

**立法會**  
**Legislative Council**

LC Paper No. CB(2) 1114/01-02  
(These minutes have been seen  
by the Administration)

Ref : CB2/PL/SE/1

**LegCo Panel on Security**

**Minutes of meeting held on Thursday, 17 January 2002  
at 10:45 am in the Chamber of the Legislative Council Building**

**Members present** : Hon James TO Kun-sun (Chairman)  
Hon LAU Kong-wah (Deputy Chairman)  
Hon Albert HO Chun-yan  
Hon Margaret NG  
Hon Mrs Selina CHOW LIANG Shuk-ye, JP  
Hon CHEUNG Man-kwong  
Hon Howard YOUNG, JP  
Hon Ambrose LAU Hon-chuen, GBS, JP

**Member attending** : Hon Michael MAK Kwok-fung

**Members absent** : Dr Hon LUI Ming-wah, JP  
Hon Andrew WONG Wang-fat, JP  
Hon WONG Yung-kan  
Hon IP Kwok-him, JP  
Hon Audrey EU Yuet-mee, SC, JP

**Public Officers attending** : Item III  
  
Mr TSANG Yam-pui  
Commissioner of Police  
  
Mr LAU Chun-sing  
Director of Crime and Security  
Hong Kong Police Force

Item IV

Ms Mimi LEE  
Principal Assistant Secretary for Security (Narcotics)

Dr Cindy LAI  
Assistant Director of Health

Mr CHAN Yiu-ming  
Statistician  
Security Bureau

Item V

Mr Timothy TONG, JP  
Deputy Secretary for Security 1

Miss Pamela LAM  
Assistant Secretary for Security E1

Mr Albert LAI Kwok-ying  
Director of Finance, Administration and Planning  
Hong Kong Police Force

Mr Michael B DOWIE  
Regional Commander  
New Territories South  
Hong Kong Police Force

Ms Barbara R WILLISON  
Chief Superintendent  
Planning and Development Branch  
Hong Kong Police Force

Mr LEE Yeung-chi  
Superintendent  
Weapons Training  
Hong Kong Police Force

Mrs Marigold LAU  
Project Director  
Architectural Services Department

**Clerk in attendance** : Mrs Sharon TONG  
Chief Assistant Secretary (2)1

**Staff in attendance** : Mr Raymond LAM  
Senior Assistant Secretary (2)5

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**I. Confirmation of minutes of meeting held on 6 December 2001 and matters arising**

(LC Paper Nos. CB(2) 834/01-02 and CB(2) 833/01-02(01))

Minutes of meeting held on 6 December 2001

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 December 2001 were confirmed.

Matters arising

2. The Chairman informed Members that in response to the Panel's request at the last meeting -

- (a) the Police would hold an in-camera briefing for members in the Police Headquarters on 6 February 2002 on the triad situation in Hong Kong, the control of firearms and the situation in respect of the loss of firearms of Police officers. A circular on the briefing had been issued to members; and
- (b) the Police would arrange a visit for members to the new Tactical Training Complex in the Police Training School on 12 March 2002. A circular on the visit would be issued to members.

List of follow-up actions required of the Administration

3. Members noted the list of follow-up actions required of the Administration.

**II. Date of next meeting and items for discussion**

(LC Paper No. CB(2) 833/01-02(02))

4. Members agreed that the regular meeting originally scheduled for 2:30 pm on 7 February 2002 be rescheduled for 8:30 am on the same day to discuss the following items -

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- (a) Prison Development Plan;
- (b) Further Development on Paramedic Ambulance Service; and
- (c) Communal Information System Capacity Planning for the Year 2002-2006.

5. Members also agreed that a special meeting be scheduled for 8:30 am on 5 February 2002 to discuss the Administration's legislative proposals to implement United Nations Security Council Resolution 1373.

### **III. Crime situation in 2001**

6. Members noted the crime statistics tabled at the meeting.

*(Post-meeting note : The crime statistics tabled at the meeting were circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(2) 939/01-02 on 18 January 2002.)*

7. At the invitation of the Chairman, the Commissioner of Police (CP) took Members through the statistics tabled and briefed Members on the crime situation in 2001, as detailed in the speaking note in the Appendix.

8. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong expressed concern that a majority of crime committed by illegal immigrants were serious ones. He asked whether the investigation of crime cases involving illegal immigrants was particularly difficult. He also asked whether there were signs of syndication of local and Mainland criminals in robberies with genuine firearms.

9. CP responded that the increase in the number of illegal immigrants arrested for crime in 2001 was not substantial. As the Police was experienced in handling crime cases involving illegal immigrants from the Mainland, the investigation of such cases was not particularly difficult. He said that the Police was working closely with the Public Security authorities of the Mainland to combat such crime and appropriate measures were adopted whenever there was a trend of increase in a particular type of crime involving illegal immigrants. In 2001, there were three reported cases of robbery where genuine firearms were used. One of the cases had been detected and investigation revealed that it involved syndication of Hong Kong and Mainland persons.

10. CP added that illegal immigrants from the Mainland were mainly arrested for immigration offences, robbery, burglary and other criminal offences.

