

MEMORADUM FOR
MEMBERS OF LEGCO PANEL ON HOME AFFAIRS

Leisure and Cultural Services Department
Provision of Entertainment Programmes

PURPOSE

This paper reports on the work of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department in the provision of free entertainment programmes to the public.

BACKGROUND

2. The organization of regular free entertainment programmes and major territory-wide carnivals during festive days in parks, playgrounds and open spaces has been a long established function of the two former Municipal Councils. The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD), since its inception on 1 January 2000, has taken over the former Councils' role in the provision of leisure and cultural services, including the provision of entertainment programmes.

PROVISION OF ENTERTAINMENT PROGRAMMES

3. The objectives of presenting free entertainment programmes are:
- (a) to provide family entertainment to the public during major traditional festivals;

- (b) to bring regular and varied entertainment to all walks of life in their neighbourhood;
- (c) to promote the appreciation of the performing arts at the grass roots level;
- (d) to preserve and promote traditional Chinese art forms such as string, rod and glove puppets and Chinese opera by regular presentation and commissioning of new programmes/productions; and
- (e) to provide performance opportunities for upcoming artists/groups.

4. The year-round entertainment programme consists of the following components:

- (a) staging of territory-wide carnivals during the Spring Lantern Festival, Mid-Autumn Festival and on New Year Eve;
- (b) organization of territory-wide children programmes and fun fairs during festive days, e.g., Mid-Autumn Lantern Design Competition cum Exhibition, Easter Family Fun Day, Christmas Fun Gala, JAL Sky School etc. for students, children and family participants;
- (c) organization of special community events such as Concerts in the Park for the Filipino community; and
- (d) presentation of regular entertainment programmes in the 18 districts, either solely by LCSD or jointly with district organizations.

PROGRAMME FOR 2000/01

5. The following is a brief account of the programme for 2000/01. Details are tabulated at Annex I.

Territory-wide Carnivals and Family Entertainment Events

6. In celebration of the Mid-Autumn Festival and the Spring Lantern Festival, seven large-scale carnivals were organized in 2000/01 at parks and playgrounds all over the territory. For the Mid-Autumn Festival, four carnivals took place at Victoria Park, Ko Shan Road Park, Kwai Chung Sports Ground and Sha Tin Park respectively. For the Spring Lantern Festival, three carnivals took place at the Ko Shan Road Park, Tuen Mun Park and Fanling Recreation Ground. These carnival-type events have proved to be very popular and attracted a total estimated attendance of over 460,000 participants. Victoria Park and Ko Shan Road Park are by far the most popular venues because of their convenient location and accessibility. Over 142,000 people attended the last Mid-Autumn carnival at Victoria Park. Ko Shan Road Park has also proved to be a very popular venue on Kowloon side with over 40,000 people attending the last Mid-Autumn carnival and 96,000 people attending the last Spring Lantern carnival. Due to the geographical spread of the New Territories, carnivals are usually scheduled to take place in different districts every year in order to cater for the needs of respective local residents. These carnivals also attract a good crowd ranging from 20,000 – 75,000 participants. In terms of programming, groups from the Mainland featuring traditional Chinese performances as well as local and youth performing arts groups are also invited.

7. In addition to the carnival type events, family type events are also organized during other major festive days such as the Easter Holidays, Christmas and New Year's Eve. The last New Year's Eve Countdown featured a wide variety of programmes such as pop concerts, roving street performances, fun and games etc. and drew a large crowd of over 100,000 people.

8. In 2000/01, a total of 15 carnivals and family type events were organized at a total direct production cost of \$11m.

Regular Free Entertainment Programmes

9. The current format of organizing regular free entertainment programmes has been established after consultation with the former Provisional District Boards over the years and these programmes are welcomed by the majority of people in the districts. The organization of regular free entertainment programmes provides plenty of performance opportunities for local artists/groups and over 170 performing groups are currently being engaged. The entertainment programmes cover a wide variety of art forms including puppet, Chinese opera, music, dance, magic show, children's variety show, traditional Chinese performance etc. A detailed list of art forms is at Annex II.

10. For 2000/01, to render support to traditional Chinese art forms, a youth Chinese opera troupe has been commissioned to stage a new Beijing opera production for touring all over the territory. New Chinese traditional puppet shows are also commissioned from time to time. In 2000/01, a total of 670 free entertainment programmes with an estimated expenditure of \$9.6m are organized for the 18 districts.

11. In order to reach a wider sector of the population, the Department has been organizing entertainment programmes in some 250 venues, ranging from the heavily patronized playgrounds and open spaces of large housing estates to open spaces at remote villages. There have always been demands for entertainment programmes at remote places in the New Territories. The programmes are organized in order to cater for the needs of the older residents there who might not have much entertainment available to them. The attendance figures of programmes at those remote places, however, tend to be on the low side.

Special Events jointly presented with other organizations

12. The Department has also collaborated with relevant organizations and sponsors in staging four special events such as the two annual fireworks displays, JAL Sky School with Japan Airlines and HK-TVB and a “Concert in the Park” with the Consulate General of the Philippines. For these events, the Department provides the organizational manpower, publicity and technical support whereas the co-presenters are responsible for the production or programme costs.

