UPDATE ON REMAKING SINGAPORE COMMITTEE’S RECOMMENDATIONS

GOVERNMENT SAYS ‘YES’ TO MAJORITY OF RECOMMENDATIONS


2. Collectively, these recommendations aim to i) unleash the creative potential of Singaporeans and attract discerning talent to live and work here; ii) fine-tune Singapore’s safety nets and engender a more compassionate society; iii) expand common spaces and strengthen social cohesion; and iii) create more opportunities for Singaporeans to contribute to the country and strengthen their emotional bonds to Singapore.

3. Just how seriously the Government is taking the recommendations has been demonstrated by the many policy changes that have been announced in the past few months. Some of the more notable changes include:

   A Home for All Singaporeans
   - Allowing schools and tertiary institutions greater flexibility in admitting students
   - Setting up a pre-tertiary independent Arts School
   - Modifying the ranking of schools

   A Home Owned
   - Easier registration of groups/societies
   - Relaxation of policies regarding funding of performance/forum art, vetting of play scripts and busking

   A Home for All Seasons
   - Consolidation and rationalization of various assistance schemes for those affected by structural unemployment
   - Facilitation of employment for the disabled

   A Home to Cherish
   - Harmonizing citizenship privileges of overseas-born babies of Singaporean women and their foreign husbands

4. The RSC has been heartened by the Government’s response. But the remaking process does not end with this review. It is an on-going work, and one in which the Remaking Singapore Committee hopes all Singaporeans will continue to contribute to.

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Chapter 2: A Home For All Singaporeans

Renew vision of a Singaporean Singapore. The concept of a Singaporean Singapore (viz. equal responsibilities, diversity and belonging) still resonates and should be celebrated.

Accepted. The government supports the concept of inclusive diversity, and agrees that it still resonates with Singaporeans. It permeates much of our culture, and is and should be explicitly articulated from time to time, for example in Minister George Yeo’s recent speech to the Singapore Business Association. We also encourage community organisations to do their part in celebrating the concept as well.

However, we do not propose to put together a formal statement to promote the message of a Singaporean Singapore. There are presently various statements that embody our national values and vision, such as the Pledge and the Singapore 21 vision. It would be better to put effort into strengthening awareness and ownership of existing statements (as proposed by RSC for the Pledge), rather than introduce another one.

Encourage greater identification with and use of National Symbols. Relax guidelines on the use of the National Symbols, for example the National Flag.

Accepted. The rules governing the use of the national flag, national anthem and other symbols have been relaxed. From 1 Jan 2004, the flag can now be flown, or displayed at all times throughout the year. To ensure that the flag is treated with respect, it should be flown from a flagpole outside the National Day celebrations period of August, and properly illuminated if flown at night. The anthem can be sung or played on all appropriate occasions, and not just during National Day celebrations. As for the Singapore lion head, an individual, organisation or company can use the lion head for purposes of identifying with the nation.

Renewed emphasis on values and ideals for which Singapore stands. E.g. promote values represented by the Pledge. Schools can hold discussions and activities that enable students to understand and practice ideals in the Pledge.

Enhance National Education (NE) in schools and Institute of Higher Learning (IHL). More open-ended and discussion-based approach to expose students to public policy.

Accepted. MOE supports these recommendations as they are in line with its on-going efforts to promote desirable values among young Singaporeans. MOE will continue to
enhance the NE programme to engage the hearts and minds of students and instil the right values. MOE recently started a Cluster NE Prototype, which leverages on cluster resources and takes an integrated and customised approach for each school.

**Set up a Self-Help Co-ordination Council.** SHGs should establish an umbrella Council with rotating chairmanship to identify synergies and integrative opportunities in their strategies, services and activities.

Accepted. The CEOs of the Self-Help Groups support this recommendation and are presently working out the implementation details. As proposed by the RSC, the Council will comprise all the CEOs of SHGs and the Chairmanship will be rotated. The Council will identify areas of common interest and promote activities where there is synergy arising out of the different communities.

**Introduce multi-ethnic/religious education.** This will help to generate greater understanding of different races and religions in Singapore. At tertiary level, introduce specialised religious courses and comparative religion.

**Schools**

Not accepted. The promotion of greater understanding of different races and religions is best undertaken by infusing it in the formal curriculum through subjects such as Civics and Moral Education, Social Studies and History, as well as outside the classroom via CCAs and enrichment programmes. This is the best approach given the secular nature of our schools.

MOE had previously introduced the teaching of religious knowledge (RK) as a subject in schools in the 1980s. The policy was reviewed after it was found that it had the unintended consequence of emphasising religious differences and proselytisation. Consequently, in 1992 Civics and Moral Education (CME) was introduced to replace RK. In explaining this decision, Dr Tony Tan, then Minister for Education, touched on the difficulties of replacing RK with a general subject on religions in a speech in Parliament on 20 Mar 1989. He said that “there was disagreement among the various religious bodies as to which religions should be included…Once settled on the religions, the Ministry found that no one could agree on which aspects of which religion should be included for study…Indeed, the Ministry could not find any academic, either in Singapore or overseas, who was brave enough to try and write a textbook on this subject which should be simple enough to be understood by secondary school students. The final blow came when the Ministry realised that, even if the syllabus could be agreed and materials developed, there was no possibility of finding teachers who would be sufficiently conversant with the main principles of five or six religions to the extent that they could confidently present a fair and unbiased picture to their students.”

The CME syllabus framework is based on secular shared values (Our Shared Values) that capture the essence of being a Singaporean. These values also help to preserve the cultural heritage of our ethnic communities.
Universities
The primary role of our universities is to prepare our graduates for the knowledge-driven society. Our universities do not have the religious standing to introduce specialised religious courses. Currently, National Education is incorporated into the curriculum at our two state universities to reinforce a sense of national identity that transcends racial and religious boundaries.

Language Competencies.
Give students the flexibility to choose a 2\textsuperscript{nd} language and not be restricted to their mother tongues, so that they can learn a language that they either believe is beneficial to them in future or are more confident of mastering.
Give students the option of offering another local language as a 3\textsuperscript{rd} language.
All students should be taught a 3\textsuperscript{rd} language at a “conversational” level as a non-examinable subject.

\begin{itemize}
\item[a.] Not accepted. If students were given the flexibility to choose a 2\textsuperscript{nd} language, this would go against the fundamental tenets of our mother tongue policy. The objective of teaching the mother tongue as the second language in our bilingual policy is to enable our students to understand and appreciate their cultural values and roots.

However, the government agrees with the RSC that students must be able to see the benefits of the mother tongue, and feel confident about mastering it. We need to nurture a passion and interest among students in their mother tongue. To do this, MOE has set up a CL Curriculum and Pedagogy Review Committee to undertake a comprehensive review of our CL teaching and learning methods to better motivate and interest students in the language as they progress through school. It will examine the introduction of innovative CL teaching and assessment approaches in schools, and the appropriate level of emphasis given to the various language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) for students of different abilities. MOE will continue to seek ways to promote interest in the Mother Tongue Languages.

\item[b.] Accepted. MOE has in place the Malay/Chinese (Special Programme), which is a third language programme leading to the ‘O’ levels. To allow more students to offer this programme, the eligibility criteria has been relaxed with effect from the 2003 PSLE cohort.

\item[c.] Accepted. Schools can offer a local language at the conversational level as an enrichment activity for students with the aptitude and interest to take it up. However, this should be optional for students, so as not to overload them.
\end{itemize}

Public education on religion.
MCDS, PA and the Inter-Racial Confidence Circles (IRCCs) to undertake proactive public religious education/awareness programs to promote better understanding of people of different religions.
Declaration on Religious Harmony to consolidate current practices and OB markers.
a. Accepted. The government takes a multi-pronged approach to the promotion of religious understanding. At the constituency level, grassroots organisations actively promote inter-racial bonding and social cohesion through a wide variety of social, recreational, and educational programmes for residents of all races and religions. At the wider district level, the Community Development Councils partner with grassroots, civic, community and voluntary welfare organisations and schools to organise events such as the annual Racial Harmony Week Celebrations, Ethnic Bonding Home Visit Programme, Racial Harmony Youth Ambassador Programme and District Day. The CDCs also organise public education programmes to promote better understanding of the different cultures and customs amongst the different races in Singapore. We will continue to be proactive in promoting better religious understanding among the people.

In 2002, IRCCs were set up to further promote inter-ethnic and cross-cultural interaction and understanding among Singaporeans. IRCC members have a unique understanding of local race/religion sentiments because they are heads of their respective communities, to whom others turn for advice on inter-racial or inter-religious issues. Hence, IRCC members are in a good position to reach out to their respective followers and embark on public education / awareness initiatives to promote better understanding of people of different races and religions. Some IRCCs’ efforts to this end include:

- Dialogues to enhance inter-racial and inter-religious understanding.
- Cross-cultural outreaches e.g. Racial Harmony Day celebrations; visits to places of religious/cultural significance; festive gatherings of various races and religions; cross-cultural knowledge quizzes.
- Mass outreach activities such as exhibitions on racial and religious heritage, talks and demonstrations of cultural or religious practices, and articles in various grassroots newsletters.

b. The Declaration on Religious Harmony affirms the values that have helped to maintain religious harmony in Singapore and serves as a reminder of the need for continued efforts to develop better understanding and relations between religious groups in Singapore. It is a declaration by all residents in Singapore to safeguard religious harmony.