11. In respect of persons from other places who committed crime in Hong Kong, CP informed Members that -

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- (a) the number of Mainland persons who entered Hong Kong legally, such as on a Two-way Permit or on transit, and arrested for crime was 1 265 in 2001, representing an increase of 23.9 % over the total of 1 021 in 2000; and
- (b) the number of visitors from places other than the Mainland and arrested for crime in Hong Kong was 678 in 2001, representing an increase of 56.9% over the total of 436 in 2000.

12. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong asked about the Police's work in the prevention of trafficking of firearms from the Mainland to Hong Kong.

13. CP responded that 14 pieces of genuine firearms were seized in 2001, as compared to 21 pieces in 2000. He said that it was one of the top priorities of the Police to combat serious crimes where genuine firearms were used. It was also one of the major areas of focus in the Police's discussion with the Public Security authorities of the Mainland. He added that there were not many robberies in the Mainland where genuine firearms were used. A majority of the firearms seized in the Mainland were only home-made ones. He stressed that there was much exchange of intelligence with the Mainland authorities in respect of the trafficking of firearms. Mechanisms were also in place for the notification of the other side of the results of bullet head examination whenever genuine firearms were seized. CP stressed that there had always been tight control on firearms in Hong Kong.

14. In response to the Chairman's question about recent media reports about a detected case of trafficking of firearms to the Mainland, Director of Crime and Security, Hong Kong Police Force (DCS) said that the case was detected in the Mainland in April 2001. To his knowledge, most of the firearms involved, nearly 99%, were not genuine ones, apart from a genuine AK-47 type gun which was no longer usable. The firearms were destined for a gun club in the Mainland. They were only suitable for recreational use.

15. While noting a decline in the overall crime rate, Mr LAU Kong-wah expressed concern about some cases of serious attacks on Police officers in 2001. He said that public confidence in the Police would be undermined if such cases could not be detected. He asked about the Police's measures in combating Mainland persons committing crime in Hong Kong and the trafficking of firearms into Hong Kong. He also asked whether there were new trends in the syndication of criminals from the Mainland and Hong Kong and the actions taken by the Police against such crime.

16. CP responded that -

- (a) in respect of a cash-in-transit robbery which occurred in December 2001, four robbers were arrested with money and firearms recovered;
- (b) in May 2001, two plain clothed Police officers were shot in their attempt

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to intercept a gang of suspicious persons in Kowloon City. Subsequent investigations revealed that the gang was also involved in the robbery of a jewellery and watch shop in Mongkok in June 2001. The Police had issued a wanted notice on the persons concerned; and

- (c) in respect of the murder of a Police officer and the murder of a bank guard in a bank robbery, the Police's investigations had made good progress.

17. CP said that in comparison with many other places, the number of robberies in Hong Kong where genuine firearms were used was relatively small. As the Mainland had a vast area, it would be very difficult to locate any robbers who escaped from Hong Kong to the Mainland. Cooperation with the Public Security authorities in the Mainland was thus particularly important in combating such crime. He informed Members that such cooperation had been very successful.

18. CP said that besides focussing efforts on combating robberies with genuine firearms, the Police had put much effort in combating international and cross-boundary crime, including the trafficking and trading of drugs, deception and the trafficking of illegal immigrants. He added that the Police had launched a series of joint operations with the Mainland authorities in combating crimes related to drugs, psychotropic substances and triad activities.

19. Mr LAU Kong-wah asked whether the problem of trafficking of drugs was serious in Hong Kong. He also asked whether there were signs that Hong Kong had become a transit point for the international trafficking of drugs.

20. CP responded that the amount of drugs seized in 2001 had decreased in comparison with 2000. This was due to a change in the method of trafficking where drugs were trafficked in much smaller quantities. He said that psychotropic drugs in Hong Kong were mainly trafficked from the Mainland and Europe. Some Hong Kong residents were suspected to be involved in international drug trafficking and trading activities. However, Hong Kong was not a transit point for drug trafficking.

21. The Chairman said that although Hong Kong had been removed from the list of major drug transit territories compiled by the Department of State of the United States (US), the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) of US still described Hong Kong as one of such places in its report. He asked whether the Administration had looked into the matter.

22. DCS responded that Hong Kong had already been removed from the list of major drug transit territories issued by US. While Hong Kong was still described in a CIA report as one of the places of concern in drug trafficking, CIA had subsequently clarified that it did not mean that Hong Kong was still on the list. He added that as Hong Kong was a centre for international trade, transportation, finance and communication, some international crime activities might be found in Hong Kong.

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However, there was no indication that Hong Kong had become a transit centre in the international trafficking of drugs. There was also no indication that drugs were trafficked via Hong Kong to other places.

23. The Chairman asked about the actions taken by the Police to follow up the matter.

24. CP responded that the Police was surprised about the inconsistency between different agencies in the US. In this connection, the Security Bureau had already written to the US seeking for a clarification.

25. Miss Margaret NG expressed concern that about 42.4% of homicides were related to domestic disputes. She asked whether the Police had referred such kind of cases to the relevant government departments for follow-up. She also asked about the measures adopted by the Administration to prevent such tragedies.

