

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

HAB181

(Question Serial No. 0492)

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:

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) has been devoting substantial resources to develop and manage recreation and sports facilities. In this connection, will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

- a) The average usage rates of tennis courts are barely 60% in the past few years. What are the reasons for the low usage rates? What measures are there to enhance the utilisation of these facilities?
- b) There are 256 tennis courts under the management of the LCSD, outnumbering recreation and sports facilities for other ball games. Given the low usage rates of tennis courts, has the Department converted some tennis courts into more popular facilities such as basketball courts or soccer pitches?
- c) The fees and charges for recreation and sports facilities have remained unchanged for years. Does the Department have any plan to review the fees and charges of the facilities?
- d) There will be a net increase of 31 posts in the Department for organising sports activities to celebrate the 20th Anniversary of the Establishment of the HKSAR. What are the duties of these posts? How many additional sports activities are being planned?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Kin-por (Member Question No. 10)

Reply:

- a) The average usage rate of tennis courts was 60% in both 2014 and 2015 and increased to 62% in 2016. The relatively low usage rate of tennis courts is mainly due to their lower usage rates during non-peak hours and the relatively large supply of tennis courts in the public and private sectors. To encourage greater use of tennis courts

especially during non-peak hours, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) will continue to allow concessionary use of tennis court by schools, subvented non-government organisations, citizens aged 60 or above and full time students during non-peak hours. Organisations for people with disabilities can also enjoy concessionary rates at all times. In addition, LCSD will upgrade the standard of its sports facilities and organise large-scale promotional activities such as Sport For All Day, as well as fun days, training courses and competitions to promote the use of its sports facilities including tennis courts.

- b) In planning leisure facilities, LCSD makes reference to the current provision of sports facilities, the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines, the policy objective of sports promotion, utilisation rates of existing facilities, demographic changes and the advice of District Councils. Since 2002, a total of 19 tennis courts have been converted to other uses including basketball courts and soccer pitches.
- c) LCSD, in consultation with relevant bureaux, is undertaking a comprehensive review of the fees and charges for recreation and sports facilities and services. The review will take into account factors including the policy objective of sports promotion, the utilisation rates of the facilities, comparable market prices, public affordability and cost recovery rates.
- d) LCSD mainly deploys existing manpower to organise and enhance recreation and sports programmes to celebrate the 20th Anniversary of the Establishment of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. As regards LCSD's plan to have a net increase of 31 posts under Programme 1 - Recreation and Sports, these posts are mainly for the management of a new sports centre in Tsuen Wan as well as public open spaces and landscaped areas in various districts; the enhancement of existing leisure venues and support services; and the replacement of some non-civil service contract positions which have long-term service needs.

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