

**For discussion on
30 April 2004**

Paper No. CB(2)2210/03-04(01)

PANEL ON SECURITY AND PANEL ON WELFARE SERVICES

Purpose

This paper provides the Administration's response to the recommendations put forward by non-governmental organisations related to family violence.

Background

2. At the joint meeting of the Panel on Security and Panel on Welfare Services held on 26 April 2004, a number of non-governmental organisations have submitted various recommendations to help prevent and combat family violence, as set out in papers from CB(2)2131/03-04(04) to CB(2)2131/03-04(17).

3. Having consulted the relevant bureaux, departments and organisations, the Administration's response to these recommendations is set out in the Appendix.

Advice Sought

4. Members are invited to note the Administration's response for reference.

Health, Welfare and Food Bureau
April 2004

**Administration's response to
Key Recommendations related to Family Violence
Submitted by NGOs at the Joint Panel Meeting on 19 April 2004**

	Recommendations	Response
1.	<p>To formulate a strategic and long-term “zero tolerance” policy against family violence, put it on policy agenda or CE’s Policy Address –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To adopt a public health perspective in handling family violence as proposed by WHO in 2002 - To adopt a macro view in considering how the community as a whole could address family violence, instead of helping individual families to solve their problems - To formulate a practicable and consistent policy direction and prepare a policy paper on preventing and combating family violence - To facilitate and review the measures implemented to realise the policy - To strengthen research on violence and regularly put forward appropriate anti-violence policies and measures - To allocate resources - To set/improve performance indicators/targets 	<p>One of the Administration’s key policy directions is to create a caring and just society which celebrates the rich diversity of our community, recognising that each individual is endowed with different strengths. We aim to create an environment in which all people get every opportunity to develop their potential. Warm, supportive and stable families are what count most in nurturing the healthy development of individuals. We will strengthen family solidarity and foster mutual care and support in the community, so that all individuals are embedded in a network of care, trust, support and reciprocity. This is clearly reflected in the 2003 Policy Agenda.</p> <p>All along, the Administration has adopted a multi-disciplinary and cross-sectoral approach in preventing and tackling family violence. The Working Group on Combating Violence, chaired by the Director of Social Welfare and comprising representatives from relevant Government bureaux, departments and non-governmental organisations, has been set up to advise on measures to prevent and tackle the problems of spouse battering and sexual violence.</p>

	<p>and pledges for different departments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To put in place regular monitoring and assessment mechanism to evaluate the effectiveness of the anti-violence drive 	<p>Protection is offered to every individual in society, irrespective of his/her relationship with the offender. Criminal offences such as assault and intimidation are provided in various ordinances, e.g. the Offences Against the Person Ordinance (Cap. 212) and the Crimes Ordinance (Cap. 200). In line with the aforementioned multi-disciplinary strategy, the Police will seek to complement additional measures for dealing with family violence.</p>
2.	<p>Specialized child abuse and domestic violence intervention approach must be retained. Some degree of specialization in the existing three tier Integrated Family Service Centre (IFSC) Model must be encouraged.</p> <p>IFSCs to coordinate with community based integrated service units and agencies specialising in handling family violence, especially in high-risk districts. To allocate funding to non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to carry out urgent or pilot projects to tackle family violence in such districts.</p>	<p>Family and Child Protective Services Units (FCPSUs) will continue to provide specialized services on child abuse and battered spouse cases. However, not all battering problems may be revealed during the initial encounter with social workers and case circumstances may change over time. IFSCs/ Family Service Centres (FSCs) of NGOs will also handle domestic violence cases. Hence, training on handling domestic violence is open to all frontline social workers other than FCPSUs. Moreover, other units (both the Social Welfare Department (SWD) and NGOs) may consult FCPSUs on handling some complicated domestic violence cases and/or transfer case to FCPSUs for follow-up upon consulting FCPSU.</p>
3.	<p>To set up dedicated district teams for handling family violence, which should –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consist of police officers, healthcare workers, social workers, lawyers and prosecutors 	<p>SWD will continue to work with the Police on measures to further strengthen the co-ordination. As stipulated in the “Procedural Guidelines for Handling Battered Cases (2004)” which will be implemented commencing 1 May 2004, case</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - On receipt of complaints, attend to the scene to intervene, collect evidence, investigate, provide supportive service or instigate prosecution - Hold follow-up case conference on a weekly basis <p>To set up a well-coordinated mechanism for SWD, NGOs, police, shelters, doctors, nurses, lawyers, teachers etc. to share information on suspected family violence cases to facilitate more effective risk assessment</p>	<p>conferences may be convened for complicated cases involving the formulation and implementation of welfare plan by at least three service units e.g. cases with risk of homicide, cases likely in need of statutory protection of children, and mentally incapacitated persons.</p> <p>At present, domestic violence cases are handled by a number of Government departments and NGOs. There is close liaison between parties concerned. The Police take firm and positive action against alleged offenders and investigate any offence that may have been committed. Depending on the circumstances of the cases, the Police will make arrest and initiate prosecution as appropriate.</p>
4.	<p>To pass family violence cases to NGOs which are dedicated to handling such cases for follow up, in order to relieve the burden of frontline workers and afford more time for detailed follow-up</p>	<p>FSCs/IFSCs of NGOs also handle domestic violence cases.</p>
5.	<p>To accord importance and allocate resources in providing services for abusers, to consider the feasibility and effectiveness of “mandatory counselling”</p>	<p>FCPSUs and NGOs operating refuge centres for women have been providing a variety of services for men, such as hotline and group work service in addition to individual counseling. Cases may also be referred to clinical psychologists for therapy or treatment.</p> <p>The feasibility and effectiveness of “mandatory counseling” will be further looked into depending on the findings and</p>

