

**Legislative Council Panel on Home Affairs
Policy Initiatives of Home Affairs Bureau**

Purpose

The Chief Executive (CE) set out the policy objectives in his 2007 Policy Address on 10 October 2007. A full list of the new and ongoing initiatives in the 2007 Policy Agenda booklet under the purview of the Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) is at **Annex**. This paper highlights the main tasks to be carried out by the HAB in the coming year, including the full implementation of the recommendations of strengthening the role of District Councils (DCs), the promotion of national education, the staging of the 2008 Olympic and Paralympic Equestrian Events, and the roll-out of the West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD) Development Project.

Enhancing the Functions of District Councils

2. To further the development of district administration, the Government will strengthen DCs' functions and enhance the role of District Officers (DOs).

3. Starting from January 2008, the 18 DCs will be involved in the management of some district facilities, including community halls, libraries, leisure grounds, sports venues, public swimming pools and beaches. A District Facilities Management Committee will be set up in each DC to steer and oversee the management of district facilities. A pilot scheme has been launched in January 2007 in four selected districts, namely Wan Chai, Wong Tai Sin, Tuen Mun and Sai Kung. We will take into account the experience gained in the pilot districts, as well as the outcome of an independent evaluation study on the pilot scheme in preparation of the full implementation of the recommendations under the DC Review.

4. In support of the management of district facilities by DCs, with effect from 2008-09 onwards, the annual provision to the dedicated District Minor Works Block Vote will be increased to \$300 million to implement district minor works projects initiated by DCs for the improvement of district environment. Provision for community involvement programmes will also be increased to \$300 million each year to encourage DCs to work with local organisations and residents to organise district

partnership programmes and recreational and cultural activities. We have also devised new manuals to enhance flexibility in the use of DC Fund and through the proper use of such funds we seek to foster greater harmony in the community. With the staging of the Olympic and Paralympic Equestrian Events in Hong Kong in 2008, we will, in an effort to promote Olympism, as well as the notions of peace, friendship, solidarity and social harmony, encourage district organisations and bodies from different sectors to organise meaningful activities on these themes.

5. We will provide additional manpower resources to enhance support to the DCs for initiating new works projects and community involvement programmes. We will arrange briefing sessions for the DC members for the new term to enhance their understanding of the operation and policies of the Government.

6. We are making preparations for the first annual Chief Executive's Summit on District Administration Scheme to be held in May 2008. This will be a valuable opportunity for DC members to exchange views on strategies for future development of the District Administration Scheme with policy bureaux and relevant departments. Moreover, Heads of Departments with direct interface with the public will continue to attend DC meetings on a regular basis to strengthen the communication between the Government and DCs on issues affecting the livelihood of residents and development in the districts.

7. The Steering Committee on District Administration will continue to provide a forum for top management of various departments to exchange views on issues of mutual concern and resolve inter-departmental district management issues. It will also provide steer to DOs and District Management Committees so as to strengthen district work. We will continue to enhance our support for DOs to enable them to maintain closer liaison with district organisations and encourage cross-sectoral collaboration so that district administration work will be enhanced and public policies can be effectively implemented at district level to better respond to the demands of the people.

Rural Affairs

8. The Heung Yee Kuk (HYK) has always been an important partner of the Government. The Government maintains close contact and cooperation with the HYK on rural matters and other issues to promote the well-being of the residents in the New Territories.

9. The Administration and the HYK will set up a joint working group to conduct a comprehensive review of rural elections, in the light of experience gained in 2003 and 2007. We will also consult the rural community on the proposals drawn up with a view to improving arrangements for rural elections, and work on the way forward for the next cycle of elections in 2011. We will also consider the HYK's proposal of an allowance for village representatives.

Promotion of National Education

10. We will continue to enhance the work on the promotion of civic education outside schools in conjunction with the Committee on the Promotion of Civic Education (CPCE) and the Commission on Youth (CoY), particularly on the promotion of national education. We will capitalise on the Olympic Games which Beijing will be hosting next year and are planning to join hands with various youth organisations, including all uniformed groups, to launch a series of activities. We hope to adopt this major event as the main theme for promoting national education in order to promote the Olympic spirit and to enhance the understanding of our country and foster a sense of national pride among the public.

