

HAB126

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 2126)

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. It is mentioned under this Programme that the Department will “improve the arrangements for the booking and allocation of sports facilities and enrolment to sports programmes through further enhancement to the computerised booking system and administrative measures”. In this connection, please inform this Committee of the details of the work (including the work already implemented and to be implemented), implementation timetable, as well as the expenditure and manpower involved.
2. How many cases involving touting activities related to leisure facilities and venues were handled by the Department in the past 3 years and what were the follow-up actions? Is it expected that touting activities can be effectively curbed with the launch of the new booking system?
3. 2 new measures have been implemented since June 2018 to further combat touting activities, i.e. true identity registration with the Leisure Link System and Turf Soccer Pitches Balloting Booking Scheme. Please provide brief information on the implementation of these measures and their effectiveness.
4. Earlier on, the police smashed a syndicate suspected of fraudulent use of identity card particulars and using forged identity cards for application for Leisure Link Patron accounts of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department and booking facilities for profiteering purpose, revealing loopholes in the Leisure Link System. What improvement measures does the Department have in response to the aforesaid incident? What administrative measures are there to combat touting activities before completion of revamping of the new computer booking system?

Asked by: Hon LAU Kwok-fan (LegCo internal reference no.: 3)

Reply:

1. The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) is developing a new intelligent sports and recreation services booking and information system (new system) to provide efficient, convenient and user-friendly booking service which can encourage

members of the public to participate in sports regularly. The project will comprise 2 phases which are planned to be launched by 2021-22 and 2023-24 respectively. It is expected that the contract will be awarded in the second half of 2019. The implementation of the new system requires a non-recurrent expenditure of about \$500 million and non-recurrent manpower of about 1 230 man-months.

2. Over the years, LCSD has introduced a series of administrative measures and system enhancements to improve the booking and allocation of sports facilities under the management of LCSD. Measures implemented include the shortening of the advance booking period for individual hirers; re-registration of Leisure Link Patrons using their Hong Kong Identity Cards (HKID Cards) to prevent hirers from using multiple identity proofs to make booking; cancellation of the “standby” arrangement for turf soccer pitches; tightening the peak period booking quota for individual users; tightening the penalty system for organisations; introducing a penalty system for hirers. LCSD also implemented various new measures in 2018 to combat touting activities, such as posting the information of cancelled sessions on LCSD website before releasing the available sessions for re-booking on the next day; cessation of the telephone booking system; cessation of booking on behalf of another person using a copy of other’s identity document at Leisure Link booking counters and implementing the “Turf Soccer Pitches Balloting Pilot Scheme”. Apart from the above measures, the identity documents of the hirers have been verified strictly by the venue staff. LCSD is closely monitoring the situation and actively exploring more anti-touting measures. LCSD has no confirmed touting cases in the past 3 years. With wider use of information and communication technology, the new system can implement more anti-touting measures such as balloting arrangements for facilities and programmes in great demand.
3. On 20 June 2018, 2 new measures were launched to further combat touting activities. Members of the public will no longer be allowed to book the department’s fee-charging leisure and sports facilities on behalf of another person using a copy of other’s identity document at Leisure Link booking counters in leisure venues or District Leisure Services Offices. The new measure is effective to prevent “queuing gangs” from abusing the existing arrangement. Hirers are required to produce their original identity documents when making a booking at any booking counter. Turf Soccer Pitches Balloting Pilot Scheme is also launched in response to strong public demand for turf soccer pitches. With a view to providing an open and fair booking mechanism, registered Leisure Link patrons can submit their balloting applications for turf soccer pitches (except multi-purpose turf pitches) through the Leisure Link e-Service System at their own time and their own place, rendering it unnecessary for patrons to queue up at early hours for booking. Sessions will be allocated by computer balloting while the remaining sessions will be available for booking after the deadline on a first-come, first-served basis. More measures are being explored and planned to be launched to combat touting activities.
4. Recently, LCSD suspected that some hirers used forged HKID Cards to register as Leisure Link Patron in order to boost the chance of booking soccer pitches. The case was reported to the Police for investigation and enforcement. In order to prevent the recurrence of similar incident, LCSD took immediate action to review the existing application procedures for registration of Leisure Link Patron, step up check-in arrangement at the sports venues and enhance the awareness of venue staff on the

identification of forged identity cards when verifying identification documents. LCSD will continue to co-operate with the Police for investigation and take appropriate action if any irregularity is spotted.

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