		recommendations of the study on child abuse and spouse battering which is underway.
6.	To review the effectiveness of the FCPSUs under SWD	<p>Prior to the restructuring of FCPSUs in March 2002, the performance of FCPSUs was monitored according to the required output standards (e.g. number of cases served, counselling hours and groups conducted, etc.) Following the restructuring, the output requirements have been revised to include those activities relating to child custody cases.</p> <p>Although it is difficult to measure the effectiveness of social work intervention which is affected by many factors, SWD has tried to develop a set of outcome standards (e.g. percentage of recurrence of child abuse, satisfaction rate of victims of battered spouse cases etc.) for service monitoring. The revised standards have been adopted with effect from April 2003.</p>
7.	<p>To enhance the family services in new towns e.g. Tseung Kwan O and TSW, and allocate more resources to areas where the problems of battered spouses and child abuse are serious</p> <p>To stop cutting welfare assistance, flexibly allocate resources having regard to the special needs of such districts as TSW and Ma On Shan, provide more resources on community networking, and set up a Fund to promote family solidarity</p>	<p>Presently, there are 2 IFSCs and 1 FSC with a total of 28 social workers serving Tin Shui Wai, including 1 IFSC (with 8 social workers) which is run by International Social Service Hong Kong Branch (ISS) and set up in July 2003 by pooling of the NGO's scattered casework resources. Following the re-engineering of FSCs, further resources will be pooled to enhance ISS's IFSC and transform Caritas' FSC to become IFSC by end of 2004. By then, there will be a total of 3 IFSCs and the number of social workers will be increased to 41.</p> <p>For Tseung Kwan O, through the re-engineering exercise, the</p>

		<p>existing 2 FSCs/counselling units with a total of 17 social workers will be transformed to become 3 IFSCs with a total of 40 social workers.</p> <p>Through the re-engineering exercise of Family Services Centres, attempt will be made to achieve an overall territory-wide re-distribution of resources based on a combination of factors including the population to be served, complexity of social problems and district needs etc.</p> <p>The \$300 million Community Investment and Inclusion Fund was set up in 2002 to pioneer a different approach to meet community needs through investment in capacity building of individuals and support network of the community, as against the conventional professional service provision approach. Such local initiatives and networks will form the basis of social capital that will help build a strong, caring and harmonious community.</p>
8.	To review the manpower provision in IFSCs	Each IFSC will have a minimum of 12 social workers as recommended by the Consultants. Individual IFSCs may have more social workers (say 16-19) depending on the population to be served and complexity of the problems in the district.
9.	To review the appropriateness of the philosophy of “family integrity” in handling family violence – to accord priority to protecting the personal safety of victims over achieving family reunion	SWD does not adopt any single philosophy, such as “family integrity” in handling domestic violence cases. Personal safety of victims and children involved are always the prime concern.

		Training on different perspectives and intervention on marital problems were conducted by local and overseas trainers. Intervention rendered is based on the risks and needs assessment of each individual case. (Please refer to the Administration's response to recommendations on training below.)
10.	To provide services and carry out assessment on all the family members and relevant persons affected by family violence	This is in accordance with the existing practice. To facilitate accurate assessment, social enquiry is conducted through interviews (individual and/or joint) with family members, home visit and collateral contacts etc.
11.	To provide 24-hour duty social workers at shelter to provide round-the-clock services	It is noted that the input of social worker at shelter during bedtime is minimal. In case of emergency, the home staff can consult the in-charge/social worker for advice or immediate intervention as necessary.
12.	To adopt scientific assessment tool e.g. the severity and frequency of family violence as well as the use of weapons etc.	HKU was commissioned to conduct a study on child abuse and spouse battering in April 2003. Part two of the study will include development and validation of a risk assessment tool and training on use of the tool for 500 frontline professionals, including police officers.
13.	To provide marriage and family therapy only after the abusers have accepted counselling/treatment, changed their abusive behaviours and genuinely accepted responsibility	While the victim may meet the batterer at his/her own free will, social workers will only arrange joint interviews and provide marital counselling with the victim and batterer based on the needs of individual cases, taking into consideration the safety of

