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16.1 At the invitation of the Chairman, the Secretary for Security (S for S), Mrs Regina IP, gave a presentation on the resource requirements under her policy areas in 2003-04 (Appendix V-14).

Immigration matters

Lok Ma Chau Control Point

16.2 Referring to the overnight traffic control at Lok Ma Chau Control Point, Mr Howard YOUNG questioned whether it was the responsibility of police officers to maintain traffic order. If this was the case, he questioned if sufficient provisions had been made in the Estimates for the purpose. Acting Commissioner of Police (CP) replied that it was only a temporary measure to deploy police officers to manage the traffic at Lok Ma Chau Control Point as 24-hour passenger clearance had only been implemented for about a month. Five additional police officers were deployed at night for the duty. Owing to the limitation of the existing facilities, the regulation of the flow of taxis and mini-buses took place outside the immigration compound. In the long run, the Transport Department might contract out the traffic management work. With the enhancement of the vehicular handling facilities at Lok Ma Chau in the near future, the need for police officers to assist in managing the traffic would be diminished. Meanwhile, the Police was considering improving the illumination of the area and installing closed circuit television (CCTV) cameras to enhance monitoring.

16.3 Mr LAU Kong-wah enquired whether the 1.8% saving to be achieved in 2003-04 would affect the frontline service of immigration counters, in particular following the implementation of the 24-hour passenger clearance at Lok Ma Chau. In response, S for S assured members that the savings would be achieved through more efficient deployment of resources rather than cutting of services. The Security Bureau (SB) would continue to meet all its performance pledges. The essential services, especially those provided by frontline disciplined staff, including 24-hour passenger clearance service at Lok Ma Chau Control Point, would not be affected.

16.4 Director of Immigration (D of Imm) supplemented that 26 additional frontline staff had been deployed to cope with 24-hour passenger clearance at Lok Ma Chau Control Point. As the throughput was higher than expected, another nine staff had been deployed for the duty. There were on average 35 immigration staff at Lok Ma Chau Control Point at normal time. To

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handle enhanced throughput capacity during long holidays, special manpower arrangements through redeployment of internal resources would be made. With the recent approval of new funds to improve the computer system and to implement the new smart identity cards, the handling capacity at immigration control points would be greatly enhanced. The long-term solution would be the implementation of automated passenger and vehicle clearance.

Abuse of travelling under business visas

16.5 Mr LEE Cheuk-yan asked about the preventive measures taken by the Immigration Department to deter mainlanders from entering Hong Kong under the disguise of business visas for the purpose of taking up employment. He quoted a press report about arranged entry of prostitutes by mainland syndicates. He sought clarification as to whether the Immigration Department had been instructed by the Financial Secretary not to query mainlanders travelling under business visas, in order to encourage business investment in Hong Kong.

16.6 In response, D of Imm said that the Mainland authorities had established a mechanism for processing applications of mainlanders for business endorsements to visit Hong Kong. He did not recall any instructions given by the Financial Secretary concerning the questioning of mainlanders holding business endorsements. Last year, there were more than 6 000 mainlanders entering Hong Kong under business endorsements every day, and thousands of others entering Hong Kong as tourists or for other purposes such as visiting relatives or transiting through Hong Kong to third countries. These visitors, like other categories of visitors, were allowed entry into Hong Kong after going through normal immigration examination at the Boundary Control Points. Immigration officers would conduct further examinations on suspicious or dubious cases.

16.7 D of Imm further said that the Immigration Department would continue to take enforcement action against unapproved employment. The Immigration Department had been maintaining close liaison with the Mainland authorities on intelligence exchange with a view to combating arrangement of unapproved employment. The two sides had established notification system in this regard. Recently, exchange of information had been expedited through the use of electronic mail. As regards the press report quoted by Mr LEE, D of Imm said that the matter was being followed up. However, the details could not be disclosed to avoid prejudice to the investigation.

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Immigration appeal cases

16.8 Noting the great disparity of successful rates of appeal cases of different nature, Mr Albert HO queried whether this was due to varying standards in the application of immigration policies. D of Imm pointed out that each appeal case was assessed on its own merits. The success or otherwise of an appeal depended largely on whether new information could be furnished by the appellants. The successful rates of appeals of different nature in no way reflected leniency or stringency in the application of immigration policies.

