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7 March 2003

Mr Michael M Y SUEN, GBS, JP
Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands
Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau
8/F, West Wing
Central Government Office
Hong Kong

Dear Mr SUEN,

Panel on Planning, Lands and Works

Applications for organizing activities in open spaces

At the meeting of the Panel on Home Affairs (HA Panel) held on 14 February 2003, a member of the Panel expressed concern that the Administration had turned down the application for holding a large-scale outdoor concert (Wild Day Out) at the former airport site at Kai Tak on 18 January 2003, and as a result, the host organization had to change the concert venue to an indoor exhibition centre in Kowloon Bay at very short notice. The member considered that the difficulties in obtaining approval for holding large-scale performances in open spaces went against the Government's initiatives to enrich people with a rich culture and to facilitate the promotion of major arts and cultural events and festivals in Hong Kong. He also considered that the wide coverage of the incident by overseas newspapers had affected the image of Hong Kong. The HA Panel then agreed to discuss the above subject at its meeting on 14 March 2003.

Having noted the reply of the Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) that applications for organizing various kinds of activities in open spaces are handled by the Lands Department in consultation with other relevant departments (**Appendix**), Hon Andrew CHENG, Chairman of the HA Panel, directed that the subject be referred to the Panel on Planning, Lands and Works (PLW Panel) for follow-up action.

To facilitate the PLW Panel's consideration of the need to discuss the subject at a meeting of the Panel, Dr Hon TANG Siu-tong, Chairman of the PLW Panel, directed that the Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau (HPLB) be invited to provide a paper on the subject, covering the following points:

- (a) Application procedures for organizing activities in open spaces and the various types of activities involved;
- (b) The respective role of the Lands Department and other bureaux/departments concerned, such as HAB and Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD), in processing and approving the applications mentioned in (a) above;
- (c) Time required to process the applications;
- (d) Criteria for approving the applications;
- (e) For the concert quoted by the member of HA Panel -
 - (i) the reason for not consulting HAB and LCSD on the application;
 - (ii) the time taken to process the application;
 - (iii) the rationale for not approving the application;
 - (iv) the Administration's comments on the points of concern raised at the HA Panel meeting on 14 February 2003 (paragraph 1 above).

I should be grateful if you would let me have the paper (in both Chinese and English) **by 28 March 2003**. Please forward the soft copy of the paper to Miss May LEUNG at mleung@legco.gov.hk.

Yours sincerely,

(Miss Salumi CHAN)
Clerk to Panel

Encl.

c.c. Dr Hon TANG Siu-tong, JP (Chairman)

Mr Oscar WONG, HPLB
(Fax: 2522 4457)

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21 February 2003

Legislative Council
Secretariat for Panel on Home Affairs
8 Jackson Road
Hong Kong
(Attn: Miss Flora Tai)

Dear *Flora*,

**LegCo Panel on Home Affairs
Meeting on 14 March 2003**

Thank you for your letter of 19 February 2003 advising us on the agenda of the March's regular meeting.

On agenda item VI, we understand the Kai Tak incident basically concerns an application for holding activities in open spaces. Under the current practice, applications for organising various kinds of activities in *open spaces* (other than venues managed by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD)) are handled by the Lands Department in consultation with other relevant departments. In the Kai Tak incident, however, neither Home Affairs Bureau nor LCSD has been consulted on the application concerned.

Against this background, it appears that the matter would better be dealt with within the context of land policy and, if agreed, be resolved at the forum of the subject Panel concerned. I should then be grateful for your consideration of our views and we await you reply before proceeding further.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ricky Leung', written over a circular stamp or mark.

(Ricky LEUNG)
for Secretary for Home Affairs