

Information Paper
20 September 2006

LEGCO PANEL ON WELFARE SERVICES

Subcommittee on Strategy and Measures to Tackle Family Violence

Update of the Police Improvement Measures on Handling Domestic Violence

INTRODUCTION

Further to the paper setting out the improvement measures to be implemented by Police on the handling of domestic violence prepared for discussion for the Subcommittee meeting held on 28 March 2006 (LC Paper No. CB(2)1439/05-06(01)), a supplementary information paper (LC Paper No. CB(2)2389/05-06(01)) expanding on specific issues as requested by the Chairman of the Subcommittee was further prepared for another meeting held on 15 June 2006. This Information Paper sets out the latest position.

LATEST POSITION

Training

2. A new training package on handling domestic violence has been rolled out to all police officers since the commencement of the training day cycle in July 2006. During the seven Train-the-Trainers workshops jointly conducted by the Force Training Officers and officers

from the Child Protection Policy Unit in July, over 600 formation trainers have been trained and the Forcewide training for frontline officers will be completed in October 2006.

3. The training aims at equipping officers with the knowledge and skills in completing the Emergency Referral Questionnaire (ERQ) through scenario-based exercises, discussions and actual practices. It also focuses on the attitude, skills and roles to be played by police officers during the process of conflict management. The importance of awareness of family dynamics and victim's psychology as well as sensitivity in handling victims' family have been re-emphasized in the newly devised training package.

4. Another important feature of the training is the focus on cross fertilization. In addition to having featured in the training video, field sharing with clinical psychologist and social workers during the training workshops have also been emphasized and it was very well received. Feedback from our frontline officers was very positive that the training package had further enhanced multi-disciplinary collaboration and service interface with victims.

5. With the growing demand in professional competence in the handling of domestic violence possible, training needs and gaps would be continuously reviewed and identified.

Enhanced Documentation

6. The enhancements in the police electronic information system to facilitate the electronic inputting of information on the ERQ and Action Checklist into the Central Domestic Violence Database (CDVD) have been completed.

7. It includes the installation of an alert mechanism in the CDVD to automatically generate an alert on repetitive cases occurring within a short period of time to the attention of supervisory officers. The enhanced version stands ready for rollout in line with other measures.

Designated Domestic Violence Investigation Unit

8. The feasibility study into the setting up of a designated domestic violence investigation capability has been completed after a Forcewide consultation exercise. Basically a new investigative framework built on a three-tiered structure will be introduced. The structure provides a graded response by investigation units at different levels according to the seriousness of the case as well as taking into consideration the degree of risk factors in the family.

9. Designated units would be set up at District level to investigate serious domestic violence reports and would be in a position to assist the District Management in the monitoring of the local domestic violence situation. The number of designated units and its size are to be decided by District Commanders subject to local needs.

10. A designated training programme will be provided for officers of the designated units focusing on the dynamics of domestic violence, behavioural patterns, treatment needs of involved parties, the handling and interviewing techniques of vulnerable witnesses as well as the importance of victims' care and service interface with the welfare units.

11. In addition to assigning the investigation of serious cases to designated units, repeated miscellaneous cases (non-crime) currently handled by the Uniform Branch will be taken up by Divisional Investigation Teams. The Uniform Branch officers will only handle non-repetitive miscellaneous cases.

12. To complement the three-tiered investigation structure and to overcome some of the complications arising from different units handling different cases arising from the same family, a 'One Family One Team' approach will be adopted. The same investigation unit, be it the designated unit or the divisional investigation team, will take over all subsequent cases involving the same family until all outstanding cases

have been concluded and investigation curtailed. The rationale is to provide a more co-ordinated approach as familiarity with the background of the family would enhance the investigation unit's capability in identifying high risk factors within the family to benefit early intervention.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

13. To whole package of improvement measures would be ready for implementation in late October upon conclusion of the whole training cycle.

14. To conclude, the effectiveness of the package of improvement measures which is devised to improve initial Police response as well as subsequent investigation would be closely monitored and reviewed.

Hong Kong Police
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