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26. CP responded that the Police was very concerned about cases where homicide of family members was committed before suicide. It would draw the attention of the Social Welfare Department (SWD) to the problem.

27. Miss Margaret NG said that in a seminar on the provision of legal assistance held in the previous year, there were concerns that some families had not been provided the necessary assistance when problems first arose and the problems eventually deteriorated and resulted in tragedies. Given that the Police possessed the most information about these tragic cases, she asked whether the Police would analyse such cases.

Adm

28. CP responded that the Police would refer the issue to the Fight Crime Committee (FCC) for follow-up. He added that FCC had always been concerned about the problem of domestic violence. Miss Margaret NG requested the Police to inform Members about the progress of the matter. The Chairman said that the Panel might consider following up the matter in the future.

29. The Chairman asked whether the Police had a practice of referring cases of domestic violence to SWD for follow-up.

Adm

30. CP said that the Police had issued detailed and comprehensive guidelines and procedures on the handling of domestic disputes and violence. The Chairman requested the Police to provide the Panel with more information about the guidelines and procedures.

31. Mrs Selina CHOW said that while the Police had said that the increase in the number of shop theft in recent years was due to the enhanced security of shops and increased awareness of shopkeepers, it might reflect that the problem of shop theft had become more serious. She asked whether the Police had studied whether the problem

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had become more serious, such as by examining the volume or value of goods involved. CP responded that the Police had not maintained information about the value of goods involved in theft cases. However, the Police had conducted analysis of the categories and age groups of persons involved in shop theft. He agreed with Mrs CHOW's view that there might have been an increase in shop theft and that the issue might have to be further examined.

32. As regards reported cases of commercial deception, Mrs Selina CHOW said that she had received complaints about refusal of the Police to process reported cases of deception. She asked whether the Police had sought to examine information about a reported case before concluding that a case did not amount to deception and that no further action could be taken.

33. CP responded that the Police would usually carry out preliminary investigation into reported cases of commercial deception to examine whether a criminal element was involved. Where a preliminary investigation revealed no criminal element in a case, the Police would explain the situation to the complainant. There were established guidelines in this respect.

34. Mrs Selina CHOW said that she had been informed by a complainant that after presentation of his case to the Police, he was immediately informed by the Police that there was no criminal element involved and the case could not be further processed.

35. DCS responded that it was a practice of the Police to carry out preliminary investigation into a reported case of commercial deception after a complaint was received. If it was found that no criminal element was involved, the complainant would be informed accordingly. As time was needed for investigation, the Police would not immediately inform the complainant whether a case could be further processed. However, as the Police's computer system maintained records about reported cases of deception, occasionally, there might be cases where previous complaints had already been received against the person or company concerned and preliminary investigation had revealed that no criminal element was involved.

36. While noting a decrease in the statistics about juveniles and young persons arrested for crime, Mrs Selina CHOW said that there were media reports about the involvement of juveniles and young persons in offences such as the sale of illicit optical discs and illicit cigarettes. She asked whether this reflected that juveniles and young persons were recruited by triad societies at a young age. DCS responded that the Police had studied the situation and noted that the problem was not widespread. It also noted that there was no indication that juveniles and young persons were recruited by triad societies at a young age for conducting such activities. He said that the Police would continue to pay close attention to the situation and combat such activities in association with the Customs and Excise Department. He added that the Police was also conducting a review on the Superintendent's Discretion Scheme.

Adm

37. The Chairman requested the Police to provide statistics for the past two years



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about the number of gangs and victims involved in different types of deception cases where many members of the public were victims, including London Gold fraud, model agency deception and street deception.

**IV. Report on the review of the Methadone Treatment Programme**

(Report on Review of Methadone Treatment Programme and LC Paper No. CB(2) 833/01-02(03))

38. At the invitation of the Chairman, Principal Assistant Secretary for Security (Narcotics) (PAS(S)N) briefed Members on the results of the Administration's review of the Methadone Treatment Programme (MTP). She informed Members that in view of the success of the MTP in Hong Kong, especially in the prevention of blood-borne diseases, Shanghai intended to introduce methadone into its drug treatment and rehabilitation services. She added that some people had opposed to the operation of methadone clinics in their vicinity. This reflected a general misunderstanding among the public about MTP. The Administration would strengthen its work in public education and publicity.

39. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong asked about the Administration's policy on the provision of drug treatment and rehabilitation service. He also asked whether methadone was only a "substitute" when drug dependent persons could not afford to purchase heroin. He said that according to the results of a survey conducted by Dr CHOI Yuen-wan of the Action Committee Against Narcotics, methadone was only a substitute and could not offer detoxification for drug dependent persons. The survey also revealed that only 1.5% of persons who had enrolled in MTP intended to achieve a drug-free state and only 20% of these persons had succeeded.

