

For information  
on 7 February 2012

## **Legislative Council Panel on Security**

### **Police Review of Policing Arrangements during Visits of Political Dignitaries to Hong Kong**

#### **Purpose**

Following the visit of Vice Premier LI Keqiang to Hong Kong in August 2011, the Police have conducted a Review of the policing arrangements in relation to the visit (the Review). The detailed findings of the Review are at **Annex** for members' reference.

#### **The Review**

2. With the ultimate responsibility for ensuring the personal safety of visiting dignitaries, it is also the Police's responsibility to facilitate peaceful demonstrations that may occur during such visits and take measures to balance the rights of all parties involved so as to ensure public safety, public order and to minimise any inconvenience caused to the community and at the same time protect the personal safety of the visiting dignitaries.

3. The visit of Vice Premier LI generated intense media interest and also attracted a number of demonstrations in which different groups took the opportunity to express their views. The Security Panel, at its meetings on 29 August 2011 and 12 September 2011, discussed Police's security arrangements in relation to the visit. The Panel accepted the Police's fulfilment of duty in respect of the protection of the safety of any political dignitaries visiting Hong Kong and maintenance of public order through professional judgments, appropriate arrangements and necessary measures in line with usual practices adopted internationally while safeguarding the freedom of speech and the right to press coverage. At the Panel meetings, the Police have undertaken to conduct a review on the arrangements to facilitate demonstrations and the work of the media as well as to enhance liaison and cooperation with external stakeholders during visits of political dignitaries in the future.

4. Therefore, the Review focuses on three areas including the Police's liaison with external stakeholders, liaison with the community and the media, and engagement with demonstrators. In reviewing these

areas, specific emphasis is placed on identifying areas of improvement that can be considered for policing similar protective security operations in the future, though noting that difficulties may arise in such engagement work due to time constraints related to the late announcement of such visits.

5. In conclusion, the Review sets out six main recommendations as the way forward for the Police to follow up in future operations:-

- a) keep in view more effective liaison channels with other affected Government Departments to further improve coordinated strategies to effectively manage future visits of dignitaries;
- b) achieve more effective expectation management strategies by considering systems of proactive community engagement with a view to garnering support and understanding of the policing measures needed to be implemented;
- c) formalise the roles, responsibilities and structure of Media Liaison Teams;
- d) ensure smooth interaction between Police Public Relations Branch and frontline units in the planning and execution of major operations;
- e) review the current training provided to frontline officers in the handling of the media to assess its suitability and effectiveness; and,
- f) work jointly with relevant external stakeholders on systems to ensure the development, and dissemination to all staff, including those of external stakeholders involved in executing the security arrangements, of agreed understandings of protocols and general operational principles reached during liaison with external stakeholders prior to security operations. This would include the appointment of senior responsible persons to assist in the development and dissemination of such understandings.

6. The conclusion of this protective security operation provides an opportunity for the Police to take stock and look back to identify areas where improvements can be made for the future. The Police will take note of the areas identified for improvement and follow up on the recommendations of the Review in policing similar security operations in future in order to provide the highest levels of service to the community.

**Security Bureau**  
**Hong Kong Police Force**

**February 2012**

## **Police Review of the Policing Arrangements for the Visit of Vice Premier LI Keqiang**

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

1. This Review is of the policing arrangements in connection with the visit to the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) of Mr LI Keqiang, Vice Premier of the State Council of the Central People's Government (CPG).

2. The visit took place between Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> August and Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> August 2011 during which time the Vice Premier resided at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Wan Chai. As part of his pre announced official program the Vice Premier visited the following venues: -

- a) Government House;
- b) Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre;
- c) Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing Ltd;
- d) Hong Kong Monetary Authority;
- e) Vocational Training Council Pok Fu Lam Complex;
- f) University of Hong Kong; and,
- g) New Central Government Offices.

3. In addition to the venues listed above, the Vice Premier also made unannounced visits to: -

- a) Wong Cho Tong Social Service Building;
- b) Housing Authority Headquarters;
- c) Laguna City;
- d) Ping Tin Estate; and,
- e) Liaison Office of the Central People's Government.

4. The visit of Vice Premier LI generated intense media interest and also attracted a number of demonstrations in which different

groups took the opportunity to air their grievances. These demonstrations, as well as the movements of the Vice Premier during his stay were very widely covered by the media.

5. The Hong Kong Police Force had the sole responsibility during the visit of ensuring the personal safety of the Vice Premier. In addition to this the Police were also responsible for maintaining law and order in and around the venues which he visited as well as facilitating peaceful demonstrations. It must be emphasised however, that the policing of visits of dignitaries such as Vice Premier LI differ from the policing of regular demonstration activities in the HKSAR. This is primarily due to the fact that where risk assessments show that there is a threat against visiting dignitaries, special measures have to be implemented to ensure their personal safety.

6. This Review focuses on three areas including the Police's liaison with external stakeholders, liaison with the community and the media and engagement with demonstrators. In reviewing these areas, specific emphasis is placed on identifying areas of improvement that can be considered for policing similar protective security operations in the future.

## II. LIAISON WITH EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

7. In the case of a visit by a dignitary to the HKSAR, the role of the Police is one of a supporting nature to facilitate the event rather than being the prime organiser or initiator. There are inevitably a great deal of other stakeholders involved and, generally, the more complex the nature of the event, the greater the number of external stakeholders involved. For the visit by Vice Premier LI Keqiang, he was a guest of the HKSAR Government and so there were many different Government departments involved but there were also many non-governmental bodies too, in particular those controlling the venues that the Vice Premier visited.

8. This section of the Review looks at the different stakeholders involved outside of the Police, how those stakeholders were interacted with and any room for improvement in the processes involved.

