

Legislative Council Panel on Home Affairs

Implementation of Measures to Combat Gambling-related Problems during the World Cup

Purpose

This paper gives members an overview of measures implemented by the Administration to combat gambling-related problems during the World Cup.

The Ping Wo Fund

2. Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) established the Ping Wo Fund (the Fund) in September 2003 to finance preventive and remedial measures to address gambling-related problems. One of the main objectives of the Fund is to finance public education programmes to prevent or alleviate problems relating to gambling.

3. The use and application of the Fund are determined by the Secretary for Home Affairs (SHA). The Ping Wo Fund Advisory Committee (PWFAC) was set up in September 2003 to advise SHA on the management and use of the Fund.

4. The 2010 World Cup football tournament will take place between 11 June and 11 July 2010. The PWFAC has agreed on a series of enhanced publicity efforts for counteracting the heightened gambling atmosphere in the community during the World Cup. Relevant department such as the Police also provide support for our programmes. Details of the programmes are set out in the ensuing paragraphs.

“Do Not Gamble” Campaign

5. On the recommendation of the PWFAC, we have commissioned the Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) to organise a new series of public education campaign in 2009-10 known as “Do Not Gamble” Campaign (the Campaign). The Campaign included a mascot design competition, inter-school football matches, launching of the “Do Not Gamble” website ([www. http://www.donotgamble.tv/](http://www.donotgamble.tv/)), sharing

sessions by problem gamblers and a TV Announcement of Public Interest (API) design competition. The target participants of the activities are youngsters. RTHK has been promoting the activities to over 300 schools since June 2009. The mascot design competition has attracted over 1 300 entries while the inter-school football matches have attracted around 90 school teams involving more than 650 student and teacher players. For the “Do Not Gamble” website which was launched in September 2009, its daily hit rate is around 7 000 to 10 000 times.

6. To further enhance public awareness of the problems of gambling in the wake of the World Cup, additional publicity efforts have been mounted as described below -

New API

7. We have commissioned RTHK to produce a new API featuring football playing under the same theme “Do Not Gamble” as part of the Campaign. The purpose is to educate the general public on the negative consequences of excessive gambling. A more lively approach has been adopted to appeal to young people. The API is scheduled to be broadcast from around early June to mid July 2010.

8. To maximize the impact of the new API, we have distributed the API to counselling and treatment centres for problem gamblers. We have also arranged to broadcast it on trains and buses from June to July 2010.

“Do Not Gamble” Fun Fair

9. A one-day Fun Fair based on the theme “Do Not Gamble” will be held on 12 June 2010 at the Southorn Playground as part of the Campaign. Game booths surrounding the theme will be set up by around 20 organizations, including schools, non-governmental organisations as well as the four counselling and treatment centres funded by the Fund. The final match of the inter-school football matches mentioned in para 5 above, as well as friendly football matches amongst celebrities, the Hong Kong Police Force and prominent local football

players, will be held on the same day. We hope to convey the message of “Do Not Gamble” amidst a festive atmosphere for the World Cup created by the game booths and football matches.

New TV Programmes

10. Free TV is an effective means to disseminate our messages to the general public. We have produced a series of three-minute drama episodes to enhance public awareness of the negative consequences of excessive gambling and to introduce ways to prevent and alleviate gambling-related problems. We will also feature real cases of problem gamblers and convey the message of “Do Not Gamble” through sharing of experience with celebrities in the one-minute episodes. The TV episodes are aired from late May to early June 2010 and from late June to early July 2010.

Publicity Efforts the Internet

11. Internet is one of the most popular communication platforms among youngsters. Pop-up advertisement banners are placed on popular websites targeted at the youth and football enthusiasts between late May and mid July 2010. The following four slogans based on the theme “Do Not Gamble”, as well as the Gambling Counselling Hotline are featured in the advertisement banners –

- (a) 沈迷賭博 = 賭錢落海
- (b) 睇波不賭波 樂趣一樣多
- (c) 賭到眾叛親離 你輸唔起
- (d) 賭海無崖 回頭是岸

Efforts on Combating Illegal Betting

Law enforcement

12. On combating illegal gambling activities, the Police will step up law enforcement actions against illegal football betting during the World Cup. In order to prevent and address the possible increase in

illegal football gambling activities, including those involving young people, a special cadre has been set up with the Organised Crime and Triad Bureau co-ordinating the work of the headquarters, regional and district formations in this respect.

Publicity and education

13. In addition, the Police will make publicity and education efforts in preventing illegal football gambling among young people.

14. The Police have produced a series of publicity materials, including posters and banners which will be displayed at suitable locations in all Police Regions to disseminate anti-illegal gambling messages. These messages include educating the public on the penalty of participating in illegal football gambling activities and the hotline to report these activities. Some materials will be strategically displayed at places frequented by young people, including fast food shops, and internet cafes.

15. The Police have also created a sub-webpage under the Police's website, so as to publicise anti-illegal gambling messages. To increase its coverage, the Police will provide the hyperlink of this webpage, through the Police School Liaison Officers, to schools in all districts, so that schools can attach the hyperlink to their own websites to strengthen publicity to young people. Moreover, same as before, the Police School Liaison Officers will spread anti-illegal gambling messages to students through various means.

Home Affairs Bureau

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