

**Drug Dependent Persons Treatment and
Rehabilitation Centres (Licensing) Bill
Costs and Funding for Upgrading Works
by Drug Treatment and Rehabilitation Centres**

At the Bills Committee meeting on 18 December 2000, Members requested information on the estimated costs and funding for upgrading building and fire safety works in existing drug treatment and rehabilitation centres which would be affected by the Drug Dependent Persons Treatment and Rehabilitation Centres (Licensing) Bill (the Bill).

Estimated costs

2. There are a total of 13 drug treatment and rehabilitation agencies operating in 40 locations which will require to be licensed following the implementation of the licensing scheme. A preliminary survey by the Social Welfare Department, Buildings Department and Fire Services Department in 1998 revealed that these centres vary in size in terms of land area on which they are located, floor area of their premises and capacities they possess. The conditions of their premises which amounted to an estimate of around 180 in 1998 also vary in that some may require only minor modifications, while some, demolition and re-construction.

3. According to the Social Welfare Department, the current initial estimate for the funding required for these centres to upgrade their building and fire safety standards is around \$104 million. The estimate is calculated according to the Social Welfare Department's general knowledge of the conditions of these centres, with due consideration to the situation that a significant number of these centres are stone or wooden structures with minimal safety standards and located in remote areas. The Social Welfare Department has also made references to the capacity of these centres and the upgrading costs with reference to the cost level of comparable building works. The funding need will spread over a period of eight years, but will mostly fall on the initial four to six years. Upon implementation of the licensing scheme, the Social Welfare

Department, Buildings Department and Fire Services Department will institute a programme to inspect the centres which apply for licence or certificate of exemption. It is only at that time that the Administration can come up with a more accurate estimate on costs of upgrading works to be undertaken by the centres which will be affected by the Bill.

Sources of funding

4. In spite of the above, the Administration has specifically alerted several major charitable funds, including the Lotteries Fund, Beat Drugs Fund, the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust and the Chinese Permanent Cemeteries Fund of the possible demand for financial assistance from these centres. It has also identified other possible sources of fund which the centres can apply. A summary of these funds is given below :

(a) Lotteries Fund

The objective of the Lotteries Fund is to finance the support and development of social welfare and rehabilitation services in Hong Kong. With sufficient and steady income as well as no ceiling set on the grant to be applied, the Lotteries Fund is an ideal source of possible funding support for the centres to be affected by the licensing scheme. Another advantage of the Lotteries Fund is its flexibility in timing of application (it is opened to application all the year round). The processing time for each application varies according to the nature and scope of the proposed project. For centres with difficulties in accepting the grants from the Lotteries Fund due to conflict with the Christian faith, they can apply for exemption from making acknowledgement to the Fund. The Director of Social Welfare will consider the requests by individual centres for waiving the requirement to acknowledge the Fund on the merits of individual cases. In 1999/2000, the total allocation of the Lotteries Fund was about \$913 million.

(b) Beat Drugs Fund

The Beat Drugs Fund aims to promote worthwhile anti-drug activities which can help reduce the problem of drug abuse, particularly amongst the young, and to promote community-wide efforts and programmes in the campaign against drug abuse in Hong Kong. In 2000, the BDF Association approved 29 projects with a total grant of \$16.6 million. Applications to the Fund are invited in November every year through the print and electronic media.

(c) Chinese Permanent Cemeteries Fund

The Board of Management of the Chinese Permanent Cemeteries (CPC) aims at providing grants to local social welfare and charitable organisations to organise capital projects for the benefit of Hong Kong people. Applications are invited in July annually by the Board of Management of the CPC through Government bureaux and departments. While the maximum grant for each project is \$1 million, consideration may be given to approving a grant up to \$3 million in exceptional cases. The Board of Management of the CPC had earmarked \$35 million to finance projects in 2000. All applications received are screened and prioritised by the relevant Government bureaux/departments and then centrally coordinated by the Board of Management of the CPC.

(d) The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust

The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust works in partnership with Government and non-profit-making agencies to improve the quality of life of the Hong Kong people. There is no upper ceiling on the grant awarded. In 1999/2000, the allocation of the Trust (including funds granted to the Chief Executive's Community Project List)

was about \$1,146 million. Agencies may submit the application with the required details to the Trust at any time.

(e) Chief Executive's Community Project List

The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust disburses funds annually for the Chief Executive to allocate to worthwhile projects which are of benefit to the community. The Chief Executive's Community Project List will finance sizeable projects costing not less than \$10 million. In 2000, \$78.4 million were earmarked for allocating to worthwhile projects. Applications are invited by the Health and Welfare Bureau through Government bureaux every year. All applications received are screened and prioritised by the relevant Government bureaux before submission to the Health and Welfare Bureau for decisions.

(f) Sir Murray MacLehose Trust Fund

The Sir Murray MacLehose Trust Fund (SMMTF) is used for the benefit of the people of Hong Kong at the sole discretion of the Chief Executive. There is no ceiling on the grant for each project. Grants are usually awarded to substantial capital projects. Nevertheless, worthwhile small projects will also be considered. The Fund has invited applications in September 2000 and is expected to approve a total grant of about \$15 million. After the SMMTF has accumulated sizeable disposable balance, the Home Affairs Bureau will invite applications through Government bureaux. All applications received are screened and prioritised by the relevant Government bureaux before submission to the Home Affairs Bureau.