### **Stakeholders Involved**

9. The visit of the Vice Premier was coordinated by the HKSAR Government but there was significant involvement in the visit by those outside of the Government too, most notably the organisations that controlled the venues visited by the Vice Premier. The list below shows all the organisations in control of venues who the Police engaged in the course of preparations for the visit and their role: -

<u>Organisation</u>	<u>Role</u>
Hong Kong Airport Authority	As the point of arrival and departure
Grand Hyatt Hotel, Wan Chai	Residence of the Vice Premier during his visit
Wong Cho Tong Social Service Building	Hosted a visit by the Vice Premier

Housing Authority	Hosted a visit by the Vice Premier
Laguna City Estate Management	A flat visited by the Vice Premier
Ping Tin Estate Management	A flat visited by the Vice Premier
Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre	Forum on the National 12 <sup>th</sup> Five-Year Plan Contract Signing Ceremony for Mainland and Hong Kong Cooperation Ceremony for the Issue of Renminbi Sovereign Bonds in Hong Kong
Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing Limited	Hosted a visit by the Vice Premier
Hong Kong Monetary Authority	Hosted a visit by the Vice Premier
Vocational Training Council Pok Fu Lam Complex	Hosted a visit by the Vice Premier
University of Hong Kong	Centenary Celebration Ceremony
Liaison Office of the Central People's Government	Hosted a visit by the Vice Premier
New Central Government Offices	Opening Ceremony

### **Process of Liaison**

10. It was necessary for the Police to engage each of the above stakeholders to ensure that appropriate security arrangements for each aspect of the visit were also put in place. Such engagement would have included details for the arrival and departure, routes to be taken by the Vice Premier, security measures to be implemented in various areas and an agreement on the division of responsibilities. If the host

organisation is a private organisation, it is necessary for that private organisation to take the lead in making the security arrangements, with Police assistance, to the satisfaction of all parties.

11. For the visit of a dignitary, the Police will be responsible for the personal safety of the dignitary within any premises that a dignitary visits and liaison will be conducted with the host organisations first. Later arrangements will be made for joint meetings with the local Police District who would be responsible for security outside of the premises, for handling any demonstration activities and to manage traffic and pedestrian flow in the vicinity so as to minimise the impact of the visit on the community.

12. Engagement of this nature is not usually possible until the itinerary of a visit has been confirmed and upon the release of the itinerary by the HKSAR Government. This being the case, Police liaison with external stakeholders is inevitably late in the day and the timing of such is beyond the Police's control, often resulting in meetings being conducted and arrangements made at short notice.

13. In some cases, liaison with external stakeholders during dignitary visits, and indeed other events, can be very smooth because the stakeholders concerned have experience of such visits and liaison is usually an affirmation of previously agreed protocols. This was the case for a number of the venues and organisations involved on this occasion too such as the Airport Authority, the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre and the Grand Hyatt Hotel, all of whom have had experience of working with the Police in similar visits previously and all of whom knew from experience what their role would be and what the Police would do.

14. For some of the organisations though, this was either the first time they had been involved in such a visit or they had little experience in dealing with visits of a similar nature. For them, the process of working with the Police to agree on a delineation of responsibilities was unfamiliar as they had little experience on a daily basis of such matters. Given the time pressures involved, which most were not accustomed to dealing with, the absence of a suitable period to study and absorb what

was required of them meant that their arrangements for their involvement in the visit of the Vice Premier were reliant on Police support, assistance and advice.

15. This type of liaison does not end with pre-event meetings though and, to ensure the joint objectives are met, must continue throughout the event itself and may also include a 'washup' meeting afterwards to identify best practices and ground for improvement in future events. In this regard, it is important for both the Police and the external stakeholder to nominate senior responsible persons who are familiar with the event and the agreed protocols and principles to be available and in close contact throughout all the phases of the event. This ensures that common understanding remains just that, that any incidents occurring can be quickly discussed and a solution identified and also allows senior responsible persons from all stakeholders ready access to one another.

### **Liaison with the University of Hong Kong**

16. Given the controversy surrounding agreements made with the University of Hong Kong, it is necessary to document the process of liaison here from the Police perspective. Three meetings, plus working level contacts and site visits for familiarisation purposes, were held between the Police and the University management. The three meetings were held on the 4<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> August.

17. In the meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> August the University presented its plans for a restricted zone (into which only authorised persons and vehicles would be admitted), traffic arrangements, arrangements for entering the venue of the ceremony and measures to accommodate demonstration activities. Given that the University is a private place, it was agreed that University security staff would take initial action to implement these traffic and security measures and to handle any demonstration activity that might possibly occur, whilst the Police would provide assistance when there was a breach of the peace or when there was a request from the University.

18. The meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> August was used to fine tune some of the arrangements previously discussed whilst the University also expressed its concern that it might not be able to field sufficient security staff necessary for the protection of dignitaries and to deal with the demonstration activities that might possibly occur. The Police agreed that they would take appropriate action to assist the University under prevailing circumstances at the time.

19. Following the release, on the Internet, of details of demonstration activities planned for the visit of the Vice Premier, an urgent meeting was held on 17<sup>th</sup> August, the day before the visit. The main focus of this meeting was concern that the area chosen by the demonstrators for the said demonstration activities, the Swire Bridge, was unsuitable for such as it was a viaduct with a narrow pedestrian walkway and low railing and any confrontation there between demonstrators and security staff would be hazardous to both parties. To ensure the safety of both the demonstrators and security staff, it was agreed by the Police and the University that the Swire Bridge was not suitable for demonstration activities. It was agreed that the 'restricted zone' would be expanded to include this location whilst arrangements to accommodate demonstrations nearby were also agreed. The Police recommended to the University that additional security staff would be necessary but the University stated that they did not have adequate security staff and so the Police agreed that they would take appropriate action to assist under prevailing circumstances at the time.

20. Following these meetings the University produced two maps, one after the first and one after the second meeting, whilst the Police themselves produced a map after the third meeting to show the revised arrangements agreed upon.

### **Principles of Liaison**

21. It is of great importance in any liaison with external stakeholders that a joint and clear understanding between the parties is developed on general agreements made on arrangements and any delineation of responsibilities as well as principles decided upon through the liaison process. The development of common

understandings on these principles is of vital importance in both the planning and execution phases of operations and as has been mentioned earlier designated responsible persons from all parties must be fully aware of such common understandings and be in close contact at all times. Such understandings should also include a procedure for the Police to provide assistance and the extent of assistance under different circumstances.

22. The agreed understandings on operational protocols and procedures must also be clearly explained to all staff involved in the operation so that each of them understands who is responsible for what and the clear delineation of responsibilities. This is a very important concept and ensuring that there is an agreed understanding and the dissemination of salient points to all necessary parties should be put in place and implemented for future events to avoid any misunderstanding on respective roles.

