

MAJOR SPORTS EVENTS COMMITTEE

“M” Mark Events Tickets for Non-Governmental Organisations in 2014-15

PURPOSE

This paper reports for Member’s reference on matters relating to the provision of “M” Mark events tickets to Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs).

BACKGROUND

2. One of the objectives of “M” Mark System is to instill a sustainable sporting culture, foster a sense of pride and social cohesion in our community. To enhance the community involvement and as a kind of social benefit bringing to the community, the business sector and “M” Mark event organisers have been encouraged to sponsor free tickets for people from less privileged backgrounds to attend major sports events since 2009.

TICKETS DISTRIBUTION

3. At present, all organisers of “M” Mark events reserve a certain number of tickets for distribution to the less privileged groups for attending the events free of charge. These tickets are either paid by the sponsors or issued as complimentary tickets. The Secretariat would assist the organisers, if so requested, in distributing such tickets on the advice of the Social Welfare Department (SWD). We would also consult SWD for advice of potential target groups for the organisers to arrange for distribution of tickets. As far as the “M” Mark System is concerned, there is no requirement on the number of such tickets (minimum or maximum) to be distributed.

4. The sponsors and event organisers have all along been very supportive to this initiative. Since the introduction of this initiative in 2009, around 35 400 “M” Mark event tickets have been distributed through

different channels to target participants. This figure does not include any other free tickets that may be distributed by the organisers and/or their sponsors.

5. Among the 13 “M” Mark events staged in 2014-15, some can be viewed free of charge at open space or on the road side (i.e. Hong Kong International Dragon Boat Races, Harbour Race, and Hong Kong Marathon) and some of the events are free admission for the preliminary rounds (such as Hong Kong Open Badminton Championships, World Masters Squash Championships – Hong Kong, Hong Kong Tennis Open, The Youth Championships (Tenpin Bowling) and Hong Kong Squash Open). Over 5 000 tickets of seven events (with an average of over 740 tickets per event), with a total face value of \$593,520 were distributed to 88 NGOs.

6. The Secretariat collects feedback from the beneficiary organisations to ascertain effectiveness of the initiative. The NGOs receiving free tickets from HAB are required to complete a post-event evaluation form after enjoying the “M” Mark events. Feedback received will be conveyed to the organisers for reference.

7. In general, the initiative is well received by both the NGOs and the participants. Most of the participants consider that the competitions are spectacular and enjoyable. Comments / suggestions received so far include –

- (a) to have tickets issued to the NGOs earlier;
- (b) to arrange transportation for the participants;
- (c) to send NGOs event posters to facilitate their internal promotion;
- (d) to provide information such as rules of the sports to participants so as to facilitate the appreciation of the competition;
- (e) to arrange seats closer to the competition area; and
- (f) to provide light refreshment if the programme period straddles meal hours.

8. Some of these ideas, such as providing transportation and refreshment, would involve additional manpower and financial resources which we consider should not place an undue burden on the organisers and their sponsors. Given the different nature and setup of the individual events, we consider it appropriate to leave it to the individual organisers to make their own arrangements for this group of audience which is part of

community engagement.

WAY FORWARD

9. As more and more organisers and their sponsors are taking on similar initiatives, we will start collecting feedback from the NGOs receiving free tickets through the organisers. We will also review the “M” Mark website with a view to including a designated section to promote this initiative and allowing any NGOs to approach us for an opportunity to attend “M” Mark events. We are also considering inclusion of basic information and interesting facts about “M” Mark sports in the website. We trust that these measures will further promote the “M” Mark brand, the “M” Mark events as well as the sport concerned at the community level.

10. The Secretariat will continue to work with and encourage the “M” Mark event organisers as well as business sectors, in particular those commercial companies under the Core Sponsor Group, to sponsor more free tickets for people with less privileged background to attend major sports events so as to generate more community support for “M” Mark events. Separately, we are also considering measures to promote sport at community level through NGOs riding on “M” Mark events, such as arranging know-the-sports activities for our target participants.

ADVICE SOUGHT

11. Members are invited to note the progress report above.

**Major Sports Events Committee Secretariat
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