11. We will encourage youth organisations to carry out more projects for promoting national education. We will also increase funding support for local organisations and schools to organise more visits/familiarisation tours to the Mainland for young people so as to gain first-hand experience in the development in the Mainland and build up ties with their counterparts in the Mainland.

12. We will continue to work with the CPCE and the CoY to promote national education and the Basic Law through different channels, such as announcements of public interest, television and radio programmes, educational materials, etc. We will also provide organisations with national flag and national song CDs as well as training in flag-raising.

2008 Olympic and Paralympic Equestrian Events (the Equestrian Events)

13. The 2008 Beijing Olympic Games will be the first-ever Olympic Games to be held on Chinese soil. Hong Kong will stage the Equestrian Events and become an Olympic city. The "Good Luck Beijing – HKSAR 10th Anniversary Cup" Eventing Competition (the 2007 Event) was held in August this year. The purpose of the 2007

Event was to test the venues, infrastructure and support services for the Equestrian Events, as well as to provide a chance for the athletes and horses to experience the weather conditions in Hong Kong. A total of 17 horses from eight overseas countries and 20 local horses participated in the 2007 Event. We are conducting a comprehensive review and will, according to the results of the review, recommend appropriate changes to the “hardware” and “software” in order to perfect the arrangements for the Equestrian Events.

Promotion of Sports Development

14. In preparation for the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, our athletes have been actively taking part in training, aiming to attain the qualification requirements for the Olympic Games. The Government also hopes to mobilise the community to support the Olympic Games and our athletes. Therefore, we will continue to allocate resources and introduce additional measures to support sports development. We will also collaborate with all sectors of the community to promote sports development on all fronts in Hong Kong, along the three strategic directions to promote sports in the community, develop elite sports, and make Hong Kong a major location for international sports events.

15. To promote sports in the community and wider participation in sports by people of all age groups, we will further enhance the School Sports Programme with a view to achieving the objective of “One Student, One Sport”. We will also continue to collaborate with the 18 DCs and relevant National Sports Associations (NSAs) to plan and organise the bi-annual Hong Kong Games so as to strengthen citizens’ sense of belonging to the community. To objectively assess the effectiveness of promoting sports in the community, we will conduct a study on the “Participation Patterns of Hong Kong People in Physical Activity”.

16. We will also accelerate the implementation of suitable leisure and cultural services (LCS) projects of the former Urban Council and Regional Council based on community needs. The CE announced in his Policy Address in 2005 early implementation of 25 priority LCS projects. In 2006, we further agreed to implement another 21 LCS projects. We have all along given priority to these 46 LCS projects and have been reporting their progress regularly to the relevant subcommittee under the LegCo Panel on Home Affairs. Regarding the other LCS projects, we will take forward the suitable ones, having regard to the views of the community.

17. In developing elite sports, we will encourage more talented young people to pursue a career in sports by increasing resources and formulating different supporting measures to enhance the support to elite athletes. We are actively facilitating the planning of the re-development of the Hong Kong Sports Institute (HKSI), with a view to providing world-class training facilities for athletes in Hong Kong. We have implemented measures to enhance the financial support to elite athletes and to strengthen the athletes training programme. In addition, we have invited the Sports Federation and Olympic Committee of Hong Kong, China (SF&OC) to work with us in developing a comprehensive athletes retirement scheme to support retired athletes. We have also put in place a mechanism to identify and support up-and-coming sports in collaboration with the HKSI and NSAs.

18. To establish Hong Kong as a major sports events capital, the Major Sports Events Committee is reviewing the “M” Mark System and Support Package, with a view to providing a better platform for and assisting the sports sector to engage business partners in organising more sustainable, market-oriented and self-financing international sports events. We will continue to plan the development of a Multi-purpose Stadium Complex in Kai Tak, which would allow Hong Kong to hold more international sports events and provide Hong Kong with an environment more conducive to the promotion of major sports events.