		the victim and until both parties are ready.
14.	To separate “Child Protective Services Unit” (CPSU) from “Family and Child Protective Services Unit” in order to clearly separate the investigative functions (to be undertaken by CPSU) and counselling functions (to be provided by NGOs or SWD’s clinical psychologists)	<p>There are pros and cons. Separating these roles may lead to fragmentation.</p> <p>For cases where the investigating officer is deemed not appropriate to render follow-up counseling (e.g. rejection by the abuser), they may be transferred to another officer of the unit.</p> <p>It is also not uncommon for cases to be referred to clinical psychologists for treatment.</p>
15.	To provide counselling to the community or schools affected by family violence	Presently, critical incident stress debriefing will be conducted by clinical psychologists and social workers of SWD for community or schools affected by family violence. Cases identified to be in need of further assistance will be referred to appropriate professionals after the debriefing.
16.	<p>To review the deployment and allocation of social resources and rebuild pluralistic service delivery, and post-incidence services should not be neglected</p> <p>To provide more pre-marital counselling to enhance the problem solving abilities of couples</p> <p>To let NGOs run by ex-victims to provide post-incident counselling services, so that IFSCs could focus on</p>	Peer support groups by ex-victims are available and social workers will mobilize these groups to help the victims as appropriate and on a voluntary basis.

	<p>preventive and intervention work</p> <p>To enhance the functions of NGOs and community organisations in participating in the anti-violence drive</p> <p>To coordinate cooperation and partnership between Government and NGOs run by former victims of family violence to provide better services to other victims, training for frontline staff and monitor service delivery</p>	
17.	<p>Social workers to provide counselling and support to victims and provide “mandatory counselling” to abusers</p>	<p>Pending result from the study on child abuse and spouse battering on the effectiveness and feasibility of adopting mandatory counseling in Hong Kong (this part of study would be ready by mid 2004).</p>
18.	<p>Social workers or relevant professionals to make assessment and recommendations on the visitation plan of children by abusers after parents’ divorce</p> <p>To recruit volunteers from the community as carers will be able to help identify potential victims</p> <p>To build in risk assessment tools in different professions for early detection of family violence cases</p> <p>Case workers to carry out regular risk assessments on suspected child abuse cases</p>	<p>Consideration should be given on individual cases basis. Nevertheless, safety of victims and children will always be the primary concern. Custody evaluation is an integral part of the work of the workers at FCPSUs and for some clinical psychologists (CPs) of SWD for cases referred by the Court.</p> <p>Volunteer support is being developed by both SWD and NGOs.</p> <p>HKU was commissioned to conduct a study on child abuse and spouse battering in April 2003. Part two of the study will include development and validation of a risk assessment tool and training on use of the tool for 500 frontline professionals,</p>

	<p>To set up community network and database to encourage victims to seek assistance and report family violence cases.</p>	<p>including the Police.</p>
<p>19.</p>	<p>Strategic Prevention Program with the community and through training community leaders, youth and adults, to spread the message, support and strengthen others</p> <p>To enable each family with newborn to join head start home visiting programs with a strong capacity building, networking and prevention element.</p> <p>To enable each citizen seeking Labour Department's assistance to look for jobs to receive some degree (e.g. 2 hours) of social service public education.</p> <p>To enable each family receiving Comprehensive Social Security Assistance to receive some degree (e.g. 2 hours) of public education.</p> <p>To reach each and every one non-Chinese speaking domestic helpers when they arrive at Hong Kong airport. To provide them with relevant basic information and a designated number of hours training.</p> <p>Government departments and NGOs to cooperate in</p>	<p>At the district level, there are also District Coordinating Committees on Family and Child Welfare chaired by the District Social Welfare Officers and attended by representatives from local NGOs, Government departments at the district level, community leaders and other interested parties to organize public education programme on prevention of family violence.</p> <p>Job-seekers at the Labour Department and CSSA recipients are accessible to public education activities organized in the community.</p> <p>Programmes targeting non-Chinese speaking domestic helpers are also available. During the year 2002/03, a total of 20 programmes on prevention of domestic violence were organized for non-Chinese speaking domestic helper. There were over 400 participants.</p> <p>HAD also helps publicise and encourage community participation in such public education programme.</p> <p>With HAB's sponsorship, ISS operates a team of information ambassadors, known as the Mobile Information Service, at the</p>

	preventing family violence	<p>Airport. The information ambassadors greet newly arrived domestic helpers and migrant workers as they disembark and hand out the information kit, comprising the HAB's Service Guidebook, publications from the Labour Relations Division of the Labour Department and the Equal Opportunities Commission. The guidebook includes details of family service centres, refuge centres for women, and child care centres. The information ambassadors also maintain a mobile phone hotline for referring possible clients to consulates, agencies and government departments.</p>
20.	<p>To formulate “pro-arrest” policy – as long as there are evidence and witness statements pertaining to family violence, law enforcement agents can put abusers under arrest, instigate prosecution or recommend counselling etc (with reference to the superintendent discretionary scheme or bind-over order).</p>	<p>The Police will investigate into any offences that may have been committed and will take firm and proactive action against the alleged offenders. Police Superintendents’ Discretion Scheme applies to children under 18. Extension of this scheme requires careful examination. Binding over orders have been and will continue to be used in domestic violence cases.</p> <p>There are already policies and guidelines as to whether to prosecute. Each case will be considered according to those policies and guidelines.</p> <p>There is no objection from a general legal policy perspective to the arrest and prosecution of perpetrators of family violence where there is sufficient evidence to support a charge.</p> <p>A part of the pro-arrest policy proposal is that law enforcement</p>

