

LegCo Panel on Home Affairs

Policy Initiatives of Home Affairs Bureau

Introduction

The 2005 Policy Agenda just issued lists the Government's new and on-going initiatives over the next two and a half years. This note elaborates, where applicable, on the initiatives affecting the Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) in the 2005 Policy Agenda.

2005 Policy Agenda

Effective Governance

Initiative (1)

- Making suitable preparations for the review on the roles, functions and composition of District Councils, taking into account the experience of the operation of the second term District Councils. We will consult the public in the review process.

A descriptive account of initiative (1)

- It is Government's plan to commence the review of the role, functions and composition of District Councils before the end of this year. The Constitutional Affairs Bureau and the Home Affairs Department have set up a working group to make preparations for the review.
- The review will pay due regard to the relevant legal provisions, the original rationale for introducing the district administration scheme, the recommendations put forward by Government in the Report of the Working Group on District Councils Review published in 2001, and the experience of the operation of the second term District Councils. A public consultation document will also be issued to facilitate discussion and to canvass views from different sectors of the community.

Initiative (2)

- Reviewing the issues involved in the existing system of advisory and statutory bodies (ASBs), and exploring practical ways to streamline its structure and enhance its functions.

A descriptive account of initiative (2)

- We are conducting a comprehensive review on the role and functions of public sector ASBs to enhance the representativeness, openness and efficiency of these bodies for meeting the needs of the community and new challenges. In this connection, we have submitted a series of interim reports on the review to the Panel on Home Affairs of the Legislative Council, focusing on a wide range of issues relating to the appointment system and the operation of these bodies. We shall continue with the review and explore practical ways to streamline the structure and enhance the functions of ASBs.

Initiative (3)

- Reviewing the arrangements for rural elections in the light of experience gained in 2003.

A descriptive account of initiative (3)

- We are conducting a comprehensive review of the arrangements for rural elections on the basis of experience gained and identify areas for improvement for the 2007 rural elections cycle. We will conduct consultation on the detailed proposals in due course.

Initiative (4)

- Implementing the existing gambling policy and regulating authorized gambling activities conducted by licensed operators.

A descriptive account of initiative (4)

- We will continue to implement our gambling policy whereby we restrict gambling opportunities to a limited number of authorized and regulated channels only.

- We will continue to regulate the authorized betting activities conducted by the licensed operators in a way which strikes a balance between the need to ensure competitiveness of authorized betting operations vis-à-vis illegal bookmakers, and the need to minimize the adverse impact of gambling on the community.

Initiative (5)

- Working closely with the Football Betting and Lotteries Commission to ensure proper regulation of authorized football betting and lotteries.

A descriptive account of initiative (5)

- We are working closely with the Football Betting and Lotteries Commission to ensure proper regulation of authorized football betting and lotteries.

Vibrant Economy

Initiative (1)

- Providing a platform for the sports sector to engage business partners in organizing international sports events.

A descriptive account of initiative (1)

- We will bring in more major international sports events. We aim at developing a strategy in which a platform will be provided for the sports community to engage business partners in organizing and promoting such events in Hong Kong. Our strategy will be to :
 - promote the community’s interest and capability in sports as an anchor in community building;
 - pool expertise and resources of the sports sector and the business sector;
 - provide international exposure and marketing network for sports events;
 - bring in more innovative and commercial approach; and
 - enhance Hong Kong’s international profile and create new opportunities for economic growth.

- The Major Sports Events Committee will foster closer partnership with local sports community and private sector in planning more large-scale sporting events in Hong Kong.

Initiative (2)

- Further facilitating the development of creative industries, pursuant to consultation with local creative industries and organization of various activities to arouse public interest.