19. Hong Kong will host the 5th East Asian Games (EAG) in 2009. The EAG mascot will be announced by the end of this year together with the launching of the EAG merchandise programme. An EAG anthem competition will be held in late 2007/early 2008 and a volunteer recruitment programme will also be launched in early 2008. Meanwhile, we will continue to collect professional inputs from the related NSAs on necessary improvement works to bring our existing sports venues to international standards required for holding the EAG events.

Promoting the Olympic Spirit and Encouraging Community Participation in Related Activities

20. Apart from using the Olympic Games as a platform in promoting sports on all fronts, we also hope the city to inspire the Olympic spirit of solidarity, fair play, and friendship. We will make use of the opportunity of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games to facilitate community involvement and encourage the members of the public for full participation in the Olympic Games. In order to create a strong Olympic

atmosphere in Hong Kong and to raise public awareness of the Beijing Olympics, we are, in collaboration with the SF&OC and organisations concerned, launching a series of relevant activities and publicity campaigns which include the following:

- Major community involvement projects will be carried out on dates of significance, such as the 300-, 200- and 100-day countdowns to the Olympics. The content of the activities will be in line with the theme of “Green Olympics”, “Hi-Tech Olympics” and “People’s Olympics”;
- As for the Olympic torch relay to be held in May next year, 120 people from different sectors will become torchbearers to carry the Olympic torch through various parts of Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and the New Territories by different modes of transportation to spread the Olympic spirit and showcase our gorgeous scenery and unique city glamour to the world;
- During the period of the Beijing Olympic Games from 8 to 24 August 2008, Olympic Live Sites will be set up for people to meet and enjoy the spirit of the Olympic Games by watching live TV broadcast of Olympic Games on giant screens, as well as participating in diversified cultural and entertainment activities;
- Funding will be provided to local community organisations under the community involvement projects of the DCs to organise activities relating to the promotion of Olympism in the 18 districts throughout Hong Kong (see paragraph 4 above);
- To encourage community participation in sports activities, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) will offer sports facilities for public use free of charge from 1 July to 30 September 2008. This will encourage more people to participate in sports so that the health conditions of all citizens can be improved;
- Hong Kong, being the city to stage the Olympic Equestrian Events, will be promoted outside Hong Kong to attract tourists through the Hong Kong Tourism Board and our offices outside Hong Kong;
- A number of Announcements of Public Interest will be launched to promote the Olympic Games, Equestrian Events and Olympic spirit, and

encourage the people of Hong Kong to act as a good host to the guests and tourists visiting Hong Kong;

- Activities related to the Equestrian Events are being organised through the Hong Kong Equestrian Federation (HKEF) to help students to gain a better understanding of the Equestrian Events. The HKEF has already produced a teaching kit on the equestrian sport for distribution to primary and secondary schools in Hong Kong. This teaching kit will also be recommended to schools in the Mainland as a means to introduce Hong Kong to young people in the Mainland; and
- The dressing up of the city will be stepped up progressively. We will work with the Olympic sponsors/suppliers to put up banners/posters on the main streets, footbridges and external walls of government buildings to promote the Olympics and disseminate publicity messages at the airport and on public transport.

21. We will stage the Equestrian Events and promote the Olympic Games with our existing resources as far as possible. We will apply for additional resources from the Legislative Council (LegCo) in future to promote Olympism and sports according to our needs.

West Kowloon Cultural District Development Project

22. WKCD is an important strategic investment in culture and the arts for the future of Hong Kong. It seeks to build up an integrated arts and cultural district with world-class arts and cultural facilities, distinguished talents, iconic architectures and quality programmes with a must-visit appeal to local residents in Hong Kong, visitors from southern China and tourists from all over the world. It should also be a driving force to foster the growth and development of cultural and creative industries in Hong Kong. In addition, the WKCD would be a low-density development with ample public open space larger than that provided by Victoria Park and a vibrant harbourfront area for the general public to enjoy and relax. The WKCD would also be closely connected with local community in its neighbourhood.

23. Following 15 months of protracted deliberations, studies, and consultations, the Consultative Committee on the Core Arts and Cultural Facilities of the WKCD submitted to the CE in June this year their recommendations on the arts and cultural

facilities to be provided in the WKCD, the financial arrangements and other related issues.

