

**Presentation by Secretary for Home Affairs  
at the Special Meeting of the Finance Committee  
on Wednesday, 21 March 2001**

Mr Chairman,

Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) is responsible under Head 53 for six Programmes, namely (1) Rights of the Individual; (2) Information Policy; (3) District and Community Relations; (4) Youth Development; (5) Recreation, Sport and Entertainment Licensing and (6) Culture. Because of the constraint of time, I will specifically talk about three of them today and they are Work on Culture and Sport, Review on District Councils, and new building management services provided by the Home Affairs Department (HAD).

**Work on Culture and Sport**

2. After dissolution of the former Provisional Municipal Councils (PMCs), we have set up the Culture and Heritage Commission to advise the Government on how best to support Hong Kong's cultural development and the preservation of our heritage. Cultural development is indeed an arduous task which needs the active participation and consensus of both the Government and the public. Hence, the Commission has just launched its consultation exercise and a series of open forums will be held in late March to solicit the views of the community.

3. Regarding the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) set up since January 2000, measures have been introduced to improve the management of the Department, as well as to enhance the quality of our services to be more user-friendly and responsive to community needs. These measures include:

- **Enhancing culture and arts education, and promoting sport in schools**

In collaboration with the Education Department and schools, the Department has launched the "Millennium Reading Pledge", the "Culture Day Pilot Scheme" and the "School Sports Programme" to cultivate the youth's interest in culture and the arts, as well as to encourage students to actively participate in sports activities so as to raise the standard of sport in schools.

- **Revamping the delivery of leisure and cultural services**

Along with further contracting out of the management of leisure facilities, preparation for corporatising the three performing companies, namely the Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra, the Hong Kong Dance Company and the Hong Kong Repertory Theatre, is nearing completion. Upon corporatisation, the companies may enjoy more flexibility in management and artistic expression. In

addition, there will be more public participation.

- **Demarcating the responsibilities between the Hong Kong Sports Development Board and the Department**  
SDB is responsible for providing funding to National Sports Associations (NSAs) for holding international events or programmes, while the Department provides subventions for local events and training programmes organised by the NSAs.
- **Improving the booking of facilities**  
To consolidate the booking of sports and recreational facilities across the territory, “Sportix” and “Regional Council Computerised Booking System” will be merged and Internet booking service will also be provided.
- **Integrating the library systems of the former PMCs**  
The library automation systems have been integrated and upgraded. Readers may now reserve library materials over the phone or on the Internet, and they may pick up or return them at any libraries.

4. I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate that the Government appreciates Members’ concern about the outstanding projects of the former PMCs, and the local demand on cultural and recreational facilities as well. In the process of prioritising the implementation of these projects, we will take into consideration community needs and factors such as overall planning and effective utilisation of resources.

5. Though LCSD is enhancing the leisure and cultural services, the Department has managed to **reduce its permanent establishment** by about 5%, from 9 778 on 1 January 2000 to 9 277 on 1 January 2001, without compromising the quality of service. It is expected that further streamlining and improvement in cost-effectiveness can be achieved in the next two years by means of outsourcing of services, launching voluntary retirement scheme and simplifying working procedures.

### **Review on District Councils**

6. We attach great importance to the roles and contributions of the DCs on district administration. Apart from advising the Government on the provision of public services and facilities in the districts, the DCs also serve as a bridge for communication between the Government and the public. Since the establishment of the new DCs in January 2000, we have implemented measures to enhance the functions of the DCs.

7. We have undertaken to further enhance the roles and functions of the DCs. A review is now being conducted by HAB. Our overall objective is to enhance the DC's roles in the promotion of cultural, leisure, recreational and sports activities, the improvement of environmental hygiene and community facilities at the district level.

8. In the 2001-02 Budget, the Financial Secretary has earmarked \$100 million to allow an early start by HAB and HAD to implement the recommendations arising from the review in accordance with its outcome and after consultation with the DCs. We expect to complete the review in mid 2001 and subsequently consult the DCs on its recommendations.

### **New Building Management Services provided by the Home Affairs Department**

9. In view of the new measures brought about by the implementation of the Building Management (Amendment) Ordinance 2000, and in order to raise our building management service standards, HAD will be allocated an additional \$22.5M in the 2001-02 financial year (and \$43.9M starting from 2002-03 for full year expenditure) for additional manpower to provide more comprehensive and professional service to owners and Owners' Corporations (OCs). With these additional resources, we plan to create about 90 posts in stages. A new division with 12 posts responsible for the provision of legal, technical and other expert support will be established in the HAD Headquarters to help coordinate building management matters. At the district level, District Building Management Liaison Teams will be set up in all 18 districts to replace the existing 15 Building Management Coordination Teams. By 2002-03, about 78 posts will have been created in the District Offices to provide support for the District Building Management Liaison Teams.

10. The new District Building Management Liaison Teams will comprise full-time and appropriately trained staff from the Liaison Officer and Housing Grades. Apart from providing out-reach support service to owners and OCs, the Liaison Teams will visit OCs, assist owners to form OCs, sit in OC meetings and help owners to solve building management problems. They will also assist law enforcement departments to implement building maintenance and fire safety improvements in buildings. Where disputes arise between owners or between owners and OCs, the Liaison Teams will assist in mediation.

11. Besides, in view of the popularity of the Building Management Resource Centres (BMRC) on Hong Kong Island and in Kowloon, HAD will set up in Tsuen Wan the third BMRC in May this year.

12. To enable the community to obtain quick and accurate information on building management, HAD will set up before the end of the year a dedicated homepage with updated information on building management and bulletin board service for reference and use by the public. Also, by March 2002, HAD will set up a central database on all private buildings (including residential, commercial, and industrial buildings) to provide the public with basic information on buildings in all districts such as the type of building, the number of units and storeys, etc..

13. I trust the above new services will enhance public participation in building management and improve the quality of building management work in Hong Kong.

### **Conclusion**

14. The above only covers three main tasks of many areas of work undertaken by HAB. Members are welcomed to raise questions, if any, about these three or other areas of work within HAB's responsibilities. My colleagues and I will try our best to provide you with the answers. Thank you.