

(Translation)

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香港特別行政區政府
保安局



The Government of the
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
Security Bureau

香港添馬添美道 2 號

2 Tim Mei Avenue, Tamar, Hong Kong

本函檔號 Our Ref.:

來函檔號 Your Ref.:

電話號碼 TEL. NO.: 2810 2068

傳真號碼 FAX. NO.: 2810 7702

24 July 2013

Miss Betty Ma
Legislative Council Secretariat
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central
Hong Kong

Dear Miss Ma,

Cases involving children left unattended at home

I refer to your letter dated 3 July 2013 with the Hon CHAN Kam-lam and Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan's enquiries about cases involving children left unattended at home. Our reply is as follows.

The Offences Against the Person Ordinance (OAPO) (Cap. 212) stipulates that any person who unlawfully abandons or exposes any child, being under the age of two years, whereby the life of such child is endangered, or the health of such a child is or is likely to be permanently injured; or any person who wilfully assaults, ill-treats, neglects, abandons or exposes such a child or young person under the age of 16 years under his custody, charge or care in a manner likely to cause such a child or young person unnecessary suffering or injury to his health shall be guilty of an offence. Whether leaving a child unattended at home will constitute an offence under the OAPO depends on a number of factors and has to be assessed on a case by case basis, e.g. the child's age and self-care abilities, whether the act has caused harm to the child, whether the person involved has a responsibility of care over the child, whether the person has intentionally neglected the child and is aware of the possible harm to the child caused by his act, etc.

The number of cases involving children left unattended at home handled by the Police in the past three years, as well as the respective figures of injuries, deaths, arrests and prosecutions are as follows:

	2010	2011	2012
Number of cases involving children left unattended at home handled by the Police	60	43	61
Number of injuries and deaths caused by leaving children unattended at home	6	2	2
Number of persons arrested*	52	35	48
Number of persons prosecuted	19	12	19

*Arrested persons include children's parents and caregivers.

Yours sincerely,

(Mr Kilian TUNG)
for Secretary for Security

c.c.:

Hong Kong Police Force
Ms TANG Suk-chun, Chief Inspector
(Child Protection Policy Unit) (Crime Wing)

Fax No: 2200 4361

Labour and Welfare Bureau
Mr LO Ho-man

Assistant Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Welfare) 2A Fax No: 2501 0478