24. The Government generally agrees with the overall direction proposed in the Recommendation Report. In September, we launched a public engagement exercise to explain to the general public the proposals in the Recommendation Report through different channels and to listen to their views. If the public is generally in support of the recommendations, we will implement the project at full speed and introduce the bill on establishment of the “WKCD Authority” into the LegCo as soon as possible.

Development in Culture and the Arts

25. To realise the vision and objectives of WKCD and to make Hong Kong an international cultural metropolis, we should take timely measures to enhance our cultural software in parallel with developing the hardware of the WKCD. As an integral part of our cultural policy, the Government is committed to the development of cultural software. At present, our annual recurrent expenditure on cultural and the arts amounts to around \$2.5 billion, which is mainly deployed to the provision and management of cultural facilities through LCSD such as public libraries, museums, performance venues and visual arts centres for the purpose of promoting arts and culture to the public. With these recurrent resources, we are also supporting arts organisations, nurturing talents and fostering audience building through providing funding support for professional performing arts groups, organising cultural programmes and arts education programmes through the LCSD as well as through the on-going work of the Hong Kong Arts Development Council (HKADC) and Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts.

26. We will work with the arts and cultural sector to introduce a series of measures to strengthen the development of cultural software. Starting from 2008-09, we will implement the following measures –

- Conducting a comprehensive survey on the demand and supply of manpower in the arts and cultural sector with a view to devising appropriate training and education measures.
- Increasing funding for ten major performing arts groups during the transitional period before a new funding and assessment mechanism is put in place following a review, so that these groups can consolidate themselves

and achieve steady growth. This interim additional funding support given to the performing arts groups would mainly be dedicated to strengthening the provision of administrative support, facilitating their participation in the Venue Partnership Scheme and organising more cultural exchange activities to promote our performing arts outside Hong Kong.

- Increasing funding for the HKADC to enhance support for the development of small and medium arts groups, building up a network for cultural co-operation between Hong Kong and Mainland artists and art groups, and conducting baseline studies to support the development of various art forms, etc.
- Augmenting LCSD's work on audience building and arts education.
- Providing funding for small and medium arts groups to produce more partnership programmes at LCSD venues.

27. We would endeavour to explore the possibilities of providing more venues and space for arts and cultural activities in various districts outside the WKCD, so that arts groups and artists can showcase their artistic and creative talents while the public will have more opportunities to access and participate in arts and cultural activities. Such efforts include the construction of new purpose-built venues for the performing arts, making use of non-purpose-built venues, and discussing with partner organisations how to make better use of their venues for arts purposes. In this connection, we will encourage arts groups to make use of the newly completed community hall in Tin Ching Estate, Tin Shui Wai, the Centre for Youth Development in Chai Wan and Shek Kip Mei creative arts centre to be opened early next year, the community hall in the Siu Sai Wan Complex expected to open in 2010, the Cantonese opera centre converted from the Yau Ma Tei Theatre and expected to open in 2011, the new Annex of the Ko Shan Theatre scheduled for completion in 2012, and the Kwun Tong Cross District Community Cultural Centre scheduled for completion in 2015.

**The 2007-08 Policy Address
Policy Agenda
[Extract: Policy Initiatives relevant to Home Affairs Bureau]**

Ten Major Infrastructure Projects to Boost Our Economy

New Initiatives

We will:

- Proceed in full swing with the development of the West Kowloon Cultural District as soon as possible taking into account public views, and strengthen cultural software mainly through a series of measures to enhance support for arts groups, artists, arts education and audience building, so as to facilitate the long-term development of culture and the arts.

Quality City And Quality Life

On-going Initiatives

We are:

- Facilitating the development of creative industries through efforts to promote culture and the arts, including supporting the operation of a creative arts centre at the former Shek Kip Mei factory building to help nurture budding artists.
- Working closely with the Hong Kong Housing Society and the URA to assist owners of older buildings to properly manage and maintain their buildings. We are also continuing our efforts to enhance building management and maintenance of private buildings through public education, publicity and participation of professional bodies.
- Continuing to enrich cultural and recreational facilities based on community needs, including the implementation of suitable projects of the former Urban Council and Regional Council.
- Planning the development of a Multi-purpose Stadium Complex in Kai Tak.
- Providing a platform for and assisting the sports sector to collaborate with business sector in organising international sports events.
- Identifying and designating support for “up-and-coming” sports, so as to enhance Hong Kong’s medal hope in the international sports arena.

