

**LegCo Panel on Security –
Subcommittee on Indebtedness of Police Officers**

**The Administration's response to issues
raised by Members at the meeting on 5 October 1999**

Experience sharing session

With regard to Members' suggestion of arranging an experience sharing session with Police officers with / had been with unmanageable debts, the Force Management have sought assistance from the Junior Police Officers' Association to appeal to its members to join the session with the subcommittee. However, no officer has, so far, volunteered to do so.

Number of Police officers interviewed

2. The total number of Police officers who were interviewed in the Formation level in relation to their financial position in the past three years is 2,297, with breakdown as follows –

Reasons for conducting interviews	1997	1998	1999 (Jan –Sep)
Tax recovery notice	569	522	351
Enquiry letters from financial companies	152	237	229
Tax recovery notice and enquiry letters from financial companies	68	94	75
Total	789	853	655

Other measures to tackle the problem of Police indebtedness

3. As regards whether the Force Management can legally obtain information on the financial position of Police officers who are believed to have financial difficulties, legal advice has confirmed that by virtue of section 30 of the Police Force Ordinance (Cap. 232) (Annex), a Police officer is required to answer questions relating to his duty asked of him by his superior and has a duty to assist in Police investigations. He has to answer questions, including those related to his indebtedness, put to him in an investigation even if the answers might lead to his being subject to disciplinary proceedings. A Police officer's right to silence during a disciplinary investigation, of which he is the subject, has been abrogated by necessary implication of section 30 of the Police Force Ordinance.

4. In addition, the Force Management is formulating new measures that can be taken to tackle the problem and will seek legal advice from the Department of Justice on the feasibility and legality of these proposals.

**Section 30, Police Force Ordinance (Cap. 232) –
Police officers to obey lawful orders**

Every police officer shall obey all lawful orders of his superior officers whether given verbally or in writing and shall obey and conform to police regulations and orders made under this Ordinance.