		officers can "recommend counselling", amongst other things, if there is evidence of family violence having taken place.
21.	To expedite the legislative proposal to criminalise the act of stalking – to distinguish the stalking acts committed by family members and others e.g. investigative journalists, and legislate separately against stalking behaviours in family violence cases	<p>HAB has studied in depth the Law Reform Commission’s report on stalking. It is well aware of the diverse views on the proposed legislation. Some sectors of the community are concerned about the stalking problem and urge for legal measures against such acts. Some others are strongly against any legislative move that may pose as a threat to freedom of information. However, HAB appreciates it that stalking is a problem that needs to be tackled. HAB intends to follow up on the proposed legislation, and will go through the necessary process.</p> <p>The proposed legislation targets at harassment in general. It aims to protect victims from harassment, including victims in, or have been in, a close relationship with the perpetrators. Such an approach would provide greater protection to victims in different situations.</p>
22.	<p>To review the Domestic Violence Ordinance (DVO), e.g.</p> <p>(a) To expand the definition of family members from spouses, cohabitees and children under 18, to former spouses, former cohabitees and other family members who reside together etc.;</p>	Protection is offered to every individual in society, irrespective of his/her relationship with the offender. Criminal offences such as assault and intimidation are provided in various ordinances, e.g. the Offences Against the Person Ordinance (Cap. 212) and the Crimes Ordinance (Cap. 200). In line with the multi-disciplinary strategy mapped out by the “Working Group on Combating Violence”, the Police will seek to

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (b) To clearly define family violence to include not only physical abuse but also psychological abuse, abandonment, neglect, intra-marital rape and other less obvious sexual acts (c) To confer more powers on the court by allowing the court to attach a power of arrest to injunction orders in cases of sexual and psychological abuses (d) To empower DSW or a person appointed by DSW to act as a temporary guardian of victims who are abandoned or neglected by abusers (e) To extend the maximum validity of injunction order up to 18 months to dovetail the corresponding matrimonial or guardianship proceedings (f) To introduce the element of “mandatory counselling” (g) To require the court to take into account whether an abuser has participated in any counselling/educational courses and their performance, when considering an application to extend the validity of an injunction order 	<p>complement additional measures for dealing with family violence.</p> <p>SWD has commissioned HKU to conduct a study on child abuse and spouse battering. It will, inter alia, identify possible areas of improvement including those related to legislative amendments.</p>
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	<p>(h) To permit victims of family violence to submit an application to the court direct</p> <p>(i) To permit a third party to apply for an ex parte injunction for a victim provided that the victim is aware of the application</p> <p>(j) To study the possibility of including provisions on prohibition against stalking behaviours in DVO</p>	
23.	To legislate against discrimination of new arrivals in the proposed anti-racial discrimination bill	<p>HAB will consult the public on the proposed legislation against racial discrimination. The proposed legislation should protect everyone from racial discrimination. New arrivals from the Mainland should enjoy the same protection against racial discrimination as anyone else in Hong Kong.</p> <p>Although new arrivals from the Mainland sometimes face discrimination by Hong Kong's Chinese majority, almost all of them are of the same ethnic group as local Chinese. The discrimination experienced by new arrivals from the Mainland is not based on race. Rather, it is a form of social discrimination and therefore outside the intended scope of the Bill.</p>
24.	To adopt a more proactive and targeted enforcement approach, increase the manpower of Police's Child Abuse Investigation Unit, and enhance its functions so that it would become a dedicated team responsible for	The Police would flexibly deploy its resources to ensure quality services to the public.

