

## KCC Finalizes National Standard Mobile Phone Hangeul Keypad Arrangement

- Feature phones to adopt *Cheon-Ji-In* standard only  
and smart phones to support multiple standards -

Korea Communications Commission finalized a single *Cheon-Ji-In* standard Hangeul keypad arrangement for feature phones and multiple standards including *Cheon-Ji-In*, *Naratgeul* and SKY for smart phones on March 23 .

The former Ministry of Information and Communications and the former Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Energy sought to standardize Hangeul keypad arrangement for mobile phone from '95, but, they failed to make it a reality due to disagreement among relevant stakeholders. However, as the media reported that China was seeking to develop international standard Hangeul keypad arrangement in last October, the public became increasingly aware of the significance of the issue and the consultative council between the executive branch and the ruling party finalized a 2-step policy measure to establish a relevant standard with public hearings in the National Assembly.

The national standard finalized now equals to the 1st step of the policy measure intended to define standards among alternatives already commercialized and the 2nd step is intended to establish a

private sector forum mandated to develop a future standard Hangeul keypad arrangement.

Convergency Policy Officer Jae-Moon Park of KCC commented, “The standard adopts the most popular one among consumers, namely Cheon-Ji-In, for feature phones designed to adopt only one keypad arrangement. However, smart phones intended to support several keypad arrangements are allowed to incorporate *Cheon-Ji-In*, *Naratgeul* and SKY keypad arrangements to maximize choices for customers.”

For now, mobile phone manufacturers are not allowed to adopt competitor’s keypad arrangement in their smart phones due to potential patent right infringement. However, as they now agree to license their keypad arrangements to each other free of charge on the assumption that their arrangements are adopted as one of the standards, smart phone subscribers are able to choose one as they like.

Following the KCC decision, the Radio Research Laboratory of KCC and the Korean Agency for Technology & Standard (KATS) under the Ministry of Knowledge Economy will specify devices subject to the national standard and definition of each Hangeul keypad arrangement and refer such specification to deliberation by the Communications Standards Committee and the National Standards Committee for final enactment of national standard in early June. End.