40. PAS(S)N responded that MTP was not the only programme for drug treatment and rehabilitation. The Administration had adopted a multi-modality approach in providing treatment and rehabilitation services to cater for the different needs of drug abusers from varying backgrounds. Methadone was only suitable for the treatment of opiate abusers but not other drug abusers. Being operated on a voluntary, outpatient mode, MTP allowed drug abusers to live with their families, work and perform other daily activities as a normal person. Such advantages were not found with in-patient drug treatment centres. MTP provided a readily accessible, legal, medically safe and effective alternative to continued illicit opiate drug abuse. The review confirmed that although the ultimate policy objective for drug treatment and rehabilitation was to assist drug dependent persons to achieve a drug-free state, the mainstay of MTP should be substitution therapy.

41. PAS(S)N added that the working group responsible for the review on MTP (the Working Group) recommended that naltrexone should be considered as a drug to assist relapse prevention and a research in this regard should be conducted accordingly. The Working Group was also of the view that formal clinical trial on the use of Chinese medicine in drug treatment and rehabilitation should tie in with the full

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commencement of the Chinese Medicine Ordinance (Cap. 549). The Working Group also recommended the strengthening of supportive services and patient assessment to better assist patients in their rehabilitation. She added that drug dependent persons under the age of 21 who applied for joining MTP were encouraged to receive in-patient detoxification and rehabilitation services in order to achieve absolute abstinence.

42. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong asked whether there were established mechanisms to assist patients under MTP to bridge over to detoxification. PAS(S)N responded that under the recommendations of the Working Group, a structured patient reassessment mechanism would be introduced to allow for more regular reviews of patients' treatment plans, including the plan for referral to in-patient detoxification and rehabilitation services.

43. In response to the Chairman's question about whether there was any compulsory referral for in-patient treatment at some stage, PAS(S)N said that the Administration had strengthened supportive services through the deployment of more social workers. Assistant Director of Health added that the Society for the Aid and Rehabilitation of Drug Abusers (SARDA) had an existing establishment of 21 social workers deployed for the provision of such services. It intended to strengthen such service through the addition of six to seven social workers in the next financial year. The Chairman asked the Administration to provide more information about the service and caseload of the existing social workers of SARDA and the improvements to be achieved with the proposed addition of social workers.

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44. Mr LAU Kong-wah asked how the Administration would address public concerns about crime activities outside methadone clinics. He also asked about the Administration's timetable for the renovation of methadone clinics other than the Sham Shui Po Methadone Clinic.

45. PAS(S)N responded that the Administration was aware of the situation outside methadone clinics. Although there was no indication that crime activities outside methadone clinics were serious, cooperation with the Police had been and would continue to be called for in this area. Steps would be taken in the management of methadone clinics so as to improve the order during the opening time of clinics. She added that the renovation of the Sham Shui Po Methadone Clinic was launched as a first step in the improvement of the physical setting of methadone clinics. The Administration would assess the results of the renovation and examine the availability of funds before gradually rolling out the improvement plan to other methadone clinics.

Adm

46. Mr LAU Kong-wah asked the Administration to provide more information about the situation of crime activities outside different methadone clinics, including those in Sham Shui Po, Tsuen Wan and Shatin.

47. Mr Albert HO said that the Administration should consider integrating methadone clinics with other drug treatment and rehabilitation clinics so that more comprehensive services could be provided for patients. He considered that more

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counselling should be provided for MTP patients.

48. PAS(S)N responded that the idea had been considered in the review. With a large number of clinics located in different parts of Hong Kong operating long and flexible hours, MTP provided a good catchment and readily accessible service to its users. Nevertheless, the suggestion of Mr Albert HO could be considered in the longer term having regard to operational and cost considerations.

49. PAS(S)N added that the majority of the existing 21 methadone clinics were sharing facilities with general out-patient clinics of the Department of Health to keep operating cost to the minimum. The expenditure per patient attendance was \$17 in 1999, which was the lowest among all treatment modalities in Hong Kong. The Working Group noted that some care services could not be delivered due to limitations in the existing physical settings of methadone clinics. In view of this, it recommended that improvement be introduced to better equip methadone clinics for the provision of improved care services. The Chairman requested that renovation of other methadone clinics be expedited after the renovation of the Sham Shui Po Methadone Clinic was completed. PAS(S)N responded that it would depend on the availability of resources.

50. Mr MAK Kwok-fung said that his occupation involved contacts with drug dependent persons. He asked whether studies were conducted on the effectiveness of MTP in reducing crime and assisting MTP patients to achieve a drug-free state. He also asked whether studies were conducted on the change in employment situation of patients after joining MTP.

51. Statistician, Security Bureau responded that the Working Group had conducted a survey to analyse the characteristics and perception of patients before and after receiving services under MTP. The survey findings revealed that -

- (a) over 70% of patients indicated that they had improved in spirit after receiving methadone treatment;
- (b) over 50% of patients indicated that their relationship with family members had improved after receiving methadone treatment;
- (c) more than 50% of patients were employed. There was a slight improvement in the employment situation of patients after joining MTP;
- (d) over 50% of patients indicated that they had not abused heroin in the past four weeks at the time of enumeration; and
- (e) over 50% of patients claimed that people committed fewer criminal acts after joining MTP.

52. Mr MAK Kwok-fung said that many MTP patients were opiate-dependent drug

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abusers who perceived methadone as a substitute when they could not afford to purchase opium. He considered that treatment plans should be drawn up to assist MTP patients in detoxification.