Correctional services matters

Penal institution

16.9 Mr LAU Kong-wah questioned the need to construct a super prison at Hei Ling Chau at a cost of \$12 billion at the time of fiscal deficit. S for S said that the funding proposal to the Public Works Subcommittee was for the carrying out of a feasibility study on a prison development plan at Hei Ling Chau. The purpose was to relieve the overcrowding situation in penal institutions, especially for female inmates. The proposed prison development plan would not be completed until 2013. Commissioner of Correctional Services (C of CS) supplemented that the expenditure of the \$12 billion would be phased over a number of years. The proposed construction of a super prison would improve flexibility in utilizing and managing resources. Compared with the resources required for the construction of four to five prisons, a super prison would provide 2 600 more places and require less than 1 100 additional staff for operation.

Re-integration of offenders into community

16.10 Mr Martin LEE opined that the best way to re-integrate offenders into community was successful employment after release. As it was not unusual that rehabilitated offenders were job discriminated, he urged the Government to take the lead, together with large commercial corporations, to provide them with job opportunities. Mr LEE enquired if the Government had set any quota for employing rehabilitated offenders as civil servants. C of CS said that Government had not excluded released prisoners from joining the civil service. There was however no record on the number of released prisoners taking up civil service employment. Under the law, Correctional Services Department (CSD) was required to provide education and vocational training to young offenders during custody. The vocational training was designed to cater for market need in

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order to enhance their employment opportunities after release. Through organizing various educational and publicity activities, CSD promoted community support for rehabilitation of offenders. For instance, it had organized seminars with the University of Hong Kong for potential employers of offenders with the purpose of encouraging them to give job opportunity to rehabilitated offenders. Voluntary agencies provided great assistance to rehabilitated offenders in this regard.

16.11 Mr Martin LEE requested S for S to convey his view to the Executive Council that Government should take the lead, together with large corporations, to work out a plan to encourage hiring of rehabilitated offenders.

Police Matters

Rewards and Special Services

16.12 Noting that the Police had no statistical breakdown of the expenditure under Subhead "Reward and Special Services" for combating serious crimes, narcotic and security offences, and no statistics on the number of recipients of such rewards, Mr James TO queried how the Police Force could effectively monitor the expenses. He considered that the Administration should provide a breakdown of rewards and special services, in line with the arrangement adopted by some overseas jurisdictions, like the United Kingdom.

16.13 CP explained that as a matter of principle, the Police Force would not disclose expenses on rewards and special services because these involved police operations of confidential nature. Disclosing such expenses would reveal detailed operational arrangements of the Police Force and its capabilities to the criminals, who might be able to elude justice, thus jeopardizing public interests. Practically it was not possible to provide a breakdown of expenditure on rewards and special services because a reward could be in relation to different serious crimes. CP stressed that there were stringent guidelines on expenses. Each item of expenses was carefully scrutinized and was subject to audit internally and by the Director of Audit. No loopholes had so far been detected. CP said that as far as he knew, the Police authorities of most overseas countries adopted arrangements similar to Hong Kong and disclosed an overall expenditure figure only.

16.14 Mr James TO remained of the view that a breakdown of expenses on rewards and special services was necessary. He further observed that the

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actual expenditure for rewards and special services as at 15 March for the year 2002-03 was only \$59.47 million, whereas the estimates of expenditure for 2003-04 was \$85 million. He queried whether the substantial increase was to cover rewards for combating crimes of political nature, such as treason and subversion, as defined under the National Security Bill. S for S clarified that the National Security Bill had yet to be enacted and SB had not requested the Police Force to make provision in this regard.

Tseung Kwan O Division

16.15 Mr LAU Kong-wah questioned whether the proposal to upgrade Tseung Kwan O Police Division to Tseung Kwan O Police District would be pursued in view of the Government's overall plan to reduce operating expenditure. CP said that notwithstanding the growth of population in Tseung Kwan O, it was considered not necessary at the present stage to upgrade Tseung Kwan O Police Division to a district level. In deciding whether a police division should be upgraded, other factors such as crime rate and traffic volume had to be taken in account. Meanwhile, Kowloon East Regional Headquarters and Kwun Tong District had deployed extra resources to Tseung Kwan O to maintain law and order. He assured members that as a long term objective, the plan to upgrade the Tseung Kwan O Division to Tseung Kwan O District had not been shelved.