The Declaration is not a legal document and it is not intended to regulate religious groups in Singapore. It serves as a basis for Singaporeans to reflect on the state of religious harmony from time to time, and the steps they can take to deepen ties and understanding with other communities. Hence, the Declaration is not intended to define the ‘out-of-bounds markers’. If there are disputes or disagreements between religious groups, the Declaration will at best serve as a reminder of the underlying principles and norms, which will help to foster better understanding and consensus.

Socialisation in SAP schools. MOE should create consciousness at the national level that SAP schools can also accept non-Chinese students who meet their entry criteria.
Accepted. The entry criteria for all national schools, including SAP schools, are transparent and do not discriminate against the race of the student. SAP schools admit students of all races who meet the school's merit-based admission criteria and who are eligible to offer Higher Chinese/Chinese. SAP schools also collaborate with other schools and external organizations to create more opportunities for their students to mingle with other races, and to understand their cultures and religions.

Regardless of type, viz. Madrasah or Adventist, religious schools should have integrative elements so that the students emerging from them would have sufficient common ground to share with one another.

On madrasahs, MUIS is supportive of the recommendation as it is in line with the direction for madrasahs. Madrasahs are already teaching English, Mathematics and Science as part of its core curriculum. Further, students in madrasahs will be taking the PSLE in 2008 as required by the compulsory education policy.

The media should be more sensitive and avoid stereotyping in their coverage/portrayal of minority races. Language (non-English) channels and papers should showcase content from other channels and papers to educate their viewers and readers and be more deliberate about broadcasting and publishing comments by other ethnic groups about their own ethnic issues.

Accepted. MITA/MDA will continue to work closely with the programmes/publications advisory committees to guide the media to place more emphasis on these areas. MDA will continue to fund TV programmes that foster greater racial and religious understanding.

Up-stream integration of foreigners
Extend buddy programme to wider group of foreign students and foreign working adults.
Foreign-based associations help to settle foreigners, but should not become social enclaves. Our social sector organisations and volunteer welfare organisations can take the lead in partnering foreign clubs to take on joint community projects.

a. Accepted. There are currently many programmes in Singapore schools to help foreign students on scholarship make the adjustment to Singapore and to help them feel they are a part of the society. In addition to the buddy programme, there are also pastoral care, the host family programme and the foster parents' scheme. We will encourage our schools to extend similar integration programmes to the foreign students.

MOE and MCDS will also work closely with relevant agencies (including STB, MOE, SIF and EDB) to enhance programmes to integrate foreign students. For example, the People's Association is partnering with MOE in a programme to involve foreign students in the local youth activities. MOM and MCDS will examine how it can work with employers to integrate skilled foreign workers in Singapore. If the foreign
professionals have positive experiences in Singapore, it will enhance Singapore’s image as a global talent hub.

In addition, part of MOM’s retention strategy of foreign professionals is to instil world-class HR practices among organisations in Singapore, for example, the Global Workforce Summit was held in March 2004 Singapore. It was organised by the US based Employee Relocation, and brought together some of the leading experts in global talent relocation and global companies to debate and discuss issues relating to the global mobility of talent and relocation.

b. Accepted. It is natural for people living in a foreign country to look for company with compatriots from their home countries, especially when they are new. MCDS and MOM will work with the relevant agencies, including foreign associations, to help facilitate their smooth settlement and integration into our society. We will also work with local organisations and foreign associations to engage foreigners in our community, including their participation in voluntary work and community activities.

Addressing Singaporeans’ concerns. These revolve around two major themes: economic insecurity, and the impact on a nascent national identity. The government needs to put greater effort into understanding and addressing the root concerns. Efforts to integrate foreign residents and new Singaporeans require ground-level involvement, and a high sense of ownership, among Singaporeans.

Accepted. We agree that we need to involve Singaporeans in our efforts to integrate foreign residents into our midst. Besides explaining the need to welcome foreigners to Singapore and raising awareness of the economic and social contributions of foreigner communities to our society, various government agencies have initiated programmes to enhance the social integration of foreign residents into the local community. We share the RSC’s view that ground-level interaction and involvement at the neighbourhood, workplace and schools offer good opportunities to increase interaction between foreign residents and Singaporeans. There are several ongoing initiatives to facilitate this. For example, the People’s Association have programmes to welcome new Singapore Citizens and PRs. In addition, grassroots organisations and CDCs work with foreign associations to facilitate interaction between Singaporeans and foreign residents.

Help Singaporeans acquire “global skills” by setting up a Committee to Globalise Singaporeans to coordinate activities such as student exchange programmes, short-term overseas stints, financing schemes to facilitate overseas studies/training/employment, and other supporting structures.

Accepted. Instead of a Committee mechanism, this will be undertaken by the Workforce Development Agency. WDA is developing industry-based skills frameworks, of which Global Mindset in our workers is a component. WDA will contextualise the training of such skills and build into the curriculum of new occupational and employability skills training programmes. Meanwhile, WDA has also put in place a Strategic Manpower Conversion Programme (Internationalisation) that
covers the training of international marketing and international business development skills to facilitate the regionalization of local businesses and for Singaporeans to explore job opportunities overseas.

Re-think representation and franchise, in view of the mobility of Singaporeans. In addition to voting by overseas Singaporeans, consider the appointment of Nominated MPs for overseas Singaporeans and the creation of “overseas constituencies”.

Not accepted for now. The government would prefer to take a gradual approach to this, beginning with the introduction of overseas voting.

Re-integrate returning Singaporeans. In addition to existing measures, additional help could include:

for returning children, priority for entry to local schools
greater leeway in selecting and learning mother tongue
assigning a teacher to help orientate the child
allowing the children to enrol in international schools.

For returning adults, a job assistance program to help them look for work and update them on workplace practices and expectations

MOE has a range of measures to assist returning Singaporean students with re-integration. These measures are pitched at the pre-departure, overseas stay and post-return junctures, and include local boarding assistance, provision of curriculum materials, immersion programmes and school placement assistance. On specific recommendations:

a. Children returning from overseas are assured of a place in a local school. MOE will assist such children to find a school place upon their return. A common problem is the children’s desire to be admitted to the schools of their choice that may not have vacancies. To address this, MOE has in place the Leave of Absence scheme which allows children going overseas to retain their school places, so that they can be re-admitted to their original schools upon their return.

b. Children with limited exposure to their Mother Tongue Language (MTL) while overseas and have difficulties coping with MTL upon their return may be considered for exemption from offering MTL in the PSLE. If they return at the secondary level, they may be granted approval to offer another language in lieu of MTL or be allowed to take the MTL “B” syllabus. If they rejoin the system at the pre-university level, they may be allowed to offer a content subject or another language in lieu of MTL.

c. Our schools make arrangements for the re-integration of Singaporean children returning from overseas into our school system. Students staying overseas could apply to join immersion programmes in our schools when they come back for vacation in Singapore. Schools also conduct school-based bridging programmes to help children returning from overseas ease back into the school environment and curricula. As different schools offer different learning environment and
programmes, it would be best to let our schools determine the type of bridging programmes to introduce.

d. MOE believes that that all Singaporean children should be educated in an environment that nurtures a Singaporean spirit and character. Foreign System Schools (FSS) are established to cater to the needs of foreign expatriates in Singapore. However, MOE appreciates that some children who have studied abroad for a significant period of time could face difficulties in adapting to our local education system. MOE is prepared to be flexible and would consider requests for admission into foreign system schools for such children on a case-by-case basis.

e. MOM’s Contact Singapore offices as well as the Contact Singapore website currently carry information on industry developments, job opportunities as well as advice on settling in Singapore. In addition, Contact Singapore’s website has a section dedicated to overseas Singaporeans and addresses issues specific to them. In addition to providing information on key growth sectors and opportunities, it has an entire section - Moving Back - devoted to issues they may encounter when deciding to return to Singapore.

Employment assistance is also available for returning Singaporeans via two platforms:

- MOM’s Employment Town website, which includes on-line job matching services, as well as a job assistance programme to help overseas Singaporeans look for work back in Singapore and update them on local work-place practices.
- MOM’s CareerLink Centre which offers direct job-matching and career coaching services to job seekers

Replicate the Singapore education experience for Singaporean communities overseas. These schools will help to keep overseas Singaporean children on par with the education system in Singapore, while sustaining their bonds with the country.

Accepted. MOE is prepared to set up Singapore international schools where there is a critical mass of Singaporeans. For example, MOE has set up a Singapore International School in Hong Kong. MOE will continue to do so subject to the constraints of cost and availability of resources e.g. teachers. Alternatively, MOE will consider assisting Singapore-style schools, which are supported by the Singapore community in a location, with curricula and other forms of support.

Allow schools and universities greater flexibility to admit students. Schools could look beyond summary indicators and consider the students’ overall performance in school and admit singularly talented students or students who have reached proficiency in the most relevant subjects, but whose aggregate scores may be dragged down by one or two subjects.

Accepted. MOE had accepted the recommendation of the University Admission Committee to allow NUS and NTU a more flexible criteria for admitting students to universities, with them being able to admit up to 10% of their students based on their
own independent criteria. MOE will adopt the same approach for schools and JCs, so that they can recognize a more diverse range of intellectual achievements and other talents. Currently, Independent Schools (IS), Autonomous Schools (AS), schools offering integrated programmes and specialised schools already enjoy discretion in their admissions. This will be expanded. The proportion of discretionary places for AS and IS will be doubled to 10% and 20% respectively. Discretion will also be extended to other mainstream secondary schools that are able to develop niches of excellence, for up to 5% of their Sec 1 enrolment. In addition, all JCs not offering the Integrated Programme, will have discretion for up to 10% of their JC1 intake.

