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### **An Unexplored Legal Issue for the Provision of Free Legal Information in Hong Kong**

This paper examines an unexplored legal issue for a provider of free legal information in Hong Kong: can the provider bring a legal action against someone who, without its permission, hosts a website making available online the same materials obtained from the provider's website? Where the provider (such as HKLII) is not the copyright owner of materials on its website, it is not entitled to sue for infringement of copyright in the materials. Furthermore, if the user interface of the offending website differs from the provider's, the provider may not be able to bring a copyright action in respect of the user interface. In these circumstances the provider may only rely on the copyright in its entire collection of online materials as a "compilation". However, in the absence of judicial authorities in Hong Kong, the requirements for such "compilation copyright" are unclear. Given the conflicting decisions in other leading jurisdictions, there is serious doubt as to whether the provider's website may enjoy compilation copyright in Hong Kong.