

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(2) 150/00-01
(These minutes have been seen by
the Administration and cleared
with the Chairman)

Ref : CB2/PL/SE/1

LegCo Panel on Security

**Minutes of special meeting
held on Thursday, 15 June 2000 at 2:30 pm
in Conference Room A of the Legislative Council Building**

Members present : Hon James TO Kun-sun (Chairman)
Hon Mrs Selina CHOW LIANG Shuk-ye, JP (Deputy Chairman)
Hon Albert HO Chun-yan
Dr Hon LUI Ming-wah, JP
Hon Gary CHENG Kai-nam, JP
Hon Howard YOUNG, JP
Hon LAU Kong-wah

Members absent : Hon David CHU Yu-lin
Hon CHEUNG Man-kwong
Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo

Public Officers attending : Item II
Mr J C F LEUNG
Assistant Director (Administration)
ICAC

Item III

Mr Raymond WONG
Deputy Secretary for Security 1
Security Bureau

Mrs Elizabeth S C YEUNG LAU
Principal Management Services Officer
Security Bureau

Mrs Elizabeth K W MA LO
Superintendent of Police (Licensing)
Hong Kong Police Force

Mr Edmond CHU
Senior Treasury Accountant (Finance Control)
Hong Kong Police Force

Mr KWOK Jing-keung, JP
Chief Fire Officer (Protection)
Licensing and Control
Fire Services Department

Mrs Christina LI
Deputy Department Secretary
Finance and Establishment
Fire Services Department

Mr LAI Tung-kwok
Assistant Director of Immigration
Personal Documentation
Immigration Department

Mr CHU Chan-pui
Department Secretary of Immigration
Immigration Department

Mr LUK Wai-hung
Staff Officer
Auxiliary Medical Service

Mr HO Kam-tim
Senior Operations and Training Officer
Civil Service Training and Administration
Auxiliary Medical Service

Item IV

Ms CHANG King-yiu
Deputy Secretary for Security 2

Mr KWOK Jing-keung, JP

Chief Fire Officer (Protection)
Licensing and Control
Fire Services Department

Mr K M LEE
Assistant Director
Port Control
Maine Department

Mr TSANG Hing-kam
Acting Assistant Commissioner
Customs & Excise Department

Item V

Mr Raymond WONG
Deputy Secretary for Security 1

Mr Keith KWOK, JP
Director of Finance
Administration & Planning
Hong Kong Police Force

Mr George LEUNG
Senior Systems Manager
Hong Kong Police Force

Item VI

Ms CHANG King-yiu
Deputy Secretary for Security 2

Mr PANG Sung-yuen, JP
Deputy Commissioner of Correctional Services
Correctional Services Department

Mr CHAN Chun-yan
Assistant Commissioner of Correctional Services (Operations)
Correctional Services Department

Mr FOO Tsun-kong
Regional Commander Marine,
Hong Kong Police Force

Mr LAM Chun-man, JP
Chief Fire Officer (Headquarters)

Fire Services Department

Clerk in attendance : Mrs Sharon TONG
Chief Assistant Secretary (2)1

Staff in attendance : Mr Stanley MA
Senior Assistant Secretary (2) 6

Action

I. Report of the Subcommittee on Emergency Ambulance Services
(LC Paper No. CB(2) 2270/99-00)

The Chairman invited members' comments on the report.

2. Mr Albert HO said that due to the late arrival of ambulance, a patient suffering from heart attack had died in the hospital this morning. He expressed concern about the serious delay in the provision of the emergency ambulance service (EAS), particularly those which had given rise to casualties. He asked whether the Administration had explained to the Subcommittee about the reasons for late arrival of ambulance.

3. The Chairman said that the Administration had provided the Subcommittee with statistics on response time performance of the EAS for the period from March 1999 to February 2000 for discussion on 23 May 2000. He recalled that only 1% of the emergency calls recorded during the period had a response time of exceeding 18 minutes. He added that late turn-outs of ambulances were due mainly to communication errors, traffic jams and rural areas without vehicular access. He suggested that the Administration should be asked to provide a report on the incident quoted by Mr HO.

4. Mr LAU Kong-wah enquired about the effect of including the response time of ambulance-aid motorcycles (AAMC) in the calculation of the overall EAS performance.

5. The Chairman said that according to the Administration's statistics covering the period from December 1999 to February 2000, 93.15% of the emergency calls were responded within the 12-minute response time target, and only 0.94% of the calls had to relay on AAMCs for fulfilling the response time target. The claim that inclusion of the response time of AAMC in calculating the overall performance of EAS would lead to a better overall response time performance was therefore not sustained.

