

Legislative Council Panel on Home Affairs

Discussion on the Regulation of Motocross Courses

Purpose

This paper outlines in brief issues related to the regulation of motocross courses, for members' information.

Background

2. In December last year, a seven-year-old boy died in an accident that happened when he was practising at a motocross course in the New Territories. The incident has raised public concern regarding the safety of cross-country motorcycling activities and of motocross courses.

3. Cross-country motorcycling has a history of more than twenty years in Hong Kong. Initially, it was an activity involving a small number of people using open areas of the countryside. In recent years, more and more people have been attracted to this activity, particularly children and young people. There are now three private cross-country motorcycling clubs operating in Hong Kong (namely, the Hong Kong Trials and Motocross Club, the Hong Kong H.L.H. Trials & Motocross Club and the Super Scooter Motocross Club). Each of these is a registered business, providing a training ground and lessons for their members, making use of "private" land. In view of the fact that the activities are held on "private" land and confined to their members, Government does not have specific legislation or administrative measures to regulate the safety of the motocross courses.

International Regulation

4. Most sports in Hong Kong are managed and develop in compliance with the recognised codes of their respective international federations. The federations have rules and regulations governing areas such as venue design, safety measures, event organisation and rules of races and competitions. As members of the international federations, the various "national" sports associations (NSAs) in Hong Kong are accountable and responsible for monitoring the activities of their member clubs.

5. In the case of cross-country motorcycling, there is an international federation, the Federation Internationale de Motocyclisme (FIM), which issues safety codes and guidelines to its members. In the Hong Kong SAR, the Hong Kong Automobile Association (HKAA) is a recognised member of the FIM. However, the three cross-country motorcycling clubs now operating in Hong Kong are not currently members of the HKAA. Therefore, the HKAA is not in

a position formally to give the clubs professional guidance or to monitor the safety of cross-country motorcycling activities.

Regulation of Local Motocross Clubs

6. In line with the practice whereby sports in the SAR are promoted by NSAs in accordance with the codes of the international sports federations, we consider that international codes governing cross-country motorcycling and the requirements of motocross courses should apply to this activity locally. While there is no NSA which governs the sport of motocross in Hong Kong, there is an organisation, namely the HKAA, which is affiliated to the international governing body.

7. We have discussed with the HKAA and the three private cross-country motorcycling clubs the need to improve the existing safety measures and facilities to bring them up to the required international standards. We understand that two of the clubs have now submitted the membership applications to the HKAA. The HKAA is now considering membership applications from the motorcycling clubs. Should the clubs become members of the HKAA, their activities can be more regularly supervised and promoted in accordance with FIM and HKAA standards.

Further Action

8. We will closely monitor the progress of the motocross clubs' application for HKAA membership and subsequent measures taken to improve and enforce internationally recognised standards. We shall report back to this Panel on a regular basis on progress with this issue.

Home Affairs Bureau

8 February 2000