

**Consultative Committee on the
Core Arts and Cultural Facilities of the
West Kowloon Cultural District**

**Progress Report of the Performing Arts and
Tourism Advisory Group**

Purpose

This paper gives a progress report on the work of the Performing Arts and Tourism Advisory Group (PATAG) since its establishment on 6 April 2006 under the Consultative Committee on the Core Arts and Cultural Facilities of the West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD) and the proposed way forward.

Advice Sought

2. Members are invited to
 - (a) note the work done by PATAG over the past two months since its first meeting on 24 April 2006 (paragraphs 3 to 5);
 - (b) note some general direction of the views discussed/received so far on the need for performing arts venues in WKCD (paragraphs 6 to 7); and

- (c) discuss the proposed way forward for the coming months (paragraphs 8 to 9).

Background

3. At the first PATAG meeting held on 24 April 2006, Members endorsed the proposed work plan of holding open consultative forums and sector-specific focus group meetings to gauge views on the performing arts venues as core arts and cultural facilities and other arts and cultural facilities needed in WKCD in May and early June 2006. PATAG would then proceed to examine the views collected with a view to coming up with recommendations to the Consultative Committee (CC) for endorsement and subsequently to the Financial Matters Advisory Group for considering the financial implications. In view of the sequential nature of work among CC and its three Advisory Groups (AG), the PATAG's work plan has to dovetail with the other two AGs. The PATAG aims to complete its task in August 2006.

4. Based on the existing arts and cultural policy (as outlined in Information Paper PATAG/02/2006) and having regard to the current provision of performing arts venues in Hong Kong (Information Paper PATAG/03/2006), PATAG, guided by its terms of reference, focuses its work on the followings: -

- the need for and major specifications of various performance venues defined as Core Arts and Cultural

Facilities (CACF) in WKCD in the Invitation for Proposals issued in September 2003 ^(Note), in particular from the perspectives of enriching performing arts and promoting tourism; and

- the need for other arts and cultural facilities in WKCD (excluding museums and Art Exhibition Centre).

The PATAG meetings, informal discussions, focus group meetings and consultative forums have given rich food for thought in re-examining the original requirements as defined in the IFP.

Work Done Since the Establishment of PATAG

5. PATAG held 10 meetings in the past two months, including three regular meetings, five focus group meetings and two open consultative forums. The regular meetings aimed to develop overall considerations on performing arts facilities in WKCD and other related issues. The sector-specific focus group meetings effectively gauged views from the concerned sectors on how WKCD could be developed and the need for the performing venues in the district from users' point of view. Open consultation

^(Note) The performance venues include:

- (a) a Theatre Complex comprising three theatres with seating capacities of at least 2,000, 800 and 400 seats respectively;
- (b) a Performance Venue with a seating capacity of at least 10, 000 seats;
- (c) a Water Amphitheatre; and
- (d) at least four Piazza Areas.

forums aimed to gauge views from different sectors and the general public. The list of regular meetings, focus group meetings and open consultative forums held by PATAG from April to June is at **Annex A**.

Some General Directions of the Views Received/Discussed so far

6. Through discussions at meetings, briefings and open consultative forums referred in paragraph 5 above, it appears that, under a preliminary analysis, some general directions in respect of the performing arts facilities in WKCD have emerged. They are summarized as follows -

- (a) WKCD should be developed into an integrated world-class arts and cultural, entertainment and tourism district. It should be a district with its facilities suitably clustered together to attract people flow all day, hence creating synergy and vibrancy;
- (b) both the hardware and software of WKCD should be of high standard to be commensurate with the goal of developing WKCD into a world-class arts and cultural, entertainment and tourism district;
- (c) the performing arts facilities in WKCD should aim to meet the needs of the long-term development of arts and culture in Hong Kong and should not simply be

considered as solution to the current shortage of performing venues. Thus, flexibility should be allowed in the facilities for further development or changes in future;

- (d) not only is it necessary to consider from the tourism perspective when examining the need for the performing arts facilities, but also it is equally important to develop WKCD into an attraction for local people;
- (e) the performing arts facilities and other arts and cultural facilities should factor in the element of nurturing budding artists and building up audience;
- (f) there should be outdoor performance venues and spacious open space in the district for visitors, particularly the children, to hang out and enjoy outdoor performances;
- (g) the need for purpose-built venues for Xiqu/Cantonese Opera and classical music respectively should not be overlooked; and
- (h) the concept of 'theatreland' of having a few streets provided with a number of relatively small-size performing venues for different performing arts forms is worth pursuing.

7. There is a view that the Government should develop a comprehensive cultural policy and vision before we decide on what facilities are most appropriate for WKCD. It has been suggested that detailed studies, analyses and debates should be conducted and international arts and cultural institutions should be invited to express their views. On the other hand, many respondents and practitioners in the sector who attended PATAG's consultative forums and focus group meetings expressed their wish that WKCD project should proceed as soon as possible, as the issues of venue shortage and limitations caused by the inflexibility of Government venues have become very imminent. They are of the views that the hardware and software of arts and culture in WKCD are complementary and should be developed together as soon as practicable.

Proposed Way Forward

8. Towards the end of the one-month consultation period (from 17 May to 16 June), the Secretariat had received over 30 written submissions. Moreover, we had sought advice from members of the Public Affairs Forum (an online forum to canvass views on major public issues, operated by HAB). Over 60 responses were received. The Secretariat would prepare an analysis and prepare a paper summarizing the gist of these comments for PATAG to consider. PATAG has set aside three regular meetings in July and August (i.e. 6 July, 17 July and 11 August 2006) to critically re-examine the need of the performing venues as defined as CACF in the IFP with a view to coming up

with proposals on the performing venues and other arts and cultural facilities needed in WKCD (more regular meetings could be scheduled if need arises). The general directions of the views discussed at PATAG meetings and received through consultative forums and the written submissions will be taken into consideration in preparing the papers to facilitate the discussions.

9. After thorough discussions at the scheduled meetings, PATAG will report to CC in August its recommendations on issues specified in the terms of reference.

**Secretariat, Performing Arts and Tourism Advisory Group
June 2006**

List of Meetings, Focus Group Meetings and Open Consultative Forums held by Performing Arts and Tourism Advisory Group from April to June 2006

PATAG Meetings

	<u>Date</u>
1 st Meeting	Monday, 24 April
2 nd Meeting	Tuesday, 16 May
3 rd Meeting	Thursday, 22 June

Focus Group Meetings

- Meeting with the Cantonese Opera Sector on 9 May 2006
- Meeting with the Tourism Sector on 22 May 2006
- Meeting with Presenters of Cultural and Entertainment Events on 26 May 2006
- Meeting with the Presenters of Cantonese Opera on 2 June 2006
- Meeting with the Chinese Artists Association of Hong Kong on 17 June 2006

Open Consultative Forums

- 1st session at Lecture Hall, Sheung Wan Civic Centre, Hong Kong on 1 June
- 2nd session at Lecture Hall, Hong Kong Heritage Discovery Centre, Kowloon Park, Kowloon on 2 June