

**Allegation of late arrival of an ambulance
at Cheung Hang Village, Lai Chi Kok
on 28.1.2000**

At the meeting of the LegCo Panel on Security on 28 January 2000, an allegation of late arrival of an ambulance for conveying a collapse patient to hospital was quoted. The Fire Services Department (FSD) has completed an investigation into the incident. This note informs members of the findings.

The incident

2. On 28 January 2000 at 1224 hours, the Fire Services Communication Centre (FSCC) received a call for emergency ambulance service involving an 89-year old man found collapsed and without breathing at House No. 45 Cheung Hang Village, Lai Chi Kok. (A copy of the location map is at Annex.) An Emergency Medical Assistant (EMA) ambulance A179 was immediately dispatched to respond.

3. While on the way, the Supervisor of A179 requested for more information on the reported scene of incident. FSCC attempted to verify with the caller but the telephone line of the latter was engaged. Anticipating difficulties in locating the incident address, the Supervisor of A179 requested for the reinforcement of an Ambulance Aid Motor Cycle (AAMC). At 1228 hours, 4 minutes after the call, AAMC AM883 was dispatched.

4. Whilst approaching the entrance of Cheung Hang Road, EMA ambulance A179 met two policemen on scooters. Ambulance A179 took 12 minutes to arrive at the end of Cheung Hang Road leading to Cheung Hang Village at 1236 hours; while AAMC AM883, 9 minutes, at 1237 hours. At the end of the vehicular access, the ambulance crew unloaded the necessary equipment, including stretcher, carrying-chair, defibrillator, oxygen resuscitator, and first aid box. The ambulance crew and the AAMC rider walked uphill. One policeman accompanied them; the other drove his scooter in front and acted as a scout for the team to locate the scene of incident along the footpath.

5. After a foot journey of about 10 minutes, the AAMC rider saw vehicles traveling on a road above their position. (The road was later confirmed to be Wah King Hill Road.) With a view to expediting the conveyance of the patient to hospital, the AAMC rider contacted FSCC and informed it of the need for a second ambulance as reinforcement pending identification of the newly found road which should be nearer to the scene of incident.

6. The house numbers of Cheung Hang Village were randomly allocated. The attending ambulance crew and AAMC rider spent 16 minutes before reaching the patient at 1252 hours. On entering House No. 45 Cheung Hang Village, they found the patient lying on bed with no pulse or breathing and immediately performed resuscitation and applied the defibrillator. The rider of AAMC then left the scene to find an exit to the newly found road, which was confirmed to be Wah King Hill Road by a passer-by. Accordingly the AAMC rider notified FSCC the location to meet the second ambulance, which was immediately dispatched at 1254 hours.

7. At 1305 hours, the patient was conveyed to the meeting point at Wah King Hill Road after Cardiac Pulmonary Resuscitation was applied to him for about 7 minutes. EMA ambulance A58 arrived at the meeting point 3 minutes later at 1308 hours, and conveyed the patient to Princess Margaret Hospital in 10 minutes.

Observations

8. The incident address given by the caller was No. 45 Cheung Hang Village, Lai Chi Kok. Given the limited information provided by the caller who could not be reached in time again, the ambulance crew could only proceed to search the incident scene along the most probable route, i.e from Cheung Hang Road into Cheung Hang Village.

9. The first attending EMA ambulance A179 and AAMC AM883 took 12 minutes and 9 minutes respectively to reach the end of Cheung Hang Road. Ambulance A179 arrived 1 minute earlier than the AAMC which was dispatched 4 minutes later than A179. The shorter response time of the AAMC indicated its effectiveness to beat travelling time. The