Entry into IHLs in Singapore – to further expand the current admission system to include polytechnic students, mature applicants and international students with “outstanding singular talents”. The universities should also set aside a quota of the available places for “outstanding singular talents”.

Accepted. University education is available for all who can benefit from it. MOE agrees that the definition of success should be broadened to cover non-academic elements. The university admission system takes into account performance and leadership in co-curricular activities, and considers applicants with singular talents. The universities may also now admit up to 10% of their students based on independent criteria. The introduction of faculty scores in addition to common university scores also facilitate the shift from a “one size fits all” measure of aptitude for university education, towards broader and more flexible measures of merit. Nonetheless, we must recognise that the university is principally an academic institution. All who are admitted must therefore be able to cope with the academic rigour of its programme.

Enhance diversity of the school curriculum through elective modules. Elective modules in academic and non-academic subjects should be introduced for a more flexible school curriculum that can be customised to develop the diverse talents of as many students as possible. Such elective modules should include non-academic areas like the performing arts, IT, design and visual art, sports and entrepreneurship.

Our approach in education is for students to receive a good grounding in core subjects viz. languages, mathematics and science at primary level. This core is broadened to include the humanities at secondary level. These subjects will provide students with the skills and content knowledge to serve as a foundation for the learning of a wide range of subjects as they progress further through the educational levels. This core of subjects is embedded within a total curriculum framework to provide a holistic education for our students. The total framework includes the teaching of non-academic subjects such as music, art and physical education, and a wide range of Co-Curricular Activities (CCA). The elective modules, as recommended by the RSC, are already incorporated into our existing total curriculum framework, albeit mainly as non-examinable subjects and CCA.

Start a National School for the Arts and Music at the secondary level.
Accepted. MITA announced the setting up of a pre-tertiary Independent Arts School in Parliament on 13 Mar 04. The full report of the Committee on Specialised Arts School is on the MITA website, http://mita.gov.sg

Improve access to quality early childhood education through a means-tested subsidy regime. Adopt a more comprehensive and co-ordinated approach to ensure the quality and standards of the pre-school sector, including developing an accreditation system to help parents select centres.

Accepted. Both MOE and MCDS support the recommendation as we recognise the importance of making affordable, quality pre-school education available to children from families who do not have strong home support. MCDS has been working to improve the quality of child-care centres and MOE has taken steps to increase the quality of pre-school supervisors and teachers.

Diversity in pre-school education
Affordable quality pre-school education is important, especially for children who do not have strong home support. At the same time, there is also value in giving parents choice in the type of early learning programmes for their children. This diversity is already available as pre-school education is provided by different agencies, both in the community and private sectors. MOE’s role is to help raise the overall quality of pre-school education by focusing on high leverage areas, such as designing a developmentally appropriate curriculum framework and raising minimum professional qualifications of teachers. MCDS is providing financial assistance to needy parents.

Framework for Kindergarten Curriculum
In January 2003, MOE published a framework for a kindergarten curriculum in Singapore. The framework is based on the Desired Outcomes of Pre-school Education, which emphasises social, moral, aesthetic, physical as well as cognitive development of the child. The framework recommends a holistic and integrated approach to learning, and has been disseminated to all kindergartens and child care centres.

Licensing
All childcare centres are required to be licensed to ensure the quality of services offered to the public is of acceptable standard. Centres must provide comprehensive information on the curriculum, programmes and qualification of their staff. Centres are required to provide developmentally appropriate programmes, which encompasses physical, intellectual/cognitive, social and emotional growth of children. A childcare centre of average standard will be issued with a 12-month licence. Good centres will be issued with a 24-month licence. Parents can use the tenure of licence as an indicator when selecting a centre for their children.

All kindergartens are registered by MOE. They are subject to requirements which would help ensure standards in kindergarten operations.

Pre-school Teacher Training
We agree with the RSC that teacher training is a key leverage area. To raise the standards and professionalism of pre-school teachers, all teachers are expected to be trained. MCDS requires all childcare centres to meet the following minimum qualifications requirements for pre-school teachers by end-2004:

- all pre-school teachers to be trained at the Certificate in Pre-School Teaching
- supervisors to be trained to at the Diploma in Pre-school Education (Leadership) level
- at least one teacher per centre to be trained at the Diploma in Pre-school Education (Teaching) level.

MCDS and MOE have also introduced a joint training framework for pre-school teachers. Through the Pre-school Qualification Accreditation Committee, we have set out accreditation guidelines and minimum standards for teacher training in areas such as entry requirements, course content, duration, trainer qualification, etc.

Precursor to Accreditation
In Sep 2003, MCDS launched a set of best practice guidelines for childcare centres. MCDS plans to move towards a customer-driven accreditation system for childcare centres once the market is ready for self-regulation. Licensing will then be revised to look into basic areas like safety, health and hygiene, leaving the other quality dimensions like staffing and programmes to the accreditation system. For kindergartens, MOE has developed and launched a self-appraisal tool for kindergartens to enable them to embark on the virtuous cycle of yearly self-appraisal, action planning and continuous improvement.

Funding for Kindergartens
From 2002, non-profit kindergartens that meet the qualifying criteria may receive annual recurrent grants from the government, to help them meet the professional requirements set by MOE. The quantum of grants is based on the number and quality of trained personnel needed to implement the MOE-designed or equivalent/better pre-school programme. Eligible kindergartens can use the recurrent grant to attract and retain better-qualified principals and teachers while keeping fees affordable.

Financial Support for Families
MCDS has schemes that address the affordability of early childhood education, including the universal childcare subsidy and Baby Bonus. The Baby Bonus itself aims to inject up to $200 million into the pre-school industry each year. In January 2003, MCDS introduced pro-rated subsidy for parents attending flexible child care programmes at child care centres, to meet the needs of parents who work part-time or flexi-time. MCDS has also implemented the Centre-Based Financial Assistance Scheme for Child Care (CFAC) to ensure that childcare is accessible to children from low-income families. The scheme is means-tested and is administered by the Community Development Councils (CDCs).

From 2004, financial assistance of up to $600 per annum per child will be disbursed by MCDS under the Kindergarten Financial Assistance Scheme (KiFAS) to lower income families who are sending their children to non-profit kindergartens receiving recurrent grants from MOE to improve teacher quality. The financial assistance is meant to help
cover increased fees that parents of needy families would have to pay to send their children to centres offering improved pre-school education.

**Voucher System**
The present system of disbursing the Government Child Care Subsidy to parents via the child care centres is administratively more efficient than using vouchers. Under the current system, parents are already able to benefit from the subsidy regardless of which licensed centre their children attend.

**Introduce PE as an O-level subject**

Not accepted for now. Our secondary schools provide general education for students, so as to prepare them for further education at post-secondary levels. Specialised independent schools are in a better position to cater to specialised areas, as they have the relevant expertise, networks and resources. As the sports school is now in start-up phase, the recommendation is not accepted for now. But the government is prepared to consider the recommendation at an appropriate time.

**Widen CCA point system to include activities outside school.**

Accepted. Students’ participation in CCA outside the school is recognised, and CCA points are awarded for such involvement. CCA points are given for representation in approved outside organisation’s performances/projects, and for contribution to community service

**Provide access to coaching/counselling for students**

Accepted. Appropriate education and career advice and counselling will help maximise talent and address relevant social issues such as youth esteem and family problems. Counselling resources are also available through partnerships with VWOs, alumni and outsourcing.

MOE adopts a comprehensive approach to providing psychological and emotional support for students. They are taught lifeskills which cover topics on personal and interpersonal effectiveness, to develop their resilience and equip them with problem solving skills. Schools have counselling referral systems to facilitate the early identification and extension of help to students with problems. A career guidance programme has also been put in place in all secondary schools and JC/CIs. MOE will continue to explore collaborations with relevant agencies.

On career counselling, MOM agrees and has already worked with the Distributed Career Network (DCN) partners to provide career counselling to the unemployed and job-seekers. WDA has also been working with career centres in post secondary education institutions and universities to provide timely information on jobs to students. It will be working with these institutions to enhance career counseling and guidance capability.
Modify school ranking system. Use banded concept instead of individuals ranks, and various categories instead of one general ranking system that is biased towards academic components.

Accepted. MOE announced during the Mar 04 Budget Debate that it would broaden and augment the school ranking system. Ranking is a useful benchmarking tool. However, instead of a ranking table based on a singular academic criteria, MOE will be introducing "school achievement tables". These tables will give a broader picture of schools’ performance in both academic and non-academic domains.

Chapter 3: A Home Owned

Adopt a green/red lane approach for public entertainment licensing. Instead of a "catch-all" clause and a short exemption list, consider listing down the types of activities that are less likely to be approved, and would need to go through the licensing process. Activities not on this "red lane" list will be given automatic licensing

For arts performances, certain categories (e.g. Chinese opera, busking, lion or dragon dances and constituency activities) are already exempted from licensing, while other arts performances are required to obtain an event-based licence. MDA is working on expanding the exemption list to include other categories such as traditional/ethnic music and dance. The Censorship Review Committee had proposed a two-year term licence for arts groups with a proven track record of responsibility, and MITA will consider this. MITA will also bear in mind the green lane/red lane approach proposed by the RSC, but will move gradually on the matter.

In the meantime, MHA will be expanding the exemption list to include:
- the transmission of recorded music in bowling centres, billiard saloons, massage establishments, amusement centres, computer games centres and fun fairs
- operation of game machines, including pin-tables and pool tables in bowling centres, billiard saloons, massage establishments, pubs, lounges, discos, nightclubs, bars, cafés and restaurants; and
- operation of computer games centre in hotels.

