

COMMUNITY SPORTS COMMITTEE

Working Group on the Monitoring of Performance of Contractors at Sports Centres

INTRODUCTION

This paper invites Members to express their views on the establishment of a working group on the monitoring of performance of contractors at sports centres.

BACKGROUND

2. The Government has all along stuck to the policy objective of maintaining an efficient small government, with a view to reducing financial deficits, controlling the size of the civil service and creating more business and employment opportunities for the market. In formulating the management and operation mode of its recreational and sports facilities, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) has given major considerations to service quality and outcome, as well as the possible implications on existing staff.

3. To implement the policy of “Big Market, Small Government”, the LCSD has started to outsource the management of its sports centres to contractors since 2000, in addition to the outsourcing of the management of swimming pools inside holiday camps a number of years ago. Presently, 11 sports centres and 3 swimming pools inside holiday camps are managed by contractors. To ensure that the outsourced services are up to the required level, the LCSD has stipulated clearly in the contracts the requirements and standards of different services, and also conducted regular and surprise site inspections. This is to confirm that the contractors have fulfilled the contract requirements. On top of these measures, the LCSD has also set up a standing committee chaired by a Deputy Director to hold regular meetings with district representatives to strengthen communication, with the aim of formulating more effective management measures to further monitor and enhance the performance of contractors. According to the contractors’ service records and findings of customers’ opinion survey, the overall performance of contractors responsible for the

outsourced sports centres has met the contract requirements. The general public are also satisfied with the service level.

4. Taking into account the policies of “Big Market, Small Government” and the freezing of the civil service establishment, the LCSD has planned to outsource the management of Tai Kok Tsui Sports Centre and Swimming Pool, which are to be completed by the end of this year. The Hong Kong & Kowloon Life Guard’s Union led strikes on 1 August 2005 and 19 August 2005 respectively to express their objection to the outsourcing arrangement. The Union held that outsourcing of lifeguard services would lower the level of life-saving services and lead to staff redundancy. At the meeting of the Community Sports Committee (CSC) on 26 July 2005, the LCSD explained to Members that, as stipulated in the contracts, the lifeguards employed by the contractors needed to possess the required qualifications and hold valid pool lifeguard awards, and that the standard number of lifeguards would also be the same as that of other LCSD swimming pools. Outsourcing the management of swimming pools will therefore not lower the level of life-saving services. As Tai Kok Tsui Sports Centre is a new venue, outsourcing the management of the facility will neither affect the posts of existing staff nor lead to staff redundancy.

5. To enhance public participation in the monitoring of the outsourced services at recreational and sports facilities, the CSC has recommended the establishment of a working group to follow up the issues relating to the service level at sports centres outsourced by the LCSD.

PROPOSED TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE WORKING GROUP

6. The Working Group, which is under the CSC, will advise the CSC on the monitoring of service level at sports centres outsourced by the LCSD. The proposed terms of reference of the Working Group on the Monitoring of Performance of Contractors at Sports Centres are now set out at the Annex. We recommend that the Working Group can examine the LCSD’s own monitoring mechanism, listen to the LCSD’s reports on its monitoring work, pay site visits to the outsourced facilities, examine the findings of independent market researches conducted on the service level at outsourced facilities, and study the views of the public and various social sectors.

ADVICE SOUGHT

7. Members are invited to give views on the terms of reference and the composition of the Working Group on the Monitoring of Performance of Contractors at Sports Centres.

Leisure and Cultural Services Department
September 2005

**Working Group on the Monitoring of
Performance of Contractors at Sports Centres**

Proposed Terms of Reference

The terms of reference of the Working Group on the Monitoring of Performance of Contractors at Sports Centres are to advise the Community Sports Committee on:

- (i) the examination of the LCSD's current monitoring mechanism for the outsourced management of sports centres;
- (ii) the monitoring of the service level at outsourced sports centres;
- (iii) the evaluation of the outcome of the outsourcing arrangement; and
- (iv) to put forward to the Administration their views on the related improvement measures through the Community Sports Committee.