53. PAS(S)N responded that the Working Group recommended that a more detailed and structured initial assessment should be conducted on newly admitted patients and individual treatment plans should be developed for these patients. It also recommended that a structured patient reassessment mechanism should be introduced to provide for reviews of the treatment plans and facilitate placement of patients in suitable treatment modality.

54. Mr MAK Kwok-fung said that to his knowledge, the naltrexone treatment scheme, which was found to be effective, was currently on trial on a user-paid basis. He considered that the Administration should subsidise the scheme to reduce the financial burden on patients receiving naltrexone treatment. He asked about the Administration's timetable on the use of naltrexone in drug treatment and rehabilitation.

55. PAS(S)N responded that there had not been any large scale clinical trials in Hong Kong on the effectiveness of naltrexone. The Hospital Authority, the Department of Health and interested non-government organisations would jointly launch a clinical trial to assess the effectiveness of naltrexone in relapse prevention for detoxified patients in Hong Kong, subject to availability of funding. As the wider use of naltrexone would depend on the results of the clinical trial, there was not yet a timetable for the introduction of naltrexone in drug treatment and rehabilitation. She added that the clinical trial would commence within the current year if funds were available.

**V. New Territories South Regional Police Headquarters and Operational Base at Tsuen Wan**

(LC Paper No. CB(2) 833/01-02(04))

56. Deputy Secretary for Security 1 (DS for S1) informed Members that besides the advantages as detailed in the Administration's paper, the proposal to construct a purpose-built regional Police headquarters and operational base at Tsuen Wan (the proposed project) would offer the advantages of -

- (a) relinquishing a site area of about 6 400 square metres in Tsuen Wan; and
- (b) creating 565 job opportunities.

57. Mr LAU Kong-wah said that although the New Territories (NT) Region had been divided into the NT South Region and NT North Region in the past, it was more appropriate from a geographical point of view to divide the NT Region into an east region and a west region.

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58. Director of Finance, Administration and Planning, Hong Kong Police Force (DFAP) responded that the NT Region had been reorganised into a south region and a north region in the past for historical and operational reasons. He added that the Police was currently conducting a review on whether the existing delineation of Police regions would need to be revised. However, the results of the review would not affect the proposed project. He said that the NT North Regional Police Headquarters was currently located in Tai Po, while the NT South Regional Police Headquarters was located in Ma On Shan. This was very undesirable. Under the proposed project, the NT South Regional Police Headquarters would be located in Tsuen Wan. If the NT Region was divided into an east region and a west region, the regional headquarters in Tsuen Wan would become the regional headquarters for the west region, while the regional headquarters in Tai Po would become the regional headquarters for the east region.

59. Mr LAU Kong-wah asked about the necessity for the proposed indoor shooting range referred to in paragraph 14 of the Administration's paper. He also asked about the locations where Police officers in the region currently underwent training in shooting. Superintendent (Weapons Training), Hong Kong Police Force responded that Police officers in the NT South Region currently received such training in the shooting ranges located in NT North Region and Kowloon.

60. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong questioned whether there was an urgent need for the proposed project, especially at a time of poor economic condition.

61. DFAP responded that due to the limitation of resources, the construction of the regional headquarters for the NT South Region had been deferred for nearly 10 years. The Administration considered it an appropriate time to launch the project. He said that financial resources had been secured within the Administration for the proposed project.

62. Regional Commander (New Territories South), Hong Kong Police Force added that there had been incidents where difficulties in mobilising Police officers had complicated the situation. He said that when a major incident occurred in the Airport, inability to promptly command and control the support unit could result in serious ramifications. By moving the regional headquarters to Tsuen Wan, the Police would be able to react more quickly and prevent major problems.

63. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong said that with the advanced communication system currently deployed by the Police, mobilisation of the necessary Police officers should not be a problem regardless of where the regional headquarters were located. He stressed that under the presently poor economic climate, it was not an appropriate time to launch the proposed project, even if the necessary financial resources had been secured.

64. DS for S1 responded that the proposed project was necessary because of -

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- (a) the rapid development and population increase on Lantau Island, and the forthcoming significant developments such as the Hong Kong Disneyland;
- (b) the fact that seven major facilities of the region were currently scattered in five locations, which was very undesirable; and
- (c) a severe shortage of space in the existing facilities, especially in the changing rooms, rooms for the storage of exhibits and video interview rooms.

65. The Chairman considered the project cost of \$717 million very substantial, especially at a time of deficit in the budget. He requested the Administration to provide a detailed paper explaining the problems encountered with the existing facilities, the necessity for the project and the improvements to be brought about by the proposed project. To facilitate Members' understanding of the existing situation, the Chairman suggested that a visit to the existing facilities be organised for Members after the requested information was provided. His view was shared by Mr Albert HO. DS for S1 agreed to provide the requested information and arrange the suggested visit.

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66. The meeting ended at 1:05 pm.

