

Government welcomes pop concert organiser's co-operation in implementing measures to combat ticket scalping

Regarding media enquiries today (April 9) on the ticketing sales of the "#FOLLOWMi Sammi Cheng World Tour – Hong Kong 2019" concert (Sammi Cheng's concert) through the URBTIX, a spokesman for the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) gave the following response:

The Government has implemented a series of measures to facilitate the orderly and fair sales of tickets through official channels. Before the ticket sales of large-scale or very popular events commence, the URBTIX proactively discusses with organisers on feasible ticketing arrangements that suit the needs of individual programmes. The Government, with the consent and co-operation of organisers, has introduced two measures for very popular events held at the Hong Kong Coliseum (HKC) since the fourth quarter of 2018:

1. No counter booking at the URBTIX outlets on the first day or throughout the whole period of ticket sale. Only Internet, mobile app and credit card telephone bookings are available; and
2. Ticket collection will be delayed. People who purchased tickets will have to collect their tickets from the 14th day before and up to the day of the respective performances with the same credit card that they used for ticket purchase.

The Government welcomes the organiser of Sammi Cheng's concert to adopt the above measures, and is pleased to note the organiser has offered a higher proportion of tickets to the public so that more citizens could have chances to purchase tickets through official channels.

After reviewing the proportion of public sale and consignment tickets for paid-admission events at the HKC and the Queen Elizabeth Stadium, the Government has formulated a proposal to lower the ceiling ratio of consignment tickets gradually. To balance the views of the public and the performing industry, the Government announces the new measure of lowering the overall ceiling proportion of consignment tickets from 80 per cent to 70 per cent for events with four or more performances. That means the lower limit of the proportion of tickets for public sale will be increased to 30 per cent. The related measure is planned to be implemented from July 2019, applicable to booking applications received from July 2019 onwards, and not limited to paid admission events using URBTIX for sale of tickets. The Government will continue to encourage event organisers to increase the ratio of public sale

tickets so that more tickets of this kind will be available. The LCSD has sent a letter to the Performing Industry Association (Hong Kong) Limited informing the industry of the related proposal and will arrange to meet with industry representatives to brief them the details.

Besides, to ensure a smooth operation of the URBTIX system and prevent online ticket purchases by bots, LCSD has also been enhancing the system functions, such as introducing multi-layered setting and programmes to prevent purchases by bots, increasing the number of servers and the amount of bandwidth to strengthen the system processing ability and improve network traffic. In fact, the URBTIX system has been operating normally and selling tickets for the Sammi Cheng's concert continuously since the ticket sales started today. Around 70 000 tickets from 13 shows were available for sale today and they were almost sold out by 3pm. Nearly 40 per cent of the tickets were sold in the first hour (10am to 11am) and nearly 90 per cent were sold at 1pm. Online sale of tickets has been smooth in general throughout the day.