6. Members had no further queries and endorsed the report of the Subcommittee.

II. Revision of fees and charges under the purview of the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC)
(LC Paper No. CB(2) 2269/99-00(01))

7. Mr LAU Kong-wah enquired about the basis for the calculation of the administrative overheads. He also asked why the production of copies of the video/audio tape had to be carried out by an Assistant Commission Against Corruption Officer.

8. Assistant Director (Administration) of ICAC (AD(A)/ICAC) said that the administrative overheads were calculated at 20% of the total material, staff, capital and accommodation costs incurred for the reproduction of a copy of video/audio tape, which were in line with the guidelines set by the Treasury. He added that given the confidential nature of ICAC investigations, such reproductions were required to be handled by an Assistant Commission Against Corruption Officer who was at the lowest rank of the professional grade.

9. In response to the Chairman, AD(A)/ICAC said that the income arising from reproducing copies of video/audio tape in the last year was around \$11,000. He added that ICAC would provide a duplicate copy to each interviewee at no charge.

10. Members had no objection to the proposed fee increases as the increases would only affect a small number of people.

III. Revision of fees and charges under the purview of the Security Bureau
(LC Paper No. CB(2) 2269/99-00(02))

11. At the Chairman's request, Deputy Secretary for Security 1 (DS for S1) introduced the Administration's paper. He pointed out that three of the sixty-five items, one on the licensing of massage establishment and two on the issue of Document of Identity, covered by the current fee revision exercise would be subject to further review. The Administration would consult the Panel after completion of the reviews. Meanwhile, these three items were excluded from the current fee revision exercise. Subject to members' endorsement, the Administration would implement the increases for those fees which could be effected by administrative measures and undertake preparatory work for the statutory fees, with a view to submitting the subsidiary legislation to the LegCo at the beginning of the next legislative session.

Issue of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Passport

12. Mr Howard YOUNG noted that the proposed percentages of adjustments for issue of HKSAR passports and delivery charges for overseas applicants were different. He enquired about the general principles for proposing the revised fees and charges.

13. In response, DS for S1 said that to achieve full cost recovery within a reasonable timeframe, the Administration proposed to revise the fees and charges on the following

basis -

- (a) the 12 items with an existing cost recovery rate of less than 40% would be increased by 20%;
- (b) the 14 items with an existing cost recovery rate of between 40% to 70% would be increased by 15%; and
- (c) the remaining 24 items with an existing cost recovery rate of over 70% would be increased by 10% or less.

14. Mr Howard YOUNG expressed reservations about the proposed revision of fees from \$280 to \$336 (an increase of 20%) and from \$400 to \$460 (an increase of 15%) for the issue of 32-page and 48-page HKSAR passports respectively. He asked about the fees for the issue of British National (Overseas) (BNO) passports with similar number of pages.

15. Assistant Director of Immigration (Personal Documentation) (AD/ImmD(PD)) responded that the current fees for the issue of a 32-page and 48-page BNO passport were \$610 and \$750 respectively.

16. Mr LAU Kong-wah said that a 20% increase in HKSAR passport fee would affect the livelihood of the majority of people. He enquired about the basis for the estimate of 378 000 applications in a year and asked whether the staff establishment, currently at an budget of \$149 million, for processing these applications would be adjusted in case the demand for HKSAR passports declined in the future.

17. AD/ImmD(PD) responded that applications for HKSAR passport had become stabilized and that the annual estimate of 378 000 applications was based on a daily average of 1 400 applications for 270 working days. He pointed out that around 5.5 million citizens in Hong Kong were eligible for HKSAR passport and so far about 1.1 million passports had been issued. He did not envisage that there would be an upsurge in the applications for HKSAR passport. Currently, around 279 staff members were engaged in the issue of HKSAR passport. He stressed that to ensure cost-effectiveness, the ImmD would redeploy its staff resources in the light of any change in the number of applications.

18. Mr LAU Kong-wah expressed reservations about the cost-effectiveness of a staff establishment of 279 to process 1 400 applications daily. The Chairman echoed the view of Mr LAU.

19. AD/ImmD(PD) explained that there were established security and administrative procedures for processing the applications and maintaining the production quality of the HKSAR passport to enhance international recognition. Apart from checking the authenticity of applicants' identities and the supporting documents, investigation would be initiated for any doubts in an application.

20. Mr Howard YOUNG asked about the locations for processing applications for

HKSAR passports. Department Secretary of Immigration (DS of Imm) responded that for security reasons, all applications for HKSAR passport were centrally processed in the Headquarters of the ImmD.

21. Dr LUI Ming-wah sought clarifications about the estimate of an annual depreciation of \$23 million in the ImmD. DS of Imm responded that the estimate was mainly reserved for the annual depreciation of computer and network equipment.