Council Business Division 2  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
20 February 2002

## 2001 CRIME SITUATION

### THE OVERALL CRIME SITUATION

- A total of 73,008 crimes were recorded in 2001, a decrease of 5.5 % over 2000 (77,245).
- 13,551 Violent Crimes were recorded, a drop of 8.5% compared with 2000 (14,812). The number of Violent Crimes recorded was the lowest in the past 27 years.
- Looking at Crime Rate, per 100 000 population, the Overall Crime Rate stood at 1084.5, a drop of 6.4 % compared with 2000.
- The Violent Crime Rate was 201.3, a 9.4 % decline compared with 2000.
- In 2001 the Crime Detection Rate was 44 %, compared with 43.6% for 2000.

### Robbery

- Overall Robbery reports dropped by 7.7 % to 3,167 cases.
- The number of robberies where genuine firearms were used was the same as 2000. Both years noted 3 cases.

- Robberies where arms (e.g. stun gun) were used were 3, compared with 5 in 2000.
- Robberies where pistol-like objects were used decreased by 20 cases (-26.3 %).
- Head-bashing robberies dropped by 30 cases (-26%).
- Taxi robberies also decreased by 44 cases (-42.7%).
- However the year saw several incidents where the use of genuine firearms either during the course of robbery or believed to be intended for that purpose took place.
  - ✧ In May two plainclothes were gunned down in their attempt to intercept a gang of suspicious characters under the railway bridge in Waterloo Road, Kowloon City. Subsequent investigations revealed that this incident involved the notorious KWAI Ping-hung gang which was later responsible for the robbery of a jewellery/watch shop in Mong Kok in June 2001. The police are making every effort to bring these culprits to justice.
  - ✧ There were also two highly publicized cases of particular concern in December last year. The tragic murder by a lone armed robber of a bank guard in a robbery was followed by a cash in transit robbery several days later. Whilst every effort is being made to bring the lone culprit to book, in the second robbery where a security guard was also shot, the Police arrested 4 culprits with the stolen money and firearms



recovered.

- ✧ In 2001, there were 3 other cases (non-robbery) where genuine firearms were used, compared with 5 in 2000. 14 genuine firearms were seized in 2001 compared with 21 in 2000.

### **Bank Robberies (Item 7d)**

- Bank robberies increased by 36 cases from 18 in 2000 to 54 in 2001 (i.e. +200%). This type of crime mainly occurred between August and November last year. 32 cases (or 59.3%) have been detected with 9 culprits being arrested. Five repeated offenders who were responsible for a total of 28 cases were arrested after October. In December, the trend of bank robbery halted with only 2 cases taking place at the beginning of the month.
- This type of robbery typically involves single culprit who pass threatening notes to the bank staff and rely on the effect of these threats for results.
- Most are “copycat” crimes. There is no syndication behind the increased numbers.
- Among which, 24 cases (nearly half of the total) were instances where the robbers completely failed in their attempts without any money taken.

### **Goldsmith/Watch Shop Robberies**

- There were 11 Goldsmith/watch shop robbery cases in 2001 compared with 10 cases in 2000, a marginal increase.
- The figures for 2001 are now at the second lowest on record for the past 23 years.
- Police have intensified patrols in the vicinity of banks and other high risk premises and encourage the owners or person-in-charge of these premises to improve their own security measures to deter such crimes.

### **Burglary**

- Burglary cases fell slightly by 327 cases in 2001, a fall of 3.6%, and has become the lowest figure in the past 21 years.

### **Homicide**

- In 2001 the number of Homicide cases rose to 66, an increase of 23 cases compared with the 43 which occurred in 2000, the latter being the lowest figure recorded in the past 25 years.
- For 2001 the proportion of homicides committed in relation to the various types of domestic disputes was 42.4% (or 28 cases). In 9 cases, 9 children aged under 12 were killed, compared with 3 in 2000. This increased number showed an upward trend and reflected a social problem. This contrasts with the relatively low number attributable to violent crimes such as robbery or gang attack (12.1 %).
- 48 (or 72.7%) of the homicide cases were detected.

### **Wounding and Serious Assault**

- There has been a decrease of 6.2% in the number of reported cases of this type with 6,472 cases in 2001 compared with the 6,903 cases in 2000.
- The proportion of the total which is attributable to various disputes has remained stable at around 68.1 %.
- The percentage of such cases with Triad overtones continues to stand at 8.6% as it has done for the past several years.

### **Rape and Indecent Assault**

- 95 Rape reports were made in 2001, compared with 104 reports in 2000, a decrease of 9 cases (or -8.7%). The number of such reports continues to remain stable and within historically prevailing levels.
- Over half (73.7%) were committed by persons who were known to the victims.
- 1,007 Indecent Assault reports were recorded in 2001, a decrease of 10.4% compared with the previous year.
- Of the Indecent Assaults in 2001, around 80% were committed by strangers with the majority in crowded public places or on public transport.

### **Thefts**

- All thefts under the above categories fell with the exception of **Shop Theft**.
- **Shop Theft** rose by 7.1% to 7,470 cases.
- The number of Shop Theft has increased since 1997. The reasons for this are believed to be the enhanced security of the shops and the improved awareness of the shopkeepers, resulting in their easily identifying the thieves.
- **Pickpocketing** cases fell by 17.1%.
- The figures for **Snatching** fell by 18.1% while **Miscellaneous thefts** fell by 4.7%.