## **Conclusion**

23. The Police have a role to provide appropriate security for visiting dignitaries but, where the dignitary is hosted by a private organisation on private premises, more coordination and cooperation is required to provide such security. In this regard, it is necessary that the private organisation takes the lead in making security arrangements, with Police assistance, to the satisfaction of all parties. Liaison with all stakeholders concerned is necessary to achieve the purpose.

24. Liaison with external stakeholders in connection with the visit of Vice Premier LI Keqiang was held by and large without any undue problems surfacing although liaison with the University of Hong Kong revealed some misunderstandings of what was to happen. The importance of the development of clear and common understandings of the operational protocols and principles cannot be underestimated and to assist in the development and execution of these understandings, dedicated senior responsible persons from all parties, who are conversant with the understandings, must be appointed to maintain close contact with each other during all phases of the event.

Dissemination of understandings reached, for example to security staff and users of the University, may also have avoided any misunderstandings of where demonstration activities were to be facilitated or who was to be responsible for what.

25. Whilst it is recommended that further exploration of how to ensure more robust systems to ensure the development and dissemination of agreed understandings of protocols and general operational principles are put in place for future operations, it should also be noted that the time pressures involved in some events such as dignitary visits could mean that problems will still surface. This is especially so when external stakeholders are unfamiliar with what is required of them and lack the resources or knowledge to effectively assume responsibility for security measures on their own, private, premises.

### **III. COMMUNITY AND THE MEDIA**

26. The visit of dignitaries to the HKSAR generates intense media interest not only in the visit itself but also in the demonstration activities that can be associated with the visit. Visits also impact upon the community in two main areas. Firstly through the intense media coverage, such visits can generate a great deal of interest within the community and secondly through the physical impact on local communities from the movements and itinerary of dignitaries and the management of demonstration activities associated with such visits.

27. The visit of Vice Premier LI Keqiang was no exception to this and the fact that he is a high ranking member of the CPG created even more interest in the visit from members of the local media.

28. The Police place enormous importance on maintaining efficient and effective working relations with members of the media in order to facilitate their work. This is equally true during major operations such as the visit of Vice Premier LI Keqiang.

29. This section of the Review explores both community engagement and the Police's engagement and facilitation of the media both prior to and during the policing operation and identifies room for improvement.

#### **The Community**

##### **Objectives of Community Engagement**

30. For any events and / or incidents that impact upon the community it is important to have a strategy in place to engage and enlighten the community on the event and / or incident so that they are aware of what will happen and how it will affect them. In this way they will be better prepared and the impact of the event / incident upon them may be lessened.

31. With this in mind, the objectives and benefits of a pre planned community engagement strategy could include: -

- a) garnering community support for, and tolerance of, possible inconvenience caused by measures designed to ensure the smooth running of the event;
- b) engendering understanding and cooperation of affected parties within the community;
- c) raising the awareness within the community of Police policies and procedures in relation to the event;
- d) clarifying directly with the community misconceptions and refuting erroneous reports;
- e) notifying the community in a timely manner of any special traffic arrangements; and,
- f) updating the community regularly on Police actions in relation to the event that may arouse public interest.

### Role of the Police in Community Engagement

32. In coordinating the visit of Vice Premier LI, the Police were one of a number of stakeholders within the HKSAR Government, albeit one with the sole responsibility of ensuring the personal safety of the Vice Premier. In this regard, the Police have a major role in managing the expectations of the community regarding the security arrangements related to the visit. This is especially so in relation to the disruption that may be caused by measures implemented by the Police to ensure that high levels of security are maintained. As well as this, there is a need to ensure an understanding of the actions that the Police take during the visit.

33. In this respect, within the Police there should be two levels of engagement; the first at the strategic level to the community as a whole, which should be executed by the Police Public Relations Branch (PPRB); and the second level should be at the local level through the Police Community Relations Office (PCRO), which should be addressing the

community through local and neighbourhood groups, and preparing them for the impacts of the visit.

34. However, due largely to the time constraints of this visit, community engagement was not fully pursued by the Police and thus the objectives outlined previously in this section could not be wholly achieved.

### Community Expectation Management

35. Expectation management forms the cornerstone of community engagement and is an area that must be addressed in devising any strategy of engagement. Through effective expectation management tools, the community can be prepared for the impacts that can result from protective security operations. Such impacts can be inconvenience through the implementation of special traffic arrangements or the control of footbridges through to the impact upon the community of news reports such as those which resulted from this visit on the management of demonstration and the facilitation of media coverage. Additionally through expectation management the community can be made aware of the need to implement special measures to ensure the personal safety of dignitaries.

36. Such expectation management tools arise largely through communication channels and can take the form of briefings such as those provided before fireworks displays to announce special arrangements for the operation.

37. In addition to actual briefings, other channels of communications can also be utilised such as announcements through the mass media and releases on the Police Public Page in order to reach out to the community as a whole. Consideration for the use of such channels should be given in future operations.

### **Media Facilitation**

#### The Role of the Information Services Department

38. The Police are just one of a number of stakeholders within the

HKSAR Government which had responsibilities for the visit of Vice Premier LI. This was certainly the case for media relations where the Information Services Department (ISD) was also involved.

39. As has been mentioned, the visit of a dignitary of the status and position of Vice Premier LI generated intense media interest and in this regard an effective strategy for facilitating the work of the media was vital. It is of great importance that the Police work closely with ISD to develop such a strategy which should extend to pre visit engagement as well as facilitation of the work of the media during the visit.

40. Obviously a visit of this nature will, and did, generate intense media interest both within and outside venues. The facilitation of the media is equally important in both areas and as a result the Police could have worked more closely with ISD in developing a Government media strategy that would have covered both inside and outside venues. In particular, the facilitation of media activities outside of the venues should be part of an overall strategy in media relations and this should not have been in isolation from the way that the media were handled inside venues.

#### The Role of the Police Public Relations Branch

41. PPRB is the lead unit within the Police for maintaining effective and efficient relations with the media. In this respect PPRB could have played a more prominent role in both the planning and execution of this policing operation. However although PPRB were represented during the planning stage of the visit and Media Liaison Teams (MLTs) were deployed during the execution (as will be discussed later in this section), its role in the policing operation was limited.

