



The city’s skyline pictured from the Qianhai Guiwan area in Shenzhen, Guangdong province. FENG XIAO / FOR CHINA DAILY

Shenzhen’s Qianhai expands financial and legal opening-up

Area becomes first option for institutions from SAR to enter mainland market

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Qianhai in Shenzhen, Guangdong province, has achieved further opening-up especially in its financial and legal service sectors through its constant effort in expanding international cooperation.

In September 2021, the central government issued the Plan for Comprehensively Deepening the Reform and Opening-Up of the Qianhai Shenzhen-Hong Kong Modern Service Industry Cooperation Zone, proposing the implementation of the country’s policy initiative of further opening up its financial industry in the Qianhai Cooperation Zone.

Taking this opportunity, the emerging financial district in Shenzhen has responded to the plan with dedicated moves over the past year. In the first half of this year, the added value of the financial sector in Qianhai increased 18.1 percent year-on-year, official data showed.

The Qianhai Shenzhen-Hong Kong International Financial City has built a 4-million-square-meter industrial area for Hong Kong-funded financial institutions after the launch of the Qianhai plan. So far, the industrial space has attracted 218 financial institutions, with Hong Kong and foreign-funded entities accounting for 30 percent of those businesses.

The businesses include French insurance company AXA, Italian insurer Assicurazioni Generali, Hang Seng Qianhai Fund Management, Linklogis and Dah Sing Bank. Qianhai has become the first option for Hong Kong’s financial



A view of Qianhaiwan, which is located in the west of Shenzhen. FENG XIAO / FOR CHINA DAILY

institutions to expand into the Chinese mainland market, local officials said. One of the best examples, Hong Kong-based Dah Sing Bank, has set up its branch in Qianhai.

“We have kept close eyes on Qianhai, learning that it is constructing the Qianhai Shenzhen-Hong Kong International Financial City with a high standard and is promoting the financial system’s interconnection with the globe, which is attractive,” said Harold Wong, managing director and chief executive of DSB.

Since the launch of the plan, Qianhai has established the first batch of pilot programs in the country including multicurrency bank accounts, the integrated cash pool of local and foreign currencies for multinational businesses and the cross-boundary wealth management in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area.

The implementation of a series of policies and measures featuring financial opening-up in Qianhai has made it more attractive to Hong Kong and foreign-funded financial institutions, said Liu Yu, general manager of Hang Seng Qianhai Fund Management.

As an investor from Hong Kong,

Hang Seng appreciates the opening-up in the financial sector in Qianhai, Liu said.

He noted that the cross-boundary wealth management not only provides Hong Kong and Macao residents with opportunities to manage their properties on the Chinese mainland, but also allows asset management institutions to offer services to more investors. That also helps expand renminbi usage in financial trade and facilitates the internationalization of RMB.

Apart from the financial sector, Qianhai has also seen further development in the opening-up of legal services. Official data show the Qianhai Court has recruited 32 jurors who are native to Hong Kong and 16 mediators from Guangdong, Hong Kong, Macao and overseas regions. The Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area International Arbitration Center was established in Qianhai, and the Shenzhen Court of International Arbitration has new arbitrators from 114 countries and regions.

In addition, the Qianhai Shenzhen-Hong Kong International Legal Services District has introduced 122 legal service institutions such as the China

(Shenzhen) Intellectual Property Protection Center. Qianhai is now home to seven of 15 Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao jointly operated law firms in the country.

China Commercial Lam Lee Lai (Qianhai) Law Firm, the first Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao jointly operated law firm in China, was set up in Qianhai in 2014. Early this year, Lam Lee Lai moved its office to the SCIA Tower, China’s first international arbitration building, in the legal service district. Its office area has increased by up to 2,000 square meters.

Que Lingyu, a partner lawyer in Lam Lee Lai, said the law firm achieved rapid development thanks to Qianhai’s interconnection with Hong Kong and Macao in terms of rules and institutions.

At this time, Lam Lee Lai has more than 30 lawyers from the Chinese mainland and more than 20 from Hong Kong and Macao, having seen a surge in annual business, Que said.

After moving to the legal service district, institutions engaging in judicial, arbitration, mediation, legal and IP protection services have helped promote communications and increase the efficiency of business operations, Que added.

Lam Lee Lai has also established a practical operational relationship with its counterparts in Qianhai, Que added.

At present, Qianhai has gathered judicial organs at different levels and types such as courts featuring IP and financial services.

The legal service district has planned to build centers for international legal services and commercial dispute resolution, as part of the effort to help promote the interconnection of different law systems and rules. It also aims to help jointly operated law firms to expand their businesses overseas.

Progress in cooperation and reform to support Hong Kong corporations

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Qianhai has made fresh progress in Shenzhen-Hong Kong cooperation and international cooperation since Sept 6, 2021, when the Plan for Comprehensively Deepening the Reform and Opening-Up of the Qianhai Shenzhen-Hong Kong Modern Service Industry Cooperation Zone began its implementation.

Located in Shenzhen, in South China’s Guangdong province, the Qianhai zone rolled out measures this year to provide “all-around support” for Hong Kong residents and companies in Qianhai. They cover nine aspects including housing, starting a business, finance, employment and scientific and technological innovation.

Qianhai and Hong Kong released 18 measures on Sept 2 to promote the interactive development of venture capital industries in Shenzhen and Hong Kong. The measures are of great significance to the pragmatic and innovative cooperation between Shenzhen and Hong Kong in the financial sector, a Qianhai official said.

A mechanism for regular finance-related communication and cooperation between Qianhai and Hong Kong has been created to promote extensive Shenzhen-Hong Kong cooperation in the financial sector to serve the high-quality development of the real economy, the official added.