A descriptive account of initiative (2)

- Culture and creative industries refer to industries with value added through creativity and interest protected under intellectual property rights. Many of these industries already exist in Hong Kong. They would have significant development potentials if they could attract new investments, open new markets, and stimulate a free flow of talents and creativity. We will facilitate the further development of our creative industries to promote economic growth and our cultural features, and to provide more employment opportunities and room for creativity for our young people.
- In the past 12 months, we have organized and sponsored a number of activities, seminars and international events to promote creative industries. We will continue the work on this front with a view to providing a platform to facilitate the matching of business investors and creative talents.

Initiative (3)

- Organizing various types of local community economy projects in collaboration with District Councils and local bodies.

A descriptive account of initiative (3)

- We will continue to implement various projects in collaboration with District Councils, other relevant departments and the private sector, and strengthen our efforts in promoting the unique characteristics of districts with a view to enhancing local community economy and tourism.

Caring and Just Society

Initiative (1)

- Introducing a Bill to extend the prohibition of racial discrimination to the private sector.

A descriptive account of initiative (1)

- In September 2004, we issued a consultation document to consult the public on our legislative proposals. The consultation period has been extended to 8 February 2005. The views received will be analyzed and taken into account in drafting the bill. If all proceeds smoothly, we aim to introduce a bill into the Legislative Council in the 2004-05 legislative session.

Initiative (2)

- Enhancing our network at district level, which has proved invaluable in combating SARS and implementing Team Clean initiatives.

A descriptive account of initiative (2)

- We will continue to enhance our network at district level, which has proved invaluable in combating SARS, implementing Team Clean Initiatives and organizing events to promote district characteristics, etc.
- We are :
 - forming district hygiene squads by recruiting volunteers from local groups to support Team Clean efforts;
 - mobilizing volunteers to launch cleansing projects in public areas; and
 - partnering with non-government organizations to promulgate good hygiene practices.

Initiative (3)

- Providing continual researches, preventive education, remedial counselling and treatment services for addressing gambling-related problems.

A descriptive account of initiative (3)

- We will, with the financial support from Ping Wo Fund, continue to conduct research, organize preventive education programmes, and provide remedial counselling and treatment services for problem and pathological gamblers, for the purpose of addressing gambling-related problems.

Enlightened People with a Rich Culture

Initiative (1)

- Establishing a Sports Commission and reconstituting the Hong Kong Sports Institute, with a view to pursuing the new vision for sports development in Hong Kong.

A descriptive account of initiative (1)

- The Sports Commission was established on 1 January 2005. It has three functional committees under it, namely, the Community Sports Committee, the Major Sports Events Committee and the Elite Sports Committee, with a view to pursuing the new vision for sports development in Hong Kong. HAB and Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) will provide support to the future Sports Commission and its committees.
- On 1 October 2004, the Hong Kong Sports Development Board was dissolved. On the same date, the Hong Kong Sports Institute Limited was established as the delivery agent for high performance sports services in Hong Kong.
- A new Sports Funding Office was set up on 1 April 2004 under LCSD to provide one-stop subvention service for National Sports Associations and other sports organizations. The new funding structure aims to streamline the administrative procedures and improve the efficiency for subvention.

Initiative (2)

- Launching a public consultation exercise to seek the views of the public on the policy of heritage conservation in Hong Kong and review the policy in the light of the views received.

A descriptive account of initiative (2)

- We intend to adopt a holistic approach in assessing the historical value and cultural background as well as the merit of the architecture of the buildings in our strategy for heritage conservation. This will not only give appropriate protection to historical buildings and their cultural ambience, but also maintain the diversity of our architecture, enhance the community's sense of belonging and widen the citizens' exposure to our unique history.
- We launched a public consultation exercise from February to May 2004 on broad policy issues. The public's response was overwhelming, with over 500 views received. Having studied these views and suggestions, we have started mapping out possible implementation measures. We hope to further consult the public within this year.

Initiative (3)

- Continuing with our planning and consultation on the implementation of two Private Sector Finance (PSF) projects on leisure and cultural facilities in Kwun Tong and Tseung Kwan O respectively.