42. With the benefit of hindsight and the intense media interest which the visit of Vice Premier LI generated, PPRB could have played a more important role in the overall management of the policing operation. While ISD coordinates the overall strategy to facilitate the work of the media, PPRB can contribute by playing a more proactive role in engaging the media to enhance their understanding on the

impact and rationale of the Police's security arrangements, particularly in on-the-ground situations. PPRB's involvement should have been from the very beginning of the planning stage, extending to pre visit engagement of media organisations, to managing expectations before and during the visit and facilitating the work of the media on the ground.

43. The proactive involvement of PPRB in the planning and execution of operations of this nature would also provide frontline Police commanders with the perspective of the media as well as overall Government strategy on media relations when formulating and executing their plans. This would assist in such areas as the designation and management of Designated Press Areas (DPAs) and providing commanders with a better understanding of the needs of the media.

#### Media Relations Strategy

44. A comprehensive media relations strategy is a central element to the success of any major operation. For this policing operation a separate media relations strategy was not established as it was anticipated that existing mechanisms with relation to the Police's media relations would be adequate.

45. Such a specific strategy should be designed to supplement the operational deployment of the Police and dovetail with the overall Government strategy. It could contain the following elements: -

- a) to ensure a coordinated media response within the Police in line with the overall Government strategy;
- b) to inform the public on the impact and rationale for the security arrangements, management of demonstration activities and traffic management;
- c) to respond to anticipated media enquiries in relation to the arrangements set out in (b) above and to ensure that such enquiries are dealt with efficiently; and,

- d) to advise on the handling of major incidents and concerns in relation to the Police operation.

46. Having such a strategy in place prior to an operation of this nature would ensure that the Police are better prepared to respond to, and work with the media during the operation. However it should be noted that the short notice often associated with the formal announcement of visits such as Vice Premier LI's and the need to maintain an appropriate degree of confidentiality on the information related to the visit are factors that will affect the formulation and implementation of such a strategy.

### Media Engagement and Expectation Management

47. Prior to the visit of the Vice Premier there was no early engagement of the media by PPRB. This was primarily due to the short notice of the visit and the lateness in the announcement of the Vice Premier's program. Such early engagement would have been effective in ensuring that the media were aware of what to expect in relation to the operation and the arrangements that would be put in place.

48. Proactive engagement of the media both prior to and during any major operation is an important tool in building mutual trust and co-operation as well as managing expectations. Such engagement could take the form of media briefings by the Police and other key stakeholders prior to the commencement of the visit. These could be used to inform members of the media on arrangements in place for media coverage of the visit and how they would be affected. This would also provide media organisations with an opportunity to express their expectations and requirements which the Police and other key stakeholders could endeavour to meet subject to the constraints of the operation in question.

49. This engagement and management of expectations can be continued through to the execution phase of operations through regular media briefings such as 'end of day' briefings by the Police and other key stakeholders where updates on the day's activities and details of

future activities could be provided. This again would be a positive initiative in maintaining effective relations and ensuring that members of the media were kept aware of activities and incidents. This would also be an effective expectation management tool in that advance notice on arrangements for media coverage could be provided.

50. Whilst there may be limitations in such engagement due to factors such as short notice and restrictions on what information can be released for security reasons, it is an area of engagement that can be further explored for future similar operations.

### Designated Press Areas

51. In order to facilitate the work of the media, it is a common practice for the Police to set up DPAs in the vicinity of activities and / or incidents which attract media interest. In relation to the visit of Vice Premier LI Keqiang these included both the movements and activities of the Vice Premier as well as demonstration activities associated with the visit.

52. There are additional factors that have to be considered in the setting up of DPAs during protective security operations due to the risks and threats associated with a dignitary. In this regard the Police have to balance the need to facilitate the work of the media with the need to ensure that the proximity of unscreened persons and the congregation of large numbers of people do not in themselves pose security risks or threats.

53. In order to achieve this balance, operational commanders identified locations for DPAs outside the different venues<sup>1</sup> visited by Vice Premier LI in areas that best afforded views of his arrival at the venues but at the same time allowed for a buffer area between the DPA and the Vice Premier himself. Where necessary, DPAs were also identified in areas in close proximity to Designated Public Activity Areas (DPAAs) so that media coverage of demonstration activities could be facilitated.

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<sup>1</sup> Media coverage inside the venues is the responsibility of the organisers

54. For the visit of the Vice Premier, the District Commanders of the scheduled locations which were visited made the decision for the sites where DPAs were established based on a number of factors including, but not limited to: -

- a) the need to facilitate the work of the media;
- b) the location of the security zones;
- c) the physical and geographical layout of the locations; and,
- d) the need to minimise obstruction to other members of the community.

55. It should also be noted that some DPAs were situated in relatively close proximity within the security zone to where the Vice Premier's motorcade would arrive / depart a venue and in these circumstances the risk to the motorcade is at its greatest due to the fact that the motorcade would be moving slowly. The setting up of the DPAs at these locations were to provide the media with a vantage point in order to cover the arrival / departure of the Vice Premier. However in such circumstances in order to facilitate this and allow members of the media to congregate in locations of such close proximity, arrangements including a search and verifying the identities of members of the media were necessary.

56. In such circumstances a quick search of belongings, including checks of equipment and articles carried by members of the media to ensure that they were bona fide would be sufficient unless the suspicions of officers were aroused in which case a more detailed search would be required. It should also be noted that the requirement for searches were not made for members of the public who could freely move in the same areas as the DPAs were set due to the fact that such persons were not permitted to congregate in the area nor remain there prior to the departure / arrival of the Vice Premier's motorcade and as such they did not pose the same security risks.

57. In identifying the locations for DPAs, Police commanders considered locations from a security perspective, amongst other factors. This was correct in light of the nature of the operation and to ensure

that any risks to the safety of both the Vice Premier and the community were minimised. However PPRB were not consulted on the locations. Had PPRB been consulted, input from the perspective of the media as well as the overall Government strategy on media relations could have been obtained which would have allowed commanders greater assistance. This is an area that should be further explored in future.

