

MAJOR SPORTS EVENTS COMMITTEE

Proposed Measures to Further Project the Image of the “M” Mark System

PURPOSE

This paper invites Members to give in-principle support to the implementation of the proposed measures to further project the image of the “M” Mark System and Support Packages (the “M” Mark System).

BACKGROUND

2. In order to help enhance Hong Kong’s image as Asia’s sports events capital and to facilitate the “national” sports associations (NSAs) in Hong Kong to develop sustainable major sports events through greater participation and support from the private sectors as well as the community at large, the Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) has launched the “M” Mark System since November 2004.

3. At the first meeting of the Sports Commission (SC) on 1 February 2005, the SC endorsed the Major Sports Events Committee (MSEC)’s recommendation of setting aside a seed fund of \$30 million from the Arts and Sport Development Fund to provide financial support for the recognised “M” Mark events whenever appropriate. At the same meeting, the SC had also suggested that the television media should be better used to publicise sports events. The possible options were (a) inviting a commercial television company to cover and broadcast sports events; and/or develop documentary programmes on sports at its own cost, or (b) producing programmes using public funds and then for broadcast through available channel(s).

4. To follow up the discussion of the SC, the MSEC, in respect of the publicity of major sports events, has:

- (a) created respective webpages for “M” Mark events recognised under the “M” Mark System on the websites of the HAB and the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD);

- (b) held award presentation ceremonies in 2006 and 2008 to recognise the relevant NSAs and their sponsoring partners for their contribution to the successful hosting of “M” Mark events; and
- (c) commissioned the Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) to produce sports-themed TV series to promote sports culture in our community and to cover the “M” Mark events.

Though these measures have to some extent helped publicise the “M” Mark events, they are piecemeal in nature and there is clearly room for additional publicity.

PROPOSAL

5. So far, the efforts of MSEC have been focused on invitation of applications for award of “M” Mark event status either with or without funding support, and enlistment of core sponsors as prospective members to provide support for “M” Mark events. As three years have lapsed since the launching of the “M” Mark System, the “M” Mark System has gained considerable attention in the community. It is time for us to consolidate the achievements and to take further actions to project the image of the “M” Mark System as this will enhance the general public in Hong Kong and overseas visitors’ awareness and support of and interests in “M” Mark events, which should in turn help attract more major sports events, spectators, and economic benefits to Hong Kong.

6. To further project the image of the “M” Mark System is a long-term branding exercise. For that, we need a strategy, with prioritised resources and focused efforts. In this connection, it is proposed to start with branding the “M” Mark System in Hong Kong, which may include the following proposed measures:

- (a) the MSEC Secretariat to invite the RTHK to produce the 3rd TV series around the theme of Olympic sports with a crossover with those sports in ancient China with an objective to arouse public interest in sports in leading up to the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games;
- (b) the MSEC to conduct briefings/seminars to NSAs to share experience in staging major sports events with an aim to encourage them to stage such events and to advise the (potential) organisers how to expand the scale of their events;
- (c) the MSEC Secretariat to publish a “M” Mark events annual calendar

for 2009 for public distribution, through collaboration with relevant sports organisation(s);

- (d) the MSEC Secretariat to coordinate the updating of the “M” Mark events annual calendar on the website of the “M” Mark System and hyperlink to the websites of the LCSD and the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB); and
- (e) the LCSD to assist in holding roving exhibitions in schools and public sports venues to introduce the “M” Mark System and the “M” Mark events held so far.

7. The measures suggested in paragraph 6 above are some initial ideas only. To attain the desired effect, it is proposed for the Advisory Panel (AP) of MSEC to plan and oversee the implementation of the measures for further projecting the “M” Mark System; and to co-opt representatives from relevant organisations such as the Hong Kong Tourism Commission, HKTB and LCSD into the AP in order to leverage on their experience and expertise in staging publicity campaigns.

WAY FORWARD

8. Given that the “M” Mark System has been implemented for over three years, in order to sustain the momentum of publicity gained so far, it is suggested to start the branding of the “M” Mark System as soon as possible and within 2008. An amount of \$2 million has been set aside for implementation of the proposed measures set out in paragraph 6 above. Subject to Members’ views, the MSEC Secretariat will coordinate with the AP to take forward the various measures in due course.

ADVICE SOUGHT

9. Members are invited to give in-principle support to the proposed measures to further project the image of the “M” Mark System, and to allow the AP to plan and oversee of the implementation of the proposed measures.

Major Sports Events Committee Secretariat
March 2008