

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

CSTB288

(Question Serial No. 2530)

Head: (95) Leisure and Cultural Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Recreation and Sports

Controlling Officer: Director of Leisure and Cultural Services (Vincent LIU)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism

Question:

Regarding the launch of SmartPLAY, the new intelligent sports and recreation services booking and information system, would the Government inform this Committee of the following:

1. the details of the manpower required and the expenditure involved since the launch of the SmartPLAY system, the number of registered users of the system and the percentage of such users over active users of the previous system;
2. in respect of the research and development of Phase 2 of the system, the manpower concerned and the estimated budget, and whether there is a timetable for the work;
3. as it is learnt that the problem of touting still exists, whether the Government has considered conducting undercover operations or other enforcement actions to tackle touts; if so, the details of the measures; if not, the reasons for that.

Asked by: Hon CHENG Wing-shun, Vincent (LegCo internal reference no.: 35)

Reply:

1. The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) has deployed a dedicated team consisting of 7 time-limited posts (1 Chief Leisure Services Manager, 1 Senior Leisure Services Manager, 2 Leisure Services Managers, 2 Assistant Leisure Services Managers I and 1 Assistant Clerical Officer) and 3 permanent posts (1 Information Technology Manager, 1 Analyst/Programmer I and 1 Analyst/Programmer II) to take charge of project development and system monitoring and evaluation, and to ensure that the contractor takes follow-up action in accordance with the contract. The total staff cost of the entire dedicated team is around \$90 million. During the period from the launch of user registration on 3 July 2023 till February 2024, the number of registered users of the system had exceeded 500 000 and among them, over 170 000 were patrons of Leisure Link, the previous system, which amounted to roughly 70% of the frequent users.

2. Following the launch of the core functions of Phase 1 in November 2023, the dedicated team of the LCSD and the contractor are pressing ahead the development and testing of Phase 2, and plan to roll out the enhanced functions of Phase 2 in the second half of 2024 progressively, including bookings by organisation, major events management, room/bay allotment for camps and campsites, fitness room management, water sports facilities management, as well as swimming lane booking and management. As the enhanced functions are part of the service contract for the development and maintenance of the entire system, the LCSD is unable to provide a breakdown of the expenditure on the functions of Phase 2.

3. The LCSD has all along been paying attention to the unauthorised transfer or touting activities in relation to recreation and sports facilities, and has been examining the possibility of imposing deterrent criminal penalties or fines on persons engaging in unauthorised transfer of the user permit of facilities pursuant to the existing legislation. After the launch of the new system, when booking and checking in facilities, individual hirers and organisation hirers are required to declare and undertake that the user permit will not be transferred by any means. Hirers failing to do so may have contravened the Theft Ordinance (Cap. 210) which may result in criminal liability. The LCSD is stepping up the monitoring of unauthorised transfer and touting of recreation and sports venues, including closely monitoring and regularly searching social media platforms for information on venues and facility sessions of suspected touting cases, and working closely with the Police to take appropriate enforcement actions regarding any suspected cases of unauthorised transfer.

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