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15 May 2008

Ms. Serena Chu,  
Public Accounts Committee,  
LegCo Building,  
8 Jackson Road,  
Central,  
Hong Kong.

Dear Ms. Chu,

**The Director of Audit's Report on the  
Results of value for money audits (Report No. 50)**

**Chapter 5 : The Society for the Aid and Rehabilitation  
of Drug Abuse (SARDA)**

Thank you for your letter of 8 May.

We have been assessing the merits of SARDA's revised proposal submitted in January 2008 regarding the establishment of a Centre for Anti-drug Education and Disciplinary Training (CAEDT) at Shek Kwu Chau (SKC). We will take account of the specific terms about the intended CAEDT operation set out in the revised proposal and consider, inter alia,

- (i) an objective benchmark for gauging the effectiveness of the proposed CAEDT programme;

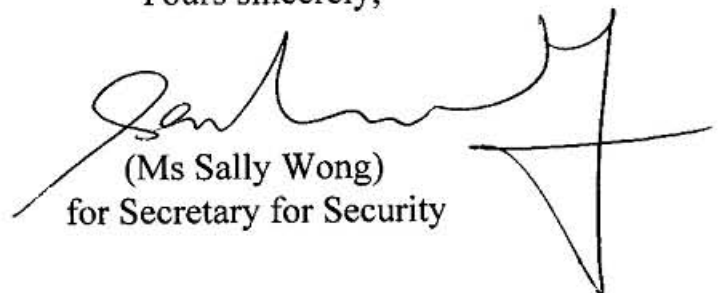
- (ii) the specific expertise and resources required as distinct from that of a traditional opiate treatment programme;
- (iii) the cost-effectiveness of the proposal having regard to the significant capital costs for setting up the CAEDT (\$117 million) and likely recurrent requirements; and
- (iv) the long-term financial sustainability of the proposal.

We aim to consult with relevant policy bureaux and departments, with a view to arriving at a considered response to SARDA within the current financial year 2008-09.

We would like to underline that the under-utilisation of the SKC Centre does not necessarily justify the establishment and operation of the CAEDT. There is no question of automatic transfer of underused subvention from e.g. the SKC Centre to another new project like the CAEDT. Each new and publicly funded project has to be considered carefully against its own merits.

Any savings arising from the under-utilisation of SKC under the existing scope of subvention should be fully accounted for. We note that DH is working on the issue to see if adjustment of resources to the SKC Centre is required. His letter to you dated 15 May 2008 is relevant.

Yours sincerely,



(Ms Sally Wong)  
for Secretary for Security

c.c. D of Health  
Executive Director of SARDA  
SFST  
D of Audit  
S for S