MHA is also exploring other suitable areas of exemption.

Designate performance venues for relaxing rules. Provide a 'designated space' where specific rules can be relaxed to facilitate expression and experimentation. Artists could perform without the need for a public entertainment licence. Law and order can still be safeguarded by measures such as a simple registration process, explicit rules prohibiting content that could cause racial/religious enmity and limiting indoor seating capacity.

Not accepted. MITA does not believe that it is practical to create an essentially "hands-off zone" without running the danger of the impact of some actions or activities
spilling beyond the artificial boundary with serious consequences on society at large. Hence we do not support the setting up of “free arts zone”.

**Review treatment of Performance and Forum Art.** Remove the $10,000 bond requirement, and allow performance art and forum theatre to be considered for government funding along with other art forms, based on merit of content.

Accepted. NAC will henceforth consider funding for performance art/forum theatre, subject to vetting of the synopsis and meeting prevailing funding guidelines, including the artistic merit of the performance. The requirements for a performance licence, including the submission of a synopsis, will still be necessary, but the mandatory $10,000 security deposit will be lifted. Nevertheless, the arts licensing body will impose the security deposit as and when necessary, just as for all other public performances under the Public Entertainment and Meetings Act.

**Set up PEMA appeals advisory committee comprising lay Singaporeans.** The Committee will review cases where performances are deemed to have violated the guidelines and make recommendations to the regulatory authority. This approach is similar to the appeals mechanism adopted by the Singapore Broadcasting Authority for television programmes.

Accepted. In Feb 04, MITA set up a committee for arts entertainment to advise the Minister for Information, Communications and the Arts on appeal cases.

**Remove the requirement for prior vetting of all play scripts.** Instead, the relevant authorities should set out clear guidelines on what are objectionable contents. Arts groups that consistently violate the guidelines (i.e. have a proven record of putting up objectionable performances), would be penalised by having to submit all future scripts to NAC for vetting.

Accepted. MITA accepts, in-principle, the recommendation to remove the requirement to pre-vet play scripts. This will be effected for content that does not touch on race or religion, or is unlikely to undermine core values or national interests. In addition, arts groups who have consistently demonstrated social responsibility in their handling of sensitive issues will be exempted completely from script pre-vetting. Guidelines on disallowed content will still have to be adhered to by all arts groups and performances. MDA is working out the exemption guidelines for script pre-vetting in consultation with NAC and the arts groups.

**Relax rules of busking by doing away with the requirement for buskers to donate all proceeds to charity.** The $10,000 fine could be replaced with first a warning, with the fine coming into effect only if the warning is not adhered to.

Accepted. MITA has removed the requirement for buskers to donate all proceeds from donations to charity. However, NAC will continue to audition buskers to ensure that the quality remains high.
Extend rating system beyond movies to more forms of media. This helps to educate parents on how to protect their children from undesirable materials and on the use of the rating system.

Accepted. MITA supports, in principle, the extension of rating systems to more forms of media. This allows the public to make more informed choices on the materials they access (except for mediums that have a high circulation volume and with a time-sensitive market, such as daily newspapers, as well as broadcasting, where belting is a more appropriate means to manage access.)

MITA recognises the importance of public education and parental supervision in managing undesirable content on the Internet. MDA will continue to support the efforts of the Parents Advisory Group for the Internet (PAGi) to educate parents on ways to guard their children against unsuitable content on the Internet. MDA will also be setting up a multi-agency media education council to inculcate community and parental guidance in censorship as a long-term public education strategy.

Define “political” OB markers. This will reduce ambiguity and dispel the impression that the discussion of political governance is tantamount to engagement in politics.

Not accepted. OB markers cannot be delineated absolutely, but will shift dynamically according to the circumstance. The following is an excerpt from DPM Lee’s speech at the Harvard Club dinner on 6 Jan 2004:

“... We did not mark out upfront all the OB markers explicitly and comprehensively, as some civic groups and individuals wanted the Government to do. This would have been difficult in practice, and probably would not have been desirable in principle.

Had we pre-defined all the parameters for discussion, civil society would have lost the spark and autonomy that allows fresh areas to be explored, limits to be redefined, and both Government and civic groups to develop a certain responsiveness to each other and move society forward by engaging each other.”

Encourage academic research on public policy to address any misperception that academics based in Singapore are being restrained in their writings and apply self-censorship. In addition, a pool of funds could be set aside for such research.

Accepted. Academics in NUS are strongly encouraged to conduct rigorous and relevant research in various fields, including public policy. Research in public policy is currently funded in NUS through competitively-sourced research grants.

Easier registration of groups/associations. Instead of requiring all societies to seek prior approval, list down explicitly the types of societies that would require prior approval. Those that fall outside the list would be ‘automatically’ approved and registered.
Accepted. MHA has worked out a new “Automatic Registration” regime for societies that pose minimal law and order or security concerns. Under this “Automatic Registration” regime, the categories of group or association that might be used for unlawful purposes or for purposes prejudicial to public peace, welfare or good order in Singapore, or for which registration would be contrary to national interests, would be specified in a Schedule. If a group or association falls outside the categories specified in the Schedule, it will be eligible for automatic registration.

The Automatic Registration process is thus in line with the spirit of RSC’s recommendation. It promotes self-regulation by civil societies by allowing societies, which fall outside the negative list, to be registered based on self-declaration.

MHA has put up the proposed “Automatic Registration” regime for public consultation on the e-consultation portal. A feedback session was also held on 29 Jan 04. The proposed regime has been fine-tuned taking into account the feedback. The Societies Act will need to be amended to implement the new registration regime. The Societies (Amendment) Bill will be tabled in Parliament shortly. More details will be released during the second reading of the Bill.

One-stop information and e-services centre for groups on the e-citizen portal. The centre can assist groups in registering, organising events and other administrative processes.

Accepted. Currently, the National Volunteer and Philanthropy Centre (NVPC) provides a set of FAQ on registration of organisations and fund-raising matters on its website (http://www.nvpc.org.sg). This information is updated annually. The National Council of Social Service (NCSS) also provides comprehensive registration information and links at their eVWO site (http://www.evwo.org.sg) on voluntary welfare organisations specifically. MCDS, NPVC and NCSS will continue to work with partners to enhance support and services for the voluntary sector.

Set up a National Youth Forum under the auspices of the National Youth Council to provide a formal platform for youths from a variety of backgrounds to study policy formulation and debate national issues.

Accepted. In Nov 2003, a 6-member Steering Committee, comprising NYC council members, was formed. It is chaired by Mr Ahmad Nizam, President of Mendaki Club.

Draw up a government Code of Consultation. This should be a public document providing guidelines and minimum standards on when and how the public should be consulted.

Accepted. To provide greater flexibility for government agencies to identify issues amenable to public consultation, a set of public consultation guidelines, rather than a "Code of Consultation", was announced by DPM Lee on 6 Jan 2004 and reproduced below:
"The RSC proposed developing a set of ground rules for this purpose. A team of young civil servants worked on it, and have come up with useful guidelines, which the Government endorses….

For the Government, we will uphold the spirit of consultation by doing the following:

- First, clarify. We will state clearly the objective, scope and process of each public consultation exercise. We will make clear the decision-making process and the scope for change. Where an issue is not amenable to public consultation, or the Government has overriding reasons to make a particular decision, we should not go through the motions of consultation pretending that all options are still open. It is better to be honest, explain the reasons for the decision, and win public support for it.

- Second, provide sufficient time for the consultation exercise before finalising the policy. It takes time to study an issue seriously and to build a consensus. But more time is not always better, and it is not always possible to align everyone to the same view. We have to maintain the momentum of the consultation and at some point, make a decision and move on.

- Third, provide timely and accessible information on policies under consultation, and in a simple and concise manner. The hardest part of working out complex policies is to explain the issues simply and clearly. In an extreme case like the Sars outbreak, we even had to resort to using dialects!

- Fourth, facilitate diversity of views: To gather the widest range of views, the public consultation exercise needs to be inclusive. In particular, it should include those most likely to be affected or who have the most to contribute. Simply posting a document on a website and waiting passively for inputs will not do.

- Fifth, close the loop: Public inputs should be seriously considered and with an open mind. The Government's response and reasons for the final decision should be made public. This is not merely to show the public that their inputs are valued, but also to encourage others to contribute their ideas.

For the public, we hope they will observe the following to get the most out of the consultative process:

- First, seek to understand the rationale and intent of the policy under consideration and their own role in the process. The public needs a good understanding of the issues at hand before they can sensibly take part in discussions.

- Second, just as the Government needs to be open to different views, so too must the participants. Individuals and civic groups are entitled to expect every serious proposal to be considered, but they must also accept that not all views can be accepted by the Government or other Singaporeans.
- Third, there should be mutual respect for the legitimacy and point of view of all participants. Views should be put across constructively and civilly.”

The following is being done to enhance the practice of consultation in the public service:

The Civil Service College and the Public Relations Academy have started courses to educate public officers on conducting effective public consultation. A public consultation resource portal on the government intranet is also being developed, to help public officers to learn from past experiences in consulting the public.

The Feedback Unit’s online consultation portal (www.feedback.gov.sg) will be positioned as a one-stop portal for the general public to give feedback on various policy proposals. Government agencies are being encouraged to make use of the portal to reach out to the general public. Government agencies are also encouraged to consult the public through other avenues e.g. dialogue sessions, if necessary. Under the e-Government Action Plan II, new IT projects will also be identified and developed to support the government agencies’ efforts to conduct effective consultation.