A descriptive account of initiative (3)

- The PSF approach, which is in line with the Government's policy of "big market, small government", would
 - allow greater flexibility in the development and management of leisure and cultural facilities;
 - tap the creative ideas of the private sector in the design, and its expertise in the construction and management of these facilities;
 - generate more business and job opportunities for the private sector; and
 - help contain the size of the civil service.
- We have invited Expressions of Interest (EoI) for the development of two sites in Kwun Tong and Tseung Kwan O respectively into leisure and cultural facilities. A total of 10 submissions had been received and examined by the consultant. We have worked out a Development Brief and the Town Planning Board has been informed

in 2004. We are examining the details of the legal procedures, tendering arrangement, pricing policy as well as the management and maintenance contract before invitation of interested parties to participate in the projects. We will also identify other suitable projects which could be developed with the PSF approach in light of the experience gained from the implementation of these two pilot projects.

Initiative (4)

- Planning the development of a stadium complex and a home base for elite training in South East Kowloon.

A descriptive account of initiative (4)

- The feasibility study on the technical and financial aspects of constructing a multi-purpose stadium and some ancillary sports facilities in South East Kowloon has been completed. However, in light of the recent Court ruling, the reclamation projects within the Harbour area, including those proposed in South East Kowloon Development (SEKD) will be reassessed and the overall planning of South East Kowloon is under review. Subject to the outcome of the review, we will work out a revised timetable for the multi-purpose stadium project in South East Kowloon.

Initiative (5)

- Preparing for the organization of the 5th East Asian Games to be held in 2009. The 5th East Asian Games Planning Committee with wide representation has been established in July 2004. Members of the Planning Committee comprise representatives from sports, business, tourism, banking sectors and related Government departments.

A descriptive account of initiative (5)

- We will establish the institutional framework for the organization of the 5th East Asian Games with participation of the sports sector and the community. We will also work closely with sports sector to bring sports development in Hong Kong to a new horizon and to lift the standards of our athletes. At community level, we will continue to promote the benefits of regular participation in physical activities and encourage the active involvement of the community in sports.

Initiative (6)

- Considering the best option to strengthen tertiary visual arts training in Hong Kong.

A descriptive account of initiative (6)

- A number of institutions are taking proactive steps to develop programmes and courses in visual arts at degree level. Assistance will be offered to these institutions as appropriate.

Initiative (7)

- Developing a cultural, arts and sports network in the Pearl River Delta.

A descriptive account of initiative (7)

- We have held summit meetings with the major cities in the Greater Pearl River Delta, Shanghai and Hainan including the State Sport General Administration and reached formal agreement with cultural and sports authorities on the overall strategies, areas of co-operation and the framework of co-operation in the development of the network. Exchange and Cooperation Agreements have been signed.
- We will step up networking with other major cities in the Mainland for exchanges on cultural and sports programmes, and also on promotion.

Initiative (8)

- Facilitating the promotion of major arts and cultural events and festivals in Hong Kong, highlighting our status as an international city.

A descriptive account of initiative (8)

- As Asia's world city, Hong Kong has a rich and vibrant cultural scene which enhances our quality of life and attracts visitors from around the world. We will strive to stage more world-class events and festivals in Hong Kong and continue to support local performing arts groups in order to strengthen Hong Kong's position as an

international city.

- The Second Asian Cultural Cooperation Forum (ACCF) held in November 2004 and the New Trends in Architecture in Europe and Asia Pacific 2004-05 held in early January 2005 are great successes. The ACCF will continue to be held in 2005.

Initiative (9)

- Improving the governance and operation of cultural services in Hong Kong, including libraries, museums and performance facilities; and encouraging stronger involvement of the cultural sector and the community in the process.

