

**For information
on 18 March 2014**

**Legislative Council Panel on Security
Police's Handling of Serious Assault and Wounding Cases**

Introduction

This paper aims to brief Members on the legislation and procedures in respect of Police's handling of serious assault and wounding cases, and provides them with the relevant statistics.

Relevant Legislation

2. Inflicting bodily harm is a very serious offence. Any person who is charged with "shooting or attempting to shoot, or wounding or striking with intent to do grievous bodily harm" under section 17 of the Offences Against the Person Ordinance (Cap.212) shall be subject to a maximum penalty of life imprisonment. Besides, any person who is charged with "wounding or inflicting grievous bodily harm" under section 19 or "assault occasioning actual bodily harm" under section 39 of the above Ordinance shall be liable to imprisonment for three years.

Case Handling Procedures of the Police

3. Similar to the handling of crimes with persons injured, the Police will, upon receipt of a report, first and foremost rescue the injured person. A statement will be taken from the victim when his condition becomes stable. As far as case investigation is concerned, the Police will probe into every wounding and serious assault case in a meticulous and professional manner. In addition to searching for witnesses and collecting exhibits at the crime scene and in the nearby areas, the Police will conduct in-depth investigations into various aspects of the case like the motive and the modus operandi.

4. Regarding the search for eye-witnesses, the Police will inquire of the pedestrians/drivers on the street, people in the shops and all the residents in the neighboring buildings what has happened before and after the crime has occurred. Objects with evidential value, such as weapons for assault, clothes of the victims and objects left behind by the assailants on the spot, will be collected at the crime scene and in the nearby areas. Depending on the nature and necessity of the case, the Police will seek experts' assistance in collecting

fingerprints, DNA samples and other forensic evidence. Besides, the Police will obtain CCTV footage from the shops in the vicinity of the scene and along the escape route of the assailants, which is of great help to the investigation.

5. As far as the motive is concerned, the Police will conduct a comprehensive investigation from different angles by looking into whether the victim is involved in any disputes over money, relationships or other matters. In addition to gaining an understanding of whether the victim has any conflicts with others in daily life and at work, the Police will interview the victim's family members, friends and co-workers to obtain more information about the case.

Relevant Statistics

6. In 2013, 6 163 cases of wounding and serious assault cases¹ were recorded, a decrease of 655 cases or 9.6% in comparison with 2012. The number of such cases reached a record low over the last ten years in 2013. Amongst them, 4 441 cases were detected and the detection rate marked 72.1%, indicating the highest in the last ten years. The above figure was also 28.9% higher than the overall crime detection rate (43.2%) in 2013.

Difficulties of Investigation

7. Although wounding and serious assault cases registered a detection rate of 72.1% in 2013, the investigation of the Police and success in crime detection are often influenced by various external factors, including the mode of operation of assailants, the availability of witnesses, whether CCTVs are installed in the vicinity of the crime scene, and whether the victims can clearly recognise the assailants at the moment when the crime took place.

The Recent Assault on the Person-in-Charge of a Media Organisation

8. The SAR Government and members of the public are highly concerned about the assault on the person-in-charge of a media organisation on 26 February 2014. In Hong Kong, where the rule of law is upheld, no acts of violence are tolerated and the Administration strongly condemns such savage act. So far, two suspects have been apprehended in Guangdong and nine persons were arrested by the Police in Hong Kong following days of investigation and having sought the assistance of the Mainland public security authorities. Since the Police are making vigorous effort in the detection of the

¹ As a standard practice, serious assault and wounding cases are classified by the Police as "wounding and serious assault" cases.

case, the Administration is not in a position to give further details of the investigation at the present stage.

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