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27 December 2018  
(By e-mail: ahychu@legco.gov.hk)

Mr Anthony Chu  
Clerk, Public Accounts Committee  
Legislative Council  
Legislative Council Complex  
1 Legislative Council Road  
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Mr Chu,

**Public Accounts Committee**  
**Consideration of Chapter 6 of the Director of Audit's Report No. 71**  
**Barrier-free facilities at government premises**

Thank you for your letter dated 17 December 2018 requesting response and/or information in writing on matters set out in the Appendix of your letter. Our submission is attached at *Annex* for your perusal, please.

Yours sincerely,



(Mrs Lilian Leting)

for Director of Leisure and Cultural Services

Enclosure

- c.c. Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Fax: 2537 3539)  
Secretary for Home Affairs (Fax: 2591 5536)  
Director of Buildings (Fax: 2868 3248)  
Director of Architectural Services (Fax: 2810 7341)  
Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene (Fax: 2524 1977)  
Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Fax: 2147 5239)  
Director of Audit (Fax: 2583 9063)

**Response to Enquiries from  
Public Accounts Committee on Audit's Report No. 71 (Chapter 6)  
Barrier-free facilities at government premises**

**No. Questions and Answers**

**Q21 As referred to in paragraph 3.6, LCSD did not maintain a complete and updated list of concerned barrier-free facilities. Why was this case? What measures will be taken to address this problem?**

A21 With a view to facilitating persons with disabilities (PWDs) to participate in sports activities, LCSD has been maintaining a list of barrier-free access (BFA) facilities in leisure venues with sports facilities including sports centres, sports grounds, stadia, swimming pools, beaches, waters sports centres and holiday camps, etc. There is however room for improvement for venues with only passive recreation facilities. The only cultural venues without an updated list of BFA facilities are located at share-used buildings where the BFA facilities are under the purview of the management responsible for the respective buildings.

LCSD agrees to the recommendation of the Audit Commission (Audit) that a complete and updated list of barrier-free facilities should be maintained at all venues under the Department for monitoring and planning purposes. Steps are being taken to compile and maintain a list of BFA facilities in each venue under LCSD's management. Such information will also be made available to the public on LCSD's website to enhance the services to the persons with disabilities. Uploading work in respect of cultural venues has already been completed.

**Q22 According to paragraph 3.6, all music centres, all District Leisure Services Offices and 907 recreation and sports venues under LCSD were not included in the Department's lists of barrier-free facilities, please explain the reasons.**

A22 LCSD's five music centres are located at share-used buildings where BFA facilities are under the management of respective premises. However the departmental list of BFA facilities has now been updated to include these five music centres.

With a view to facilitating PWDs to participate in sports activities, LCSD has been maintaining a list of barrier-free facilities in leisure venues with sports facilities including sports centres, sports grounds, stadia, swimming pools, beaches, waters sports centres and holiday camps, etc. There is however room for improvement for other venues, including those with only passive recreation facilities and the District Leisure Services Offices.

**Q23 According to paragraphs 3.13 to 3.16, the records of the access audits of LCSD were inaccurate, please explain whether this was caused by human negligence, and what measures have been/will be taken by LCSD to improve the problem.**

A23 All along, checking of barrier-free facilities was conducted during the daily/regular inspection of facilities by venue staff or other staff in discharging their duties to ensure facilities (including accessible toilets, tactile guide paths, braille maps, etc.) are safe and clean for use by the public. Any irregularities or damages of facilities would be reported to works agents for rectification. Before the promulgation of the LCSD Administrative Circular on “Providing a Barrier-free Environment for Persons with Disabilities” in 2017, there was no standard checklist form for conducting regular access audits on barrier-free facilities. It is considered that the inaccuracies found in the records of the access audits might be attributed to the fact that some staff members were not familiar with the aforesaid Administrative Circular and the checklist form issued in 2017.

LCSD agrees to the recommendations of Audit that there is room for improvement in conducting access audit. We will strengthen the training for staff with a view to enhancing their awareness, knowledge and skills in handling accessibility issues. In addition, consideration is being given to include training on accessibility issues as part of induction training for some departmental grades. Furthermore, all staff, particularly those assisting the Access Officers (AOs), will be reminded to adhere to relevant operation guidelines in their inspection of the barrier-free facilities in the venues.

We will also review the current arrangements in the management of barrier-free facilities including the frequency and manner of access audits and the format of the audit checklist to better facilitate the AOs in their conduct of access audits.

**Q24 With reference to paragraphs 3.20 to 3.22, please advise the follow-up actions that will be taken by LCSD to correct the deficiencies identified by Audit in the provision, maintenance and control of barrier-free facilities managed by LCSD and the implementation timeline of the follow-up actions.**

A24 For deficiencies relating to the maintenance of barrier-free facilities with damage or wear and tear as identified in the audit report, arrangements are being made with maintenance agents (ArchSD or EMSD) for rectification. For deficiencies relating to the control of barrier-free facilities, immediate rectifications have already been made by concerned venue management. Other venues not covered by the audit report are also being checked for deficiencies during regular venue inspections. Any damage or irregularities of barrier-free facilities will be reported to the maintenance agent for prompt rectifications.

For deficiencies relating to the provision of barrier-free facilities, LCSD has commenced a stocktaking exercise in all venues to identify the deficiencies and share lessons learned to heighten staff awareness and knowledge of barrier-free requirements. A list of deficiencies identified upon completion of the stocktaking exercises will be prepared for follow-up discussion and action in consultation with the maintenance agents.

In the long run, venue management will seek ArchSD's technical advice and support to enhance and strengthen the provision of barrier-free facilities beyond the basic requirements as appropriate, especially for new venues and major renovation projects.

- Q25
- (a) What is the frequency of seminars held on accessibility issues by LCSD, and whether LWB has set any guidelines in this regard?**
  - (b) Is it compulsory or voluntary for AOs to join, and whether LWB has set any guidelines in this regard?**
  - (c) If it is voluntary, how could B/Ds ensure their AOs would understand the latest requirements of the issues?**

- A25
- (a) A seminar on "Access for All" is held once a year to provide AOs with a general knowledge of barrier-free environment and enable them to get familiar with the relevant ordinances. In addition, officers of LCSD are invited to attend seminars on accessibility issues organized regularly by the Civil Service Training and Development Institute (CSTDI).

According to LWB's memo dated 13.12.2010 on "Appointment of Access Co-ordinator and Access Officer", B/Ds are advised to arrange suitable training for their AOs, in collaboration with Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) and CSTDI as appropriate. Frequency of such training is not specified.

- (b&c) According to the guidelines of LWB, Access Co-ordinators in B/Ds should arrange suitable training for their AOs, in collaboration with EOC and CSTDI as appropriate. Such training should cover practical guidance on handling accessibility issues, assistance to PWDs having regard to the operational circumstances of individual departments and venues, and proper ways to help PWDs to evacuate from the venue in case of emergency.

Under the two-pronged approach, aside from relevant seminars, LCSD has also provided alternative learning resources. Links to reference materials for AOs provided by LWB (including guidelines and videos) are made available at the LCSD training intranet to enable staff to enrich their knowledge on the subject.

To better ensure that officers who fill the posts designated as the AOs of particular venues are equipped with the necessary knowledge through training, consideration is being given to include training on accessibility issues as part of the induction training for certain departmental grades. In addition, officers who are posted to posts bearing responsibilities of AO will be nominated to attend the next "Access for All" seminar.