

## Acting SHA reveals enhanced support measures to "M" Mark sports events next year

\*\*\*\*\*

The Acting Secretary for Home Affairs, Ms Florence Hui, said today (December 8) that to enhance support to "M" Mark sports events, the maximum amount of matching grants available would be increased from \$6 million to \$7 million in the first three years and the funding duration extended from six to eight years, effective from the next financial year.

Ms Hui announced the package of enhanced measures during a workshop organised by the Major Sports Events Committee (MSEC) of the Sports Commission. She added that the allocation of matching grants to organisers of major sports events would be more flexible as the ceilings of \$3 million, \$2 million and \$1 million in the first, second and third years respectively would be lifted.

Under the new package, the maximum amount of matching grant that can be made available to an "M" Mark event will be increased from \$9 million over a period of six years to \$11.5 million in eight years.

"To encourage organisers to step up publicity and promotion, new 'M' Mark events could be allocated a maximum of \$0.5 million in direct grant during the first three years for promotional activities," Ms Hui said.

The government will also support national sports associations (NSAs) to apply for staging world tournaments of individual sports in Hong Kong. As such events would not normally be held in the same region year after year, the MSEC proposed to introduce a supplementary scheme for these events. The initial recommendation is to provide a maximum amount of \$5 million in matching grant and direct grant for each eligible event.

Application guidelines for the new support measures will be laid down and announced by the MSEC in due course.

The "M" Mark System was introduced in 2004 to develop major sports events into sustainable ventures, and to enhance Hong Kong's profile as the events capital of Asia, which is one of the core objectives for sports development in Hong Kong.

The workshop was held at the Hong Kong Heritage Discovery Centre to facilitate experience sharing by organisers and sponsors of major sports events with

representatives of NSAs. Mr William Ko, Chairman of Organising Committee of the Standard Chartered Hong Kong Marathon 2011; Ms Erica Peng, Marketing Manager of Cathay Pacific Airways Ltd; and Mr Gary Ng, Managing Director of Watsons Your Personal Store; spoke at the workshop.

A new series of TV and radio Announcements of Public Interest on the "M" Mark System, which would be aired from tomorrow, was premiered at the workshop. A new print-ad was also introduced.

MSEC wished to encourage more sponsorship for major sports events from the commercial sector to promote sports development in Hong Kong. Companies sponsoring "M" Mark events would also benefit as they could establish a healthy and vibrant corporate brand.

Ends/Wednesday, December 8, 2010

NNNN