	handling family violence and sexual abuse investigative unit	
25.	To adopt a more proactive approach in the investigation and evidence collation process, which should start upon receipt of complaints	The Police will investigate into any offences that may have been committed and will take firm and proactive action against the alleged offenders. Depending on the circumstances of the cases, the Police will take evidence and consider initiating prosecutions as appropriate.
26.	The judiciary/prosecution should not regard family violence as intra-familial problem, but should put forward timely improvement proposals on their own Judicial proceedings should clearly reflect the “zero tolerance” stance, and set out the content of evidence being sought to ensure consistency at the operational level.	There are training and seminars for the judicial sector. There are also suggestions to amend the Domestic Violence Ordinance, Chapter 189, which the Government will give serious consideration in light of the findings and recommendations of the consultancy study on child abuse and spouse battering.
27.	On prosecution, should – - take effective action to stop family violence first in order to protect the safety of victims before pursuing prosecution - not shift the responsibility to victims as to whether the abusers should be prosecuted.	The Police will proceed with prosecution as long as there is sufficient evidence and in consultation with DoJ. If the victim is unwilling to give evidence and there is no other evidence, it is very difficult to prosecute. Some victims may withdraw their complaints after a family settlement, especially when the incident is a minor one. More publicity and education to change the victims' attitude may help.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - instigate prosecution at once upon occurrence of family violence provided that there is sufficient evidence, irrespective of the willingness or indecisiveness of the victims. 	
28.	To provide for a protection order for victims of family violence who want to stay in the marriage or not ready to leave. This order does not (unless breached) constitute a criminal offence. This makes protection more readily accessible to women since this course of action is not a criminal charge of assault.	We are seeking legal advice on the proposal.
29.	Police should put on record cases of family violence, provide information or services depending on the severity of the cases involved or instigate prosecution, and refer abusers to counselling	This is the existing practice of the Police.
30.	<p>To review the present training for professionals</p> <p>To strengthen the skills and gender awareness of all frontline staff (including police, social workers, doctors, nurses, lawyers, teachers, district councillors etc) in handling family violence and enhance their sensitivity, and refresh their knowledge on referral procedures and resources available</p> <p>For police in particular, to frequently provide training for</p>	<p>During the past 3 years, SWD organized a total of 57 training programmes with more than 3,500 participants from different disciplines including social workers, clinical psychologists, teachers, medical and nursing staff and police officers etc.</p> <p>Local trainers including experienced practitioners and academics from tertiary institutions and overseas trainers from different countries (e.g. USA, UK, Canada and Australia) with ample experiences in this area were invited to conduct the training programmes. Apart from emphasizing the importance of</p>

<p>frontline police staff on handling family violence cases e.g. every 3 months, and accord priority to family violence training among other training modules</p> <p>To enhance the skills of social workers in handling family violence –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to ensure that personal safety of victims is the topmost priority over the concept of “family integrity” - to provide counselling to abusers and victims separately - to consider providing marriage and family counselling to both parties jointly only after the abusers accept total responsibility and the victims’ safety is secured. <p>To provide more on-the-job guidance and support closely</p> <p>Judges, prosecutors and probation officers should also be aware of the causes of family violence and the characteristics of the abusers and victims in order to enhance their judgement</p>	<p>multi-disciplinary collaboration in the training, victim safety has been repeatedly emphasized by our speakers to be the first priority in handling domestic violence cases. In response to this area, safety plan/risk assessment tools adopted by different trainers were introduced. In working with the battered spouse/ batterers, different approaches, such as group treatment and individual counselling, were adopted. During the past 3 years, 8 classes on gender sensitivity were conducted for 271 participants from SWD and NGOs.</p> <p>For the year 04/05, funding has been reserved to conduct training on domestic violence.</p> <p>The Hospital Authority has been providing on-going training to staff in partnership with Government departments, professional organizations and NGOs to strengthen the skills and raising awareness of the staff in recognition and management of family violence.</p> <p>Every year, HAD organises various training courses for District Council (DC) members. DC members enrol on these courses on a voluntary basis. Consideration will be given in consultation with SWD and tertiary institutions to introducing in the training programme a module course on skills and gender awareness for handling domestic violence cases.</p> <p>As regards the Police, the subject of domestic violence forms part</p>
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		<p>of the basic training of police officers. A training package has been developed for frontline officers on the handling of domestic violence during their training days. "Victim psychology" has been included as a training topic since March 2004. In the past two years, over 11,000 frontline police officers have received such training, and further training will be organised later this year.</p> <p>Frontline officers attended seminars on domestic violence organised by either the Police or NGOs from time to time. The most recent one was conducted by overseas experts in February 2004.</p> <p>We will review the contents and frequency of training from time to time.</p>
31.	To strengthen training for frontline staff and change their discriminatory attitude against new arrivals	<p>Ongoing training on working with new arrivals is organized. During the past three years, 21 classes for over 1,000 participants from SWD and NGOs were conducted.</p> <p>The need to handle family violence cases with care has been emphasized in the training for the Police. We will keep this under review.</p>
32.	To adopt an uniform assessment tool for abusers, victims and their children	<p>HKU, the research team of study on child abuse and spouse battering, will develop the risk assessment tool in early 2005.</p>

