

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**

**HAB239**

**(Question Serial No. 2121)**

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:

According to Programme (1), the work of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) involves developing and managing leisure facilities. Will the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. What are the manpower and expenditures involved in developing and managing the LCSD's leisure facilities this year? Given that the actual usage rates of sports centres and sports grounds in 2015 and 2016 are higher than the targets for both years, will the Government raise the targets for next year so that sufficient resources can be deployed to carry out the work? If so, what are the details? If not, what are the reasons?
2. As the usage rates of sports grounds in 2015 and 2016 are 99% and close to full capacity, will the Government provide more sports grounds next year to meet the public needs? If so, what are the details? How many new sports grounds will be provided and what are their respective locations? If not, what are the reasons?
3. Given that the quality of natural turf pitches has all along been criticised and carcinogens have been found in artificial turf pitches, has the Government implemented any improvement measures accordingly this year? If so, what are the details? What are the manpower and expenditures involved? As the problems persist, how will the Government follow up and remedy the problems next year? What will be the manpower and expenditures involved?

Asked by: Hon NG Wing-ka, Jimmy (Member Question No. 48)

Reply:

1. The revised estimate of Programme 1 - Recreation and Sports for 2016-17 is \$3,933.7 million, involving 4 354 staff tasked to develop and manage recreation and sports facilities and to organise a wide range of leisure activities in order to promote recreation and sports at all levels throughout the community. In general, development and management of recreation and sports facilities, and organisation of leisure activities are managed by the same team of staff in districts. The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) does not have separate breakdown figures on

the manpower and expenditures involved for developing and managing recreation and sports facilities.

LCSD sets the target usage rates of respective sports facilities to drive performance by making reference to the utilisation rates of existing facilities, the provision of sports facilities, the policy objective of sports promotion as well as the relevant changes and trend. There may be fluctuation in usage rates of sports facilities from year to year. The Department will review the targets for sports facilities annually after taking into consideration relevant factors.

2. We are currently planning 1 new sports ground in Tuen Mun district, and will consult Legislative Council Panel on Home Affairs and seek funding approval of the Finance Committee in 2017-18 on its pre-construction works.
3. LCSD has been implementing the following measures to enhance the upkeep and quality of its natural turf pitches -
  - (i) the establishment of the Sports Turf Management Section since May 2014 to provide professional advice and technical support for the management and maintenance of natural turf pitches;
  - (ii) the provision of skilled workers and equipment to facilitate the execution of turf maintenance works; and
  - (iii) the provision of more training courses, both local and overseas, for staff so as to equip them with the requisite skills and knowledge in turf management and maintenance.

Around \$10.20 million has been earmarked in 2017-18 for the implementation of the above improvement measures.

Since artificial turf pitches form part of the facilities in public leisure venues, LCSD does not have separate figures on the manpower and expenditure involved in managing, maintaining and improving 3G artificial turf pitches.

As regards the artificial turf systems currently in use in the LCSD's third-generation (3G) artificial turf pitches, they are in compliance with the requirements of Fédération Internationale de Football Association. LCSD staff keep regular inspections of the conditions of the pitches. Regular turf maintenance (including replenishment of infill materials) is carried out as appropriate. Besides, cleansing of debris and trailing rubber granules are carried out by venue staff on regular basis. If damage is found, the contractors from the Architectural Services Department or LCSD will arrange maintenance work or fill in the rubber granules as soon as possible. Both contractors are required to submit, in accordance with the contract requirements, relevant certificates of the materials used to demonstrate that the materials used are in compliance with safety requirements.

LCSD has formed a new committee to review the current standards, requirements and practices for the design, construction, installation, operation and maintenance of artificial turf pitches in venues managed by LCSD.

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