

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**S-HAB06**

**(Question Serial No. S0014)**

Head: (95) Leisure and Cultural Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (1) Recreation and Sports

Controlling Officer: Director of Leisure and Cultural Services (Ms Michelle LI)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Home Affairs

Question:

- (1) In Reply Serial No. HAB207, it is pointed out in the question that the average usage rates of sports grounds reached 99% while the average usage rates of natural turf pitches reached 100%. However, the Government plans to provide only 1 more natural turf pitch, which is in Tuen Mun District, in the coming year. Will the Government provide more natural turf pitches? If so, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons? On the other hand, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department plans to convert more existing natural turf pitches into artificial turf pitches in 2016. Yet, the fact is that natural turf pitches and artificial turf pitches are clearly different and cannot substitute for each other. Football players prefer natural turf pitches. Have the Football Association and local football clubs been consulted on the measure? If so, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by: Hon TANG Ka-piu

Reply:

Football is a sport that can be played and enjoyed on many types of surface. In planning new football pitches, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) takes into account many factors such as the policy objectives for sports development, demand of the whole community and individual communities, utilisation rates of existing facilities, site availability, the views of the District Councils and relevant “national sports associations” (NSA) concerned.

The LCSD is planning one new sports ground with natural turf pitch in Tuen Mun district. As regards artificial turfs, Third Generation (3G) artificial turf pitches are approved by the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) as suitable for football activities and are used by many countries and regions for football training and competitions. For the conversion of natural turf football pitches into artificial turf pitches, the LCSD has consulted the relevant District Councils and NSAs, including the Hong Kong Football Association and the Hong Kong Rugby Football Union. They support the use and additional provision of 3G artificial turf pitches for their training and competitions. In view of the advantages of

artificial football pitches which can be used for 270 sessions per month (i.e. 4 times that of natural turf pitches), the LCSD plans to provide two more 3G pitches in 2016 by converting existing natural turf pitches and provide another 3G pitch under an open space project by 2017-18.

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