33.	<p>To review the existing multi-disciplinary coordination mechanism</p> <p>To escalate the current “Working Group on Combating Violence” into “Central Working Group on Combating Violence” and enhance its functions which should include adopting a proactive intervention approach, formulating an anti-violence policy agenda and professional guidelines, coordinating inter-departmental efforts, strengthening the role of NGOs and monitoring implementation of different measures, with appropriate power and resources support. It should meet at least on a quarterly basis.</p> <p>To set up “District Network on Combating Violence” to implement the policy agenda and professional guidelines</p> <p>To set up an inter-departmental “Family Violence Monitoring and Implementation Committee” to formulate/update guidelines/assessment tools, monitor and evaluate implementation of guidelines, coordinate multi-disciplinary referrals, convene cross-sectoral case review conferences, propose legislative amendments and review service provision, planning and resources deployment</p>	<p>The Working Group on Combating Violence, chaired by the Director of Social Welfare and comprising representatives from relevant Government bureaux, departments and NGOs, has been set up to advise on measures to prevent and tackle the problems of spouse battering and sexual violence. The coordination mechanism has been a well-established one and it has been operating the functions as proposed effectively.</p> <p>There is a District Coordinating Committee on Family and Child Welfare which is coordinated by SWD. It is a forum to discuss domestic violence issues and to implement joint-projects to combat violence at district level.</p>
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34.	<p>To set up an independent Fatality and Serious Cases Review Standing Committee with multidisciplinary representation.</p> <p>To carry out in-depth investigation in respect of Government departments, NGOs and relevant parties by independent third parties</p>	<p>The Administration will give further thought by making reference to the experience of the Review Panel and in any case, not to prejudice the criminal investigation and legal proceedings.</p>
35.	<p>To station social workers at police stations to provide immediate support to victims and assist police officers to carry out risk assessment</p>	<p>There is already an established referral mechanism between the Police and SWD. During office hours, the Police may directly contact FCPSU for assistance. After office hours, the Police may call up hotline for assistance from the after office hour outreaching team on child abuse and spouse battering.</p> <p>We need to carefully study the implications of the proposal. In the meantime, we will continue to ensure that those in need have ready access to social services.</p>
36.	<p>To set up a shared central database to capture all cases of family violence for use by different departments, so that when victims or third parties seek assistance from SWD and Police, these departments can analyse all the relevant information, carry out risk assessment and take appropriate follow-up action.</p>	<p>The feasibility of such a proposed shared database can be explored.</p> <p>The relevant departments will consider enhancing the exchange of information relating to domestic violence having regard to the requirements of the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance.</p>
37.	<p>To enhance the spirit of accountability in implementing the professional guidelines. To</p>	<p>Each department/organisation has its own monitoring and complaint system to monitor the performance, including conduct</p>

	<p>require relevant parties to conduct internal monitoring on the implementation of professional guidelines, enhance service users' right to knowledge, and follow up on behaviours in breach of the guidelines</p> <p>To set up effective monitoring mechanism to oversee the implementation of guidelines, especially the conduct of frontline staff</p>	<p>of staff (e.g. supervisor, complaint mechanism, the Office of the Ombudsman for government departments and Social Workers Registration Board).</p> <p>Checks and balance are in place within the Police Force to ensure compliance with the guidelines. At Force level, the Child Protection Policy Unit acts as a monitoring body. At Divisional level, the Divisional Commander will assess each domestic violence case to ensure that appropriate action is taken.</p> <p>The Police have engineered improvements to the guidelines and internal orders in the past year, for example, implementing non-consensual referral to SWD, developing a training package and the Aide-Memoire Card, etc.</p> <p>The Hospital Authority will also conduct on going monitoring of implementation of the guidelines.</p>
38.	<p>To enhance the coordination functions of SWD's District Coordinating Committee on Family and Child Welfare Services</p>	<p>There is a District Coordinating Committee on Family and Child Welfare which is coordinated by SWD. It is a well-established forum to discuss domestic violence issues and to implement joint-projects to combat violence at district level.</p>
39.	<p>An assessment tool worked out and professionals trained periodically to use it more effectively.</p> <p>The screening and risk assessment tool being jointly</p>	<p>Training on the risk assessment tool developed by the HKU research team will be provided to 500 frontline workers including social workers and other related professionals, such as the police and medical practitioners.</p>

	worked out by HKU and SWD should be adopted not only by social workers, but also police and healthcare workers etc.	The Hospital Authority has been providing training to staff on risk-based assessment tools on family violence in line with the multi-disciplinary guidelines published by the SWD.
40.	Social workers and other professionals to report cases of family violence to police on behalf of the victims when they become aware that the victims may have immediate danger	<p>Social workers will seek the assistance of the Police on an individual need basis.</p> <p>All family violence cases will be carefully assessed by staff involved. Victims will be advised to report to the police. If the incident is considered to be of a serious nature, SWD staff will report on behalf of the victim.</p>
41.	Residents in new towns - To review the planning of new towns, to re-allocate resources in these new towns and mobilise local resources to strengthen community support network	<p>Hong Kong's continuous development has called for the need for more systematic planning guidance on the distribution of land uses, population and facilities provision, with particular regard to the newly developed areas. In the context of forward planning and development control, the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines (HKPSG) has been used as an effective Government's manual to provide locational guidelines for the distribution of land uses and facilities, planning guidance on the scale, intensity and site requirements of developments.</p> <p>In effect, the HKPSG also serves to provide yardsticks to measure the sufficiency of facilities and the degree of balanced development in an area to ensure that the community would benefit most from the developments. These yardsticks can be</p>

