

## **MEDIA FACTSHEET FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES OFFICE (MSO) COS 2023**

### **BUILDING MORE GRACIOUS COMMUNITIES THROUGH A STRONG SOCIAL COMPACT**

Set up in 2014 as part of the Ministry of National Development, the Municipal Services Office (MSO) partners government agencies and Town Councils (TCs) to improve the delivery of municipal services, with the aim of creating a quality living environment for residents. However, many of the neighbourhood issues are complex as they could be socio-behavioural in nature, which the Government alone cannot fully resolve. These require the community to come together and agree on how we relate to one another, and how we can better accommodate individual differences and preferences when living in close proximity to one another.

1. To support efforts in building a pleasant living environment, MSO actively partners the community to address complex municipal issues which arise from how residents interact with one another and when there are differences in social practices. Examples are:

- Alliance-for-Action (AfA) on Norms for Joss Paper Burning
- Community Advisory Panel (CAP) on Neighbourhood Noise

#### ***Alliance-for-Action (AfA) on Norms for Joss Paper Burning***

2. In July 2022, MSO supported the formation of the Alliance for Action (AfA) on Norms for Joss Paper Burning. The AfA was established in collaboration with key representatives of the Chinese community, to forge a consensus within the community on the acceptable norms for the traditional custom of joss paper burning.

3. During the Seventh Lunar Month 2022, the AfA developed a public education (PE) campaign focused on correcting misconceptions associated with the practice (e.g., joss paper should be burnt and not tossed or scattered). Results from the PE campaign were encouraging. We saw a 13% drop in feedback volume compared to 2021's Seventh Lunar Month.

4. For Lunar New Year (LNY) 2023, the AfA's PE campaign focused on encouraging devotees not to burn joss paper along common corridors and to consider conducting their rituals in temples instead. Working closely with religious goods merchants and Town Councils, the AfA also encouraged devotees to ensure that offerings fit into the available eco-burners and oil drum burners provided in their respective estates before purchasing them. The LNY PE campaign contributed to a significant drop in joss paper burning feedback numbers, with total LNY feedback volume falling by 70% in 2023 compared to 2022.

#### ***Community Advisory Panel (CAP) on Neighbourhood Noise***

5. In April 2022, MSO and the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth (MCCY) set up the Community Advisory Panel (CAP), which looked to define what is deemed as acceptable and unacceptable noises and noise threshold, as well as what

constitutes good community norms that residents should observe to reduce noise disturbances to their neighbours. In particular, the CAP looked at noise from neighbours and congregational noise in common areas.

6. The CAP has submitted their recommendations to the Government in November 2022, following their engagements with the community to gather public views and suggestions on the issue.

7. [\[Update\]](#) MSO has been working with relevant agencies and community partners to promote the proposed community norms. These norms include encouraging residents to practice considerate behaviours to reduce noise, and to resolve issues amicably among themselves instead of seeking interventions from the authorities at the first instance.

- i. As part of MSO's Adopt A 'Hood Initiative, students from Dunman High School have installed standees around the Jalan Batu estate with messages to remind residents to keep noise levels down and to avoid noisy recreational activities. These standees are placed in common areas such as playgrounds and recreational corners.
- ii. A group of residents in Pioneer have come together through MSO's Love Our 'Hood Initiative to trial physical calendars at lift lobbies, which they will use to inform neighbours in advance about their plans for noisy home-based activities, such as renovations and gatherings.

8. [\[Update\]](#) MSO is currently studying CAP's recommendation to extend the quiet hours from the current 10.30pm – 7am, to 10pm – 8am. Some community events are already aligned with the extended quiet hours and would end by 10pm. MSO will be engaging the wider public and relevant stakeholders to hear their views on the possible impact of this proposed extension.

9. [\[New\]](#) MSO will be setting up an experiential space for residents to better appreciate how various activities in their daily living can create different levels of noise disturbances to neighbours, and how noises may be perceived differently. It will also look to educate visitors on actions that can be taken to reduce the noise impact on neighbours. MSO aims to open this space to the public in the second half of the year.

10. [\[Update\]](#) On CAP's recommendation for a quantitative noise threshold in the form of a decibel limit to assess egregious cases of neighbourhood noise, MSO is studying this further with CAP to assess how it would help in the management of noise issues.

11. [\[Update\]](#) CAP also recognised that norms may not sufficiently address or resolve egregious cases of noise. On their recommendation for a designated agency with legal levers to address unacceptable noise levels, the Inter-Agency Committee for Community Dispute Management (ICCDM), led by MCCY, has been closely reviewing the Community Dispute Management Framework (CDMF). The enhancements are intended to support early amicable resolution of disputes, while also providing more effective means to address protracted and egregious cases.

