

Film Services Office
Progress Report (June – October 2003)

Progress made

1. Facilitating location shooting

A. Government departments

In October 2003, the Planning Department agreed to accept applications for location shooting in its venues. So far, a total of 51 departments, most of them with venues suitable for location shooting, have agreed to accept applications from the industry.

Other matters requiring further action include:

Lane closure to facilitate location shooting

During the reporting period, the Film Services Office (FSO) received a total of 52 applications for lane closure to facilitate location shooting. FSO assisted in the discussion with the Transport Department, the Highways Department and the Hong Kong Police Force. As a result, all the applications were approved.

Movement permit for shooting vehicle

During the reporting period, the industry submitted 11 applications for movement permit and prohibited zone permit. All applications were approved with the assistance of FSO.

Review of charges for use of government premises

The Government Property Agency is reviewing the charges on the use of government premises.

B. Public and other bodies

During the reporting period, FSO has secured the agreement from the following organisations and establishments to make their premises and facilities available for location shooting: Jockey Club Tuen Mun Home for the Aged Blind, Ha Wo Hang Village Ancestral Hall, The Society for the Aid and Rehabilitation of Drug Abusers, Tai Lam Tunnel, Nam Chung Village, Committee for the Protection of Red Chamber monument, Pak Ngan Heung, Hong Kong Exhibition Centre, Wun Chuen Sin Koon, Pier at Ocean Terminal, International Finance Centre, as well as 28 restaurants, 49 petrol stations, 3 hotels, 3 golf clubs, 99 supermarkets, 10 department stores, 3 shopping malls, 1 film studio, 1 commercial building, 1 car park, 1 clinic and 1 bookshop. To date, a total of 1 060 public and other bodies have agreed to accept applications for location shooting in their premises.

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During the reporting period, the Hospital Authority decided to suspend processing of application for filming in public hospitals due to the review of renewal of insurance policy. FSO therefore provided the industry with suggestions of other venues available for filming.

C. Handling complicated applications for location shooting

During the reporting period, FSO dealt with 199 complicated cases referred by the industry. With the assistance of FSO, 192 cases have been approved by the organisations concerned and 7 cases are being processed.

D. Advising the industry on filming locations

During the reporting period, FSO made 107 suggestions of filming locations to the industry.

2. FSO publications and publicity campaign

The tenth issue of "Hong Kong on Location" (02.2003 – 07.2003) was published in August this year. Starting from this issue, "Hong Kong on Location" will be published half-yearly instead of once every three months.

A new short film promoting Hong Kong as an ideal choice for location filming was produced by FSO. CD-ROMs of the short film will be distributed to overseas film production companies. The contents of the film will also be uploaded to the FSO website.

3. Entertainment Special Effects Ordinance (ESEO)

Between June and October, FSO processed 458 applications. A total of 96 stream A discharge permits (for film/ television productions) and 135 stream B discharge permits (for theatrical productions) were issued. In addition, 44 special effects operator (SEO) licences and 33 conveyance permits were issued. The statistics for the same period in 2002 were processing of 306 applications and issue of 59 stream A discharge permits, 134 stream B discharge permits, 15 SEO licences and 30 conveyance permits. Both the number of applications processed and permits issued are higher this year than the same period of last year.

4. Facilitating overseas promotion of local films

Hong Kong Film Festivals

With the assistance from FSO, the Information Services Department and the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Tokyo organised Hong Kong Film Festival in Seoul, South Korea in October. Eight Hong Kong films were screened during the festival.

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5. Promoting Hong Kong as a major film production centre in Asia overseas

A. Pusan International Film Festival

In October, FSO took part in the Pusan International Film Festival held in South Korea in order to promote Hong Kong as an ideal choice for location filming. During the three-day exhibition, we received more than 150 guests who were mainly filmmakers from South Korea and Japan. Many of them showed great interest in filming in Hong Kong.

B. Locations Global Expo

Next year's Global Expo "Locations 2004" will be held from 16 to 18 April in Los Angeles, USA by the Association of Film Commissioners International. FSO will participate in the event with the Hong Kong Tourism Board and will invite local production companies to join in to promote Hong Kong as Asia's major film production hub.