Set up Management Committees (MCs) for HDB estates to foster a greater sense of ownership of their estates. MCs consisting only of residents can be set up to manage the common property within a sizeable estate comprising about 1,000 dwelling units, instead of having the Town Council to directly manage the common property.

Accepted in principle. MND/HDB agrees that it is important to foster a greater sense of ownership and self-reliance amongst HDB residents, and have started out in this direction with the privatization of HUDC estates, which is still on-going. Also, HDB has recently launched a campaign to encourage HDB residents to take greater responsibility for maintenance of their own flats.

One consideration is that having an MC to manage the common property within an estate comprising about 1,000 dwelling units, instead of having the Town Council to directly manage the common property, may not achieve economies of scale. This could translate into higher maintenance costs for HDB residents. This issue will have to be studied further and resolved if costs are to be kept down.

MND/HDB agrees with the thrust of the recommendation. However, various issues have to be studied further and resolved before the idea is extended from HUDC estates to other HDB residents at an appropriate time.

Chapter 4: A Home For All Seasons

Rationalise and consolidate the different assistance schemes into an “Economic Relief Scheme” (ERS) to provide holistic assistance for the structurally unemployed. Employment assistance would be the first line of assistance, and financial assistance the last resort, conditional on the recipient actively looking for jobs and
undergoing relevant training and counselling. The ERS could reside in the CDCs where financial and employment assistance is already parked.

Accepted. MCDS agrees with the principles of targeting assistance for the structurally unemployed, with the aim of helping them to get back to work quickly. In Oct 2003, MCDS introduced the Work Assistance Programme (WAP) to help low income Singaporeans tide over periods of retrenchment and find employment quickly. Successful applicants will receive both employment and financial assistance. In line with the principle of mutual obligation, WAP recipients have an obligation to actively seek jobs while on the programme. WAP assistance will be provided up to 3 months in the first instance. Extension of assistance will be conditional on whether the individual has fulfilled his obligations. The programme is currently administered by the Community Development Councils. (see also #42)

We agree with RSC that the package of assistance should be delivered holistically and tailored to address the various needs of a family.

Use of CPF in a prolonged recession. Unemployed individuals could be allowed, on a very limited and exceptional basis, to tap on available resources in their CPF accounts to support themselves through spells of unemployment.

Accepted, but only for prolonged and severe economic downturns as allowing members to withdraw their CPF savings prematurely to tide over economic hardship will reduce retirement adequacy and can therefore only be a stopgap measure. The better approach is to help the unemployed be more employable and find a job.

The CDCs has launched the Work Assistance Programme (WAP) to provide financial assistance to unemployed Singaporeans and at the same time help them to find jobs. WAP focuses on low income individuals who are fit to work. The amount of assistance will vary depending on each applicant's circumstance, but generally will not exceed $400 per month. Besides cash, the family may also receive targeted support, for example, schooling assistance for children or utilities grant.

In return for the assistance, beneficiaries will have to fulfil specific conditions. They must actively seek work. They must attend all job interviews arranged for them, undergo training to acquire new skills and accept any reasonable job offer. If they fail to secure jobs within three months, then we will assign them a case manager, who will provide more intensive career counselling and help them overcome any impediments to securing a job. The financial help will last for 3-6 months, because within that time most recipients should be able to get back to work.

Housing mortgages and the safety net. HDB to consider allowing Singaporeans to re-mortgage part of their assets to meet urgent cash requirements rather than for them to be forced to sell their flats. HDB could also explore other means of helping financially-strapped Singaporeans.

Not accepted. MND/HDB has no intention at the present moment to allow HDB flat lessees to re-mortgage their flat to raise loans. This is to ensure that HDB flats are not
subjected to undue financial risks that may result in the loss of the home for flat lessees and their families. However, we can consider it in the future when residents are given more responsibility and public housing rules are relaxed further.

Meanwhile, MND/HDB has considered other ways to help flat lessees in financial difficulties. To help flat owners monetise their housing asset, HDB has relaxed the rules on subletting of whole HDB flats. Since 1 Oct 03, lessees of all HDB flats who have occupied their flats for 15 years or more can sublet their flats. Those who have occupied their flats for 10 years and have no outstanding HDB loan are also eligible to let out their whole flat. With this relaxation, lessees would be able to generate some income from their flats without having to re-mortgage their flat and run the risk of losing the flats should they be unable to service the repayment of the loan.

HDB also has in place a package of financial assistance measures to help HDB mortgagors who have difficulty paying their mortgage loan. They can approach HDB for assistance to pay a lower loan instalment, extend their loan repayment period or defer payment of their loan instalments for a specified period.

Health insurance. Expand the role of insurance in healthcare financing. Enhance MediShield by raising claimable limits. Provide financial assistance to low-income individuals by co-paying MediShield premiums. Facilitate employers’ contribution towards a portable insurance scheme in place of existing healthcare benefits.

Accepted. MOH agrees that we should expand the role of insurance in healthcare financing.

a. We have set up a 3Ms Review Committee which is working out the detailed changes to MediShield. The Committee will come up with its recommendations in 2004.

b. The Government has in good economic years shared its budget surplus with the public through initiatives such as Medisave top-ups and MediShield premium rebates for the elderly. Low-income individuals who have difficulties with their medical expenses can also seek help from Medifund. Medifund allows us to provide more targeted assistance to the needy for their healthcare expenses. MOH will explore the feasibility and details of assisting the lower-income to pay for insurance premiums when the role of insurance in healthcare is further enhanced.

c. We also support the move towards portable medical benefits. This initiative is spearheaded by a Tripartite Working Group with members from NTUC, Singapore Business Federation/Singapore National Employers Federation, MOM, MOF, MAS and MOH. The Working Group had in October announced details of tax incentives for employers who move towards portable medical benefits.
Extend the Primary Care Partnership Scheme to the disabled and chronically ill, so that they can obtain subsidised treatment and dental care from private General Practitioners at polyclinic rates.

Accepted. MOH agrees that we should extend the scheme to lower income Singaporeans with disabilities that limit their physical mobility. Providing means-tested care at GP clinics will make it more convenient for the disabled to access subsidised primary healthcare. The Ministry is working out the details of implementation.

The Ministry welcomes the suggestion to extend the PCPS to cover chronic illnesses. The optimal management of chronic diseases requires a multi-disciplinary and structured approach to deliver care cost-effectively. We have piloted the Comprehensive Chronic Care Programme (CCCP) in 2 polyclinics and from the lessons learnt, will be testing the approach further in a larger number of polyclinics before we can consider extending it to GPs.

Eligibility criteria of assistance schemes. As a general principle, all government agencies should adopt a graduated scale of eligibility for their assistance schemes, as opposed to sharp cut-off points, which eliminate those earning marginally above the income cut-off.

Accepted. MCDS is progressively implementing means test (which adopts a graduated scale of subsidy) for its services and programmes, where appropriate. Currently, the graduated scale of subsidy is available to beneficiaries in sheltered homes for the aged, day care centres for senior citizens, and those receiving assistance under the Centre-Based Financial Assistance Scheme and Student Care Fee Assistance Scheme. For other schemes, the level of help given is usually given on a needs basis and there is flexibility built in to take into account needs of larger families.

MOE to play a more active role in special education e.g. carry out research and planning, identify more primary schools in each school cluster (similar to what is being done at the secondary school level) where facilities are available for the disabled to study in.

Children with learning or physical disabilities, who are able to follow the mainstream curriculum, will not be denied a place in a mainstream school. MOE undertakes periodic reviews on the provision of resources to these children. For instance, since 1999, MOE has increased its provision of facilities and resources in mainstream schools to cater to pupils with sensory impairments and physical disabilities who are able to follow the mainstream curriculum.

Government adopts a “many helping hands” approach in meeting the needs of students who have disabilities, which our mainstream schools could not cater to. This "many helping hands" approach entails the active involvement and support of the National Council of Social Services and voluntary welfare organisations in providing for their needs. This is important so that the passion and participation of the people sector
are harnessed, encouraging an active citizenry and nurturing a strong spirit of volunteerism in Singaporeans.

Set up a National Council on Accessibility to coordinate efforts at improving accessibility and to champion the physical accessibility needs of the less mobile.

Supported. The government agrees that we need to help the less mobile enjoy freedom and accessibility to public housing, roads and walkways, shopping malls, and public transportation. Such efforts would require the collaboration of various agencies with the necessary policies and expertise. If the non-profit body proposed by RSC were to be established, the government would be prepared to work with it to bring about a more accessible Singapore.

Appoint an authority to coordinate transportation planning for the less mobile, such as the elderly and the disabled, to ensure integrated access for all.

Not accepted. The transportation needs of less mobile persons, which increasingly will include our growing elderly population, is an issue that requires close collaboration of various authorities and stakeholders. The various government agencies have and will continue to work closely to improve the transportation planning and services for these people. There is currently a Workgroup on Accessibility chaired by National Council of Service Service (NCSS) and comprising government and non-government agencies.

In recent years, collaboration among the various authorities has resulted in concrete initiatives taken to better meet the transport needs of the less mobile. For example, the Land Transport Authority and public transport operators have introduced various measures to improve the accessibility of public transport. These included low-floor buses, ramps and lifts at MRT stations and retrofitting existing MRT stations to make them barrier-free. For those who are unable to use mainstream transport services due to their special needs, the NCSS, together with the Voluntary Welfare Organisations, have implemented measures to address the transportation needs of this group. These included subsidy schemes such as the NCSS Transport Fund and Car Park labels as well as adapted vehicle transport service. People with disabilities who need a car for work purposes can also apply for waiver of Additional Registration Fee and Certificate of Entitlement.

