

**For information
on 4 July 2012**

**Legislative Council Panel on Security
Security Bureau's work plan for the year ahead**

This note elaborates on the Security Bureau (SB)'s initiatives in the year ahead.

Policy Objective

2. SB is responsible for a wide range of policy portfolios, from maintaining law and order, exercising effective and efficient immigration and customs control, providing swift and reliable emergency fire and rescue services and providing rehabilitation services to offenders and drug abusers. Hong Kong is one of the safest cities in the world, with a low crime rate and good social order. We shall continue to listen to people's views, improve our services, and maintain a free, open and secure society.

3. SB's major policy initiatives for the year ahead are set out in the ensuing paragraphs.

Major Initiatives

Measures to tackle Mainland pregnant women giving birth in Hong Kong

4. The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) has implemented a number of policy measures to ensure that Hong Kong pregnant women are given priority for proper obstetric services and neonatal services, whilst limiting the number of non-local pregnant women coming to Hong Kong to give birth to a level that can be supported by our healthcare system. From immigration control perspective, the Immigration Department (ImmD) has enhanced immigration control measures in support of the arrangements for delivery quota of local hospitals for non-local pregnant women and confirmation certificate since December 2011. Non-local women at an advanced stage of pregnancy (in particular 28 weeks or more) are required to have confirmation certificate and produce it to ImmD officers when entering Hong Kong. Those who

cannot produce a booking certificate may be refused entry. Besides, the ImmD has been relaying information of Mainland pregnant women having been refused entry to Mainland authorities, so as to deter them from the dangerous behaviour of seeking emergency admission to Hong Kong hospitals shortly before labour.

5. Furthermore, the ImmD has enhanced their operation and enforcement strategies through intelligence and data collection; and has stepped up prosecutions and removals against overstaying Mainland women and combating illicit middleman. From October 2011 to May 2012, the ImmD has prosecuted some 300 Mainland pregnant women who had overstayed in Hong Kong. The ImmD and the Police also prosecuted seven illicit middlemen who had assisted Mainland pregnant women to give birth in Hong Kong, and they were all found guilty and sentenced to imprisonment.

6. With these enhanced measures, the number of Mainland pregnant women (with no obstetric booking) gate-crashing Accident and Emergency Departments (A&ED) of local hospitals has significantly dropped from the peak of a monthly average of 150 in the last four months in 2011 to a monthly average of 80 from January to April this year. In May 2012, the number further dropped to 45, following the fee adjustment for emergency delivery by non-local women via A&ED from \$48,000 to \$90,000. The ImmD will continue to closely monitor the situation and enhance the control measures and joint operations with other government departments against illegal activities when necessary.

Immigration facilitation for visitors and cross-boundary students

7. The number of visitors arriving Hong Kong has continued to grow over the past few years. In 2011, the total number of visitor arrivals reached 41.9 million, representing a 16% increase from 2010. The increase is particularly significant among Mainland visitors. The ImmD has introduced the Mainland frequent visitor e-Channel service at major control points by phases since this January. As at mid June 2012, more than 210 000 eligible Mainland frequent visitors have enrolled for using the e-Channel service, with 3.4 million usage registered. The ImmD is in close liaison with Mainland authorities with a view to further extending the service to Mainland visitors, hence to enhance efficiency at control points.

8. To augment the handling capacity of existing cross-boundary control points, we are carrying out improvement works at Man Kam To

(MKT) and Lok Ma Chau (LMC) control points. The works for MKT are expected to be completed in 2012, with the number of e-Channels to be increased by 100% from 9 to 18. As for LMC control point, the works are expected to be completed by 2013, with the number of e-Channels to be increased significantly from 20 to 43.

9. At present, the LMC control point provides 24-hour clearance service. In the first quarter of 2012, the average daily number of passengers recorded in the overnight period (i.e. from midnight to 6:30 a.m.) is 13 100, representing 17% of the daily passenger traffic. We will continue to closely monitor the passenger demand and review the operation hours of the control points from time to time.

10. In the years ahead, the HKSAR Government and the relevant Mainland counterparts will establish new control point facilitation to further promote cross-boundary passenger and cargo flow, including the New Cruise Terminal at Kai Tak in mid-2013, the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link in 2015, Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge in 2016 and Liantang/Heung Yuen Wai by 2018.

