

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

HAB172

Question Serial No.

2337

Head: 95 – Leisure and Cultural Services
Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Recreation and Sports

Controlling Officer: Director of Leisure and Cultural Services

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Home Affairs

Question:

Given the increase in the expenditure incurred by the Department on “recreation and sports” in recent years, please provide the following information:

- a. As the average usage rates of natural turf pitches have reached the ceiling in recent years, has the Department earmarked any expenditure for providing more natural turf pitches? If so, what will be their locations and the estimated expenditure; if not, what are the reasons?
- b. What is the average expenditure on the maintenance of natural turf pitches every year?
- c. Are local football teams or the Hong Kong football representative teams given priority use of the natural turf pitches? If so, how many hours in total are allocated for priority use per week? If not, does the Department have any plan to allow local football teams or the Hong Kong football representative teams to make priority booking of the natural turf pitches in the future? What will be the estimated expenditure involved?
- d. How many inspections were carried out by the Department on the identity of natural turf pitch users last year? What is the establishment for the staff responsible for such inspections? Will additional manpower be provided in this respect in 2013-14?

Asked by: Hon. FAN Kwok-wai, Gary

Reply:

- a. The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) currently provides 49 natural turf soccer pitches and 30 artificial turf soccer pitches. Given the strong demand for soccer pitches and the fact that artificial turf pitches offer many more sessions than natural turf pitches for public use (a natural turf pitch can provide at most 60 hiring sessions a month due to the need for turf maintenance whereas an artificial turf pitch can provide 270 sessions a month), LCSD plans to provide more artificial turf soccer pitches to meet public demand. These include converting 14 existing natural and first/second generation artificial turf pitches into third generation turf pitches in the coming four years, as well as developing a new 11-a-side artificial turf soccer pitch in Tin Shui Wai and one 7-a-side artificial turf soccer pitch in the Phase 2 redevelopment of Kwun Tong Swimming Pool Complex and Kwun Tong Recreation Ground. Currently, there is no natural turf pitch under construction.
- b. As most of the natural turf pitches form part of the overall facilities provided in the public leisure venues such as parks and sports grounds, LCSD does not have separate figures on the maintenance cost of natural turf pitches.

- c. LCSD has arranged a turf pitch for use by the Hong Kong Football Association (HKFA) as the National Squad Training Centre (NSTC) for training of their representative teams and top priority will be given to the bookings of the NSTC for such training activities. To help develop local professional teams, LCSD has also provided HKFA with home venues for its ten First Division Football teams to organise home-and-away football leagues, and dedicated training venues for their regular training. Priority will be given to bookings from HKFA for the use of home and training venues. A list of training venues provided for the First Division teams in the 2012-13 football season is at the Annex.

To facilitate the training of local football teams, LCSD provides priority advance booking for teams from three to 12 months. They can book up to half of the total available sessions in a month for natural turf pitches and one-third of the available sessions during peak hours of the month for artificial turf pitches. No additional expenditure is involved for such booking arrangement.

- d. Venue staff are required to enforce strictly the checking of all hirers' identity to ensure that the hirer is one of the users of the facilities. The verification procedure is carried out by the venue staff as part of their overall venue management duties, and hence no additional expenditure is incurred in carrying out identity checking.

Name in block letters: Mrs. BETTY FUNG

Post Title: Director of Leisure and Cultural Services

Date: 28.3.2013

Annex to Reply Serial No. HAB172

Venues Allocated to the First Division Football Teams for Training

Football Clubs	Training Venue
South China Athletic Association	Po Kong Village Road Park Pitch No. 1 (Artificial turf pitch)
Kitchee Sports Club	Shek Kei Mei Park (Artificial turf pitch)
Citizen Athletic Association	Happy Valley Recreation Ground Pitch No. 6 (Artificial turf pitch)
Tin Shui Wai Pegasus Football Club	Tsing Yi Northeast Park (Artificial turf pitch)
Tai Po Football Club	Kwong Fuk Park (Artificial turf pitch)
Sun Hei Sports Club	Ho Man Tin Service Reservoir Playground (Natural turf pitch)
Yokohama FC	Po Kong Village Road Park Pitch No. 2 (Artificial turf pitch)
Hong Kong Rangers Club	Shek Kei Mei Park (Artificial turf pitch)
Tuen Mun Sports Association	Wu Shan Recreation Ground (Artificial turf pitch)
Southern District Football Association	Wong Chuk Hang Recreation Ground (Artificial turf pitch)