A descriptive account of initiative (9)

- We have established since November 2004 three committees on cultural services, namely Committee on Performing Arts, Committee on Museums and Committee on Libraries, to assist Government in formulating strategies and plans for the development of cultural facilities and services, based on the Culture and Heritage Commission policy recommendations as well as the consultancies on the respective services. We will work in collaboration with the committees with a view to continuing fostering community support and partnership with different sectors; enhancing public interest and understanding in performing arts, visual arts and literary arts; as well as further enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of our service delivery.

Initiative (10)

- Continuing consultation on measures to provide temporary protection to the most meritorious historical buildings, and to assess the heritage value of selected historical buildings.

A descriptive account of initiative (10)

- We have put in place an internal alarm mechanism for Government departments to forward any demolition or development proposals affecting graded historical buildings and pre-1960 buildings to the Antiquities and Monuments Office (AMO) of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department for comments.

- On the basis of the findings of a previous territory-wide survey on pre-1950s buildings conducted by the AMO, we have commenced a further in-depth study on the heritage value of selected buildings. We will consult the Antiquities Advisory Board of the results in due course.

Initiative (11)

- Enhancing the work on promotion of youth development in conjunction with the Commission on Youth, particularly on civic and social participation of young people.

A descriptive account of initiative (11)

- In partnership with the Commission on Youth, we will continue to promote the holistic development of our young people, encouraging their social participation in particular, so that they would become contributing and responsible members of the community.
- We have commissioned a local university to conduct the first-ever comprehensive benchmark study on civic engagement and social networks of youth in Hong Kong. The study results in the first stage would establish a baseline for future tracking and trend surveys on this subject, and develop a set of useful indicators for evaluating youth services in Hong Kong. The results of this benchmark study are expected to be available later this year.
- We are working closely with the Commission on Youth to set up district youth forums made up of young people from the relevant districts. The forums seek to provide young people with a platform to deliberate on, and express views on social issues, thereby enhancing their civic awareness and social participation.

Initiative (12)

- Providing young people with appropriate non-formal education and training through supporting the activities of youth uniformed groups.

A descriptive account of initiative (12)

- We would continue to work in close partnership with uniformed groups and other youth organizations in developing appropriate and timely non-formal education, training and development programmes

for young people.

Initiative (13)

- Enhancing the work on the promotion of civic education outside schools in conjunction with the Committee on Promotion of Civic Education, particularly on promotion of national education among the general public.

A descriptive account of initiative (13)

- We have revamped the role and functions of the Committee on Promotion of Civic Education (CPCE). The Committee has now become more focused in its promotional measures. The annual funding application scheme - the Community Participation Scheme - has, since 2004, been focused on a single topical theme (rather than a range of civic education themes). The topical theme for 2004 was social participation and commitment, while that for 2005 would be social harmony.
- In response to community concerns about the need to enhance national education amongst the general public in Hong Kong, we have set up a Working Group on National Education comprising members from both the CPCE and the Commission on Youth. The primary objective of the Working Group is to draw up plans and programmes to increase the sense of national identity amongst the general public. The first-ever API featuring the national anthem was produced in close consultation with this Working Group.
- We would continue to strengthen our collaboration with district-based civic education committees and other concerned parties in the community including particularly the education sector, the professional sectors and the media, so as to enhance the effectiveness of our promotional efforts.
- We will sustain our efforts in promoting Basic Law in the local community through the organization of focused publicity programmes.

Initiative (14)

- Continuing our work on the promotion of racial harmony.

A descriptive account of initiative (14)

- Public education remains an important priority and we continue to address discrimination and to promote racial harmony through the work of the Committee on the Promotion of Racial Harmony and the Race Relations Unit. We have taken a number of initiatives including sponsoring radio programmes in minority languages and organizing Sunday cultural programmes to enhance the ethnic minorities' sense of belonging to Hong Kong while retaining their own cultural identities.
- We established an Ethnic Minorities Forum in July 2003 to strengthen our ties with the minority communities. We will continue to provide funding support to education and publicity activities for the promotion of racial harmony.