### **Theft of Motor Vehicles**

- 2,562 number of vehicles were reported stolen in 2001. This represents a fall of 242 vehicles or 8.6% over 2000.
- The number of stolen Jeeps and High-Performance Vehicles (HPV's) decreased in 2001.
- Efforts against the stealing of container tractors brought good results in 2001, with a drop to 120 cases compared with 154 in 2000, a decrease of 22.1%.
- Of the overall number of stolen vehicles, 55.3% was subsequently recovered compared with 54.7% in 2000.

## **Deception**

- 4,051 deception reports were recorded in 2001, a marginal increase of 1.6% when compared with 3,986 in 2000.
- Serious Commercial Deception dropped by 14% (-13 cases). London Gold Fraud also decreased over 30% (-12 cases). Modelling Agency Deception decreased by 50% (-15 cases) while Street Deception dropped by 1.8% (-11 cases).
- Pyramid-related Fraud increased from 3 to 19 cases, due mainly to proactive action taken by the Police.
- Fraud cases relating to Bankruptcy soared from 11 to 192 in 2001. The government takes a series views towards this problem. The relevant departments and organizations are looking into the new trend and working on the counter-measures.

## **Serious Narcotics Cases**

- There were 2,473 serious narcotics cases recorded in 2001, an increase of 7% compared with 2000, which was due to strong enforcement action against this type of crime by Police. The overall result in this aspect is good.

|                          | <u>2001*</u>    | <u>2000</u>  | <u>%</u><br><u>Change</u> |
|--------------------------|-----------------|--------------|---------------------------|
| Heroin                   | 195 kg          | 339 kg       | -42.5%                    |
| MDMA (Ecstasy)           | 208,473 tablets | 378,621 tabs | -44.9%                    |
| Cannabis                 |                 |              |                           |
| Herbal                   | 2,335 kg        | 227 kg       | +928.6%                   |
| Resin                    | 2 kg            | 6 kg         | -66.7%                    |
| Methamphetamine<br>(Ice) | 65 kg           | 88 kg        | -26.1%                    |
| Ketamine                 | 88 kg           | 15 kg        | +486.7%                   |

\*Provisional Figures

- In 2001, serious narcotics cases rose 7 %. It was mainly because Ketamine was listed as dangerous drug in December 2000, the abuse of psychotropic drugs by youngsters and the Police had stepped up action against psychotropic drugs.
- Having taken high-profile sweeping action against dance parties where psychotropic drugs activities concentrated, the situation was contained and alleviated.
- Last year, 4 dancing venues closed automatically because of continuous enforcement action by the Police. (Note: there are 7 large-scale and 70 small-scale dance venues.)
- From figures, the number of arrests relating to serious narcotic cases was 3,064, increased by 7.2% (+205). The arrest of young persons rose 62.7%, from 437 in 2000 to 711 in 2001.

- Among these 711 young persons, 579 were in connection with psychotropic drugs, i.e. over 80%. The arrest of youngsters increased to 579 or 164.4%, compared with 219 in 2000.
- Same as last year, one of the major priorities for the Force is to combat the trafficking and abuse of dangerous drugs with severe and effective measures.
- The strategies for the Police to have joint operations targeting the trafficking and abuse of dangerous drugs in conjunction with Customs and Excise Department locally and with Guangdong and Macau law enforcement agencies in the neighbourhood regions were very successful, such action will continue.
- Regarding the quantity and types of dangerous drugs seized, the quantity of cannabis and Ketamine seized increased significantly. The increase of cannabis was in connection with a case in Sam Mun Tsui, Tai Po where 1980 kg cannabis were found. The abuse of Ketamine was the reason leading to the increase of such drug.

### **Organised Crime and Triads**

- Another top priority for the Police is to tackle organised crimes and triad activities. The Police conducted many large-scale anti-triad operations, including 4 undercover operations and joint operations with Guangdong and Macau law enforcement agencies. A total of 2,472 persons were arrested for triad related offences, which showed an increase of 24% when compared with 1,987 in 2000.
- In 2001, a total of 2,455 triad-related cases occurred, a decrease of 22 cases

(-0.9%) when compared with 2,477 cases in 2000. The proportion of crimes attributable to triad activity was 3.4% in 2001, similar to 3.2% of 2000, and there is no indication for the situation turning worst.

- Police will continue to maintain vigilance in the fight against all forms of triad activities by way of strengthening intelligence gathering and combating their financial sources, such as controlling of vice activities and drugs trafficking. Anti-triad enforcement action will remain a top priority in 2002.

### **Debt Collection Related Cases**

- The number of crime reports relating to debt collection activities have substantially reduced in 2001.
- During 2001 there were 1,497 cases of criminal damage, 261 cases of criminal intimidation/blackmail related to debt-collection as compared with 1,836 and 432 respectively in 2000. These are falls of 18.5% and 39.6% respectively.
- Overall, the number of debt collection related crime complaints recorded by Police during 2001 was 1,960, approximately 21.5% lower than the 2,498 received in 2000.
- The Police have continued to take effective measures to ensure that all such cases were more quickly investigated by crime officers and the victims were given due reassurance during the investigation process.