22. Mr LAU Kong-wah requested and the Administration agreed to provide a detailed breakdown of the costs for issue of a HKSAR passport.

(Post-meeting note : The Administration's response was forwarded to members vide Paper No. CB(2)2492/99-00(01) on 30 June 2000.)

Replacement of Hong Kong Identity Card (HKID)

23. Given an estimate of 171 000 cases of loss of HKID in a year, Mr Albert HO expressed reservations about the proposed increase from \$395 to \$435 for a replacement HKID. He considered that the proposal had a direct implication on people's livelihood.

24. AD/ImmD(PD) responded that Hong Kong residents were provided with a HKID card at no charge and should pay for the replacement card. He added that the proposal would only increase the cost recovery rate to 81%.

25. The Chairman pointed out that apart from carelessness, there were other reasons for loss of HKID, e.g. being victim of pickpocketing. He suggested that the Administration should consider progressive increase of fees for repeated replacement of HKID cards and that needy persons such as Comprehensive Society Security Assistance (CSSA) recipients should be given special consideration.

26. AD/ImmD(PD) said that increasing the level of fees for repeated loss of HKID card would carry a punitive implication in setting the level of government fees and charges. He added that CSSA recipients could apply to the Social Welfare Department for a waive of the replacement fee.

27. Despite the Administration's explanations, Mr Albert HO remained having reservations about the proposal.

Hiring charge for personnel and equipment of the Fire Services Department (FSD)

28. Mr LAU Kong-wah cited a reported incident where there was a delay in breaking into the flat which led to the untimely rescue of a man who had committed suicide because the subject's father was worried that a fee had to be paid for the break-in service by the FSD rescue team. He enquired about the criteria for charging a fee for hiring of fire services personnel and equipment.

29. Chief Fire Officer (Protection), Licensing and Control (CFO(P)LC) of the FSD

explained that for non-emergency situations, staff of FSD would confirm with the user on the hiring charge for the personnel and equipment before providing the services requested. No fee would be charged for cases requiring emergency services. As regards the case cited by Mr LAU Kong-wah, the FSD crew at scene had evaluated the situation and considered that it was only a case of dispute between family members. He agreed that the FSD crew should not mention the fee for paid services in such situation.

30. In response to the Chairman, CFO(P)LC said that the annual budget of 7 310 hours was mainly for the provision of firemen and equipment for location shootings and filming in response to applications from the film and entertainment industry.

Training course fees of the Auxiliary Medical Service (AMS)

31. Mr Albert HO enquired about the reason for the varying cost recovery percentages of the existing fees and charges. He expressed concern about the high cost of the various training courses offered by the AMS.

32. DS for S1 responded that because of historical reasons, the cost recovery percentage varied from item to item. For example, different items might have different timing for fee revision in the past. It was Government's policy to achieve full cost recovery for all fees and charges within a reasonable timeframe. On the level of fees set by AMS, he pointed out that participants of these courses were mainly from Government departments and government-related organizations operating under trading fund.

33. The Chairman enquired about the level of fees for similar training courses offered by other organizations such as the St. John Ambulance Brigade. Staff Officer of AMS (SO/AMS) responded that the difference in the level of fees could be attributed to the fact that AMS employed full-time civil servants while St. John Ambulance Brigade had volunteers to conduct the training.

34. In response to the Chairman's further questions, SO/AMS said that government departments and related organizations had the discretion in choosing the training courses offered by AMS or other organizations. So far, no complaint had been received about AMS's training fees.

35. Members had no query on the proposed revision of fees for other items. The Chairman asked the Administration to take note of members' comments on the proposed revision of fees for issue of HKSAR passport and replacement of HKID.

IV. Safe transportation of used vehicles and spares in containers (LC Paper No. CB(2) 2269/99-00(03))

36. At the Chairman's invitation, Deputy Secretary for Security 2 (DS for S2) briefed members on the salient points of the Administration's paper on "Regulation of transportation of used motorcycles/vehicles and related spare parts". She said that

four factors had attributed to explosions in the course of conveying used motorcycles and vehicles in containers, namely poor ventilation within the container or the transport vehicle, fuel residue left in the fuel tanks of the used motorcycles and vehicles, high temperature and friction between the used motorcycles and vehicles inside the container.

37. DS for S2 further said that the complexity of the issue was reflected by the diverse recommendations of the Coroner and The Ombudsman regarding the legislative approach. The Administration considered that instead of spending more time to re-examine the feasibility of resorting to the Road Traffic Ordinance (RTO) or the Dangerous Goods Ordinance as recommended by the Coroner and The Ombudsman respectively, the FSD could assist in the enforcement work by way of defining improper loading and conveyance of used motorcycles and related spare parts in enclosed containers as a fire hazard. Subject to confirmation by the legal adviser, the loading and conveyance of these special items without taking the prescribed precautionary measures or complying with the safety guidelines could be made an offence under the Fire Services Ordinance (FSO). The Administration aimed to introduce the legislative amendments in the next legislative session.

