

# **Board Report to the AGM 2024**

## **Finance**

I would like to begin this year on a serious note. As reported in the audited accounts at last year's AGM, the Association faced a financial deficit of approximately HK\$1.3 million in 2022/2023. This year (2023/2024), the deficit remains largely unchanged, with around 50% attributed to staffing costs. While we receive government subsidies, they do not fully cover the operational requirements of running two rowing centres and retaining personnel in an increasingly competitive market. Additionally, while we are delighted with the new facilities at JCSTRC, the monthly costs, including additional staffing, daily operations, and repairs, remain high and are not subsidised.

The number of members opting for the lower HK\$50 ordinary membership, day passes, or other subsidised options exceeds those using fully paid centre memberships, making membership income insufficient. Similarly, boat rack charges have remained unchanged. The Board will need to revisit these issues in the coming year, and an increase in rates is unavoidable. Action will also be needed in respect of unpaid racking fees as demand for space at both boathouses is high.

Looking ahead, based on 2024/2025 expenses up to September, we predict a gradual reduction in the deficit by the end of the next financial year. Expenditure controls have been implemented or are planned for electricity, cleaning, professional fees, and part-time manpower.

We aim to maximise LCSD subventions for manpower and resources while seeking sponsorship from additional sources, including LCSD's matching fund scheme, wherever possible. Promoting our events to increase participation and expanding our membership base will also contribute to additional income for the Association. Staff are being encouraged to adopt the PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act) approach, exploring innovative ideas to better manage the Association within the current financial reality.

## **Governance**

Following a three-year review, the SF&OC has recently issued a new code of governance for National Sports Associations. The code contains 243 guidelines across six categories, with which Associations must comply by the end of 2026. Failure to do so may result in a loss of government funding. While the new policy is welcomed, the administrative implications for our staff are significant.

Under the Community Sports Club programme, we are responsible for monitoring the use of public funding provided to clubs. Earlier this year, a meeting was held with clubs to explain their obligations and liabilities within the scheme.

## High-Performance Rowing

Our high-performance rowing programme, run in partnership with the Hong Kong Sports Institute and led by Technical Director **Kenny Wu**, continues to produce excellent results:

- **Chiu Hin Chun** achieved a significant milestone by qualifying for the Paris Olympic Games, where he finished 20th—a commendable achievement for a lightweight rower. He also secured Hong Kong’s first-ever gold medal at a World Cup regatta in Lucerne, earning the title of World Rowing’s “Rower of the Month” in June.
- **Leung Wing Wun** won a silver medal at the World University Championships in the Netherlands.
- **Lam San Tung** and **Chan Chi Fung** achieved gold at China’s National Championships.
- Our athletes also won two silver and one bronze medal at the Asian U19 and U23 Championships in China, and three bronze medals at the Asian Senior Championships in Uzbekistan.

We organised a welcome-home event for our Paris team in conjunction with a gathering of 17 Hong Kong Olympian rowers in October. A heartfelt thank you to all athletes, coaches, and support staff for their dedication and success on the international stage.

## Local Rowing

In addition to our regular Shing Mun River regattas, our event calendar remained vibrant. Highlights included:

- **The 46th Hong Kong Rowing Championships**, which attracted a record 465 competitors from across the region, despite being held between two approaching typhoons. A youth squad from Western Australia joined us for the first time, fostering potential future exchanges.
- Successful execution of **Indoor, Masters, Coastal, Schools, and University Championships**.

Special thanks go to the Events and Umpiring Committees, volunteers, and dedicated local umpires who make these events possible. We also recognise the contributions of our international umpires in officiating at regattas regionally and globally.

Sadly, we lost two dear rowing friends in 2023/2024. Our deepest condolences go to the family of **Ng See Hung**, a long-standing umpire, coach, and supporter of rowing, who passed away in January, and to our respected coach **Francis Chiu**, who passed away in October 2023.

## Coastal Rowing

Coastal rowing is expected to grow in popularity with the inclusion of Beach Sprint events at the 2026 Youth Olympic Games in Dakar and the 2028 LA Olympic Games. Building on our 2019 hosting of the World Rowing Coastal Championships, we continue to hold regular coastal events locally, including the Harbour Coastal Regatta and ATIR, in partnership with the RHKYC. We have also just completed our Beach Sprint Championships at Mui Wo – for the first time using an LCSD public beach. Looking ahead, we hope to host more major Beach Sprint events as we look towards 2028.

We are actively promoting rowing to a wider population through collaborations with NGOs such as Vessel, HK Playground Association, Po Leung Kok, and AYP. Thanks to **Tai Ming**, who coordinated with Chinese YMCA Wu Kai Sha, a series of coastal rowing activities was successfully conducted using HKCRA coastal boats stored at their facility. We hope YMCA will join our family of affiliated clubs, enabling more rowing activities. Additionally, we are working closely with LCSD Wong Shek Water Sports Centre to offer Coastal Rowing at a publicly funded venue for the first time.

## Para Rowing

With the retirement of several experienced para rowers, we aim to rebuild the programme by collaborating with NGOs to introduce indoor rowing activities, transitioning later to on-water rowing. Revenue from JCSTRC's solar panels will help fund these initiatives. **AJ Samuel**, our para rower and former Vice Chairman, is also launching an adaptive rowing initiative alongside his new film *Pushing Through the Waves*. We are also happy to welcome the Korean Para Rowing Team each year for their winter training camp.

## Cross-Border Exchanges

The rise of “sport-for-all” on the Mainland has fuelled interest in rowing, particularly in the Greater Bay Area. Members and some parents participated in various Mainland regattas, such as the AISL Harrow Rowing Regatta, while Mainland club rowers joined our local events. With the support and encouragement of the HKSAR Government, we hope to inspire the younger generation towards excellence in rowing, while also fostering cultural exchanges and friendships with Mainland counterparts.

## Representation and Honours

Our members continue to contribute to the governance of rowing internationally, holding posts with World Rowing, the Asian Rowing Federation, the Sports Federation and Olympic Committee of Hong Kong, China, and the Hong Kong Water Sports Council.

Congratulations to:

- **Wong Wai Chun** and **Lam San Tung** for receiving the Medal of Honour in the 2024 HKSAR Honours List

- **Cheung Hoi Lam** and **Leung King Wan** for receiving the Chief Executive's Commendation.
- **Wong and Lam**, were also recognised with a Hong Kong Sports Stars Award for their partnership in the coxless pair.
- **Yu Man Sheung**, for being honoured at the Hong Kong Coaching Awards for his community coaching contributions.

## **Thanks**

As the Jockey Club STRC redevelopment project nears its final sign-off, I extend heartfelt thanks to our Project Advisory Group, who ensured its timely, on-budget delivery. Special recognition goes to retiring Board Member **Ken Leung** for his exceptional leadership throughout the project.

Finally, I express my deepest gratitude to our Directors, Committees, Coaches, Umpires, Athletes, Staff, Volunteers, Members, Clubs, and Stewards. Your *"Passion to Go Beyond"* remains the life-blood of our Association.

**Ho Kim Fai OLY**  
**Chairman**