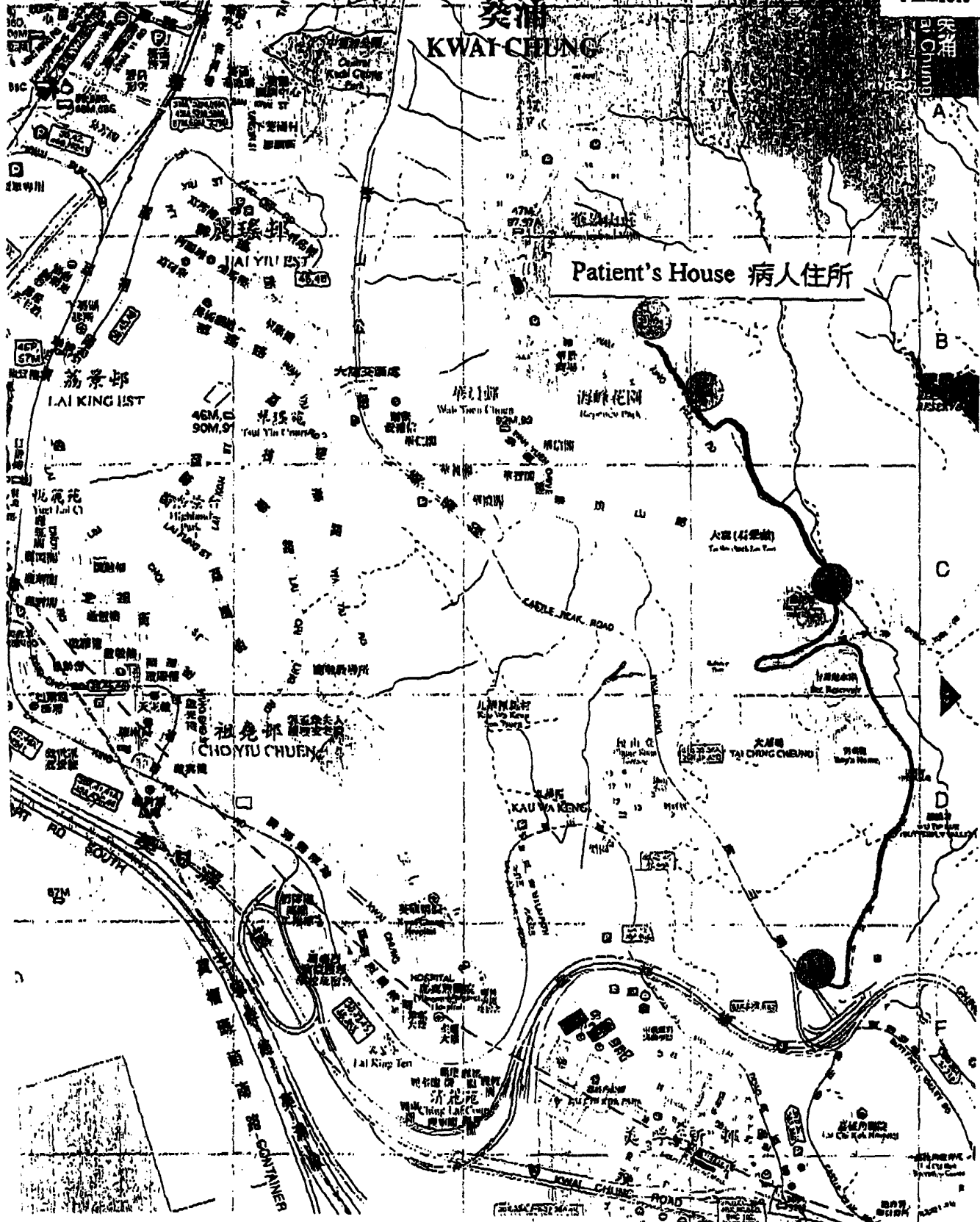
second EMA ambulance A58 was dispatched to pick up the patient at the vehicle accessible point at Wah King Hill Road close to the scene of incident to facilitate speedy conveyance of the patient to hospital.

10. The special topography of Cheung Hang Village and the absence of prominent house numbers had added difficulty to the searching of the reported address. The attending ambulance crew had exercised good judgment and initiative in locating the incident scene.






11. There was no delay in the ambulance arrival. The ambulance team had made every effort to attend the scene of incident as soon as possible and done their best to resuscitate the patient. Close co-operation had been maintained among the police, 999 reporting centre, the ambulance crews and FSCC throughout the operation. The reinforcement requests and the decision to convey the patient to hospital via an alternative route had much shortened the time of conveyance to hospital.

12. The allegation of late arrival of an ambulance at the scene of incident cannot be substantiated.

Fire Services Department
3 February 2000



Legend 圖例:

-  Path 小路
-  Road (Single lane dual-way) 單線雙程路
-  = Amb crew met the police 救護車隊員遇到警員
-  = End of vehicle access 車路盡頭
-  = Patient loading point 病人上落車位