58. Another area related to the setting up of DPAs in future operations is exploring with other key stakeholders the feasibility of implementing a pre registration system. Such a system is already in place and administered by ISD for members of the media to enter venues attended by dignitaries. For future operations consideration may be given to establishing DPAs even closer to venues / locations (where it is geographically possible) and allowing members of the media to pre register their details and be subject to searches in order to enter such DPAs. Such pre registration and searches could minimise security concerns and further facilitate the work of the media. Obviously, such a system of pre registration would not be applicable to unannounced visits by dignitaries as the details of such visits would not be announced in advance.

### Media Liaison Teams

59. During the visit of Vice Premier LI, PPRB deployed a total of three MLTs during the execution phase of the operation. The MLTs, comprising one Inspectorate and two Junior Police officers from PPRB operated on the ground at venues which Vice Premier LI visited as part of his program. It should be noted that they were not deployed at venues which were visited as part of unannounced visits due to the requirement to keep the details of these visits confidential and on a 'need to know' basis.

60. The role of the MLTs was to support the policing operation by playing a mediating role between the Police and the media, resolving differences, minimising misunderstandings and avoiding unnecessary conflicts. In this regard the deployment of MLTs is regarded as a successful initiative as it creates a liaison and communications channel with the media on the ground. It also relieves frontline officers of this

role.

61. During the course of the operation, MLTs closely monitored the DPAs in support of frontline officers. Requests for assistance in media relations from frontline officers were made on a few occasions during the course of the operation over relatively minor disagreements and difficulties and these were all resolved. It should be noted that no complaints were made to the MLTs by members of the media at DPAs at venues where MLTs were deployed.

62. There is no doubt that the deployment of Police officers attached to PPRB to form MLTs to take up a media liaison role on the ground is an effective initiative that relieves, to a degree, the responsibilities of frontline Police officers in media relations. However the limitations of the MLTs are reflected by the fact that only three teams could be deployed, due to the scarcity of resources of PPRB. Additionally MLTs are not, nor should they be, responsible for the management of DPAs and it is the responsibilities of frontline Police officers to ensure that order is maintained there.

63. Based on the experiences garnered from this operation, there is scope for exploring the future deployment of MLTs. This could include formalising their structure and deployment as well as finding ways in which to increase their capacity through identification of non PPRB officers who may have experience in media handling. Such experience is vital in the liaison role which MLTs are required to undertake. Consideration may also be given to exploring, with ISD, future joint cooperation measures between the MLTs and ISD that may be implemented dependant on the particular nature of the operation being conducted.

64. The absence of MLTs from unannounced visits is also another area that warrants further consideration. Whilst the primary reason for their absence was due to the need to keep unannounced visits confidential, it was apparent from this operation that members of the media covered the unannounced visits as well. This meant that the role of liaison with the media for these visits was left to frontline officers. This was not an ideal situation as MLTs are better suited to such a role

and in future, consideration should be given to attaching a MLT to assist in unannounced visits to facilitate media coverage.

### Media Facilitation by Frontline Officers

65. As has been discussed in the previous section, MLTs have a very important role in media liaison on the ground during operations such as this and are vital in their capabilities to support frontline commanders. However due to the resource limitations of MLTs and the fact that they were not always deployed during this operation there were instances where media facilitation was handled by frontline officers as well as officers from the PCRO.

66. The responsibilities of the Police in facilitating the work of the media are clearly stated in the Force Procedures Manual. These provisions state that the Police should facilitate the media to film, record or take photographs and opportunities should be provided to the media to get to vantage points to do so. In order to achieve this, the Police should maintain a relationship with the media that is based on mutual respect and understanding. In achieving this understanding and respect it is of great importance that frontline officers understand their roles and responsibilities in relation to working with the media.

67. A consideration for future operations where intense media interest is anticipated is the identification and training of District officers normally working in support roles to be deployed as Media Liaison Officers in support of frontline officers and to supplement the deployment of MLTs. Such officers could provide support in facilitating the work of the media and liaising with them on the ground. It would also take such responsibilities away from frontline duties. However it should be emphasised that if District officers are to be used in this role, they should not have any other commitments to the operation, as this would inhibit them in this role.

68. The deployment of frontline officers in liaising with members of the media should be carefully considered and where possible, their primary functions in relation to interacting with the media should be

confined to maintaining order and, during protective security operations, ensuring that the presence of members of the media at locations in close proximity to the dignitary do not pose security risks. For these duties it is essential that officers are properly and clearly briefed on their roles and responsibilities and what is required of them.

### Media Training for Frontline Officers

69. In terms of training to frontline officers in media facilitation and relations, no specific training in this area was conducted for this operation prior to its commencement. However the Police do invest training resources in the field of media relations and facilitation through a number of initiatives for officers at various ranks.

70. This training includes jointly organised workshops by PPRB and the Police College with an external consultancy to annually provide training to officers from the rank of Constable to Chief Superintendent. PPRB also runs an annual five day training course for new PCRO staff which includes a two day module on media handling conducted by the same external consultancy.

71. In addition to these workshops and courses, PPRB runs regular training on the Police's Public Relations Strategy and working with the media to recruits under training and during promotion and command courses which are run for officers ranked between Sergeant and Superintendent. As well as this a Force Training Day Package on 'Working with the Media' was also rolled out in June 2011 and training provided to officers between July and August 2011.

72. The training provided by the Police is designed to enhance officers' understanding on how to build a constructive working relationship with the media and enable them to apply the skills and techniques in working with the media that they have learnt in real situations.

73. The level of media training given to Police officers is extensive and is provided to officers from the rank of Recruit Constable to Chief Superintendent. However in light of the experiences gained during

this operation, it would be opportune for the Police to conduct a review of the content and syllabi of the training to assess where improvements can be made to achieve the Police's goal of maintaining a relationship with the media that is based on mutual respect and understanding.

### The Changing Face of the Media

74. The visit of Vice Premier LI also highlighted the changing face of the media in the HKSAR and the difficulties that the Police can have in identifying bona fide members of the media and thus facilitating their work.

75. The media in the HKSAR have always been extensive and numerous. There has never been a single organisation that all media agencies subscribe to and which can verify the identity of all members of the media. In the HKSAR there are a number of media organisations such as the Hong Kong Journalists' Association, the Hong Kong Press Photographers' Association, the Hong Kong Federation of Journalists and the Hong Kong News Executives' Association which some, but not all news agencies or individual members of the media are members of. There is also emergence of more and more freelance members of the media including the relatively new phenomena of 'net' reporters. This makes verification of bona fide members of the media more difficult as there is no 'universal' media accreditation.