### **Computer Crime**

- 235 reports were recorded in 2001, a significant drop of 36.1%, when



compared with 368 cases in 2000.

- Computer hacking noted the biggest drop of 59%, from 275 to 114 cases.
- The public's awareness on computer security and the deterrent effect of criminal convictions of 4 cases may have accounted for the decrease.
- 65 cases of e-fraud were recorded in 2001, an increase of 20.4% (+11 cases) when compared with 54 cases recorded in 2000. Such deception cases involved fraudsters using other persons' personal details to obtain goods or services via the internet e.g. e-shopping, e-auction, etc.
- As e-banking gained its popularity in 2001, 8 cases of e-banking theft were recorded in the year involving the loss of over \$4.4M.
- The usual practice of fraudsters were to deceive or steal the personal particulars of the victim's bank accounts or PIN, and then transferred the money to account opened by another person in order to obtain cash. After receiving the reports, the Police had immediately contacted the banks concerned to strengthen e-banking security. The situation is stable.
- The Force will remain alert to e-banking thefts as it may pose a significant threat to Hong Kong as a major international finance centre.
- The Police's capability to tackle computer crime has been strengthened with the Technology Crime Division being set up in 2001.
- The Police plays a leading role in implementing the recommendations of the Government Task Force on Computer Crime.

## **Illegal Immigrants**

- During 2001 a total of 8,322 Illegal Immigrants (IIs) were arrested. This compares with the total of 8476 in 2000, a decrease of 1.8%. Overall the number is the lowest for the past 17 years. The Police took active enforcement action against illegal vice activities, resulting in the increase in the arrests of female illegal immigrants from the Mainland for vice activities. The number stood at 1,357 when compared with 279 in 2000. Without such operations, the number of IIs arrested would be lower.
- In 2001, 999 IIs were arrested for committing criminal offences, a marginal drop when compared with 1,033 IIs arrested for crime in 2000.
- The main types of crimes for which these IIs have been arrested are Immigration Offences, Robbery, Burglary and Possession of Offensive Weapons. These four categories accounted for more than 70.8% of the total of all II crime compared with 71.8% in 2000.
- Police have remained vigilant to the possibility of increased criminal acts by Illegal Immigrants throughout the year and have conducted frequent operations of various types to prevent them from entering HK and to arrest those who have entered. These will continue.

- Police liaison with the Guangdong Border Defence Bureau for joint operations will continue.

### **Juveniles and Young Persons Arrested for Crimes (Items 20 and 21)**

- The number of juveniles (aged under 16) arrested for crime in 2001 was 5,909, a fall of 5.1% compared with 6,229 persons for the previous year.
- The number of young persons (aged between 16 and 20) arrested for crime was 6,145, a drop of 4.9% compared with 6,465 for 2000.
- The creation of 33 School Liaison Officers in September, 2001 is a positive step taken by Police to combat juvenile crime at school. The Police will evaluate the effectiveness of this scheme in appropriate time.

### **CONCLUSION**

- The overall crime situation in 2001 has been very steady.
- Compared with the previous year, there has been a reduction, not only in the overall numbers of crimes but also in almost all of the component categories.
- In respect of the Force anti-crime objectives and strategies in 2002, there are three areas :-

### Containment of Violent Crimes

- The top priority for the Police is to combat Violent Crimes, especially cases where genuine firearms, pistol-like objects and explosive substance will be used by culprits and to maintain such crimes at a low level.

### Against the using of psychotropic drugs by young persons

- Overall, the abuse of psychotropic drugs, especially by young persons, is still serious.
- The Police, in conjunction with other government departments and non-government organisations, will continue to adopt a multi-agency approach to tackle this kind of illegal activities through education and publicity campaigns.
- The Police will also take severe measures against the trafficking and abuse of psychotropic drugs.

### Organised Crimes and Triad Activities

- Organised Crimes and Triad activities are problems which attract the concern of the society, especially those organised, syndicated and transnational triad activities. Thus more severe measures are required to combat the situation.

## The Preparation towards Terrorist Activities in Hong Kong

- After the terrible 9/11 terrorist attacks in USA, the Police immediately evaluated the threat towards Hong Kong. Until the present moment, Hong Kong is assessed to be at a low risk and is not a target for terrorist attack.
- The Police has already adopted effective measures to protect the organisations and persons which are more prone to be targetted, such as the Consulates and the staff.
- The Police has also reviewed all contingency measures and plans with the Security Bureau. All measures are in practice.
- Last year, the Police received 88 reports for potential terrorist activities. Among these, 74 were misunderstanding and 14 were malicious acts; none of the case was real. The Police arrested and charged a suspect for applying poison in food in a supermarket in late September.
- The Police works closely with other law enforcement agencies around the world and monitors the situation.
- Moreover, based on the Resolution 1333 of the United Nations, Hong Kong passed the legislative proceedings for imposing sanction on Afghanistan in mid-October.
- Regarding Resolution 1373 of the United Nations, the Security Bureau is now considering to legislate against terrorist activities, in order to fulfill the requirement of the Resolution.