C. Overseas and mainland production crews coming to Hong Kong for location shooting

During the reporting period, 92 overseas and mainland production crews conducted location shooting in Hong Kong, broken down as follows:

- The Philippines (1 team)
- New Zealand (1 team)
- Malaysia (1 team)
- Australia (1 team)
- Sweden (1 team)
- Canada (2 teams)
- Thailand (2 teams)
- Singapore (2 teams)
- India (2 teams)
- South Africa (2 teams)
- Korea (3 teams)
- Mexico (3 teams)
- Britain (4 teams)
- Germany (4 teams)
- Indonesia (5 teams)
- Japan (7 teams)
- United States (14 teams)
- Taiwan (14 teams)
- Mainland China (23 teams)

The productions were divided into three categories, including 1 film, 86 TV programmes and 5 advertisements.

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The production crew of Miss World 2003 will come to Hong Kong in November to make a promo for the event. With the assistance from FSO, they have chosen a number of locations including the Tsing Ma Bridge for shooting. As the production will help enhance and promote Hong Kong's image as an international city, various government departments such as the Home Affairs Department, Transport Department, the Hong Kong Police Force and Highways Department will provide the necessary assistance to the production crew for their shooting work on the closed lane of Tsing Ma Bridge.

6. Liaison with the film industry

A. Meeting with the film industry

FSO held its 19th meeting with the film industry on 18 August 2003 and briefed the latter of the latest work progress of FSO.

B. Briefing Session

To facilitate the implementation of the Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement (CEPA), FSO organised a briefing session for the industry on 8 October 2003. During the session, details concerning the audiovisual services in the Annex of CEPA were explained.

7. Training programmes

FSO invited the Hong Kong Institute of Vocational Education (Kwun Tong) to organise a training course on "Avid" digital editing in August this year. A total of 16 persons attended the course. FSO has been liaising with the tertiary institutions on the arrangement of other digital technology courses to meet the training needs of the industry.

8. Film Development Fund (FDF)

In the third and fourth quarters of 2003, the FDF received 16 applications. Among them, 6 items totaling \$2.07 million were approved by the Projects Vetting Committee.

9. Establishment of the Film Guarantee Fund (FGF)

Since the launching of the FGF in April 2003, 3 applications were received and all approved. The total amount of loan guaranteed was about \$6 million.

<u>Film</u>	<u>Bank</u>	<u>Loan guaranteed</u>
1. Chinese Evil Dead	HKCB Finance Ltd.	\$1.25 million
2. Hainan Chicken Rice	HSBC	\$2.34 million
3. 失驚無神	HKCB Finance Ltd.	\$2.42 million

Details of the films guaranteed have been uploaded to the FSO's website for reference by members of the public.

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On 26 August 2003, FSO arranged a signing ceremony for the first two applications for loan guarantee. Many representatives from the film industry and the press were present on this occasion. With successful applications, it is believed that the financial sector will have more confidence in providing loans for film companies, thus promoting a new financing system for film production.

10. Short films to boost the morale of Hong Kong people

With the initiative of the Federation of Hong Kong Film Workers and the coordination of FSO, 11 short films (each lasting for one minute and five of them with extended versions) were produced under the “1:99 Short Film Series” project. The short films were shot by some of Hong Kong’s best directors with themes to help boost the confidence and morale of the Hong Kong people. At the end of July, production of all the films was completed. On 4 August 2003, a premiere for the films was held at the Times Square in Causeway Bay. Film directors, artistes, production crew, representatives from various government departments sponsoring the films and media attended the ceremony. The event was widely covered by the media.

Shortly after the premiere, the series of “1:99 Short Film” were shown in local cinemas and on TV as well as in buses and MTR stations. Two airlines will also arrange the broadcast of the films later.

In general, the “1:99 Short Film Series” obtained support from and were well-received by the community. The films also successfully appealed to the Hong Kong people.