

**For discussion
on 3 June 2008**

Legislative Council Panel on Security

Security Arrangements for the 2008 Olympic Equestrian Events

PURPOSE

This paper informs Members of the security arrangements for the 2008 Olympic Equestrian Events and Paralympic Equestrian Events to be held in Hong Kong from 9 to 23 August 2008 and from 7 to 12 September 2008 respectively.

BACKGROUND

2. On 8 July 2005, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) accepted the proposal of the Beijing Organizing Committee for the Games of XXIX Olympiad (BOCOG) to relocate the 2008 Olympic and Paralympic Equestrian Events (Equestrian Events) to Hong Kong. Since then, in consultation with BOCOG and IOC, the Administration has been making preparation for the provision of necessary services (including security, quarantine, medical and health services, transport arrangement, customs and immigration, etc.) for staging the Equestrian Events in Hong Kong.

3. We have reported to the Legislative Council Panel on Home Affairs on 8 June 2007 on the progress on preparation for the Equestrian Events (see LC Paper No. CB(2)2041/06-07(01)). This paper provides an update on the security arrangements as requested by Members of the Panel on Security.

THE EVENTS – DATE AND VENUE

4. The Olympic Equestrian Events will take place from 9 to 23 August 2008 with the last two days reserved as contingency in case of inclement weather conditions. The Paralympic Equestrian Events have been scheduled from 7 to 12 September 2008 with the last day as the contingency day. There will altogether be 278 athletes and 278 horses participating in the Events. Apart from them, there will also be 1 500 to 2 000 Olympic Family Members, and a large number of workforce, horse owners, grooms, media, volunteers, sponsors and spectators.

5. The two competition venues are the Hong Kong Olympic Equestrian Venue (Sha Tin) (the Sha Tin Venue) and the Hong Kong Olympic Equestrian

Venue (Beas River) (the Beas River Venue). The Sha Tin Venue, adjacent to the Sha Tin Racecourse, is the core competition venue and is for dressage and jumping. Its maximum seating capacity will be around 18 000. The cross-country test will be held in the Beas River Venue in the North District, temporarily converted from the Beas River Country Club and part of the adjacent Hong Kong Golf Club. Its maximum capacity of spectators will also be around 18 000. There are also non-competition venues which include but are not limited to the accommodation venues.

GENERAL FRAMEWORK OF THE SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS

6. The Equestrian Events to be held shall comply with the Olympic Rules and Regulations taking into account the actual circumstances of Hong Kong. Given the high international profile of the Olympic Games, our aim in respect of security arrangements is to ensure that the Equestrian Events are held smoothly, in a safe and secure environment for all participants. In this regard, the responsibility for security inside the competition and non-competition venues mainly lies with the Equestrian Events (Hong Kong) of the Games of the XXIX Olympiad Company Limited (EqCo), while the Hong Kong Police Force (HKPF) will assume overall responsibility for the security of the Equestrian Events, including monitoring the security arrangements by the EqCo and exercising direct command and supervision of the security staff employed by the EqCo. Throughout the planning process, close liaison with BOCOG is maintained to ensure that the security arrangements being put in place for the Equestrian Events are in line with those required for an Olympic Event and, at the same time, are implemented under the laws of Hong Kong. Close partnership with other non-Government stakeholders (e.g. Hong Kong Jockey Club) and international partners (e.g. IOC and the Fédération Equestre Internationale) is also maintained.

7. HKPF maintains close communications with the overseas law enforcement agencies in the exchange of intelligence on possible threats related to the Events. According to the latest threat assessment, both the terrorist threat level and the public order threat level are rated as “Moderate”. HKPF will keep the security situation under constant review, taking into account latest development in Hong Kong and internationally, with suitable adjustment to operational readiness and coverage of the security arrangements where necessary.

VENUE SECURITY AND ORDER

8. To ensure security of accommodation and competition venues for athletes, security arrangements will be implemented at the Sha Tin Venue, the

Beas River Venue and non-competition venues. These arrangements will include (as appropriate) access control, venue zoning and guarding systems, security zone patrols, VIP protection and the provision of fencing, CCTVs and lighting. All persons wishing to enter the venues are required to be accredited. All accredited persons will be issued with an Olympic Identity and Accreditation Card (accreditation card) by BOCOG. Spectators with valid tickets will only be allowed to enter front of house areas of competition venues on competition days or specified day(s) for course/horse inspection(s).

