

LCQ13: Development of Hong Kong athletes in Mainland

â€‹Following is a question by the Hon Stanley Ng and a written reply by the Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, Miss Rosanna Law, in the Legislative Council today (April 2):

Question:

It has been reported that Hong Kong athletes have all along been unable to be certified for acquiring the technical grade titles awarded to Mainland athletes because of their status as Hong Kong citizens, even though they won championships in sports competitions held in the Mainland. In view of this, the Administrative Measures for Technical Grades of Athletes (the Administrative Measures) was promulgated by our country in March last year to point out clearly that athletes from Hong Kong, the Macao Special Administrative Region (Macao SAR) and Taiwan may be awarded technical grade titles when they participate in national competitions and provincial competitions. The Administrative Measures have been implemented since January 1 this year to ensure that Hong Kong athletes and Mainland athletes are entitled to the same treatment. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether it has compiled statistics on the current number of Hong Kong athletes pursuing development in the Mainland, with a tabulated breakdown by province;

(2) whether it knows the specific process through which Hong Kong athletes pursuing development in the Mainland are certified for acquiring the technical grade titles awarded to Mainland athletes; whether the process is handled by the General Administration of Sport of China in a centralised manner, or there is a designated organisation in Hong Kong which is responsible for handling the relevant certification for them; if there is such a designated organisation, of the organisation;

(3) as the Administrative Measures point out that prior consent should be obtained from the relevant National Sports Associations (NSAs) in Hong Kong and Macao SAR for awarding technical grade titles to their registered athletes, whether it has compiled statistics on the current number of athletes registered with NSAs in Hong Kong who are awarded the Mainland athletes' technical grade titles upon obtaining consents from their relevant NSAs; whether there are cases in which NSAs did not give consents for their athletes to acquire the Mainland athletes' technical grade titles; if so, of the details;

(4) whether it knows the mechanism for Hong Kong athletes pursuing development in the Mainland without registration with the relevant NSAs in Hong Kong who are eligible to be certified under the standards for technical

grades of athletes to obtain certification for acquiring the technical grade titles awarded to Mainland athletes; and

(5) to facilitate the professional development of Hong Kong athletes in the Mainland, whether the Government will set a timetable for regular review of the existing process through which Hong Kong athletes are certified for acquiring the Mainland athletes' technical grade titles, and streamline the relevant procedures in a timely manner?

Reply:

President,

My consolidated reply to the question raised by the Hon Stanley Ng is as follows:

The General Administration of Sport of China (GASC) promulgated the "the Administrative Measures for Technical Grades of Athletes" (the Administrative Measures) in 2014 to award athletes with different technical grade titles after attaining specific results in competitions. In order of priority, the technical grade titles are namely International Elite Athlete, Elite Athlete, Grade One Athlete, Grade Two Athlete and Grade Three Athlete.

To promote the integration of Hong Kong into national development, the GASC promulgated the "Notice by the General Office of GASC on the Work of Awarding the Technical Grade Titles to Athletes from Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR), Macao SAR and Taiwan" in 2021, which explicitly indicated that it accepts Hong Kong athletes' applications for award of the technical grade titles. For Hong Kong athletes who wish to be awarded the technical grade titles, they are required to submit written applications. In addition to submitting proof of results, the applications should be endorsed by the relevant National Sports Associations (NSAs) to which they belong.

Subsequently, having communicated with the Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau (CSTB) and the sports sector to understand the situation, the GASC has revised the the Administrative Measures to simplify the application procedures. The GASC promulgated the amended Administrative Measures on March 14, 2024.

Article 15 of the amended Administrative Measures specifies that Hong Kong athletes can be awarded the technical grade titles directly according to their results in national and provincial competitions, without having to submit written applications. The awarding body (e.g. the relevant sports centres or associations) may publicise the proposed technical grade titles directly based on the competition results for a period of five working days. The athletes will be awarded the respective technical grade titles if there is no objection within the period.

The amended Administrative Measures also indicate that for Hong Kong athletes who are registered with specific NSAs, they should obtain endorsement from the relevant NSAs before participating in competitions (i.e.

providing a letter of consent from the relevant NSAs when participating in the competitions). In that way, the athletes can be awarded the technical grade titles based on their competition results after the public announcement period. Hong Kong athletes who are not registered with specific NSAs are not required to seek endorsement from relevant NSAs before they are awarded the technical grade titles. The amended Administrative Measures have come into effect from January 1, 2025.

The CSTB does not have the relevant information about the number of Hong Kong athletes currently developing in the Mainland, the number of NSA-registered Hong Kong athletes who have been awarded the technical grade titles with endorsement of the relevant NSAs, and the cases not being endorsed by the relevant NSAs.

The Hong Kong SAR Government encourages and supports Hong Kong athletes and NSAs to enhance exchange and co-operation with athletes and associations of various sports from different provinces and cities in the Mainland. The amended Administrative Measures, which came into effect on January 1, 2025, facilitate the award of the technical grade titles to Hong Kong athletes. The amended Administrative Measures also promote development opportunities of Hong Kong athletes in the Mainland, and enhance the integrated development of Hong Kong and the Mainland. The CSTB will continue to maintain communication with the GASC on the relevant arrangements.