

Guidelines on Handling the Playing of the National Anthem and Raising of the Regional Flag for Hong Kong Athletes and Teams Engaging in International Sports Events

Background

To ensure proper respect is afforded to our National Anthem and Regional Flag at international sports events, the Sports Federation & Olympic Committee of Hong Kong, China (SF&OC), in consultation with the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government, hereby promulgates the following guidelines and measures for all personnels of “National Sports Associations” (NSAs) to observe and follow with strict compliance.

Handling of the National Anthem and Regional Flag

1. The Protocol Division Government Secretariat of HKSAR Government (Protocol Division) provides at its website a brief introduction to, among others, Regional Flag and its usage (website: <https://www.protocol.gov.hk/en/flags.html>). For details of the specifications for the Regional Flag, please refer to Schedule 1 of the Regional Flag and Regional Emblem Ordinance. Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau (CMAB) provides at its website information of our National Anthem, including the National Anthem Ordinance and official recording of the National Anthem (website: https://www.cmab.gov.hk/en/issues/national_anthem.htm). NSAs should familiarise themselves with these Ordinances/guidelines and ensure that the use of the National Anthem and Regional Flag are in full compliance with these Ordinances/guidelines.
2. To facilitate NSAs in ensuring that the correct version of our National Anthem and Regional Flag are used at international sports events, SF&OC will provide a toolkit, including two hard copies (a computer disk or an external storage device (USB)) containing the correct National Anthem together with two Regional Flags for NSAs. NSAs may collect the toolkit from SF&OC every time before their participation in international sports events. SF&OC will assign a dedicated staff to liaise with NSAs on the collection of toolkit. NSAs may use various sizes of the Regional Flag in different sports events, but they should not manufacture the Regional Flag individually. While NSAs are encouraged to use the toolkit provided by SF&OC, they could also download the National Anthem from the website of the Central People’s Government of the People’s Republic of China (both CMAB and Protocol Division provide at their websites the relevant link : [1](http://www.gov.cn/guoqing/2017-</div><div data-bbox=)

[06/09/content_5200994.htm](#)) and procure the Regional Flag on their own but they have to ensure that the correct versions are used.

3. NSAs are required to proactively approach their respective International Federations (IFs) and Asian Federations (AFs) and provide both IFs and AFs with the correct version of our National Anthem with the proper description including its name along with the specification of our Regional Flag. For each event, NSA should remind organiser and take steps to ensure that the description and name of our National Anthem, as well as the specification of our Regional Flag are accurate in the recordings and other post-event productions/publications.
4. When any Hong Kong, China teams/representatives are going to participate in international events, the team leader as assigned by the relevant NSA's Executive Council or Committee should be responsible for bringing along two hard copies (either computer disk or USB) containing the correct National Anthem with proper description including its name and two Regional Flags. In any case, NSAs should not take or use the Regional Flag given to them by unknown parties, e.g. a spectator.
5. The team leader is responsible for passing one hard copy (either a computer disk or USB) of the National Anthem and one Regional Flag to the event organiser, who should confirm receipt of the materials in writing either by way of email, mobile communication tools (e.g. WhatsApp message), or written note with official signing. The team leader should keep the other set of National Anthem and Regional Flag and bring them along to the event venue for contingency use.
6. In anticipation that the National Anthem will be played and/or the Regional Flag will be raised, the team leader MUST check on site with the event organiser on the National Anthem and Regional Flag once again to ensure that the correct version will be used and the correct name of our National Anthem will be displayed in all captions. Should the National Anthem be played and Regional Flag be raised on multiple occasions at the sports events, the team leader MUST inspect all relevant materials and information before each occasion to ensure that they are in order.
7. At the time the National Anthem is playing and/or the Regional Flag is raising, the team leader MUST pay attention to the song being played and flag being raised to make sure that they are in order. In case a wrong song is played, an incorrect flag is raised or the Regional Flag is not properly raised, the team leader should alert the team members and lead them to act upon in accordance with the guidelines below.

8. NSAs are reminded to brief the team leader and members on the guidelines every time before their departure for participating in international events.

Action to be taken by athletes/teams upon noticing a wrong song is played as the National Anthem, an incorrect flag is raised as the Regional Flag or the Regional Flag is not properly raised

9. In case a wrong song is played as the National Anthem of the People's Republic of China or an incorrect flag is raised as the Regional Flag or the Regional Flag is not properly raised, the team leader should alert his team members immediately and lead the team members to use their hands to display the sign of "T" for expressing objection to the error made and call for a halt to the proceedings for immediate correction.
10. Should no immediate correction be carried out, the team leader should lead the full team and/or athlete(s) to leave the ceremonial venue (e.g. the field, the stage or presentation podium).
11. Should correction be done properly, the full team and/or athlete(s) may line up again to attend the ceremony.
12. In case such an incident happens, the team leader should report to SF&OC directly.

Consequence for non-compliance with the subject guidelines

13. For non-compliance with the above guidelines, the NSAs concerned may be subject to sanction after taking into consideration the circumstances of each case. Possible sanctions include suspension of membership by SF&OC; and suspension of subvention or funding support from the Government.

Implementation Plan

14. A briefing session by SF&OC on the guidelines will be arranged before 25 November 2022 for the office bearers and staff of NSAs to attend.
15. Such briefing session will be held at least once a year by SF&OC to ensure that all members, in particular those new office bearers of NSAs, are to be reminded of the importance of this subject from time to time.

16. The above guidelines will take immediate effect from 22 November 2022 and will be re-circulated to all NSAs by SF&OC on an annual basis.

22 November 2022