in its early stage of development.

HKLII can be accessed via the following three websites:

<http://www.hklII.hk>
<http://www.hklII.org>
<http://www.hklII.org.hk>

■ What's available on HKLII?

Databases:

HKLII currently comprises of 14 Hong Kong databases including Court and Tribunal Judgments (in full text) from the Court of Final Appeal, Court of Appeal, Court of First Instance, District Court, Family Court and Lands Tribunal; Practice Directions; Legislation; the table of contents of Historical Law (an image database of Hong Kong's Ordinances back to 1844 created by the HKU Libraries); Case notes issued by the Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data; Domain name arbitration decisions under the .hk domain; The Hong Kong Treaties Index provided by the Centre for Comparative and Public Law of the Faculty of Law of HKU; and recent Reports and discussion papers from the Hong Kong Law Reform Commission. More databases are being prepared. Initial databases are in English, with Chinese versions added in year 2003.

WorldLII Catalog:

HKU Faculty of Law contributes to the parts of the WorldLII Catalog which catalogs and makes searchable (by use of AustLII's web spider and search engine SINO) law sites from Hong Kong, and law subjects of particular interest to HKU Law Faculty such as the WTO, Human Rights, Arbitration/ADR and Cyberspace Law.

■ Free law? – why, who and how

Why free?

Maximising access to the law supports the rule of law. A transparent legal system enhances a country's economic efficiency and global competitiveness. HKLII aims to provide free access to legislation, decisions of courts and tribunals, law reform reports and similar materials which ought to be freely available for the general public.

HKLII encourages and assists public authorities to make legal materials they create available free via the Internet. HKLII also promotes standards for legal publishing. HKLII is part of the worldwide coalition of Legal Information Institutes (LIIs) that provides over 250 legal databases (including HKLII data) on the World Legal Information Institute (WorldLII – <http://www.worldlII.org>). HKLII aims to contribute to a global public law library on the Internet, both through databases on WorldLII and through the WorldLII Catalog.

Who runs and funds HKLII?

HKLII is operated and funded by the Faculty of Law (<http://www.hku.hk/law>) and Department of Computer Science (<http://www.cs.hku.hk>) of The University of Hong Kong (<http://www.hku.hk>), with the assistance of the Australasian Legal Information Institute (AustLII – <http://www.austlII.edu.au>), which is a joint facility of the Law Faculties of the University of Technology, Sydney (UTS) and the University of New South Wales (UNSW).

HKLII is based on data obtained by HKU from public authorities and other sources in Hong Kong. Data mark-up, search engine and other software, and initial technical infrastructure was provided by AustLII. HKLII is now developed and maintained by the HKLII Team at the Department of Computer Science of HKU.

How do you use HKLII?

The system is easy and intuitive to browse and search. There is a Quick Guide available on the HKLII website.

■ What makes HKLII work?

Proven technology:

HKLII's approach to computerising legal materials is based on over 15 years of research and development at UTS and UNSW. The same technology is being used on similar large-scale legal websites such as AustLII, WorldLII, the British and Irish Legal Information Institute (BAILII), the Canadian Legal Information Institute (CanLII) and the Pacific Islands Legal Information Institute (PacLII).

Technical features of HKLII include:

- Customised software: AustLII's SINO search engine provides very fast retrieval with boolean and proximity operators and relevance ranking of results. AustLII's web indexing software and web spider software, together with SINO, provide a unique package through which law on the web can be indexed and searched. A Chinese language interface for all of these is being developed by the HKU CS Department.

- Automated rich hypertext: HKLII provides links to statutory definitions, other sections of Legislation and cases, and (as part of WorldLII) links to cases in other jurisdictions.

- Integration of hypertext and text retrieval: HKLII provides every section in Legislation with a 'Noteup' button which causes an automatic search for cases, other legislation or other materials referring to that section.

Research:

HKLII is involved in research in computerisation of law, and in the development of databases to service other legal research projects.