38. Mr LAU Kong-wah was of the view that the fundamental cause to explosions involving freight containers carrying used motorcycles and parts was poor ventilation within the container. He suggested that the Administration should re-consider the Coroner's recommendations and propose amendments to the RTO to the effect that containers used for transporting fuelled vehicles should be canvas topped and clearly marked. Given the large number of containers on the road, he questioned how the FSD could ensure compliance with the proposed requirements against fire hazards under the FSO.

39. DS for S2 explained that according to the Transport Bureau, the RTO as it stood did not control the transportation of specific types of goods such as used motorcycles and vehicles and related spare parts. Although the Code of Practice under the RTO had incorporated the guidelines for Loading of Vehicles in September 1999, violation of the Code was not an offence per se.

40. DS for S2 further explained that relevant departments including the Transport Department, the Police, the Customs and Excise Department (C&ED) and the Marine Department would collaborate to enforce the proposed requirements. Since goods being transported across the border control points must be declared to the C&ED properly and correctly, the C&ED would refer to the FSD any freight containers at the boundary control points which were declared to be carrying used motorcycles or related spare parts. The FSD could then inspect the container accordingly. The C&ED might also institute prosecution against the responsible person under the Import and Export Ordinance for any cargo items inside the containers which were found not tally with the description shown on the cargo manifest. The Administration would continue to discuss with the trade on the arrangements to facilitate smooth implementation as well as to create a deterrent effect against improper conveyance.

41. The Chairman enquired about the control framework for marine transportation

of used motorcycles and vehicles and related spare parts. DS for S2 responded that the C&ED would collaborate with the Marine Department to ensure trade compliance with the relevant ordinances.

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42. Mr LAU Kong-wah requested the Administration to provide information on the number of cross-border containers carrying used motorcycles/vehicles and related spare parts in the past year. DS for S2 undertook to provide the requested information, if available.

43. The Chairman and Dr LUI Ming-wah expressed support for the Administration's proposal. The Chairman urged the Administration to introduce the legislative amendments as early as possible in the next legislative session.

V. Review of the Police Information Systems Strategy (LC Paper No. CB(2) 2269/99-00(04))

44. At the invitation of the Chairman, Director of Finance (Administration and Planning) of the Hong Kong Police Force (DF(AP)/HKPF) briefed members on the main points of the Administration's paper on "Police Information Systems Strategy Review".

45. In response to Dr LUI Ming-wah, DF(AP)/HKPF said that procurements of computer equipment and accessories for the HKPF were made in the form of open tenders or through the suppliers appointed under government bulk contracts.

46. Mr Gary CHENG sought clarifications about the potential benefits which might arise as a result of adopting the new law enforcement technologies. The Chairman asked whether the experience and expertise gained from the research project entitled "Artificial Intelligence Crime Analysis and Management System (AICAMS)" jointly conducted by the HKPF and the Chinese University of Hong Kong could be transferred to overseas discipline forces at a charge.

47. DF(AP)/HKPF responded that the research on the application of Artificial Intelligence, Knowledge-based Systems and Map-based Systems under the AICAMS would contribute to improve resources deployment and crime detection. In fact, AICAMS had been successfully implemented in Tuen Mun and the experience gained would benefit the development of the next generation AICAMS II which would, among other things, incorporate the use of advanced digital technologies for intelligence analysis and crime case profiling. He pointed out that the experience gained from implementation of AICAMS would be shared by relevant divisions of the HKPF and transfer of the expertise to discipline forces in other countries could also be considered. In response to the Chairman, DF(AP)/HKPF said that the cost of the joint research project was around \$4-5 million.

48. The Chairman asked how Government could ensure that the HKPF's new five-year Information Systems Strategic Plan (ISSP) would make use of the latest technologies and be implemented in a cost-effective manner.

49. Senior Systems Manager of the HKPF responded that the Administration would monitor the development of the HKPF's new five-year ISSP by making reference to similar systems adopted by overseas authorities. To ensure cost-effectiveness and use of up-to-date technologies, the Information Systems Wing would participate in the development.

Confidential

Closed session

VI. Briefing on the recent incident at the Hei Ling Chau Addiction Treatment Centre and Correctional Services Department's emergency response arrangements

(LC Paper Nos. CB(2) 2269/99-00(05), 2324/99-00(01), and 2382/99-00(01-02))

This part of the minutes is CONFIDENTIAL

VIII. Any other business

77. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 5:18 pm.

Legislative Council Secretariat
27 September 2000