		<p>taken as useful references for concerned bureaux/departments to programme the provision of community facilities and determine the priority of resource allocation under their respective policy purview. In the provision of various community facilities, the HKPSG should be applied with a degree of flexibility, having regard to land use demands, local conditions, development constraints and resource availability.</p> <p>The recommendations from HKISS are apparently more related to project implementation and comprehensive review on the priorities/distribution of resource allocation. These are matters of policy objectives/decisions nature within the purview of concerned bureaux/departments. The HKPSG and their effectiveness are constantly being monitored and reviewed having regard to the priorities of resource allocation, development trends, community's needs/aspirations and the Government policy objectives. There is well-established process and mechanisms set out in the HKPSG on how the changes of policy decisions can be incorporated such that the manual can continue to provide an equitable basis and guidelines for the allocation of scarce land resource/facilities provision.</p> <p>The service demands of new towns have been taken into account in allocating resources in the context of re-engineering of family services. Please refer to item 7 for details.</p>
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42.	New arrivals - To support NGOs to have access to new arrivals to provide them with family counselling and information on community resources	<p>All along, ISS provides enquiry and information service at Lo Wu Check Point and at Registration of Persons Office of Immigration Department. In addition to the distribution of service booklets including welfare service information for new arrivals, ISS also obtains personal particulars of new arrivals who consent to receive welfare service and forward the name list to respective District Social Welfare Offices on monthly basis. The district designated units will take up to provide outreaching to assess their needs and arrange appropriate services including family counselling service.</p> <p>At the district level, the District Officers meet with NGOs in their respective districts on a regular basis to discuss issues relating to new arrivals, including how to give better support to NGOs in reaching out to new arrivals.</p>
43.	New arrivals - To liaise with relevant Mainland authority regarding the proposal of retaining the registered permanent residence of new arrivals for a period of 3 years, so as to provide a “backtrack” if necessary	The matter falls under the Mainland authorities’ purview. We understand that Mainland residents who have migrated to Hong Kong, Macao or overseas may apply to the relevant Mainland authorities to resurrect their household registration in the Mainland in accordance with the Mainland laws. The Mainland authorities may consider such applications on a case by case basis.
44.	New arrivals - To make public the criteria in exercising discretion in granting various financial and housing assistance, examples and procedures by means of leaflets	SWD has been publicizing DSW’s authority to grant discretion on waiving the residence requirement through different channels, including “A Guide to Comprehensive Social Security

	and posters for wide dissemination for new arrivals	<p>Assistance” (CSSA), pamphlet on CSSA and SWD website etc. SWD has repeatedly explained the factors for considering discretion to the public.</p> <p>In addition, the Housing Authority has issued a leaflet explaining to new arrivals the application procedures and eligibility criteria for applying public housing. The document, as per Annex attached, is available in all HD offices together with the service handbook for new arrivals from Mainland prepared by the HAD.</p>
45.	New arrivals - To revoke the 7-year residence requirement for applying for various welfare assistance	Except for CSSA, the 7-year residence rule does not apply to application for various welfare services.
46.	To take account of the peculiar characteristics of new arrivals, ethnic minorities and physically challenged in devising the screening and risk assessment/management mechanisms	The views would be forwarded to the research team (HKU) in developing the risk assessment tool.
47.	<p>To nurture an anti-violence culture, e.g. –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parents should encourage children to give up violence prone toys - Parents/teachers should incorporate in family/school education/curricula the culture of discussion and reconciliation as well as gender equality and anti-violence messages - Should encourage victims of family violence to come out and seek assistance 	Under the current curriculum reform, moral and civic education (MCE) is identified as one of the four key tasks and is top of the education agenda. Schools are required to attach importance to it and incorporate it into school development plan. As a short term goal, schools are recommended to develop 5 priority values among students, two of them are “responsibility” and “respect for others”. The development of the two priority values will contribute to nurturing a culture of mutual respect and anti-violence among students.