We are confident that with the continuing close collaboration under the existing inter-agency workgroups and forums, further progress will be made to address the transport needs of the less mobile. Presently, we are already working with MOT’s support to explore how we can help existing VWO transport operators optimise and expand their dedicated services to a wider group of clientele.

Facilitate employment for the disabled. Provide opportunities for employers to explore what it means to recruit, retain, and advance disabled employees e.g. through symposiums, work attachments and ‘adopt-an-association’ arrangements. Possible schemes for the disabled could be modelled along the lines of the “People-
for-Jobs Traineeship” (PJTP) scheme administered by MOM, where 50% of a new hire's salary is subsidised by government for 6 months.

Accepted. The PJTP is targeted at unemployed mature workers, including the disabled, who are 40 years and above. It is a short-term initiative designed specifically to help employers manage the cost of training and inducting older workers into new jobs. A more long-term arrangement and holistic approach is required for the societal integration needs of the disabled.

MCDS, NCSS and WDA are undertaking a more in-depth study on the skills, abilities and limitations of the different groups of persons with disabilities who are employable so as to market them more effectively to potential employers. Efforts are being made to engage companies to redesign jobs and to pilot employment test beds for employees with disabilities.

Incorporate service learning into our mainstream educational curricula
Establish a Service Learning Centre to serve as a repository of service-learning expertise and a centre for logistical support;
Tertiary institutions to build up their service learning capacity and pilot service learning courses in year 2003-04; by 2006-07, tertiary institutions should incorporate service learning into at least 10% of their curriculum;
Junior colleges, primary and secondary schools could be encouraged to incorporate service learning into their curricula.

As part of MOE’s Community Involvement Programme (CIP), schools are encouraged to incorporate service learning into their curricula. A significant number of schools have already started using Service Learning as a tool to add value to CIP.

The tertiary institutions have the flexibility to offer opportunities for service learning. They are in the best position to design a curriculum that incorporates service learning if it fits into their curriculum.

Introduce Philanthropy Awards to encourage corporate philanthropy
Accepted. With their new expanded role, the National Volunteer and Philanthropy Centre (NVPC) will be revising the existing National Volunteerism Awards to incorporate philanthropy. NVPC is currently working out details of the awards. NVPC will also pursue strategies to strengthen the contributions of various sectors, including the corporate sector, to philanthropy.

Chapter 5: A Home To Cherish

Remove female quota for medical faculty in NUS.

This recommendation was conveyed to government prior to the report’s finalisation, and was accepted in Dec 2002.
Harmonise the medical benefits of female and male civil servants

Under review. This will be studied as part of Minister Lim Hng Kiang’s Committee on population challenges.

Harmonise citizenship privileges. Grant citizenship by descent to overseas-born babies of Singaporean women marrying foreigners, as well as overseas-stationed Singaporean fathers who are citizens by descent.

Accepted. As announced by DPM Lee and the Minister for Home Affairs during the recent Budget debate, the Government has reviewed the policy and will amend the Constitution to allow female Singaporeans to transfer citizenship by descent to their children born overseas. This effectively makes the grant of citizenship by descent gender neutral.

The Constitution (Amendment) Bill has been tabled in Parliament on 17 Mar 04. The Second reading of the Bill is on 19 April.

Form a National Family Council. This centralised agency will drive the family movement in Singapore and to advocate pro-family policies. It will take on a holistic and cohesive approach to analysing family issues and policies, and drive research and training on family-related policies/trends/issues.

Not accepted. MCDS is the lead agency for family matters in Singapore, and is responsible for formulating policies pertaining to a wide range of social needs and issues that have impact on the family. These issues include ageing and the elderly, youth development, juvenile delinquency, problems of low income groups, and social cohesion. Beyond these issues are other considerations such as education, health and housing that MCDS must factor into consideration even though these are areas that do not fall under its purview. For our family policies to be holistic and well integrated to meet complex needs, MCDS coordinates closely with other ministries and government agencies to ensure there is consistency in our policies.

MCDS also works closely with partners in the private and people sectors to develop a pro-family programmes and services. The "Many Helping Hands" and consultative approach is the philosophy and approach adopted by all MCDS Divisions.

The current arrangement with MCDS playing a lead role in family matters has served the nation well. We do not consider it necessary to have a new National Family Council to duplicate the role that MCDS is performing.

The RSC report advocates that one of the first tasks of the proposed National Family Council is to develop a Family Charter “to articulate the important role family plays in Singapore and develop general guidelines for the private, public and people (unions) sectors.” Such a Charter is supposed to be the basis to champion new policy initiatives and ideas for “subsequent acceptance and implementation”. While the
proposed Charter states broad ideals on the role of family in society, MCDS believes that it would be more useful to pursue specific agendas to achieve concrete results. MCDS has done this through several family-related committees. The Family Matters! Singapore is the main vehicle for public education messages on family. Chaired by Mr Chan Soo Sen, Minister of State for MCDS and MOE, the Committee is driven by the people sector and most of its members are drawn from the private sector. The Committee has been building its own image and its programmes are widely publicised through various mediums. For example, the Romancing Singapore Festival led by the people sector had generated good media coverage with 500,000 people participating in over 100 Festival events.

Another important people sector-led committee staffed by MCDS is the Committee on the Family. It is a policy advisory committee. Its terms of reference have been enhanced to include undertaking public consultation on family policies.

Other committees that the Ministry staff include the Tripartite Committee on Work-Life Strategy with MOM, NTUC, and SNEF and other committees and taskforces with Voluntary Welfare Organisations, Non-government organisations and grassroots bodies.

MCDS agrees with the RSC that more could be done in the area of research on family-related policies, trends, and issues. We are also in agreement of the need to forge regional and international links. We have started to do so in both areas.

**Incorporating family life education into the formal school curriculum, to help ensure that Singaporeans continue to value, develop and maintain strong family relations.**

Accepted. The role of the family and the importance of building strong family ties are taught formally during Civics and Moral Education (CME) lessons at both primary and secondary levels. To complement the CME curriculum, schools have in place a structured lifeskills programme, which includes preparations for work and family life. MOE has also developed a comprehensive sexuality education programme premised on the importance of the family as the basic unit of society, and which aims to develop in pupils a healthy attitude towards sexuality and responsible relationships. Overall, while schools can provide such education, family support and influence in the home is of paramount importance.

**Increase public involvement in heritage matters. The National Heritage Board and the Preservation of Monuments Board should involve and consult the public much more in their work. Partnership with the people and private sectors in activities can foster greater appreciation of our heritage, generate income and encourage the development of the local heritage industry.**

Accepted. NHB and PMB already involve the people and private sectors in their work. Nonetheless, they could explore how to include more participation in their work.
Preserve memories of Singapore life through a Community Museum & Radio and Museum of Everyday Life

Not accepted. NHB museums have done many community-based exhibitions, public outreach programmes and travelling exhibitions with community groups. Community history and everyday life and customs are being woven into the permanent displays at the Asian Civilisations Museum at Empress Place and the upcoming Singapore History Museum. There are other heritage centres dedicated to specific communities and owned by organisations in the people sector, for example the Chinese Heritage Centre, and the upcoming Malay Heritage and Eurasian heritage centres. There is also an increased interest among local communities to set up their own heritage corners or galleries within the CDCs, community centres, schools and even private organisations.

On a separate Community radio, we can explore having more local heritage and community programmes to be incorporated into existing radio channels.

Create the Temasek Heritage Foundation to act as an independent and unbiased advocate for heritage matters in Singapore, help gather views from the public and undertake commercial activities that promotes greater heritage awareness. In addition, the Foundation could lead in encouraging the development of the local heritage industry.

Accepted in principle. We welcome the people and corporate sectors' involvement in heritage promotion if members from these sectors wish to set up a non-government organisation to promote heritage. If they can find sufficient support and resources for this purpose, they are welcome to do so. Singapore already has existing heritage bodies and groups (including NGOs) which are contributing to public discourse on heritage.

Free up more time for Singaporeans; implement 5-day week in Civil Service

Under review. This will be studied as part of Minister Lim Hng Kiang's Committee on population challenges.

Expand the sea and water sports scene here to re-make Singapore into a tropical sea sports paradise for both Singaporeans and tourists, a world-class city to work and play in. Some changes in regulations and more infrastructure investment would be required.

Accepted. MCDS/SSC are currently working with the watersports NSAs to help them overcome some of the issues in promoting watersports to the public. We are also exploring ways to collaborate with other agencies to either remove the barriers that are hindering the growth of sea sports or to encourage the development of watersports in Singapore.

To help develop water sports, PUB has gradually increased access to reservoirs. For example, Pandan Reservoir is used for rowing and canoeing, Lower Seletar Reservoir
for sailing, canoeing and kayaking, and MacRitchie for canoeing. PUB will continue to work with SSC and other relevant agencies to introduce suitable boating activities such as canoeing, paddleboats, rowing, dragon boats at reservoirs.

MPA has also been working closely with SSC and other agencies in areas such as recreational underwater diving at Pulau Hantu, waterskiing and wakeboarding at Serangoon River, and relaxing licensing requirements for canoes and kayaks. On the recommendation to create different classes of Power Pleasure Craft Driving Licences (PPCDL), MPA has consulted the marinas, training institutions, organisations and associations involved in pleasure craft activities. The feedback was that most types of motorised craft are less than 20 metres in length and it is not necessary to have different classes of PPCDL. However, MPA has also received feedback that the syllabus for the PPCDL courses should be revised to keep up with the marine developments. As such, MPA, is reviewing the PPCDL course syllabus, targeted for completion by end-2004.