The General Administration of Customs announced 18 measures on Sept 7 supporting Qianhai in its efforts to deepen reform and opening-up and to serve as a trial area for innovative measures promoting comprehensive reform and opening-up of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area.

The Qianhai Shenzhen-Hong Kong Youth Innovation and Entrepreneur Hub, boasting a space of 139,000 square meters, has so far incubated 335 entrepreneurial teams from Hong Kong.

Chuangbohui (Shenzhen), an incubator founded in 2018 by Hong Kong and Taiwan residents, has nearly 6,000 sq m of office space in the north area of the

Qianhai Shenzhen-Hong Kong Youth Innovation and Entrepreneur Hub.

Liu Jia, executive vice-president of Chuangbohui and a Hong Kong resident, told Shenzhen Special Zone Daily that the company is the first space focusing on providing services for young innovators and entrepreneurs from Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan in the Qianhai Shenzhen-Hong Kong Youth Innovation and Entrepreneur Hub.

Thanks to Qianhai’s support policies for startups, Chuangbohui has so far incubated 30 entrepreneurial teams, including 29 from Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan, Liu said.

During the past year, Qianhai has also stepped up efforts to pursue high-quality international cooperation and has achieved notable results.

Established in October 2021, the Qianhai Shenzhen-Hong Kong International Financial City is now home to more than 200 financial institutions.

A group of world-class international financial institutions, such as AXA, UBS and PayPal, have set up operations in Qianhai. In the first half of this year, the added value of Qianhai’s financial industry increased by 18.1 percent year-on-year, said a Shenzhen Special Zone Daily report.

Qianhai has hosted high-level events including the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Youth Technology and Innovation Forum. International organizations such as the Singapore International Mediation Centre have settled in the area.

Qianhai’s GDP reached 175.57 billion yuan (\$24.29 billion) in 2021, a year-on-year increase of 10.5 percent. The amount of paid-in foreign capital was \$5.82 billion, up 14.9 percent year-on-year.

The total import and export volume was 1.74 trillion yuan, an increase of 20.3 percent over the previous year, official statistics showed.

From January to June this year, Qianhai saw paid-in foreign capital reach \$3.53 billion, an increase of 17.4 percent compared with the same period last year.



The north area of the Qianhai Shenzhen-Hong Kong Youth Innovation and Entrepreneur Hub. FENG XIAO / FOR CHINA DAILY

Zone has world-class business environment, says consultancy

By YIN RUOWEI
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The Qianhai Shenzhen-Hong Kong Modern Service Industry Cooperation Zone in Shenzhen, Guangdong province, is now considered to have a world-class business environment, said market consultancy Deloitte China.

Since the Plan for Comprehensively Deepening the Reform and Opening-Up of the Qianhai Shenzhen-Hong Kong Modern Service Industry Cooperation Zone was launched on Sept 6, 2021, Shenzhen has rolled out 203 implementation plans, officials said at a news conference in April. To date, these plans have led to fruitful results.

Huang Xiaopeng, executive deputy director of the Qianhai administration bureau, said the Qianhai Cooperation Zone is taking the lead in China in making breakthroughs in the innovation and development of the modern service industry, promoting the innovation of its scientific and technological development system and mechanism, and creating a world-class business environment.

“The Qianhai Cooperation Zone is becoming more open,” said Sun Lecheng, a partner at the KPMG Digital Ignition Center.

“We have made great use of preferential policies and a good business environment in the zone to increase our independent research and development capacity.

“By doing so, we are able to deeply participate in the construction of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao

Greater Bay Area, and double our business here,” Sun said.

Shenzhen is an entrepreneurial city and Qianhai in Shenzhen is the first choice for young Hong Kong and Macao entrepreneurs to start their own businesses on the Chinese mainland, an entrepreneur from Hong Kong said.

The entrepreneur’s company is located at the Qianhai Shenzhen-Hong Kong Youth DreamWorks, a

startup incubator in Qianhai. As of the first quarter of the year, DreamWorks is home to 578 companies, 314 of which were set up by entrepreneurs from Hong Kong.

Professionals in Hong Kong and Macao with 18 types of certifications can practice in Qianhai only by registration. To promote high-level international cooperation, Qianhai International Talent Port has been put into use, providing 451 one-stop

services for talents from all over the world.

Officials said a construction project in Qianhai can start as soon as the land is acquired. Constructors can apply for all relevant permits at one time and the processing time for examination and approval has been reduced from 49 to 13 days.

Qianhai’s diversified credit information service system covers more than 3.8 million commercial entities



From left: A Ferris wheel in Oh Bay scenic spot in Shenzhen is among the charms of the city’s seashore sights. Thousands of containers sit in the port area in the west of Shenzhen. PHOTOS BY QIU GENMAO / FOR CHINA DAILY



in Shenzhen and the regulations on investor protection in the area are taking shape.

From January to September, there were 27,500 newly registered enterprises in Qianhai, with a registered capital of 329.41 billion yuan (\$45.38 billion). A total of 361 Fortune Global 500 companies have set up branches in Qianhai. In the first three quarters of the year, Qianhai’s GDP reached 130.52 billion yuan, a year-on-year increase of 3.3 percent.

At a global investment promotion event on Tuesday, several projects worth over 120 billion yuan were signed. The list of investors is star-studded, as it includes the world’s top 500 investment companies and key players in financial, logistics, scientific and technological services, information services, and the cultural and creative industry.

Sunny Siu, founder and CEO of Jaguar Microsystems, said: “Qianhai is the most representative case of integration of Shenzhen and Hong Kong. It not only has unique geographical advantages, but also strong industrial and human resources. It offers a series of preferential policies ranging from tax reduction, rewards for talents to rent subsidy, and multiple support to Hong Kong-based enterprises.”