12. [New] The Government will look into a more structured process to facilitate mediation and resolution for protracted and egregious noise disputes among neighbours. The government is also considering a ground pilot, to see if leveraging stronger laws and having more dedicated facilitation works. An initial team for the pilot is targeted to be set up by the end of the year.

More details will be shared when ready.

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Municipal Services Office  
2 March 2023

### **Annexes**

Annex A: Members of the AfA for Norms on Joss Paper Burning and CAP on Neighbourhood Noise who are open to media interviews

Annex B: Vernacular Translations of Key Terms

### **For media queries and interviews, please contact:**

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**Members of the AfA for Norms on Joss Paper Burning and CAP on Neighbourhood Noise who are open to media interviews**

**Alliance for Action on Norms for Joss Paper Burning**

<b>Name</b>	Kua Soon Khe 柯孙科	Hong Poh Hin BBM 洪宝兴 BBM
<b>Background</b>	AfA Co-Lead 行动联盟联合主席 Chief Executive, Singapore Buddhist Federation 《新加坡佛教总会》	AfA Co-Lead 行动联盟联合主席 Treasurer, Singapore Federation of Chinese Clan Associations 《新加坡宗乡会馆联合总会》 Chairman, Singapore Foochow Association 《新加坡福州会馆》 Chairman, Foochow Coffee Restaurant and Bar Merchants Association 《福州咖啡酒餐商公会》
<b>Languages spoken</b>	English and Mandarin	English and Mandarin

## Community Advisory Panel (CAP) on Neighbourhood Noise

<b>Name</b>	Dr William Wan	Dr Leong Chan-Hoong 梁振雄	Lela Kaur
<b>Background</b>	<p>Chairperson of the CAP</p> <p>Dr Wan is also the General Secretary of the Singapore Kindness Movement (SKM), which has worked with HDB on promoting considerate and gracious behaviours when it comes to noise.</p>	<p>Member of the CAP</p> <p>Dr Leong is also Head of Policy Development, Evaluation, and Data Analytics at Kantar Public. His research focuses on immigration, inter-racial relations, national narratives, &amp; human-environment interactions.</p>	<p>Member of the CAP</p> <p>Ms Kaur is also a mediator at the Community Mediation Centre, and has been involved in helping to resolve noise issues among residents.</p>
<b>Languages Spoken</b>	English	English and Mandarin	English and Tamil

## Vernacular Translations of Key Terms

S/N	Key Terms (in alphabetical order)	Chinese Language	Malay Language	Tamil Language
1	Adopt a 'Hood Initiative	维护邻里计划	Inisiatif Pelihara Satu Kejiranan	"லவ் ஒளர் ஹூட்" தத்தெடுப்புத் திட்டம்
2	Alliance for Action (AfA) for Norms on Joss Paper Burning	焚烧冥纸规范行动联盟	Perikatan untuk Bertindak (AfA) mengenai Norma-norma bagi Pembakaran Kertas Berhala	ஜோஸ் காசித எரிப்புக்கான ஒழுக்க நெறிகள் குறித்த செயற்கூட்டணி
3	Community Advisory Panel on Neighbourhood Noise	邻里噪音社区咨询小组	Panel Penasihat Masyarakat mengenai kebisingan kejiranan	அக்கம்பக்க இரைச்சலுக்கான சமூக ஆலோசனைக் குழு
4	Community Dispute Management Framework	社区纠纷管理框架	Rangka Kerja Pengurusan Pertikaian Masyarakat	சமூகச் சச்சரவு நிர்வாகக் கட்டமைப்பு
5	Community Disputes Resolution Tribunals	邻里纠纷审裁庭	Tribunal Huraian Pertikaian Masyarakat	சமூக சர்ச்சை தீர்வு மன்றங்கள்
6	Love Our 'Hood Initiative	爱护邻里计划	Inisiatif Sayangi Kejiranan Kita	"லவ் ஒளர் ஹூட்" திட்டம்
7	Municipal Services Office	社区事务署	Pejabat Perkhidmatan Perbandaran	நகராட்சி சேவைகள் அலுவலகம்
8	Inter-Agency Committee for Community Dispute Management (ICCDM)	社区纠纷管理跨部门委员会	Jawatankuasa Antara Agensi bagi Pengurusan Pertikaian Masyarakat	சமூகச் சச்சரவு நிர்வாகத்திற்கான அனைத்து அமைப்புக் குழு