Sentosa is also actively supporting a sea and water sports lifestyle. It organised a Jet Ski and wakeboard stunt show from Nov 03 to Jan 04. Sentosa Cove, a prestigious waterfront residential, commercial and marina project on Sentosa Island, will host the highly anticipated Boat Asia 2004 from 15 to 18 April 2004 with over 8,000 participants. Sentosa is also inviting private companies to invest on the island to build, operate and make accessible to the public adventure sea sports facilities. A new sea sports centre has been identified. The $12 million investment is targeted to complete by end of 2004.

**Raise profile of Singapore Youth Festival.** SYF is currently confined largely to the school system. SYF should be positioned and marketed more effectively as a national-level event to the masses, possibly with events in the heartlands.

Accepted. While the Singapore Youth Festival is primarily a platform for our schools to showcase their talents, the public has been able to view and enjoy events held in venues such as Singapore Botanic Gardens and Jurong Bird Park. The public has also been able to purchase tickets to attend concerts by the Singapore National Youth Orchestra. We agree that the profile should be raised, and MOE is working with NAC to see how this can be done.

**Singapore can be an Asian events hub, playing host to world-famous international events in the same league as the Grand Prix, UK Glastonbury Festival, the London Horticultural Show etc. Such large-scale international events could attract large local followings as well as increase opportunities for local participation.**

STB is actively promoting Singapore as an Asian Events Hub and attracting major international events to come here. This will strengthen Singapore's position as an attractive tourist destination and lifestyle capital of the region. STB is working with its partners to stage events that will appeal to both local and foreign audience. Some of these major events include the Singapore Food Festival, MTV Asia Awards, Asian Aerospace, and Caltex Masters.
To set up an Audience Development Fund to seed the development of an arts-going culture

Accepted. NAC has an audience development arm devoted to the development of arts audiences. Additionally, NAC also organises the Arts Festival Outreach activities.

Streamlining the process of bringing in events. Set up a one-stop agency for arts and entertainment groups to contact when organising events. This agency, which could be part of the MITA or NAC, would cut red tape for local and foreign groups by serving as a one-stop service and information centre.

Accepted. Currently, the Arts & Heritage Town of the eCitizen portal contains information that groups can use to help them with event organising. Nonetheless, further improvements can be made to facilitate the process even more.

To maximise use of state land and to better meet demand for such facilities, we propose to make waterbodies, school fields and vacant state land more accessible to members of the public for community and recreation use.

Waterbodies
Accepted. Today, certain waterbodies have already been opened up for public recreation and organised non-motorised sporting activities are allowed. For example, sailing is allowed on Seletar Reservoir, and rowing is allowed at Pandan and Bedok Reservoirs. See also response to #62.

School Fields
Accepted. There are several schemes in place for schools to share their school fields with the community. 38 schools have entered into agreements with the community groups such as Citizens’ Consultative Committees or Residents’ Committees. There are also two pilot schemes underway to facilitate use of school sports facilities by individual members of the public. MOE will consider extending the schemes if the pilots are successful.

URA and MOE are also studying the option of co-locating schools next to community and recreational uses such as community clubs, sports complexes, swimming complexes and parks. This arrangement might make it easier for community organisations to manage the shared facilities e.g. school fields, and relieve the schools of the burden of having to manage and open such facilities for public use, whilst having the first right of use by the students during school hours.

State land
Accepted. MinLaw and MND support the proposal to maximise the use of State land and to make them more accessible to the public for community and recreation uses. Since Sept 2003, SLA and HDB have made it more user-friendly for residents to play football on State land within housing estates. “No trespassing” signboards have been gradually replaced by friendlier signs placed at the sides and not in the centre of the fields. It should be noted that not all signs all over the island need to be replaced. To
prevent wastage, signs at fields not expected to be frequently used by residents need not be replaced.

Besides interim recreation and community uses, selected sites island-wide are also available for other suitable interim uses. The sites would be subject to planning evaluation, where factors such as the availability of the site and whether the use would pose amenity problems to surrounding developments would be considered.

HDB could consider relaxing its rules on the use of void decks. Void decks are ideal for community activities that encourage residents to get out of their homes to interact with their neighbours.

Accepted. MND/HDB agrees that void decks are a good platform for social-communal interactions among the residents and is supportive of the recommendation. Currently, some community activities are already allowed in void decks, the use of which are regulated by the Town Councils. HDB will work with the Town Councils to relax rules where possible to promote social interactions among the residents while meeting the need for privacy and peace for residents.

Enable richness of life at the ‘street level’. Encourage the “Sungei Road”-type flea/antique markets, or entrepreneurship through ‘car boot sales’ on empty JTC or state land, with or without payment of a small license fee.

MinLaw supports the recommendations to enrich street level activities. To encourage these activities and to offer more flexibility to the market, MinLaw/SLA is prepared to consider time-based levy for the use of State land.