- Working with stakeholders on measures to further enhance the support to elite athletes particularly upon their retirement.
- Facilitating the re-development of the Hong Kong Sports Institute.
- Developing and implementing a holistic strategy to promote wider participation in sports by people of all age groups.
- Preparing in full gear for the 2009 5th East Asian Games. Providing competition venues of international standards, encouraging community involvement in sports activities and the Games, thereby enhancing our sporting culture.
- Developing a cultural, arts and sports network in the PRD, especially in the light of the fourth phase of the Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement (CEPA IV) liberalisations.
- Encouraging funding from the business sector and individuals to support the arts and cultural activities in Hong Kong.
- Devoting attention to the preservation and development of Cantonese opera as a local indigenous art form, and facilitating the promotion of major arts and cultural events and festivals in Hong Kong, so as to highlight our status as an international city.
- Implementing the recommendations of the Committee on Performing Arts with a view to enhancing the operation and management of cultural services and venues, rationalising the use of existing performance venues through the venue partnership scheme, and identifying and developing new venues to address the venue shortage problem.
- Implementing the recommendations of the Committee on Museums and the Committee on Libraries, devising plans to enhance the management and operation of public museum services, and strengthening the role and functions of public libraries in the promotion of reading and appreciation of literary arts.
- Commissioning an agency to, after making reference to the pilot phase of the study, compile a comprehensive inventory of Hong Kong's intangible cultural heritage in accordance with the requirement of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage with a view to strengthening their preservation and promotion in Hong Kong.
- Implementing the amended Building Management Ordinance and putting in place the associated subsidiary legislation for the benefit of owners' corporations and property owners.

Investing for a Caring Society

New Initiatives

We will:

- Organise a summit before the end of the year and put forward an action plan to promote the development of social enterprises.
- Set up a high-level Family Council to better formulate policies and initiatives relating to family support and integrate the work of the Youth Commission, Women's Commission and Elderly Commission on family support matters.

On-going Initiatives

We are:

- Working closely with the Ping Wo Fund Advisory Committee on the use of the Ping Wo Fund to finance public education to prevent gambling-related problems, to provide counselling and support services to pathological gamblers, and to conduct research on studies on gambling-related issues.
- Together with stakeholders, encouraging further development of social enterprises to help enhance the employability of the able-bodied unemployed. Reinforcing the district-based approach in alleviating poverty through implementing the Enhancing Self-Reliance Through District Partnership Programme and other district co-ordination work.

Developing Democracy And Enhancing Governance

New Initiatives

We will:

- Strengthen the role of the DCs and involve the DCs in the management of designated district facilities in all 18 districts starting from January 2008.

On-going Initiatives

We are:

- Reviewing and improving arrangements for rural elections, in the light of experience gained in 2003 and 2007, and working on the way forward for the next cycle of elections in 2011.

- Organizing an annual Chief Executive's Summit on District Administration Scheme to enhance communication between DCs and the Administration.
- Strengthening our liaison network through District Officers.
- Continuing to consult DCs on government policies and proposals.
- Continuing to take into account public opinion gathered during policy-formulation.
- Enhancing our network at district level to facilitate the collation, assessment and analysis of community feedback.
- Joining hands with all sectors in the community to organise and stage the 2008 Olympic and Paralympic Equestrian Events and make the Events a resounding success to bring pride to our home and our nation. Promoting the Olympic spirit and working in partnership with different sectors to create a positive Olympic legacy to Hong Kong through cultural, educational and community involvement programmes.
- Working with the Commission on Youth, the Committee on Promotion of Civic Education and the youth uniformed groups to provide young people with appropriate non-formal education and training, enhance the promotion of youth development and civic education outside schools, particularly on the civic and social participation of young people and the promotion of national education.