

## **MAJOR SPORTS EVENTS COMMITTEE**

### **Progress of Work and the Way Forward for the Major Sports Events Committee**

#### **PURPOSE**

This paper reports on the work progress of the Major Sports Events Committee (MSEC) since its set up in November 2004 to December 2006 and sets out the proposed way forward for Members' comments.

#### **BACKGROUND**

2. To formulate a strategic blueprint for the development of sports in Hong Kong, a review on sports policy was conducted in 2001-02, from which the following three objectives of sports development in Hong Kong were recommended and subsequently adopted: -

- (a) to develop a strong sporting culture in the community;
- (b) to achieve greater excellence by our elite athletes; and
- (c) to raise our international profile on sport with a view to gaining wider recognition and creating new opportunities for economic growth.

3. Following the conduct of the review, progress has been made to take forward the various recommendations by Sports Commission (SC) and its three committees, including the MSEC.

4. SC advises the government on the formulation of a policy for sports development in Hong Kong. The MSEC, one of the three committees under the SC, advises the government on the hosting policy and resource allocation for major sports events in Hong Kong.

5. At the first meeting of the SC on 1 February 2005, the SC endorsed the MSEC's recommendation to set aside a seed fund of HK\$30 million from the Arts and Sport Development Fund (ASDF) to provide financial support for the recognised "M" Mark events. The SC also endorsed the action plan of MSEC which is to generate local interest in sport, enhance social cohesion and inspire more widespread community participation.

## **PROGRESS UPDATE**

6. Under the advice of SC, MSEC has held 11 meetings to deliberate issues under its purview. The progress made so far is summarised below: -

- (a) Since the launching of the "M" Mark System and support packages for major sports events on 12 November 2004, up to 15 March 2007, the MSEC had received 34 "M" Mark applications. 13 applications had been awarded the "M" Mark status, in which eight of them were awarded the "M" Mark status without funding support while five of them were awarded the "M" Mark status with funding support. 13 applications were not recommended by the MSEC as they failed in meeting the vetting criteria of the "M" Mark System, such as popularity, organisational ability and spectator appeal, etc. Three applications were withdrawn and five applications are under processing. A summary of the applications and the latest financial position are at *Annex I* and *Annex II* respectively.
- (b) The MSEC has commissioned Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) to produce an eight-episode sports-themed TV series as the first of the set of three, at a cost of HK\$760,000 (HK\$95,000 per episode) to promote sporting culture in our community. To promote the first TV series, a launching ceremony was held on 22 December 2006 at the Hong Kong Park Olympic Square. The series was broadcasted from 26 December 2006 to 13 February 2007 at 7 p.m. on Jade Channel of TVB. It had been viewed widely by the public, particularly the sports sector. According to the current plan, the English version of the TV series will be broadcasted from 19 July 2007 to 6 September 2007 at 7 p.m. on Pearl Channel of TVB. DVDs will also be produced in original Chinese voices with English and Chinese subtitles for wider publicity by June 2007. The DVDs will be distributed to Leisure and Cultural Services Department's (LCSD) venues and schools for broadcasting, and sent

to Sports Federation & Olympic Committee of Hong Kong, China (SF&OC), non-government organisations and Home Affairs Department for further promotion.

- (c) A ceremony was held on 21 February 2006 to present awards to the national sports associations (NSAs) and corporate sponsors of existing “M” Mark events in recognition of their contribution to and support for sports development in Hong Kong. This ceremony also marked the launching of the Core Sponsor Group (CSG). Over these two years and up to the end of February 2007, 46 corporations have joined the CSG. 12 members of the CSG had sponsored the approved “M” Mark events. More effort will be made to increase the number of successful matching between members of the CSG and approved “M” Mark events.
- (d) The MSEC had commissioned the Hong Kong Polytechnic University (HKPU) to conduct a study on the economic benefits of major sports events in October 2005. The HKPU completed its study on three major sports events namely Cathay Pacific Credit Suisse Privilege World Squash Open 2005, UBS Hong Kong Open Championship 2005 and Cathay Pacific/Credit Suisse Hong Kong Sevens 2006 in September 2006. The report of the study was endorsed at the 11th MSEC Meeting on 8 November 2006 via MSEC Paper 6/2006. The findings of the study confirmed that the studied major sports events did bring tangible economic benefits to Hong Kong.
- (e) The MSEC endorsed the Proposal on the Provision of Subvention on Venue Charges to “M” Mark Events using LCSD venues submitted by the LCSD at the 10<sup>th</sup> MSEC Meeting held on 5 July 2006. This arrangement has been well received by the NSAs since it can help relief the financial burden of the organisers of “M” Mark events.
- (f) The “M” Mark System has been implemented for two years since November 2004. With a view to improving the System for more optimal use of public money, the MSEC has started to conduct a review on the System by stages. Views/comments received from MSEC Members, SF&OC and NSAs will be consolidated and taken into consideration in the review.

- (g) Opportunity is taken to enhance the subvention arrangement for LCSD's Major Local International Events (MLIE) such as World/Asian Championships with funding source from ASDF. Since the fund for "M" Mark events is also from ASDF, it is proposed that MLIE can be awarded "M" Mark status without funding support. As LCSD has an established mechanism to vet the applications for funding in respect of MLIE, it is considered not necessary for MSEC to consider awarding the "M" Mark status without funding support to each individual MLIE. It is therefore proposed, for Members' endorsement, that "M" Mark status without funding support be granted to MLIE automatically upon their successful application for funding from ASDF, and that LCSD should provide a quarterly report on MLIE to MSEC for reference. In line with the existing practice, the MSEC Secretariat will provide the necessary update to SC through the regular progress report.

Should the above proposal be endorsed by MSEC, before implementation, LCSD will inform the NSAs concerned that once their funding applications are accepted, the "M" Mark status without funding support from MSEC will be granted as well.

## **WAY FORWARD**

7. Efforts would continue to be made to follow up in implementing the hosting of more sustainable major sports events, to promote sports culture in the community and to expand the role and involvement of the CSG. In order to further develop sports culture and help nurture more sustainable major sports events in Hong Kong, the following issues are proposed to be the focus items for deliberations and/or decisions of MSEC in this new term: -

- (a) to continue the review on the "M" Mark System, with a view to improving the "M" Mark System and facilitating NSAs and sports organisers on staging more "M" Mark events in Hong Kong. The Secretariat will seek Members' views in due course and aim to implement the refined "M" Mark System with the issue of the revised Application Guidelines for "M" Mark event in the fourth quarter of 2007.

- (b) in collaboration with reputable organisations such as SF&OC, to explore new measures to enhance the role and involvement of the CSG, and to facilitate the matching between CSG members and approved “M” Mark events;
- (c) to evaluate the effectiveness of the first sports-themed TV series produced by RTHK to promote sporting culture in the community, and to consider the production of the second and third series in 2008 and 2009 respectively;
- (d) to consider to publicise the “M” Mark events through TV (e.g. on Sports Sunday Programme on TVB Jade Channel);
- (e) to form the Advisory Panel and Vetting Panel for this new term to help review the “M” Mark System, and to promote and implement the refined "M" Mark System; and
- (f) to take note of progress and to discuss the specific issues relating to the planning and development of the Multi-purpose Stadium Complex in Kai Tak.

## **ADVICE SOUGHT**

- 8. Members are invited: -
  - (a) to note the position and progress of work completed by MSEC as presented at paragraph 6; and
  - (b) to comment on the proposed focus items at paragraph 7.

Major Sports Events Committee Secretariat  
March 2007