11. The HKSAR Government is now making necessary preparation for the transportation of cross-boundary students (CBS) in the 2012/13 school year. As the capacity of Lo Wu Road for school and nanny buses has reached its limit, the Government is carrying out improvement works at LMC Spur Line and LMC control points to enhance the handling capacity for CBS therein by 2 500 by the 2012/13 school year. In addition, trial run for on-board clearance for CBS was launched at Lok Ma Chau control point in mid June 2012 with a view to fully implementing it in this September.

12. The ImmD will continue to make use of information technology and flexibly deploy its manpower to cope with the increase in passenger traffic. In the 2012-13 financial year, the ImmD has increased 93 posts at control points.

13. Furthermore, based on the principle of reciprocity, the HKSAR Government will further streamline the entry arrangements for Taiwan residents by allowing them to make online prior entry registration on their own. Starting from 1 September this year, eligible Taiwan residents (i.e. visitors who are born in Taiwan or have visited Hong Kong as Taiwan residents) may make prior entry registration at ImmD's website free of charge. The registrants will be notified of the result instantly, and may come to Hong Kong with self-printed valid notification slip and valid travel

document issued by the Taiwan authorities. Such visitors will be given permission to land if normal immigration requirements are met. Same as the existing arrangement for iPermit issued through authorised agents, Taiwan residents with completed prior entry registration may enter Hong Kong twice during the two-month validity period, with a stay of 30 days on each entry. The ImmD is currently working on the system enhancement and testing, and will announce details of the arrangement as soon as possible.

Reduction of the Frontier Closed Area

14. The Government announced in 2008 to substantially reduce the land area of the Frontier Closed Area (FCA) from about 2 800 hectares to about 400 hectares, and to construct a secondary boundary fence along the existing boundary patrol road to maintain the security of the reduced FCA. With the FCA reduced, those living and working in the previously closed areas would enjoy easier access. Members of the public may also visit these areas without any restriction.

15. The reduction of FCA is implemented in three stages. The construction works for the first stage (including “Mai Po to Lok Ma Chau Control Point Section” and “Lin Ma Hang to Sha Tak Kok Section”) have been completed. Following an amendment to the Frontier Closed Area Order, the reduced FCA coverage for the two Sections came into effect on 15 February 2012. The construction works for the second stage of the FCA reduction (“Lok Ma Chau Control Point to Ng Tung River Section”) are expected to be completed in December 2012. We plan to further amend the Frontier Closed Area Order in early 2013 to implement the second stage of the reduction of FCA.

16. The construction works for the third stage (“Ng Tung River to Lin Ma Hang Section”) have started, and are expected to be completed by the first quarter of 2015. We will make further legislative amendments to complete the entire FCA reduction programme.

Implementation of recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force

17. As a member of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), Hong Kong is committed to implementing the international anti-money laundering (AML) and counter financing of terrorism (CFT) standards promulgated by FATF. The Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau is

the overall coordinator in relation to AML/CFT policies, and has on 1 April 2012 brought into effect requirements under the Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorist Financing (Financial Institutions) Ordinance (Cap. 615). SB hopes that the United Nations (Anti-Terrorism Measures) (Amendment) Bill 2012 will be passed by the Legislative Council (LegCo) in this legislative session. Furthermore, SB is responsible for implementing FATF's Recommendations in relation to (a) the detection of physical cross-boundary transportation of currency and bearer negotiable instruments, and (b) the AML/CFT requirements concerning customer due diligence and record-keeping among Designated Non-financial Businesses and Professions (DNFBPs)¹.

18. In line with Hong Kong's obligation to implement the FATF requirements, we have conducted early assessment of the issues which need to be tackled having regard to the unique circumstances in Hong Kong. We are now mapping out the plan for taking forward measures to enable Hong Kong's compliance with relevant recommendations and will engage and consult relevant stakeholders in the process. We will also consult the Security Panel as and when appropriate.

Torture claims

19. Since December 2009, the ImmD has resumed the screening of torture claims made under the United Nations Convention Against Torture under an enhanced administrative mechanism. The ImmD has already screened over 1 800 claims under the enhanced mechanism. At present, there are still some 5 800 claims pending screening. We hope that the Immigration (Amendment) Ordinance 2011 will be passed by LegCo in this legislative session to provide a legal basis for the mechanism. We believe that the statutory scheme will strike a balance between achieving fair screening and preventing abuses.