Salary increments for police officers

16.16 In the light of Government's plan to save resources, Mr IP Kwok-him expressed concern that the 9 952 officers working for the Police Force, who had not yet reached the maximum salary point of their ranks as at 30 November 2002, might not be recommended for award of increments. In response, CP assured members that there was an established mechanism for recommending increments in staff salaries. The criteria for determining increments would not be tightened in order to save resources. For 2003-04, \$50 million had been earmarked for payment of salary increments.

Road safety education

16.17 Referring to the plans to upgrade facilities for the Road Safety Towns and to replace a Road Safety Bus, Mr Howard YOUNG asked whether these programmes would be outsourced. CP said that since the Road Safety Towns and the Road Safety Bus were for educational and publicity purposes, it

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was considered more appropriate that the related work should be carried out by uniformed staff. The Police Force had no intention to outsource this work.

Opinion surveys commissioned by the Police

16.18 Noting that the Police Force had commissioned the University of Hong Kong to conduct a Customer Satisfaction Survey, Ms Emily LAU enquired about the process for selecting respondents and the results of the Survey. She was concerned about the results as she had received many complaints against the Police.

16.19 CP replied that the Customer Satisfaction Survey was a regular exercise conducted every other year to assess the level of satisfaction of the public towards the work of the Police Force. The respondents were persons who had contacts with the Police Force in the past year. The Survey revealed that over 80% of the respondents were satisfied with the work of the Police Force and the outcome of the Survey would be published in the Force publication *Offbeat* on 2 April 2003. The Survey was one of the means to enable the Police Force to identify improvement areas. Complaint cases received by the Complaints Against the Police Office would also be an indicator of satisfaction with the Police.

National and internal security

Publicity programme to promote national security

16.20 Ms Emily LAU said that from the feedback she received from the public, there was discontent over the high frequency of the Announcements of Public Interest (APIs) on Article 23 of the Basic Law (BL 23) regarding national security. As a result, other aspects requiring public's attention might be sacrificed. She sought clarification on whether there was an established practice that Government would not make APIs on issues which were controversial. She also asked for the details of the expenditure for the publicity campaign on BL 23.

16.21 S for S pointed out that different people would have different views on the same subject. She herself received favourable comments on the APIs on BL 23. The Government had the obligation to promote the Basic Law, and national security was an important aspect in the Basic Law, hence widely broadcast through the use of APIs. She was not aware of any Government

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policy or practice that APIs would only promote matters of non-controversial nature.

16.22 As regards the expenditure for the publicity campaign on BL 23, S for S said that the expenditure for the design of webpages, production of leaflets and broadcasting of APIs on television and radio were respectively \$50,000, \$1.7 million and \$1.2 million.

16.23 Ms Cyd HO enquired about the mechanism for competing airtime for APIs by different bureaux. In view of the spread of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), she asked whether the SB would consider releasing the airtime allocated for APIs on BL 23 for use by the Health Welfare and Food Bureau. S for S explained that the publicity programme for national security was planned well ahead of the outbreak of SARS. Allocation of airtime for APIs was co-ordinated by Government Information Services Department, which would take into consideration the requests of different bureaux.

16.24 Mr IP Kwok-him disagreed that the broadcasting time of APIs on BL 23 was excessive. He considered it necessary to step up the APIs in view of the importance to protect national security.

Enforcement of provisions on national security

16.25 Mr James TO sought information on the additional manpower resources earmarked for enforcing provisions in the National Security Bill, and enquired whether organizational changes would be necessary for the implementation of the Bill.

16.26 S for S replied that the Police Force had all along been the authority for enforcing provisions on criminal offences including those in the National Security Bill. As it was envisaged that few cases would arise from the National Security Bill after its enactment, the Administration did not see the need to re-organize the Police Force or to increase resources for its implementation.

Anti-terrorism legislation

16.27 In response to Mr Albert HO, S for S said that the Administration would adhere to its timetable to introduce in May 2003 a legislative proposal concerning terrorist financing. As a special unit had already been set up within the Police Force and the Customs and Excise Department to investigate terrorist

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financing cases, additional resources for the legislative proposal would not be required.