Accelerate the development of our rail network

Accepted in principle. MOT/LTA agrees in-principle with the recommendation to expand our existing rail network and to increase their accessibility to commuters. This is part of our vision to develop the rail network into the backbone of our public transport system. Notwithstanding this, rail lines should still be viable in order to ensure an operationally sustainable system. The rate of development will also depend on the financial position of the Government, as MRT lines are huge capital investments.
## Remaking Singapore Committee Recommendations
### Overview of Government Response (15 April 2004)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendation</th>
<th>Status</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter 2: A Home for All Singaporeans</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Renew vision of a Singaporean Singapore</td>
<td>Accepted. The concept is and should be supported, both by government and community efforts. However, there is no need to formalise this into a statement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Encourage greater identification with and use of National Symbols</td>
<td>Accepted and implemented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Renewed emphasis on values and ideals for which Singapore stands</td>
<td>Accepted. To be implemented as part of ongoing enhancements to NE program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Enhance National Education in schools and Institute of Higher Learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Set up Self-Help Co-ordination Council</td>
<td>Accepted. CEOs of the Self-Help Groups are working out the implementation details.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Introduce multi-ethnic/religious education in schools.</td>
<td>Not accepted. MOE has highlighted likely implementation problems, drawing from its experience with religious knowledge in the 80s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Language Competencies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. flexibility for second language</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. option of local language as 3rd language</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. 3rd language at conversational level, non examinable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Not accepted. However, MOE has announced several strategies to sustain and maintain interest in the mother tongue.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Accepted. The eligibility criteria has been relaxed with effect from the 2003 PSLE cohort.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Accepted, but should be optional</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Public education on religion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Undertake proactive programs to promote better understanding of people of different religions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Declaration on Religious Harmony to consolidate current practices and OB markers.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Implemented through ongoing PA and IRCC initiatives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Not accepted. The Declaration on Religious Harmony is intended as a statement of principles and norms to foster better understanding and consensus, not as a way to define OB markers.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Socialisation in SAP schools. Create awareness that SAP schools can also accept non-Chinese students who meet their entry criteria.</td>
<td>Accepted. The entry criteria for all national schools, including SAP schools, are transparent and do not discriminate against a student’s race.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendation</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Religious schools to have integrative elements.</td>
<td>MUIS supports this recommendation as it is in line with the direction</td>
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<td></td>
<td>for the madrasahs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Role of media in enhancing racial and religious harmony.</td>
<td>Accepted. Implemented through existing channels of MITA/MDA and</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the programmes/publications advisory committees</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Up-stream integration for foreign students and skilled working adults.</td>
<td>a. Accepted. Schools with foreign students have in place a variety of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Widen the reach of the buddy programme</td>
<td>programmes to integrate them into our system, and MCDS and MOM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Encourage foreign clubs to take on joint community projects</td>
<td>will study other ways to improve integration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Accepted and being implemented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Address Singaporeans’ concerns. Integration efforts should have</td>
<td>Accepted and being implemented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ground-level involvement and ownership</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>14. Help Singaporeans acquire “global skills” by setting up a Committee</td>
<td>Accepted. Instead of a Committee mechanism, this will be undertaken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to Globalise Singaporeans</td>
<td>by the Workforce Development Agency. WDA will identify such skills</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>and incorporate them into new skills training programmes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Re-think representation and franchise by creating NMPs for overseas</td>
<td>Not accepted for now. The government would prefer to move</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singaporeans, and “overseas constituencies”</td>
<td>gradually, starting with overseas voting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Re-integrate returning Singaporeans</td>
<td>There is a set of existing programs and policies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Replicate the Singapore education experience for overseas Singaporeans</td>
<td>Accepted. MOE is prepared to set up Singapore international schools</td>
</tr>
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<td>by setting up Singapore schools.</td>
<td>overseas where there is a critical mass of Singaporeans, subject to</td>
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<td></td>
<td>the constraints of cost and availability of resources e.g. teachers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>18. Allow schools and universities greater flexibility to admit students.</td>
<td>Accepted. MOE announced during Mar 04 Budget Debate that it had</td>
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<tr>
<td>19. Broadening the definition of success – Entry into IHLs in Singapore</td>
<td>introduced more flexible criteria for schools and JCs in admitting</td>
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<td>students. Universities will also be given greater autonomy in</td>
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<tr>
<td>20. Enhance diversity of the school curriculum through elective modules</td>
<td>admissions.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The elective modules, as recommended by the RSC, are already</td>
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<td></td>
<td>incorporated into our existing total curriculum framework, albeit mainly</td>
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<td></td>
<td>as non-examinable subjects and CCA.</td>
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<tr>
<td>21. Start a National School for the Arts and Music at the secondary level</td>
<td>Accepted. MITA announced the setting up of a pre-tertiary</td>
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<td>Recommendation</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>22. Improve access to quality early childhood education</strong></td>
<td>Accepted. Implemented via ongoing initiatives and programs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>23. Introducing O-level PE subject</strong></td>
<td>Not accepted for now, as specialised independent schools are in a better position to cater to specialised areas, and the sports school is now just in start-up phase. But can be considered at an appropriate time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>24. CCA recognition for outside school activities</strong></td>
<td>Accepted. Students’ participation in CCA outside the school is recognised, and CCA points are awarded for such involvement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>25. Provide access to coaching/counselling for students</strong></td>
<td>Accepted. Implemented via ongoing initiatives and programs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>26. Modification of the school ranking system</strong></td>
<td>Accepted. MOE announced during the Mar 04 Budget Debate that it would broaden and augment the school ranking system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>27. Adopt a green/red lane approach for public entertainment licensing</strong></td>
<td>Not accepted. But MITA and MHA will continue to review the exemption list with a view to exempting other public entertainments from the requirements of the Public Entertainments And Meetings Act.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>28. Designate performance venues for relaxing rules</strong></td>
<td>Not accepted. It is not practical to create such venues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>29. Review treatment of Performance and Forum Art</strong></td>
<td>Accepted and implemented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>30. Set up PEMA appeals advisory committee</strong></td>
<td>Accepted and being implemented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>31. Cease prior vetting of play scripts</strong></td>
<td>Accepted. Exemption guidelines being worked out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>32. Relax rules of busking</strong></td>
<td>Accepted and implemented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>33. Extend rating system to more forms of media</strong></td>
<td>Accepted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>34. Define “political” OB markers</strong></td>
<td>Not accepted. DPM Lee addressed this point in a speech on 6 Jan 2004</td>
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<td>Recommendation</td>
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<tr>
<td>35. Encourage academic research on public policy</td>
<td>Accepted. Academics in NUS are strongly encouraged to conduct rigorous and relevant research in various fields, including public policy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36. Easier registration of groups/associations</td>
<td>Accepted. The Societies Act will be amended to implement an “Automatic Registration” regime for societies. The Societies (Amendment) Bill will be tabled in Parliament shortly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. One-stop registration</td>
<td>Accepted. Information and links available on NVPC and NCSS’ websites.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. Set up a National Youth Forum</td>
<td>Accepted. A 6-member Steering Committee was formed in Nov 2003.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39. Draw up a government Code of Consultation</td>
<td>Accepted. DPM Lee announced a set of guidelines on 6 Jan 2004.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. Set up Management Committees to the manage HDB estates</td>
<td>Accepted in-principle. However, various issues have to be studied further and resolved before the idea is extended from HUDC estates to other HDB residents at an appropriate time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter 4 – A Home For All Seasons</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41. To rationalise and consolidate the different assistance schemes into an “Economic Relief Scheme” (ERS) to provide holistic assistance for the structurally unemployed.</td>
<td>Accepted and being implemented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42. Allow the use of CPF in a prolonged recession, on a very limited and exceptional basis, so that Singaporeans can support themselves through spells of unemployment.</td>
<td>Accepted, but only for prolonged and severe economic downturns. The better approach is to help the unemployed be more employable and find a job.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43. Allow re-mortgage of HDB flats to meet urgent cash requirements. Explore other means of helping financially-strapped Singaporeans.</td>
<td>Not accepted. The government has other measures to help lessees in financial difficulties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44. Expand the role of health insurance in healthcare financing. Initiatives to provide better coverage</td>
<td>Accepted. MOH is studying how this can be implemented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45. Extend the Primary Care Partnership Scheme to the disabled and chronically ill so that they can obtain subsidised treatment.</td>
<td>Accepted. MOH is working out implementation details for the disabled. For the chronically ill, a pilot project has started in 2 polyclinics and MOH will extend it to more polyclinics before considering inclusion of GPs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>46. Eligibility criteria of assistance schemes. Adopt a graduated scale</td>
<td>Accepted in principle and being implemented where feasible.</td>
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<tr>
<td>of eligibility, as opposed to sharp cut-off points.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47. MOE to play a more active role in special education e.g. research</td>
<td>MOE works with NCSS and VWOs under the “Many Helping Hands” approach in the area of special education.</td>
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<td>and planning, identify more primary schools where facilities are available for</td>
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<tr>
<td>the disabled to study in.</td>
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<tr>
<td>48. Set up a National Council on Accessibility to coordinate efforts at</td>
<td>Supported. If such an NGO is set up, the government is prepared to work with it.</td>
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<td>improving accessibility and to champion the physical accessibility needs of</td>
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<td>the less mobile.</td>
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<tr>
<td>49. Appoint an authority to coordinate transportation planning for the</td>
<td>Not accepted. The issues require the close collaboration of various authorities</td>
</tr>
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<td>less mobile, such as the elderly and the disabled, to ensure integrated access</td>
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<tr>
<td>for all</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50. Facilitate employment for the disabled</td>
<td>Accepted. The relevant agencies are now studying the issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51. Incorporate service learning into our mainstream educational curricula.</td>
<td>Accepted. Schools are encouraged to do so, and tertiary institutions have the flexibility to offer and design service learning opportunities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52. Introduce Philanthropy Awards to encourage corporate philanthropy</td>
<td>Accepted. The National Volunteer and Philanthropy Centre will be revising the National Volunteerism Awards to incorporate philanthropy from this year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 5 – A Home to Cherish</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53. Remove female quota for medical faculty in NUS.</td>
<td>Accepted. This was conveyed to government prior to the report’s finalisation, and was accepted in Dec 2002.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54. Harmonise the medical benefits of female and male civil servants</td>
<td>Under review by Minister Lim Hng Kiang’s Committee on population challenges.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55. Harmonise citizenship privileges. Grant citizenship by descent to</td>
<td>Accepted. The Constitution (Amendment) Bill has been tabled in Parliament on 17 Mar 04.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>overseas-born babies of Singaporean women marrying foreigners, and overseas-</td>
<td></td>
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<td>stationed Singaporean fathers who are citizens by descent.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>56.</strong> Form a National Family Council to take a holistic and cohesive approach to analysing family issues and policies, and drive research and training on family-related policies/trends/issues.</td>
<td>Not accepted. MCDS does not consider it necessary to form a Council that would duplicate its role. But MCDS agrees that more can be done in research and regional/international links, and is doing so.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>57.</strong> Incorporate family life education into the formal school curriculum, to help ensure that Singaporeans continue to value, develop and maintain strong family relations.</td>
<td>Accepted. Already implemented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>58.</strong> Increase public involvement in heritage matters to foster greater appreciation of our heritage, generate income and encourage the development of the local heritage industry.</td>
<td>Accepted. NHB and PMB already involve the people and private sectors in their work. Nonetheless, they could explore how to include more participation in their work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>59.</strong> Preserve memories of Singapore life through a Community Museum &amp; Radio and Museum of Everyday Life</td>
<td>Not accepted. Community history and life are already being incorporated into existing museums, exhibitions and community efforts. Community radio can also be delivered through existing radio channels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>60.</strong> Create the Temasek Heritage Foundation to act as an independent and unbiased advocate for heritage matters in Singapore</td>
<td>Accepted in principle. If the people and corporate sectors are able to find the support and resources for this, they are welcome to proceed with such a Foundation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>61.</strong> Free up more time for Singaporeans; implement 5-day week in Civil Service</td>
<td>Under review by Minister Lim Hng Kiang’s Committee on population challenges.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>62.</strong> Expand the sea and water sports scene here to re-make Singapore into a tropical sea sports paradise</td>
<td>Accepted. The various agencies are actively pursuing strategies to achieve this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>63.</strong> Raise profile of Singapore Youth Festival; position and market SYF more effectively as a national-level event to the masses, possibly with events in the heartlands.</td>
<td>Accepted. The public is now able to access some SYF events but more can be done to raise the profile. MOE and NAC are working on doing so.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>64.</strong> Singapore can be an Asian events hub, playing host to a world-famous international events.</td>
<td>Accepted. STB is actively promoting Singapore as an Asian Events Hub and attracting major international events to come here.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>65.</strong> Set up an Audience Development Fund to seed the development of an arts-going culture</td>
<td>Accepted. NAC already has an audience development arm, and also organises outreach activities.</td>
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<td>Recommendation</td>
<td>Status</td>
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<tr>
<td>66. Streamline the process of bringing in events by setting up a one-stop agency for arts and entertainment groups to contact when organising events.</td>
<td>Accepted. Improvements can be made to the Arts &amp; Heritage Town of the eCitizen portal, to further facilitate the process of organising arts and entertainment events.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67. Make waterbodies, school fields and vacant state land more accessible to public for community and recreation use.</td>
<td>Accepted. The relevant agencies are actively exploring and introducing measures to increase accessibility to the public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68. HDB could consider relaxing its rules on the use of void decks. Void decks are ideal for community activities that encourage residents to get out of their homes to interact with their neighbours.</td>
<td>Accepted. MND/HDB will work with Town Councils (which regulates the use of void decks) to relax rules where possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69. Enable richness of life at the ‘street level’. Encourage “Sungei Road”-type flea/antique markets, or entrepreneurship through ‘car boot sales’ on empty land, with or without payment of a license fee.</td>
<td>Accepted. To encourage these activities and to offer more flexibility to the market, MinLaw/SLA is prepared to consider time-based levy for the use of State land.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70. Accelerate the development of our rail network</td>
<td>Accepted in principle. MOT/LTA’s vision is to develop the rail network as the backbone of our public transport system. But the rate of development would still depend on their viability as well as the financial position of the Government.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>