Sexual Conviction Record Check Scheme

20. The Law Reform Commission (LRC), after conducting thorough studies and public consultation, published a report on "Sexual Offences Records Checks for Child-related Work: Interim Proposals" in February 2010, recommending the Administration to establish an administrative mechanism for sexual offences records checks. We have accepted the

¹ DNFBPs include accountants, dealers in precious metals and precious stones, estate agents, lawyers and trust and company service providers.

LRC's recommendation and have implemented on 1 December 2011 through the Police the Sexual Conviction Record Check (SCRC) scheme whereby the employers of organisations or enterprises of persons undertaking child or mentally incapacitated person (MIP)-related work to check whether their prospective employees have any criminal conviction records against a specified list of sexual offences. The purpose of the scheme is to enhance protection for children and MIPs against sexual assaults. The scheme has received overwhelming response since its implementation. The operation of the scheme has also been smooth. In the first six months since its implementation, the SCRC Office has processed 10 665 applications for checking.

21. SB and the Police will conduct a review of the operation of the scheme. The scope of the review will include employers and prospective employees' comments on using the scheme, the operation of the Auto-Telephone Answering System, and whether there is a need to make adjustment to the operation of the scheme. We will also review the feasibility and impact of expanding the scope of the scheme to cover existing employees and improving the system operation of the scheme. In addition, the LRC would further consider whether a comprehensive legislative scheme should be introduced. We will review the way forward of the scheme by making reference to LRC's recommendations and taking into account the practical experiences obtained during the implementation of the scheme.

Anti-drug efforts

22. The concerted efforts of the Government and different sectors of the community in recent years have helped to arrest the deterioration in the problem of youth drug abuse, with the number of reported drug abusers declining by about 19% from 14 241 in 2008 to 11 469 in 2011, and the number of reported young drug abusers dropping by about 42% from the peak of 3 474 to 2 006 in the same period.

23. Nevertheless we should remain vigilant, particularly as the prevalence of psychotropic drugs has made it more difficult to detect drug abuse behaviour resulting in serious, sometimes irreversible, harm to those who abuse such drugs.

24. On the preventive education front, in addition to the 45 secondary schools which had joined in the 2011/12 school year, we will continue to promote to other schools the Healthy School Programme with a

drug testing component, a school-based initiative aiming at fostering a drug-free culture at schools through programmes promoting positive value and healthy living among students and voluntary drug testing.

25. We had, in June 2012, briefed the Security Panel on our plan to launch a public consultation exercise by end 2012 on whether and, if so, how a community-based drug testing system of should be implemented. Meanwhile, in view of the possible concern about the rights of individuals, the Administration has already engaged in informal dialogue with major stakeholders.

26. The Government will continue to implement anti-drug measures along the established strategic directions, namely community mobilisation, community support, drug testing, rehabilitation and law enforcement to combat youth drug abuse.

Continued enhancement of emergency rescue and ambulance services

27. To meet expectations from the community, we will continue to make the best use of resources and improve emergency rescue and ambulance services. Subject to the Panel's support, we will seek funding from the Finance Committee (FC) to construct an ambulance depot at Sheung Shui in late 2012/early 2013 to meet increasing needs in the concerned area. The Fire Services Department also plans to develop a computer system which will enable the provision of more comprehensive and suitable post-dispatch advice to callers of emergency ambulance services. Efforts will also be made to replace fire-fighting vehicles reaching the limit of their serviceable life to maintain the department's operational efficiency and safety of frontline staff.

Admission of talent

28. To complement Hong Kong's economic development, we will take account of the recommendation of the Steering Committee on Population Policy Progress Report 2012 and review the various talent admission arrangements. For example, we will analyze the profile of admitted talents and improve the talent admission arrangements, with a view to enhancing Hong Kong's position in the global competition for talents. In addition, we have undertaken to conduct a comprehensive review on the Capital Investment Entrant Scheme (CIES) in 2013 to ensure

the CIES remains valid and continues to serve the overall development needs of Hong Kong.

Continued search for long-term solutions to address the problems of outdated facilities and overcrowding in some of our panel institutions

29. We will continue to consider redevelopment projects and improvement works to address the problem of ageing penal facilities and meet the custodial and rehabilitative service needs of offenders. Subject to funding approval of the FC, we will take forward the redevelopment works of the Tai Lam Centre for Women in the coming year. Efforts will continue to be made to enhance other penal facilities, such as refurbishment of some of the rehabilitation facilities at Pik Uk Prison, improvement of workshop facilities at Hei Ling Chau Drug Addiction Treatment Centre and upgrading of security-related facilities at Siu Lam Psychiatric Centre.

Security Bureau
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