76. In protective security operations, the lack of a universal method to verify the bona fides members of the media as well as the growing number of freelance and 'net' reporters creates difficulties for the Police in identifying bona fide member of the media and thus facilitating their work. This means that it is not always possible to ensure that all persons entering DPAs are bona fide members of the media. As a result more stringent measures such as checking the identity of persons entering the DPAs and conducting searches of belongings are needed to ensure that those entering the DPAs are there for valid reasons.

77. In light of the lack of a universal verification system to identify members of the media, there is scope to further explore this

issue in conjunction with other key stakeholders to see if there are any solutions which would allow for a verification system to be set up which would be able to allay security concerns in allowing members of the media closer access to dignitaries.

## **Conclusion**

78. Community engagement is a very important and powerful expectation management tool to ensure an understanding of the impacts of a visit by a dignitary and the associated special measures that have to be put in place to ensure their personal safety. For the visit of Vice Premier LI, due largely to the short notice of the confirmation of the visit, it was a tool that was not fully utilised. However it is a tool that should be considered for future similar visits and Police operations. Such expectation management tools can take the form of briefings as well as other channels of communications such as announcements through the mass media and releases on the Police Public Page.

79. In formulating community engagement strategies the issue of the amount of information that can be provided must also be borne in mind. This is due to security concerns and the need to maintain a degree of confidentiality regarding the movements and activities of the dignitary and the measures put in place to ensure his / her personal safety. This ensures groups or individuals that may pose a threat to the dignitary are deprived of information on the dignitary's itinerary until the latest possible moment.

80. In relation to the media, the Police are, and will continue to be, committed to maintaining efficient and effective working relations with members of the media in order to facilitate their work. It is to the mutual benefit of both the Police and the media that both work together to ensure that such relationships are maintained. Whilst the Police fully respect the freedoms and rights of the media in covering incidents and events of interest, it must also be accepted that for visits of dignitaries who are deemed to have threats against them, measures must be put in place to ensure their personal safety, and these measures will affect the access that the media have to the dignitaries.

81. For the visit of Vice Premier LI accredited members of the media who had access to venues visited by the Vice Premier were subject to security screening. For those members of the media covering events outside the venues DPAs were established and because in some instances the DPAs were in close proximity to areas where the Vice Premier passed, measures such as the checking of identities and belongings were implemented. Such measures were put in place to minimise any threat against the Vice Premier and were reasonable in light of the risk assessment.

82. This section of the Review however, has highlighted areas of the Police's relations with the media where improvements can be made and these have already commenced through interactions with media organisations after the visit. Amongst the areas which can be considered for improvement is for the Police to work more closely with ISD in developing a Government media strategy for visits such as these. This would help to ensure a consistent and all encompassing approach to facilitating the work of the media both inside and outside venues.

83. PPRB, as the Police's media relations unit, can in future play a more proactive role in the planning and execution of similar operations in support of the overall Government media strategy. This could be done both internally through providing a media perspective to operational commanders in working out their plans and how the media may be facilitated and externally through engagement of the media to manage expectations and increase understanding. During the execution phase, whilst the deployment of MLTs was a successful initiative, their roles and responsibilities should be formalised and consideration be given to expanding their capacity by identifying more officers able to fulfil such a role.

84. Efforts should also made to work with key stakeholders to attempt to explore solutions that would allow for a verification system to be set up for members of the media which would aid the Police in identifying bona fide members of the media and thus facilitating their work. This could at the same time offer such verified bona fide members of the media increased access during operations. Media involvement could also be sought in enhancing the training which is

provided to Police officers in media relations and the facilitation of the media on the ground including the management of DPAs, so as to provide an even more balanced approach. In this way, the concerns and needs of the media in their relations with the Police and vice versa, can also be explored and addressed.

## **IV. ENGAGEMENT WITH DEMONSTRATORS**

85. The Bill of Rights and the Basic Law both guarantee the right to demonstrate in the HKSAR and, in accordance with this, the Police will facilitate all peaceful demonstrations. Notwithstanding this, the Police also have a duty to protect the safety, rights and freedoms of others and so facilitation of demonstration activities needs to be balanced with this.

86. There are numerous demonstrations in the HKSAR each week ranging from lone protestors to highly organised processions involving thousands of marchers and the vast majority of them are peaceful. Using this peaceful norm as a starting mark, the Police will endeavour to facilitate any peaceful demonstrations that they become aware of in such a way as to allow the demonstrators to achieve their objectives of raising awareness of their cause or making the target of their demonstrations aware of their concerns.

87. During the course of Vice Premier LI's visit the Police facilitated twenty-seven separate visit related demonstration activities. These demonstrations included those that were: -

- a) directed against his presence or person;
- b) conducted to bring his attention to a particular cause; and / or,
- c) conducted in the vicinity of locations where he was physically present.

88. This section of the Review looks at how the Police facilitate demonstration activities through engagement with demonstrators both prior to an event and during any actual demonstrations.

### **Police Community Relations Office**

89. Staff of the PCRO are tasked with engaging members of the community on all matters so as to retain a harmonious relationship within the District in which they work. Given their knowledge of

personalities within their Districts, and that many demonstration activities are initiated by known personalities such as community leaders, PCRO staff will usually be the ones to engage demonstration leaders or organisers to facilitate their aims.

90. Notice or information that a demonstration is to be held invariably comes from members of the community or when a notification of a demonstration activity is made to the Police in accordance with provisions of the Public Order Ordinance. Upon receipt of such information, PCRO staff will risk assess the information and then contact demonstration organisers with a view to discussing the details of the demonstration and, where necessary, to arrange a meeting to negotiate the terms and conditions that may be applied to the demonstration. In cases where the risk assessment indicates that the demonstration activity will not cause any undue obstruction or problems then liaison may be limited to a telephone call.

91. During the visit of Vice Premier LI, there was only one notification received under the Public Order Ordinance that a visit related demonstration activity was to be held although there were several events about which information was received by the PCRO staff. In almost all of these cases the risk assessments did not indicate that there would be any problems and so the established role of the PCRO in the early engagement of demonstrators was limited largely to telephone liaison.