Initiative (15)

- Formulating a comprehensive development package for the integrated arts, cultural and entertainment district in West Kowloon.

A descriptive account of initiative (15)

- The Administration has issued an Invitation for Proposals for the development of the 40-hectare prime waterfront site in West Kowloon into a world class arts, cultural, commercial and entertainment district. Proponents have great flexibility in the design, provision and operation of the arts and cultural facilities in the district, and are encouraged to form partnership with local and international cultural institutions, experts and professionals in the planning, design, financing, construction, operation, maintenance and management of the cultural facilities in the district.
- The Invitation For Proposals ended in June 2004 and five proposals were received. Three proposals have been screened-in and a 15-week public consultation exercise was launched in December 2004 to solicit public views on these proposals. Exhibitions and forums are being held to enable the public to better understand the project and express their views. The Administration will also pay visits to 18 districts to solicit views from the District Councils. The public could give their views through comment card, email, fax, letters etc. An independent consultant will also be engaged to conduct telephone polls and analyse public views received during the

consultation.

Environmentally Responsible Development

Initiative (1)

- Introducing a Bill to amend the Building Management Ordinance to improve certain provisions in the legislation for the benefit of owners' corporations and property owners.

A descriptive account of initiative (1)

- An extensive public consultation exercise was conducted from May to July 2003.
- The aims of the proposed amendments are to assist owners' corporations (OCs) in performing their duties and exercising their powers, rationalize the procedures for appointing a management committee and its members, and safeguard the interests of property owners.
- We will introduce the amendment bill into the Legislative Council in April 2005.

Initiative (2)

- Implementing a comprehensive greening policy for Hong Kong through the collaboration of different departments and with the input of experts and specialists in the field, and aiming to develop a sustainable greening programme for the urban areas. We have set up a high level Steering Committee on Greening, completed the planting of 16 million trees, shrubs and annuals in 2003-04, and will complete the planting of another 10 million in 2004-05. We also aim to produce greening master plans for Tsim Sha Tsui and Central by around mid 2005 so that works can start. Six community gardens in different districts have been established in 2004. The programme will be extended to cover all districts in 2005-06. We are also organizing various greening and horticulture activities to promote public support for a green environment.

A descriptive account of initiative (2)

- We are enhancing the work on greening through the implementation of “Community Involvement Scheme on Greening” in close partnership with government departments, district organizations, NGOs and schools. We also strive to enhance public awareness of the importance of greening through civic education and campaign in the 18 districts.
- To enlist community participation in greening activities at neighbourhood level, LCSD will provide suitable facilities in Hong Kong, Kowloon and the New Territories for the public to practise gardening with guidance from qualified instructors. The community garden programme commenced in February 2004. The programme will be extended to cover all districts in 2005-06.
- We have organized 2 790 greening and horticultural activities for about 1 200 000 participants in 18 districts in the past 12 months. We will continue to organize these activities in 2005.

Initiative (3)

- Continuing our efforts to enhance building management and maintenance of private housing through education, publicity and participation of professional bodies. We are working towards a second stage public consultation focusing on the feasibility of introducing mandatory building inspections in response to public views.

A descriptive account of initiative (3)

- Management and maintenance of private buildings is the responsibility of property owners. It has always been the Government’s policy to encourage and assist owners to form OCs to achieve effective building management. The Government has taken on the role of “facilitator” in this aspect. We have set up District Building Management Liaison Teams (DBMLTs) in each of the 18 District Offices to provide outreach services to property owners.
- In addition, four Building Management Resource Centres (BMRCs) have been set up in the territory to provide information, advice and service on building management. The BMRCs also provide, in

collaboration with professional bodies, free professional advice to the OCs and property owners.

- The DBMLTs and BMRCs have organized training courses, workshops, seminars and various publicity activities to promote effective building management. We will continue organizing these activities in the coming years.

Home Affairs Bureau
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