

**Presentation by Secretary for Security
at the Special Meeting of the Finance Committee
on Monday, 25 March 2002**

Mr Chairman,

Public Expenditure on Security

- In the draft Estimates for the coming financial year (2002/2003), the allocation of \$28.6 billion on the security policy area group represents 10% of the total recurrent public expenditure. The two policy areas under the responsibility of Secretary for Security, namely Internal Security and Immigration, account for \$24.9 billion.
- Under the Enhanced Productivity Program, Security Bureau and the departments under our purview have planned to achieve a 5% cumulative savings by 2002/03. We shall meet this target when we deliver savings of \$0.4 billion in the coming year. This is the combined result of a critical review of our service portfolio, re-alignment of our organizational structure, and re-engineering of our operational processes.
- We will redeploy these savings to new or enhanced services. Comparing with 2001/02, the provisions to be allocated to our two policy areas of Internal Security and Immigration, represent real term increases of 3.7% and 14.7% respectively.

Major Growth Areas

- We are committed to keeping Hong Kong safe and secure. With our provisions in the coming year, we will continue to maintain the rule of law in our society and to sustain the safe environment of Hong Kong.

Law and order

- Overall, the Police Force will have a net reduction of 337 posts, most of which are in support and administrative work. We will create 50 posts to strengthen operational front-line capability, crime detection capability and traffic enforcement in new towns and new infrastructures. As regards equipment, we have earmarked \$17 million for upgrading the Police's Communal Information System.

Immigration control

- We will continue to focus on facilitating economic flows between Hong Kong and the Mainland. We will provide 68 additional posts in the Immigration Department to expedite passenger clearance, 20 posts to enhance channel supervision and secondary examination functions at control points, and 5 posts to step up enforcement action against human smuggling. We also plan to improve the facilities of the Lo Wu Terminal Building so as to enhance passenger flow and provide a better environment for the traveling public.
- The Department will press ahead with the introduction of smart ID cards and ensure timely implementation of its updated Information Systems Strategy including feasibility studies for the Automated Passenger Clearance and Automated Vehicle Clearance systems.

Public safety

- To improve our service and to cope with the increasing demand, we will create 69 additional posts to strengthen emergency ambulance service and to implement full provision of paramedic care within 3 years. On the fire safety side, we will create 108 additional posts to man new fire stations and fire appliances.
- We will spend \$18M on the procurement of additional fire appliances, ambulances and equipment to enhance the rescue capability and training facilities.

Prevent and Detect Smuggling

- We will create a total of 81 additional posts for the Customs and Excise Department to strengthen its capability in combating smuggling while at the same time enhancing the efficiency of customs clearance.
- 33 of the new posts will be created at Lo Wu Control Point to help combat the smuggling of psychotropic drugs involving young people. The other 48 posts will mainly be provided for the expansion of kiosks at Lok Ma Chau Control Point and to operate two fixed X-ray vehicle scanning systems which will be commissioned in early 2003.

Drug Abuse and Treatment

- We monitor the drug abuse trend closely, in particular, amongst young people. We will set up two new counseling centers for young psychotropic substance abusers. The Drug Dependent Persons Treatment and Rehabilitation Centres (Licensing) Bill will commence on 1 April 2002. The Beat Drugs Fund has set up a special funding scheme to assist the centres in acquiring fund for upgrading works. An

inter-departmental working group will also be established to co-ordinate the assistance to the affected centres.

Custody and Rehabilitation of Offenders

- We continue to place heavy emphasis on the re-integration of offenders into society as law-abiding citizens. We will create 10 additional posts to implement a brand new Rehabilitation Centres programme for young offenders. We will allocate a new annual provision of \$2.2M to upgrade eight vocational training courses taught in young offenders' institutions.
- We will create 10 additional posts to implement the Law Reform Commission's recommendation to shorten the maximum length of detention of persons in remand.