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(Translation)

23 June 2014

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Ms Alice LEUNG
Clerk to the Panel on Home Affairs
Legislative Council Secretariat
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Ms LEUNG,

**Panel on Home Affairs of the Legislative Council
Follow up to Meeting on 8 November 2013**

At the meeting of the Panel on Home Affairs of the Legislative Council on 8 November 2013, Members discussed the management and maintenance of the turf pitch of the Hong Kong Stadium. During the discussion, the Hon WU Chi-wai requested the Administration to respond in writing to his question as to whether the recommendations put forward by the former Provisional Urban Council (PUC) on improving the facilities at the Stadium were followed up and implemented by the Administration.

As instructed by the former PUC, the former Urban Services Department (USD) arranged for re-turfing of the Stadium pitch immediately after taking over the management of the Stadium in May 1998. With the completion of the re-turfing the Stadium re-opened in September 1998.

After the re-opening of the Stadium, staff of the former USD took over the daily maintenance of the turf. In addition to monitoring the condition of the turf, the staff also sought advice from turf experts to devise maintenance procedures for different seasons and work out a more comprehensive maintenance programme. Staff also followed the recommendations on turf maintenance and management approved by the Board of Governors (BoG) of the Stadium in carrying out maintenance work, including mowing, fertilising, re-turfing and applying pesticides, according to weather conditions and event arrangements. In addition, the former USD conducted regular tests and turf analyses to review the turf condition.

With regard to the use of the venue, the former USD proposed to the BoG in October 1998 that a set of flexible guidelines for the maintenance and use of the pitch should be formulated to ensure that more events could be staged at the Stadium without adversely affecting the turf. The proposed guidelines, which the BoG agreed to, included the requirements that –

- two events for which the setting up of “terraplas” (a protective covering for the turf) was necessary should be held 7 to 14 days apart and the turf should not be covered with terraplas for more than 48 hours;
- two football or rugby matches should best be held 7 days apart; and
- if two football or rugby matches or similar events had to be held on the same day, a gap of 14 days should best be allowed before the staging of the next event.

Subsequently, the BoG asked the former USD to review the design and construction of the turf pitch, the weather and physical environment, and the professional knowledge and experience of the staff. In this connection, the former USD submitted a report to the BoG in September 1999, in which it recommended that, in addition to the continued implementation of the above maintenance measures and guidelines, three maintenance periods per year should be arranged for the turf pitch to achieve better results in the transition of warm-season and cool-season turf species and to allow sufficient time for large-scale maintenance work. The BoG approved the report.

Since taking the Stadium over from the former USD in 2000, LCSD has followed the maintenance measures and guidelines. As noted in the paper (No. CB(2) 203/ 13-14(05)) submitted to the Panel on Home Affairs of the Legislative Council, LCSD has also adopted further measures to enhance the management and maintenance of the pitch.

Yours sincerely,

(Miss Petty LAI)
for Secretary for Home Affairs

c.c.

Hon MA Fung-kwok, SBS, JP (Chairman)
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