### **Public Events Liaison Office**

92. With the growing complexity of demonstrations in the HKSAR and the fact that many demonstrators are not now only community based, the Public Events Liaison Office (PELO) was established recently to strike up a relationship with the non-community based demonstrators with a view to facilitating their activities in the same way that PCRO staff ordinarily do with community based groups.

93. During the visit of the Vice Premier, there were no demonstrations mounted by any of the established non-community

based groups and so PELO was unable to establish communication with a view to facilitating their demonstrations.

### **Facilitation during the Visit**

94. Given that, for most demonstrations, there was no notification or informal information regarding planned demonstrations beforehand, there was limited opportunity to engage demonstrators to facilitate their activities. This meant that the best opportunity to engage and facilitate demonstrators was 'on the ground' once their activities were under way or when the demonstrators were making their way to their chosen locations. Given the uncertainties involved, it was not always possible to have PCRO staff on hand to engage demonstrators in the first instance and so the first Police officers to come across demonstrators had to take up the task.

95. The locations of DPAAAs for the visit of the Vice Premier were chosen by Police commanders prior to the event based on what they believed would offer the best facilitation for demonstrators taking into account the security measures needed for the Vice Premier's protection. Ideally these locations could have been discussed with demonstrators beforehand had the Police been able to identify any with sufficient advance notice but as this was not the case the selection of DPAAAs was done in good faith in preparation for demonstrations. Upon meeting demonstrators approaching venues where the Vice Premier was, Police officers engaged demonstrators and, in most cases, were able to accommodate their activities either in the planned DPAAAs or in other locations that assumed the same purpose at the time.

96. One example of a DPAA that was planned beforehand by the Police and subsequently used by demonstrators was the one outside Central Plaza in Wan Chai. In the morning of demonstration activities, PCRO staff met a demonstration organiser and introduced the pre-planned DPAA to him which was found acceptable and so used. Later in the day a group of demonstrators were met near to the residence of the Vice Premier and then escorted to the same DPAA where they also continued their demonstration. An example of a demonstration being facilitated other than in a planned DPAA was a

group that was met on a footbridge leading to the New Central Government Offices who chose not to move to the DPAA and so held their demonstration on the footbridge itself. In both cases, on the ground engagement by PCRO and uniformed officers led to demonstrators' aims being met and the peaceful conclusion of their demonstration.

### **'No Surprise' Communications Philosophy**

97. In addition to engaging demonstrators with a view to facilitating their activities, engagement serves another important purpose and that is to help them understand the Police's position in regard to the demonstration activities. No two demonstrations are alike and so the policing response to a demonstration will be unique notwithstanding that there will be common traits throughout. The policing of a demonstration being held in parallel with a protective security operation will obviously need to be handled differently to a demonstration held by itself.

98. The visit of Vice Premier LI Keqiang was a protective security operation and so the facilitation of demonstrations needed to be made with the security concerns of the Vice Premier in mind. Whilst under ordinary circumstances DPAAAs and processions could have been allowed very close to the intended object of the demonstration, this was not possible for the Vice Premier's visit because of security concerns and so needed to be located further away. Whilst the demonstrators may not have necessarily intended to cause any harm, their presence in large numbers could have provided a target, cover or chaos for those with harmful intent.

99. The engagement process works both ways and it is also possible for the Police to learn from the demonstrators what their objectives and intentions are. This mutual understanding will lead to a communications philosophy that involves 'no surprises'.

100. The visit of the Vice Premier, involving as it did an assessed security risk, was an ideal opportunity for the 'no surprise communications philosophy' to be put into practice so that

demonstrators understood more of the rationale behind the measures that were implemented.

101. For demonstration activities that are notifiable and notified to the Police under the Public Order Ordinance, details of conditions for the activity are communicated to the organisers of the activity through the 'Letter of No Objection' which is issued by the Police and this is an effective communications tool. Though there are instances when either the activity is not notifiable or not notified and it is in these instances where more could have been done to implement a 'no surprise' communications philosophy.

102. Whilst most demonstrations during the Vice Premier's visit passed off without confrontation, Police engagement with demonstrators was limited largely to identifying protest areas and numbers of demonstrators involved. The result was that the 'no surprise' communications philosophy was not implemented as fully as it might have been.

103. In addition to seeking out and engaging demonstrators more proactively, general information on need to maintain public safety, public order and to minimise any inconvenience caused to the community which are the ultimate objectives of the Police in managing demonstration activities could have been made better known to all potential demonstrators through the use of the Internet or groups commonly associated with demonstration activity. The objectives of the 'no surprise' communication philosophy could, at least in part, have been met during the Vice Premier's visit through the use of the Police Public Page. Simple messages for one and all to read might have given demonstrators a better understanding of the ultimate Police objectives at the various venues that the Vice Premier visited.

## **Conclusion**

104. It is expected that any high profile dignitary visiting the HKSAR will be the subject of some demonstrations, either taking advantage of the publicity surrounding the visit or because the dignitary may have some involvement with or influence over an issue

that the demonstrators feel strongly about. The visit of Vice Premier LI was no exception to this and demonstrators from many backgrounds and causes staged demonstration activities to coincide with his visits throughout his stay.

105. The Police are committed to facilitating all peaceful demonstrations and to achieve such an aim will always engage demonstrators before and during demonstrations. Engagement allows for confidence to be built up between all sides and for a greater understanding of respective positions and so every effort needs to be made to ensure that the engagement is successful. It was unfortunate that, during the visit of the Vice Premier, it was not possible to identify all demonstration groups beforehand and put this concept into practice. A more proactive engagement policy might have addressed this.

106. In addition to allowing negotiations to facilitate the demonstration, engagement also allows the Police to get their message across to demonstrators regarding the ultimate objectives of maintaining public safety, public order and to minimise any inconvenience caused to the community. This 'no surprise' communications philosophy has benefits for all parties involved and should be pursued as proactively as possible.

107. The engagement of demonstrators in high profile protective security operations should not be limited to confirming participant numbers and locations but should also include proactive engagement regarding the Police's policy and ultimate objectives.

108. The Police Public Page is just one option for dissemination of general information and, in lieu of direct engagement, should be considered more widely in future operations. This is a common practice in overseas jurisdictions as is, for example, the use of 'Twitter' to regularly update the public on demonstration activities and any policing measures to be applied to them.