9. Moreover, in order to maintain the integrity and security of venues, all persons, whether in possession of an accreditation card or valid ticket, and their belongings will be required to undergo security screening before being admitted into a venue. For vehicles, checkpoints outside the venues and screening stations (at locations away from venues) will be established.

10. The EqCo will deploy security guards to maintain the general order at the competition and non-competition venues during the Equestrian Events and perform crowd management duties in accordance with the “House Rules”¹. HKPF will also deploy officers both in and around the venues, and in other ancillary locations, such as public transport interchanges, to perform crowd and traffic management duties, in conjunction with other stakeholders such as Civil Aid Service personnel and guards employed by the EqCo.

FACILITATING PUBLIC ORDER EVENTS

11. The Administration values highly the freedoms of expression and assembly of the general public, and HKPF endeavours to facilitate all lawful and peaceful public order events as far as possible. HKPF will seek to strike a balance between the freedoms of expression and assembly of the demonstrators, and the need to ensure that no danger or undue inconvenience is caused to other members of the public.

12. In line with the standing practice, HKPF will identify a number of possible sites at suitable locations as Designated Public Activity Areas to facilitate the conduct of peaceful demonstration activities. This is to enable any demonstrations to take place in a way that is safe for the demonstrators, causes the least inconvenience to the general public, and ensures the safe and uninterrupted conduct of the Equestrian Events.

¹ This is a set of rules prepared by the EqCo in consultation with relevant stakeholders to be agreed with the IOC and BOCOG to regulate the behavior of all persons present at the relevant Equestrian Events venues. In addition to the rules that are common in most sporting venues, the House Rules forbid behavior that contravenes the Olympic Charter. The House Rules are enforceable by the security guards employed by the EqCo.

13. To ensure that all lawful demonstrations are conducted in a safe and orderly manner, organizations or bodies which intend to hold public meetings or processions during the Equestrian Events period are welcome to contact HKPF as soon as possible so that suitable arrangements can be worked out well in advance. HKPF will proactively attempt to establish and maintain dialogue with local and overseas public events organizers from an early stage, and provide such information to them as necessary to assist them in organizing their demonstration activities smoothly and lawfully during the Equestrian Events period.

CONTINGENCY PLANNING

14. Given the high international profile of the Equestrian Events, adequate contingency planning is essential to prepare for all possible situations that might adversely affect the events in Hong Kong. In this regard, the EqCo has, in consultation with relevant Bureaux/Departments, produced venue-specific contingency plans aimed at responding to and enabling recovery from contingency situations that could arise at the relevant Equestrian Events venues. By the same token, relevant Government departments have updated their respective contingency plans so that they could be well prepared for possible contingency situations that may arise during the events period. To enhance their preparedness, all parties are now in the process of testing their plans through a series of exercises, drills and rehearsals in the run-up to the Equestrian Events.

15. During the period of the Equestrian Events, the EqCo will set up its Command Centre to oversee all functional operations in relation to the Equestrian Events. Close contact will be maintained with relevant Bureaux/Departments and non-government agencies. At the same time, there will be multi-agency emergency monitoring and support by the Government centrally to monitor the overall security situation and to provide support to operational departments and agencies where necessary.

OTHER RELATED MEASURES

16. To facilitate the staging of the Equestrian Events and to balance the needs of different sectors of the community, it will be necessary to implement special measures, including security, traffic diversion and crowd management, during the Equestrian Events period. We fully understand that these security measures and other arrangements might cause some inconvenience to the public. In this regard, the North District Council and the Sha Tin District Council have been consulted and both have indicated general support of Hong Kong staging the Equestrian Events, and have given their views on how to minimize the

impact on the local community. Home Affairs Bureau, HKPF and the Transport Department will make suitable announcements of any special arrangements for the Equestrian Events in a timely manner so as to engender the understanding and co-operation of all affected parties.

WAY FORWARD

17. The Administration and the EqCo will continue with the preparation of the security arrangements to ensure that the Equestrian Events will be held smoothly, in a safe and secure environment for all participants.

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Games of the XXIX Olympiad Company Limited**

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