

# 立法會

## *Legislative Council*

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### **Panel on Home Affairs**

#### **Background brief prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat for the meeting on 13 May 2011**

### **Elite Athletes Development Fund**

#### **Purpose**

This paper provides background information on the Elite Athletes Development Fund ("EADF"), and highlights the concerns of members of the Panel on Home Affairs ("the Panel") about the development of elite athletes.

#### **Background**

2. To achieve greater excellence in sport by providing more support for elite athletes has been one of the Government's three strategic directions<sup>1</sup> for the long-term sports development in Hong Kong following the completion of the Sports Policy Review by the Home Affairs Bureau in May 2002.

#### Hong Kong Sport Institute

3. Under the policy direction of the Secretary for Home Affairs, the Hong Kong Sports Institute ("HKSI") is the key delivery agent for providing training and other support to elite athletes. The Home Affairs Bureau has provided an annual recurrent funding of about \$160 million to

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<sup>1</sup> The other two strategic directions are developing a strong sporting culture in the community and raising Hong Kong's profile as a centre for international sports events.

HKSI for training and supporting elite athletes and promoting the development of elite sport. As at end-December 2010, HKSI was supporting 14 elite sports and about 1 000 elite athletes and athletes with potential, including disabled ones.

4. To enhance HKSI's position as a base for elite sports training and development, a funding of \$1.8 billion has been approved for HKSI's redevelopment project scheduled for completion by the end of 2013.

#### Proposed establishment of EADF

5. At its meeting on 17 December 2010, when discussing the potential bid to host the 2023 Asian Games, the Panel passed a motion requesting the Government to, among others, set up a sports fund with a sum equal to the \$6 billion direct cost to be earmarked for staging the Games, regardless of whether the bid for hosting the Games would be mounted or successful for the purpose of promoting the policy of sports for all and enhancing the training and retirement arrangements for local elite athletes.

6. At its meeting on 5 January 2011, Legislative Council ("LegCo") also passed a motion on "Promoting long-term sports development" urging the Government to implement a number of measures for the development of elite athletes, including allocating \$6 billion for establishing a sports fund, with a view to, among others, enhancing training for local athletes.

7. Following the passage of the motions by the Panel and LegCo, the Financial Secretary ("FS") proposed in his 2011-2012 Budget the establishment of a \$7 billion EADF to tie in with the upgrading of HKSI's facilities after its redevelopment. The investment returns of EADF would replace the current mode of providing funding to HKSI. FS expected that EADF would help make HKSI a world-class training centre, provide more comprehensive support to elite athletes, and strengthen the Government's efforts to identify and train young athletes with potential.

#### **Members' concerns**

8. The concerns of members of the Panel about the development of elite athletes are highlighted in the ensuing paragraphs.

#### Financial support

9. While HKSI was supporting 14 elite sports and a top-level full-time elite athlete could receive monthly financial assistance of around \$30,000, a concern was raised about the average amount of such assistance received by a full-time elite athlete who did not win a medal at major sports events, and whether athletes in non-elite sports could receive any support.

10. The Administration responded that individual athletes in non-elite sports who had potential or achieved good results could receive support from HKSI and their National Sports Associations. HKSI advised that as at January 2011, about 50 such athletes were receiving financial support under the Individual Athlete Support Scheme and could have full access to HKSI's facilities. Another 50 athletes with disabilities could also have such access. The monthly financial assistance to elite athletes was performance-based. A full-time athlete below the top level could receive assistance of about \$25,000 per month.

11. Some members expressed concerns about the substantial disparity in the amount of monthly subsidy provided to able-bodied elite athletes and disabled elite athletes, and asked whether the cash bonus for disabled ones who won medals at major sports games could be increased. The Administration explained that the disparity was largely attributed to the different historical backgrounds under which the respective financial assistance schemes were drawn up. It had reviewed and adjusted the financial assistance to such athletes in 2009 and would do so again when appropriate.

#### Education and career development support

12. There was a view that the uncertain prospect for elite athletes after retirement had deterred parents from encouraging their children to pursue a sports career. It was suggested that more opportunities should be provided to elite athletes to pursue further education in local tertiary institutions. The Administration advised that the enrolment requirements for individual programmes offered by different tertiary institutions might vary. The eight institutions funded by the University Grants Committee had accepted enrollment applications from athletes recommended by HKSI or the Sports Federation & Olympic Committee of Hong Kong, China ("SF&OC").

13. Members also urged the Administration to take the initiative to improve the career pathway for retired athletes, such as increasing the opportunities for them to be employed as Physical Education ("PE") teachers or trainers in schools. The Administration was called on to devise concessionary measures to encourage the business sector,

especially big enterprises, to employ retired athletes.

14. The Administration advised that it had allocated funding to SF&OC to establish the Hong Kong Athletes Career and Education Programme in collaboration with the business sector, with a view to improving the education and career prospects for serving and retired athletes. The Administration would consider whether the programme could be enhanced. In addition, some retired athletes who met professional qualifications had already been employed as PE teachers in schools.

#### Long-term sports policy

15. Some members considered that the Administration all along had only introduced sports measures but had not formulated a sports policy. They urged the Administration to devise a long-term and sustainable sports policy, such as providing more sports and recreational facilities to meet community needs, improving the sports facilities and promoting sports culture at schools, sponsoring more athletes to compete overseas and enhancing the career prospects for current and retired athletes, including disabled ones.

16. The Administration advised that it had devised a comprehensive policy on the long-term sports development at the community, school, sport association and elite levels, and would continue to invest considerable resources in the construction and upgrading of sports facilities. It would actively implement the plans to build sports venues and facilities stated in the public consultation document on the bid to host the 2023 Asian Games.

#### **Relevant papers**

17. A list of the relevant papers with their hyperlinks at the LegCo's website is in the **Appendix**.

**Relevant papers on  
Elite Athletes Development Fund**

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Date of meeting</b>	<b>Paper</b>
Panel on Home Affairs	23.5.2002 (Item IV)	<a href="#">Agenda</a> <a href="#">Minutes</a>
Panel on Home Affairs	9.12.2005 (Item IV)	<a href="#">Agenda</a> <a href="#">Minutes</a> <a href="#">CB(2)809/05-06(01)</a>
Panel on Home Affairs	16.10.2006 (Item I)	<a href="#">Agenda</a> <a href="#">Minutes</a>
Panel on Home Affairs	13.4.2007 (Item V)	<a href="#">Agenda</a> <a href="#">Minutes</a>
Panel on Home Affairs	8.1.2010 (Item V)	<a href="#">Agenda</a> <a href="#">Minutes</a>
Panel on Home Affairs	20.10.2010 (Item I)	<a href="#">Agenda</a> <a href="#">Minutes</a>
Panel on Home Affairs	10.12.2010 (Item VI)	<a href="#">Agenda</a> <a href="#">Minutes</a>
Panel on Home Affairs	14.1.2011 (Item V)	<a href="#">Agenda</a> <a href="#">Minutes</a>
Council Meeting	23.2.2011 (Item I)	<a href="#">Estimates of Expenditure 2011-2012</a>  <a href="#">Budget Speech</a>