	<p>- Should intensively promote the supportive services available, especially for NAs</p>	<p>Towards this end, EMB will develop teaching and learning resources on the theme of building up a harmonious family relationship, a culture of care and concern as well as of gender equality. The teaching resources will be uploaded on MCE web for school reference by May 2004.</p> <p>The theme of harmonious family and gender equality will be incorporated in teacher development programmes to enhance school awareness in developing of educational programmes for students</p> <p>Since 1996, HAD has been publishing a service handbook for new arrivals from the Mainland. The handbook is updated every year to provide new arrivals with the latest information on services available to assist their early integration into the local community. This includes information on services for those faced with domestic violence problems. HAD will consider in consultation with SWD and NGOs how to further highlight and possibly enhance information in this area in the next new edition of the handbook to be published in early 2005.</p> <p>Separately, HAD is now in discussion with RTHK the possibility of launching a weekly half-hour radio phone-in programme to facilitate dissemination of information on services provided for new arrivals. According to the present plan, the programme will be first tried out on a pilot basis for three months. The</p>
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		<p>problem of domestic violence will be featured on one of the pilot shows.</p>
48.	<p>To intensify publicity efforts on strengthening families cohesion, to regard family violence as a community-wide problem requiring every citizens to assist, heighten alertness, help identify needy cases and offer help</p> <p>To publicise the rights of victims of family violence, supportive services available etc in addition to the “Family Solidarity, Combating Violence” slogan</p> <p>To adopt a public health perspective in carrying out publicity and educational activities</p> <p>To organise a summit on policy advocacy and public education in respect of family policy</p>	<p>Ongoing publicity campaign on strengthening families has been launched during the past few years. The campaign aims at enhancing public awareness of the need to strengthen family solidarity, encourage early help-seeking and prevent violence including spouse battering, child abuse, elder abuse and sexual violence. The publicity activities included theme days and interactive exhibition booth, search of Resilient Family Ambassadors, short radio messages, radio series, television announcement of public interest, liquid electronic display of slogans, printing of slogans on electricity bills, display of roadside banners/plywood boards/posters, production and distribution of other publicity materials such as tissue packs/holders/boxes, garbage bins, magnets, calendars, telephone cards, leaflets etc. Besides, activities such as seminar, family camp and exhibition were held at various districts to echo the campaign.</p> <p>A website and a booklet were developed in June 2003 to promote the services available for the victims of spouse battering, child abuse and sexual violence, and facilitate the access/sharing of information among the helping professionals especially frontline workers handling these cases. Ongoing publicity and public education programmes are planned for 2004/05.</p>

49.	To make public the information/data related to spouse battering, conduct tracing studies, assess the current intervention approach and conduct “serious case review”	The updated figures on child abuse and battered spouse are uploaded in the website on victim support.
50.	<p>To carry out more research on family violence</p> <p>Local and overseas experience be consolidated to help our professionals through literature review, research, workshop, sharing forum, congress and conferences.</p> <p>To carry out comprehensive and analytic research on separated families and those who set up families in the Mainland, to facilitate the formulation of effective measures to respond to these familial structural changes</p>	SWD has commissioned HKU to conduct a 2-year study on child abuse and spouse battering in April 2003.
51.	<p>To update guidelines e.g. –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To clearly set out that no marriage or family therapy should be provided before the abusers complete counselling and accept responsibility - To provide more guidelines on risk management - To provide more standard and objective risk assessment tools 	<p>“Procedural Guidelines for Handling Battered Spouse (2004)” (to be implemented on 1 May 2004) is in place to provide guidelines on safety measures and risk management.</p> <p>The research team of study on child abuse and spouse will develop a set of risk assessment by early 2005.</p>
52.	To review current guidelines on battered spouses and child abuse so that Police can instigate prosecution against abusers without the consent of the victims	The Police will proceed with prosecution as long as there is sufficient evidence and in consultation with DoJ.

53.	To provide clear guidelines for frontline social workers and police officers in handling family violence, to clearly distinguish “family violence” and “family dispute”, and set out the referral criteria	<p>The definition of battered spouse is stated in the “Procedural Guidelines for Handling Battered Spouse Cases (2004)”.</p> <p>It is actually difficult to distinguish the two type of cases especially at the initial encounters. As social workers handle both type of cases, the Police may refer both types of case to social workers for follow-up services. Caseworkers should be highly alerted to initial stages of family violence.</p>
54.	Handling guidelines and procedures be worked out and reviewed either annually or two yearly. A mechanism assigned to be responsible for such review. Professionals to be ensured to know the system and to follow through. To ensure adequate channel for difficulties and concerns to be reflected to the review mechanism.	<p>The “Procedural Guidelines for Handling Battered Spouse Cases (2004)” was just revised and implemented in May 2005.</p> <p>The “ Handling Procedures on Child Abuse Cases (revised 1998)” will be reviewed in 2004/05.</p> <p>The Committee on Child Abuse and the Working Group on Combating Violence, both comprise representatives from related bureaux/departments, HKCSS and NGOs are channels for reviews.</p>

April 2004

内地来港人士

申请公屋的途径



香港房屋委员会根据香港特别行政区政府所订定的目标，致力为有需要的人士提供他们能力可以负担的房屋。任何人士如果有住屋的需要，选择租住公共屋邨单位是一个途径。

房委会设有公屋轮候册，以便符合资格人士申请入住公共屋邨。**刚由内地来港的人士，只要年满十八岁或以上，便可提出此项申请。不过申请人及半数的家庭成员，在配屋时，必须在港居住满七年或以上。**

房委会为方便不同成员组合的家庭，设有一般家庭申请，单身人士申请及高龄人士申请等计划。申请详情及手续，可参考房屋署印制的「公屋轮候册申请须知」，此「须知」单张可向各公共屋邨办事处、各区民政事务处、房屋事务询问处及房屋署申请组免费索取。填妥的申请书或致房屋署的函件，可寄交九龙城邮政局信箱89192号房屋署申请组收。

房委会亦欢迎你们透过电话热线2712 2712听取申请详情或与房屋署职员联络查询。有关索取「公屋轮候册申请须知」地点，详列如后：



香港房屋委員會