

LCQ13: Arts festivals

Following is a question by Dr Hon Leung Ka-lau and a written reply by the Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Tsang Tak-sing, in the Legislative Council today (January 6):

Question:

Since 2001, a thematic arts festival has been organised by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) every autumn, while the Hong Kong Arts Festival, funded by LCSD and the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, has been held between February and March every year since 1973. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(a) of the information on the various programmes in each of the aforesaid arts festivals in the past four years (set out in the table below);

| Name of the arts festival : | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------|---------|----------------------------------|
| Year | Name of programme | Performance venue | Number of performances | Number of seats in the venue | Total attendance | Average occupation rate of the seats | Number of tickets sold | | Total value of tickets sold (\$) |
| | | | | | | | Adult | Student | |
| | | | | | | | | | |

(b) of the expenditure by item and in total of each arts festival held in the past four years (set out in the table below); and

| Name of the arts festival : | | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Expenditure items | 2008-2009 | 2007-2008 | 2006-2007 | 2005-2006 |
| Funding foreign art groups | | | | |
| Funding local art groups | | | | |
| Publicity and promotion | | | | |
| Remunerations | | | | |
| Others | | | | |
| Total | | | | |

(c) given that major local art groups, Asian art groups and those of international standing are invited to perform in the Hong Kong Arts Festival every year, whether the Government has planned not to repeat such an arrangement when organising the thematic arts festival each year, and utilise the resources earmarked for inviting overseas art groups entirely on inviting small and medium sized local art groups to perform instead, so as to alleviate the financial pressure of the latter and provide them with more development opportunities?

Reply:

President,

(a) Information on the thematic arts festival and the Hong Kong Arts Festival is at Annexes I and II respectively.

(b) Information on the expenditure of the above two festivals is at Annexes III and IV respectively.

(c) The Administration is committed to promoting the development of local small and medium-sized arts groups. The Home Affairs Bureau and the Hong Kong Arts Development Council (HKADC) run a number of funds/schemes, including the Arts Development Fund and One-year Grant, Project Grant and Emerging Artist Grant, etc. under HKADC. These cater to the needs of artists and arts groups of different nature and development stages. In 2008-09, over \$100 million was spent on these groups/artists.

LCSD also provides support and performance opportunities for small and medium-sized performing arts groups through various channels, including year-round cultural presentations, arts festivals, free entertainment programmes, audience building schemes at schools and the community, as well as marketing activities at performance venues. In 2008-09, LCSD's support to these groups amounted to over \$80 million for more than 3,300 performances and activities.

To widen the international vision of local arts groups, foster cultural exchange and provide the community with a diverse choice of cultural programmes, we also present a wide variety of quality cultural programmes from the Mainland and overseas apart from supporting local arts groups and artists. Our aim is to enhance the public's awareness and appreciation of the arts scene of Hong Kong and other places, and promote Hong Kong's image as a cultural metropolis in Asia.

The autumn thematic arts festival has been well-received by the audience and is gaining increasing recognition in the international arts scene. For a cultural metropolis like Hong Kong, our efforts to support the small and medium-sized arts groups can go hand-in-hand with the provision of world-class and diverse cultural programmes such as the Hong Kong Arts Festival and thematic arts festival to enrich the content of our local cultural programmes, strengthen cultural exchange and experience-sharing among visiting and local groups.

Ends/Wednesday, January 6, 2010