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OUR REF : L/M (1) to HAB/CS/CR 6/5/293 Pt.2

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6 June 2016

Clerk to Legislative Council Panel on Home Affairs  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
Legislative Council Complex  
1 Legislative Council Road  
Central  
Hong Kong  
(Attn.: Miss Karen LAI)

Dear Miss LAI,

I refer to your letter dated 23 March 2016 addressed to the Secretary for Home Affairs. Regarding the enquiries raised in the enclosed letter from Dr Hon Kenneth Chan and Hon IP Kin-yuen, concerning the production of house programmes of performances presented by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department ("LCSD"), I am authorised to reply as follows.

The Government is committed to developing Hong Kong as a cultural metropolis of Asia. In realising this vision, the LCSD presents diverse and quality arts and cultural programmes from both Hong Kong and overseas throughout the year to serve the plural needs and aspirations of the community and enrich their quality of life by keeping them abreast of the arts scene. The LCSD also actively supports artists and arts groups of various capacities and provides them with opportunities for sustainable development and performances. Programmes staged each year comprise different art forms such as music, theatre, Chinese opera, dance and multi-disciplinary arts.

Over the years, the LCSD has been actively supporting the local arts sector in fostering the diversified development of the arts and culture and collaborating closely with local arts groups. To ensure the smooth staging of performing arts programmes of different genres and art forms, the LCSD maintains effective communication with arts groups based on mutual trust and respect when mapping out and co-ordinating performances. The Government has all long been respecting the freedom of artistic creation, under the established mode of co-operation, the LCSD will render professional assistance to the arts groups in handling matters relating to the venue, staging, ticketing and publicity. This mode of co-operation has served well over the years for promoting the vibrant development of the arts and culture in Hong Kong.

The case referred in your letter mainly involves the production of the house programme of a performance presented by the LCSD. As pointed out above, the LCSD provides assistance in handling matters relating to the venue, staging, ticketing and publicity. As regards the production of house programmes, the texts and pictures in the house programmes were provided by the collaborating arts groups. The LCSD maintains communication with the arts groups concerned on the editing and production of house programmes from time to time to render professional advice and support.

Having regard to this case, the Home Affairs Bureau ("HAB") and the LCSD have reviewed the departmental procedures on the production of house programmes. It is noted that given the different nature and scale of the programmes, there could be slight variations in the handling among different sections or staff members occasionally. Specifically, the LCSD will assign an office or section responsible for a specific programme based on its nature and scale. The officers concerned will liaise directly with the arts group on matters such as venue, staging, ticketing and publicity, including the production of house programmes. Given that the process involves various work procedures and officers, and that the activities or artistic programmes vary in their nature and scale, their house programmes also have their respective characteristics and styles.

In view of the handling of the case mentioned above and the outcome of the review, we consider that the LCSD could further enhance its communication with the arts groups. On the basis of mutual trust, both parties should accommodate each other's concerns and viewpoints on matters such as venue, staging, publicity and the production of house programmes. The issues should be dealt with in a negotiable manner, and both parties should collaborate to ensure smooth staging of the performance, whereby preventing similar occurrences in the future.

Since all programmes are distinctive in nature and within the professional realm of the performing arts, we consider it appropriate for members of the professional grades in the LCSD to continue their communication with arts groups and co-ordination of related matters, including that on the production of house programmes. Problems should be resolved according to the actual circumstances through deliberation and negotiation with the arts groups. Looking forward, the Government will continue to enhance public engagement, and encourage artistic creation and exchanges.

Yours sincerely



( Elaine MAK )

for Secretary for Home Affairs