

For discussion  
on 31 March 1999

**Legislative Council Panel on Security**  
**Office Automation for Hong Kong Police Force**

**Purpose**

This paper informs Members of the Office Automation (OA) programme for the Hong Kong Police Force (the Force) and elaborates on its interface with the Force's Information Technology Strategy (ITS).

**Office Automation**

2. In September 1993, the Government initiated a programme to improve the office efficiency and productivity of government offices by introducing OA network systems across policy bureaux and departments. In his Policy Address 1997, the Chief Executive has pledged to extend the OA programme to cover the entire Government by December 2000. So far, 22 policy bureaux and 29 departments have their OA network systems installed and in operation.
3. Under the OA programme, officers on or above Master Pay Scale Point 45 or equivalent, their secretaries and heads of functional units

such as the general registry will be provided with a personal computer and a local printer to connect to the Local Area Networks (LANs). Each personal computer will have software for electronic mail, word processing, spreadsheet, database management, graphic presentation, etc. The LAN at the headquarters of departments will be connected to the Government Communication Network (GCN) for communication with other bureaux and departments.

4. Specifically, the OA network system for the Force includes:
  - a) installation of LANs in 136 locations covering the Police headquarters, regions, districts, divisions and offices;
  - b) upgrading of 294 existing personal computers and installation of 1,346 additional personal computers and 123 additional file servers to provide a total of 1,640 workstations for all senior officers;
  - c) access to the GCN through the LANs for electronic mail communication and information exchange / sharing with other policy bureaux and departments;
  - d) access to the Government Common Application System (GCAS) for sharing of data management and retrieval of commonly used information and documents; and

- e) provision of Internet browsing and mail facilities for information search and external communication.

**Benefits of Office Automation**

5. The OA network system will bring about the following benefits to the Force:

- a) enabling more efficient communication and exchange of information locally and with overseas counterparts, thus facilitating the process of decisions making;
- b) improving communication between all Police units and other policy bureaux/departments through connection to the GCN;
- c) allowing more comprehensive, accurate and timely management of information;
- d) eliminating repetitive and time consuming manual duplication of records and subsequent distribution of paper; and
- e) facilitating the delivery of information and services to the public in the handling of their enquiries, requests and reports, for example, communication between the public and the Police Public Relations Branch could be enhanced through the use of e-mail.

6. A notional 1% saving in staff costs of those with direct access to the OA system arising from improved efficiency and productivity gain would amount to about \$19.5 million a year. There will also be an annual saving of about \$229,000 in the consumption of paper in the department.

### **Information Technology Strategy**

7. In parallel with the planning of the OA network, the Police Force has been implementing a five-year Information Technology Strategy (ITS) which is scheduled to be completed by September 1999. The ITS comprises a total of 26 new computer systems (Annex) which are of strategic importance in meeting the business requirements of the Force in maintaining law and order in Hong Kong. An OA element was not included in ITS as the former was a separate Government-wide project.

8. The implementation of the current ITS has enhanced the efficiency of the Force by streamlining procedures and facilitating sharing of information. It has brought about improvements in services provided to the public, such as improving success in crime detection through enhancing fingerprint matching process and facilitating fast retrieval of criminal records; releasing more Police officers from office / station duties to front-line operational duties; shortening the processing time for licence applications; and shortening the processing time for traffic accident enquiries and the time for compiling statistics on traffic accidents.

9. It is anticipated that 585 posts can be saved upon completion of the current ITS. The estimated savings in total annual staff costs are over \$210 million. Up to now, staff savings of 584 posts have already been achieved.

10. It is important for the Force to keep in pace with technological advancement and to respond to changes in a proactive manner. The Police have therefore commissioned a consultancy to conduct a review of the current ITS. The review is expected to complete in April 1999. The thrust of the review is to enable front-line Police officers to have greater online access to the Force's information systems, thereby enhancing efficiency of operations.

### **Interface between the two systems**

11. Following the implementation of ITS, a network infrastructure i.e. the Police Data Network (PDN), has been established in the Force to interconnect the existing and new ITS systems and to enable a single point of access to these strategic systems through the user's desktop workstation. It provides foundation for the OA network system to be built upon with lower networking and communication costs, ease of management over a common hardware and software platform, and greater reliability to the users. In addition, the integrated environment will also allow the 1,640 OA users to extend their reach to the information stored in the computer systems of the

Force much easier when the use of information technology in the Force increases.

### **Implementation**

12. The Police OA project will be implemented over a period of 24 months at a total cost of \$179,174,000. Similar to the arrangement in other departments, appropriate training will be provided to all OA eligible users in utilising allocated facilities and software. This ensures that senior officers in the Force will be able to communicate with policy bureaux and departments as uses of electronic mail are becoming a Government wide practice for exchanging information.

### **Conclusion**

13. Subject to Members' views, we will prepare a submission to the Finance Committee to seek approval for the required funding in the current legislative session.

Security Bureau  
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**Progress Summary of Information Technology Strategy Projects**  
(as at 22 March 1999)

<b><u>System</u></b>	<b><u>Current Status</u></b>
<b>(A) Communal Information Systems</b>	
1. Formation Information Communal System	LIVE
2. Regional Information Communal System	LIVE
3. Headquarters Information Communal System	In development
<b>(B) Force Criminal Investigation Support System</b>	
4. Computer Assisted Fingerprint Identification System Phase II	LIVE
5. Commercial Crime Fraud Investigation System	LIVE
6. Facial Identification	In development
7. Photo Album	In development
8. Modus Operandi Computer System	LIVE
9. Extension of Major Incident Investigation & Disaster Support System	Deleted*
10. Records Management System	In development
<b>(C) Force Operational Support Systems</b>	
11. Traffic Operations & Management System	LIVE
12. Transport Management Information System	In development
13. Central Licensing and Registration	LIVE
14. Force Mapping	LIVE
<b>(D) Force Administrative Support Systems</b>	
15. Personnel Information Communal System	LIVE
16. Accounting & Financial Management System	LIVE

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\* Upon further examination, it is considered that the present system has capacity to cope with existing and projected demand.

17.	Allowance Processing System	LIVE
18.	Leave Recording System	LIVE
<b>(E) Free Standing Systems</b>		
19.	Police Training School Exam Marking	LIVE
20.	Police Stores System	In development
21.	Marine Police Launch Management System	LIVE
22.	Auxiliary Police Management System	LIVE
23.	Security Wing	LIVE
24.	Planning & Development Branch	LIVE
<b>(F) Police Data Communication Network</b>		
25.	Police Data Network	LIVE
26.	Police E-mail Network	LIVE