New Initiatives

13. The Department, from time to time, draws up new programming ideas to enrich the overall programme. In 2000/01, several new projects have been introduced as follows:

- (a) an Evening Melodies Concert Series has been staged in the early evening at places like the Hong Kong Cultural Centre Piazza, Hong Kong Park, etc. targeted at office workers;
- (b) Lantern Exhibitions and Traditional Chinese Cultural Performances have been staged at the Airport to tie in with the Mid-Autumn and Spring Lantern Festivals which have proved to be very popular with tourists and local residents alike;
- (c) a theatre group has been commissioned to produce a new street theatre performance mixing elements of stand-up comedy, drama and physical theatre which has added an extra dimension and programme mix to the existing programme;
- (d) tailor-made programmes have been organised in support of major departmental events such as the International Arts Carnival and the

Museum's art fair for enhancing the impact of the events and more efficient use of resources; and

- (e) an enhanced series of programmes targeted at the Asian ethnic communities is being planned for 2000/01.

Expenditure/Subsidy Level

14. The direct production cost of organizing entertainment programmes in 2000/01 covering programme, technical and publicity costs is about \$21.6m with an estimated attendance of 772,000. Out of the total cost of \$21.6m, \$11m is for the territory-wide carnivals and family programmes with about 635,000 attendance and \$9.6m for 670 regular free programmes with 132,000 attendance. The overall average subsidy for 2000/01 based on direct production cost is \$28 per head comprising \$17 per head for territory-wide events and \$73 per head for regular free programmes.

Involvement with District Councils

15. The Department submits regular reports on programmes under planning as well as attendance figures of past programmes to the District Councils. Comments and suggestions from the District Councils on the choice of programmes and the use of new performance venues are always taken into consideration in planning the regular programmes. Collaboration with district organizations in the presentation of individual programmes is pursued wherever feasible whereby the Department provides programmes and technical support while the district organization provides venue and publicity support. Requests from the District Councils for contribution of programmes in support of district festivals and other community events are being entertained as far as possible.

Community Involvement

16. The Department always seeks greater community support in the organization of entertainment programmes as illustrated by the following:-

- (a) JAL Sky School - an annual joint collaboration with HK-TVB and Japan Airlines since 1984 which provides an air cruise for some 300 children, including the under-privileged.
- (b) Concert in the Park - an annual joint project with the Consulate General of the Philippines which provides excellent entertainment for the local Filipino community as well as the public at large.
- (c) Mid-Autumn Lantern Design Competition cum Exhibition - an annual collaboration with the Education Department for over 20 years with the participation of a large number of schools, providing a good opportunity for students and the general public to use their creative talent in the design of lanterns.
- (d) District participation - the Department always welcomes collaboration with District Councils and district organizations in organizing entertainment events and it renders programming support to district festivals and major events.

Review

17. The Department is undertaking a review of the organization of free entertainment programmes. Consideration will be given to strengthening the large-scale events and carnivals which are very popular. On the other hand, less popular venues and programmes might be replaced by regular programmes at a

number of strategically located venues in order to achieve better value for money. The review is expected to be completed within 2001 and District Councils will be consulted in due course.

Leisure and Cultural Services Department

5 March 2001

**Leisure and Cultural Services Department
Entertainment Programmes 2000/01
Estimated Expenditure and Attendance**

Expenditure, attendance figure and cost per head based on direct production cost (programme/technical/publicity costs)

<u>Event</u>	<u>Estimated Expenditure</u>	<u>Estimated Attendance</u>	<u>Cost per Head</u>
<u>(I) Territory-wide Carnivals and Family Entertainment Events</u>			
a) 4 Mid-Autumn Lantern Carnivals cum 1 Lantern Design Competition & Exhibition	\$4.3m	288,100	\$15
b) 2 Christmas and New Year Events	\$3.6m	124,000	\$29
c) 3 Spring Lantern Carnivals	\$2.5m	175,000	\$14
d) 3 Easter and Summer Events	\$0.5m	47,500	\$11
e) 2 Special Events (to provide support to the Reading Day Art Fair and Millennium Festival Fun Gala)	\$0.11m	N/A	N/A
<u>(II) Special Events jointly presented with other organizations</u>			
4 Joint Presentations (air cruise, fireworks displays on National Day and Lunar New Year and Concert in the Park)	\$0.05m	1,000	\$50
<u>(III) Regular Free Entertainment Programmes</u>			
670 free entertainment programmes	\$9.6m	132,000	\$73
<u>(IV) New Initiatives</u>			
3 new programmes (1 Evening Melodies Concert Series#, 2 Lantern Exhibitions and several Traditional Chinese Cultural Performances at the Airport)	\$0.9m	4,700	\$191*
Total:	\$21.56m	772,300	\$28

Note

*The number of visitors to the lantern exhibitions at the Airport, estimated at about 610,000, is not included.

#Expenditure and attendance included under regular free entertainment programmes.

LCSD Regular Free Entertainment Statistics by Art Form 2000/01

Programme Type		No of Performances	No of Performing Groups
A	Chinese Traditional Programmes		
1	Chinese Instrumental Concert	39	15
2	Cantonese Opera	63	11
3	Chinese Traditional Stage Art Show	31	6
4	Chinese Folk Song & Dance	40	15
5	Cantonese Operatic Song	77	47
6	Chinese Traditional Puppet Show	40	5
7	Chinese/Oriental Dance	15	2
8	Chinese Operas (except Cantonese Operas)	16	3
9	Chinese Folkloric Variety Show	10	2
	Total	331	106
B	Cultural Programmes		
1	Brass/Symphonic Band Concert	20	6
2	Choral Concert	23	6
3	Western Dance	12	3
4	Accordion/Percussion Concert	7	1
5	Drama	11	1
	Total	73	17
C	Modern & Popular Programmes		
1	Concert (Pop/Folk Concert)	43	18
2	Variety Show	62	10
3	Magic Show	59	5
4	Modern & Jazz Dance	5	1
	Total	169	34
D	Children Programmes		
1	Children's Theatre	46	7
2	Variety Show for Children	51	8
	Total	97	15
	Grand Total	670	172