

For information

on 25 May 2004

Legislative Council Panel on Security
Criminal activities against public figures

Purpose

This paper sets out information on the Police's handling of criminal cases against public figures, including violence, criminal intimidation, criminal damage or nuisance.

Police's handling of criminal cases against public figures

2. Given the sensitivity involved, the Police accord much importance to criminal acts against any public figures¹. On receiving reports of such cases, the Police will conduct careful and thorough investigation into them, including taking statements from relevant parties, locating witnesses, gathering evidence at scenes of crime, establishing the culprits' profiles, and analysing their modus operandi. Depending on the evidence available and subject to legal advice, the Police may arrest and lay charges against the persons concerned.

3. Criminal cases against public figures may include violence, criminal intimidation, criminal damage and nuisance. The total number of such cases and the number of cases detected from 1 January 2003 to 20 May 2004 are at **Annex**.

4. Government fully shares the public's concern at criminal cases involving public figures. The Police adopt a proactive approach, and devote additional resources and efforts to investigation of such cases as necessary. Nonetheless,

¹ In the context of this paper, "public figures" refer to Legislative Council Members and public affairs commentators.

difficulties may arise in the investigation of such cases for such reasons as the lack of a direct link between the culprit and the victim. While it is undoubtedly the Police's responsibility to investigate the cases, the ability of the victims to provide as much information related to the cases as possible is essential to facilitating the investigation efforts and bringing the offender(s) to justice.

5. The Police are committed to protecting the safety of the public. In particular, we will not tolerate any threat to public figures. Should any person consider that his safety is under threat, he should inform the Police. The Police will make an assessment as to the level of threat, and take appropriate actions accordingly. Where a witness or victim is subject to a real and prolonged threat of physical injury, he would be offered protection.

Conclusion

6. Hong Kong is one of the safest cities in the world. Government accords the utmost importance to protecting the safety and property of the community, as well as safeguarding the freedom of speech and of the press enjoyed by the public and guaranteed under the Basic Law. Government will not tolerate any criminal act. The Police will continue to follow up and investigate into all such cases, and offer appropriate protection to the witnesses and victims as necessary.

Hong Kong Police Force
May 2004

Cases involving public figures from 1 January 2003 to 20 May 2004

Cases	Number of cases	Percentage	Number of cases detected
Criminal damage	34	71%	3
Criminal intimidation	3	6%	0
Assault	1	2%	1
Request for Police investigation	7	15%	2
Nuisance Complaint	3	6%	2
Total	48	100%	8