## **V. WAY FORWARD**

109. In achieving the objective of ensuring the personal safety of Vice Premier LI Keqiang during his visit to the HKSAR, the Police facilitated a large number of visits to different locations and demonstration activities. This Review aims to study the operation from a forward looking perspective in order to identify areas, and recommend measures, for improvement in policing similar protective security operations in the future.

110. Whilst acknowledging that every Police operation is different and must be planned and executed on its own merits, it must be emphasised that the policing of protective security operations differ from the policing of regular demonstration activities in the HKSAR. This is primarily due to the fact that where risk assessments show that there is a threat against the visiting dignitary, special measures have to be implemented to ensure his / her personal safety. Such measures will impact upon the community, though it is the responsibility of the Police to try to minimise such impacts.

111. This section of the Review identifies areas where improvements can be considered to systems adopted by the Police. In doing so the Police can continue to evolve to ensure it meets the ever increasing challenges of policing such major operations.

### **Visit Management**

112. In managing visits of dignitaries such as Vice Premier LI's numerous internal and external stakeholders are involved. The Police are just one stakeholder, albeit a large one, and cannot work in isolation from other stakeholders. In this regard the Police can do more to work closely with other Government stakeholders to develop strategies to ensure that a coordinated approach is adopted by all parties in managing such visits. This is especially so in the fields of community and media engagement which have direct consequences in mitigating the impacts of such visits and the disruption which has the potential to

be caused as a result of the special measures that have to be implemented.

113. Prior to future operations, the Police should identify the relevant departments with responsibility for managing the visit and have discussions with them at an early stage to develop coordinated strategies and plans to manage the visit and mitigate the impacts which the visit may have on different sectors of the community.

### **External Stakeholders Liaison**

114. The lack of common understandings on the general operational principles agreed upon by stakeholders can create confusion and uncertainties. Whilst the dissemination of such understandings also needs to be balanced in protective security operations with the need to maintain high levels of confidentiality, if there was a common understanding of agreed operational principles and these were clearly disseminated to staff, including those of external stakeholders involved in executing the security arrangements, the potential for confusion and uncertainty may be lessened.

115. The Police should work with external stakeholders, on how to put in place more robust systems to ensure the development and dissemination to staff, including those of external stakeholders involved in executing the security arrangements, of agreed understandings of protocols and general operational principles reached through liaison with external stakeholders in future similar operations. To assist in the development and execution of these understandings, dedicated senior responsible persons from all parties, who are conversant with the understandings, must also be appointed to maintain close contact with each other during all phases of the event. Although there will be hurdles to overcome such as the need for confidentiality and time constraints, implementing such systems could be beneficial to both the Police and the external stakeholders.

### **Expectation Management**

116. Expectation management is a very important tool in garnering support and understanding from affected parties. For operations such

as the one conducted for the visit of Vice Premier LI the most likely parties to be affected by any special measures that need to be implemented to ensure his personal safety are the community in general, the media and demonstration groups.

117. Strategies are needed for expectation management and must be woven into the fabric of the planning and execution of such operations and proactively pursued. The more effective the engagement, the more the different parties will be aware of the disruption and special measures that are required and as such the impact and consequences may be lessened. Such proactive engagement could be through direct dialogue or indirectly through the Internet or media releases and appeals.

118. However it is important to highlight the fact that for protective security operations, such proactive engagement to achieve expectation management has to be balanced with the need to maintain a high degree of confidentiality to ensure that the dignitary is not exposed to unnecessary risks or threats. There is also an added complication in that due to the often late notice of the formal announcements of such visits, there is very little time left to effectively engage the different parties.

119. In future the Police should study how best to implement strategies to manage expectations through a policy of proactive engagement.

### **Operational Media Liaison and Training**

120. The media play a vital role in the HKSAR in keeping the community informed and updated on newsworthy stories. The Police are, and continue to be, fully committed to facilitating the work of the media. This operation highlighted the need to have robust and effective liaison channels established with the media both prior to, and during, operations of this nature.

121. This operation showed that although the role of MLTs is extremely important, their impact can be limited. In order to capitalise

on their potential, a review should be conducted to formalise their structure, roles and responsibilities. To address the scarcity of resources within PPRB in manning the MLTs, further exploration is also needed to identify suitable non PPRB staff, who may have experience in media handling, to supplement the pool of officers available to be deployed as MLTs.

122. The review should also address PPRB's role in operational planning and execution of such operations and how they interact with frontline units in order to maximize their experience and knowledge in media handling and the assistance which can be provided to frontline units.

123. The Police also invest a great deal of resources in media training for officers of ranks from Recruit Constable to Chief Superintendent. With the lessons learnt from this operation it would be opportune to conduct a review of the effectiveness and relevance of the training material and whether it is what is needed by frontline officers. The media themselves could also be engaged to gain their input and perspective.

## **Conclusion**

124. As with other major operations, the conclusion of the policing operation for the visit of Vice Premier LI provides an opportunity for the Police to take stock and look back to try to identify areas where improvements can be made for the future.

125. Whilst the policing arrangements for this visit were of a similar nature to previous protective security operations there can always be room for improvement. In order to continue to evolve as a highly professional and efficient organisation and to continue to provide the highest levels of service to the community at large, the Police, in addition to taking stock of the areas for improvement identified within this Review, should also:-

- a) keep in view more effective liaison channels with other affected Government Departments to

- further improve coordinated strategies to effectively manage future visits of dignitaries;
- b) achieve more effective expectation management strategies by considering systems of proactive community engagement with a view to garnering support and understanding of the policing measures needed to be implemented;
  - c) formalise the roles, responsibilities and structure of MLTs;
  - d) ensure smooth interaction between PPRB and frontline units in the planning and execution of major operations;
  - e) review the current training provided to frontline officers in the handling of the media to assess its suitability and effectiveness; and,
  - f) work jointly with relevant external stakeholders on systems to ensure the development, and dissemination to all staff, including those of external stakeholders involved in executing the security arrangements, of agreed understandings of protocols and general operational principles reached during liaison with external stakeholders prior to security operations. This would include the appointment of senior responsible persons to assist in the development and dissemination of such understandings.

**Hong Kong Police Force**  
**February 2012**