

**Hong Kong Institute of Volunteers
Inauguration Ceremony**
cum
Forum on Building Impact in Volunteering
2013.3.21

Opening Address



Mr LEE Jark-pui, SBS, OBE, JP
Chairman, Agency for Volunteer Service
Chairman, Hong Kong Institute of Volunteers

Mrs Carrie Lam, distinguished guests, volunteers, ladies and gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the Inauguration of the Hong Kong Institute of Volunteers. I should very much like to thank Mrs Carrie Lam for agreeing to officiate at the Inauguration Ceremony. Your presence today underlines the value of establishing the Institute.

Over the years, community attitude towards volunteering has been very positive, and the private sector has steadily taken volunteering as part of corporate social responsibility programmes. According to researches commissioned to The University of Hong Kong, respondents who participated in formal volunteering rose from 22% in 2001 to 36% in 2009, and the average number of hours increased from 35 to 87 per year. Many respondents indicated that they would consider volunteering in future. As more people would go volunteering, and with a more complex social environment, the quality of volunteer service is a matter of increasing relevance.

In a society of rising expectation, sharing of experience and transfer of best practices are key to service quality. While volunteering is a matter of free citizen participation, Society, the service medium, i.e. the volunteer involving organizations, and the service recipients do take certain assumptions on trust, attitude and skill of the volunteer. If volunteering is to continue gaining respect and community acceptance, certain prerequisites or standards of behaviour would be necessary to ensure quality. In 2011, the Hong Kong Volunteer Charter was drawn up to celebrate the United Nations 10th Anniversary of the International Year of

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Volunteers. At the same time, it becomes the basis for the work of the Institute. Those who have volunteered should be given an identity to mark their achievement, and this will facilitate the promotion of best practice in volunteering.

The Hong Kong Institute of Volunteers is a new initiative of the Agency for Volunteer Service to advance volunteerism and promote excellence in volunteering through a membership system of recognition, standards setting and accreditation, research and knowledge transfer. We expect members of the Institute are dedicated volunteers and have demonstrated professionalism in practice. I am confident that the sharing, interaction and networking among members will add value in promoting quality volunteer service. On this auspicious occasion, we are pleased that Mrs Lam has agreed to confer the first Honorary Fellowship of the Institute to distinguished volunteers. Also, we take the opportunity to launch the mobile phone app of the Hong Kong Volunteer Charter so that it may be more accessible to those who are interested in volunteering, and hopefully volunteering in the Charter way.

Immediately after the Inauguration Ceremony, we shall hold a forum on volunteering. I should like to thank Ms Margaret Bell and Dr Justin Davis-Smith for being keynote speakers, and taking a long trip to Hong Kong to back our effort. I should thank to our plenary speakers, Dr John Chan, Professor Joseph Lian and Mr Shih Wing-ching for sharing their insight and experience with us. This forum is most fitting to the purpose of the Institute, and I hope it will be a standing feature in our future plan.

A lot of work has been done to bring forth the Hong Kong Volunteer Charter and the Institute, and the Institute has a long way to go. Your presence is an encouragement to us in what we going to achieve. May we look forward to your support in our endeavours in promoting quality service and professionalism in volunteering.

Thank you!