Aviation security

16.28 In response to Mr Howard YOUNG, Acting Director-General of Civil Aviation clarified that the measure to strengthen the inspection of the regulated agents to air cargo was not related to the new procedure imposed by the US concerning advance manifest of clearance papers.

Daya Bay Contingency Plan

16.29 Mr Henry WU enquired whether the Daya Bay Contingency Plan had been suitably adjusted in the light of the operation of the newly established Lingao Nuclear Power Station in Daya Bay. He asked for information on the safety measures taken to allay concern of members of the public.

16.30 S for S responded that the Contingency Plan had been adjusted accordingly. A recent assessment had indicated that the opening of the Lingao Nuclear Power Station would not increase the risk of nuclear accident. S for S stressed that safety of the nuclear plant was the primary responsibility of the nuclear company. In the case of the nuclear company in Daya Bay, the Secretary for Economic Development and Labour and herself were both members of the Board. In her view, the company was professionally run and the management was well aware of the safety and risk factors. There was stringent control over safety and security of the plant operation and effective measures to combat terrorist attacks.

16.31 On the part of Government, S for S said that SB had established effective communication and close contact with the Guangdong authority to ensure co-operation and timely exchange of information. In the unlikely event of a nuclear accident, SB would mobilize the relevant departments including the Hong Kong Observatory and the Fire Services Department to take appropriate actions. She assured members that the Daya Bay Contingency Plan had been comprehensively tested during an emergency drill in February 2001. The exercise showed that the Plan was sound and all the departments and agencies involved were fully prepared to respond in the unlikely event that there was an accidental release of radioactive material from the nuclear power station.

Information and system management

Information Technology Management Unit

16.32 Noting that nine posts would be transferred from the Information Technology Services Department (ITSD) to SB for the establishment of the Information Technology Management Unit (ITMU), Miss Margaret NG enquired whether this would bring about any savings. S for S confirmed that the transfer of posts was only a redeployment of posts and so would not achieve any new savings. The nine posts were currently providing support services to six departments under the purview of SB. They were the Auxiliary Medical Service, the Civil Aid Service, the Correctional Services Department, the Fire Services Department, the Government Flying Service and the Independent Police Complaints Council. By transferring the nine posts for the creation of ITMU under SB, funding requests for the development of information technology would be dealt with by SB in a co-ordinated manner. The objective was to enhance effectiveness and flexibility in the utilization of resources and strengthen the information technology management capability within SB.

16.33 Given that the transfer of posts could not result in savings, Miss Margaret NG did not see the merit of such a move. On the contrary, she was concerned that the central management of information technology by ITMB under SB would compromise the independence of the six departments, in particular the Independent Police Complaints Council. Deputy Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury explained that as explained in the Controlling Officer's Report under ITSD's Head, the arrangement for transfer of posts from ITSD applied to many bureaux and departments and was not unique to SB. The arrangement was a change aimed at empowering bureaux and departments to take up the responsibility for managing information technology through the setting up of their own ITMUs.

Sharing of communication facilities

16.34 Mr SIN Chung-kai noted that the Police Force and the Fire Services Department had made a funding request of \$1 billion and \$0.7 billion respectively in 2001 for upgrading their communication and mobilizing systems. He enquired whether the two systems were compatible and whether SB had any long-term plan to rationalize their systems with a view to achieving savings.

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16.35 S for S replied that the Police Force and the Fire Services Department used different communication systems to cater for their own needs. Nevertheless, where necessary, their systems could be adjusted to the same frequency to enable communication between the two departments.

Frontier Closed Area

16.36 Given that the number of mainlanders illegally crossing the borders of Hong Kong had been declining, Mr SIN Chung-kai urged SB to review the size of the Frontier Closed Area to save manpower resources. S for S agreed that there was room to reduce the Frontier Closed Area which was 28 km². However, reducing its size would not achieve much savings as the manpower requirement in the Frontier Closed Area had already kept to the minimum given the installation of electronic sensors and fencing. She agreed that a reduced Frontier Closed Area would provide convenience to the residents living nearby and land for development.

