

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. 2220)

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 (Vincent LIU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Home Affairs

Question:

1. It is stated in the Budget that \$318 million will be earmarked to implement a five-year plan for upgrading football pitches, substantially increasing the number of 5-a-side football pitches meeting international standards. What are the justifications for the Government's plan to substantially increase the number of 5-a-side football pitches?
2. Regarding the Government's plan to develop football, have the football sector, professional and amateur footballers been consulted beforehand? If not, will consultation be conducted before the implementation in future?

Asked by: Hon CHEUNG Kwok-kwan (LegCo internal reference no.: 26)

Reply:

1. Being recognised by the Fédération Internationale de Football Association as a form of football competition, futsal is suitable for promoting the sport of football at the community and school levels and is conducive to enhancing the overall level of football. While quite a number of countries and places are putting forth efforts to promote the development of futsal in recent years, the Futsal League competitions and inter-school futsal competitions have also been organised in Hong Kong with an ever-growing number of participants. To tie in with the international trend of development of football and support the long-term development of football in Hong Kong, the number of 5-a-side football pitches meeting international standards has to be substantially increased. Under the five-year plan for upgrading football pitches, some of the existing 5-a-side hard-surface football pitches not meeting the standards and 7-a-side hard-surface football pitches of smaller sizes will be converted into standard 5-a-side football pitches, while line-markings for 1 or 2 5-a-side football pitch(es) will be added on some 7-a-side hard-surface football pitches so that they can be used for futsal competitions.

2. The Government has all along been engaging the football sector and the relevant “national sports association” (NSA) on the development of football. The Leisure and Cultural Services Department is actively exploring, with the relevant works departments, the technical feasibility of carrying out improvement works, having regard to various factors including the actual conditions of football pitches, usage rates of existing football pitches, views from the NSAs and local community, etc. in determining the priority for the improvement works so as to provide more standard football pitches for members of the public for promoting the development of football in Hong Kong.

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