

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**CSTB196**

**(Question Serial No. 2459)**

Head: (95) Leisure and Cultural Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (4) Performing Arts

Controlling Officer: Director of Leisure and Cultural Services (Vincent LIU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism

Question:

It is mentioned in Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2023-24 under Programme (4) that the Department will strengthen the support to local artists and arts groups for organising performances and cultural exchanges activities at the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA). In this connection, please inform this Committee of:

1. the administrative costs and staff establishment to be involved in the initiative;
2. the estimated number of participating local artists and arts groups;
3. details of the anticipated performances and cultural exchanges activities in the GBA, and when a timetable will be provided; and
4. the reasons for revising the target for attendance at district cultural programmes from 110 000 to 80 000 as from 2023. Given that the attendances in 2021 and 2022 were far below the original target attendance of 110 000, what improvement measures will be adopted accordingly?

Asked by: Hon FOK Kai-kong, Kenneth (LegCo internal reference no.: 29)

Reply:

1. It was announced in the 2023-24 Budget that the Government would provide a total of \$135 million over the coming 5 years to continue to support performing arts groups/artists in Hong Kong in taking part in performances and productions in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA). The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) will earmark a funding of about \$3 million from its annual allocation to cover such costs as administrative and overall publicity expenses. The work related to cultural exchanges will be undertaken by 4 Cultural Services Manager Grade members and 4 non-civil service contract staff. The manpower-related expenditure will be met by the LCSD through internal deployment of resources.

2. In the coming 5 years, the LCSD is anticipated to support a total of about 1 000 local performing artists and arts administrative personnel from around 22 arts groups in taking part in performances and cultural exchange events staged by local arts groups in the GBA.
3. Following the recent full resumption of normal travel between Hong Kong and the Mainland, the LCSD has commenced discussion with local arts groups and performance venues across the GBA to relaunch the cultural exchange events which had been postponed on account of the COVID-19 epidemic as early as possible. On another front, the Department will further strengthen and develop collaboration platforms with the GBA cities as well as curate programme brands, including the joint production of distinguished programmes, in a bid to provide more performance opportunities for local arts groups/artists. Those local arts groups/artists wishing to stage cultural exchange events in the GBA may now submit their programme proposals to the LCSD. Further details may be found at the website of the Cultural Exchange Liaison Office. The LCSD will also upload the programme particulars to the website in due course.
4. Since April 2021, the Community Arts Scheme has replaced the one-off performances under District Free Entertainment Programmes. The Scheme mainly organises interactive and educational cultural and arts activities such as training workshops and community outreach programmes, with emphasis on in-depth participation and sustainability. Given this, the number of participants/audiences of such programmes will be fewer than one-off performances. Since the target participants of this new programme mode are different from the past, the target attendance for district cultural programmes will be revised from 110 000 to 80 000 from 2023. In addition, the decrease in the attendance was due to the temporary closure of performance venues and cancellation of many programmes in 2021 and 2022 arising from the COVID-19 epidemic.

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