

For information  
on 8 July 2014

**Legislative Council Panel on Security**  
**Police's handling of public meetings and public processions**

**Introduction**

This paper provides information on matters in relation to the Police's handling of public meetings and public processions.

**Principles adopted by the Police in handling public order events**

2. Hong Kong residents enjoy the rights of meeting, procession and demonstration according to the Basic Law and other relevant laws. The Police always handle all public order events in a fair, just and impartial manner in accordance with the laws of Hong Kong. The enforcement policy of the Police is to endeavour to strike a balance by striving to facilitate the smooth conduct of lawful and peaceful public meetings and processions on one hand, while on the other, minimizing the impact of such events on members of the public and road users, as well as ensuring public order and public safety.

3. When expressing their aspirations, participants of public meetings or processions are advised by the Government to abide by the laws of Hong Kong and respect others' rights so that the events could proceed in a peaceful and orderly manner, without compromising the efforts of the Police to maintain law and order. The Police will act in accordance with the law under all circumstances and will, in the light of the prevailing circumstances, take decisive measures against any illegal behaviour, breach of peace or public order in a bid to maintain public order and ensure public safety.

4. Under the Public Order Ordinance (the Ordinance) (Cap 245), in the event of any public meeting or procession the attendance of which exceeds the limit prescribed in the Ordinance, i.e. public meetings of more than 50 persons and public processions of more than 30 persons, the organiser(s) shall give a notice to the Commissioner of Police (CP) not less than seven days prior to the intended event, and it can only be conducted if CP does not prohibit or object to it. The notification shall cover such basic information as the date of the public

meeting or procession, time of commencement and duration, location or route, theme, as well as the estimated number of participants, etc. CP may impose condition(s) on a notified public meeting or procession to ensure order of the event and overall public safety, and the corresponding condition(s) imposed will be stated explicitly in the “letter of no objection” issued to the organiser(s). Organiser(s) may appeal to the statutory and independent Appeal Board on Public Meetings and Processions if they consider CP’s decision unreasonable.

5. The Police have a duty to take lawful measures to regulate public meetings and processions as appropriate to ensure public order and public safety. The Police have considerable experience in handling public order events. Based on the objectives, nature, number of participants, risk assessments and operational commitments of individual events, the Police formulate corresponding strategies and contingency plans, deploy their manpower flexibly and adopt crowd management measures. Generally speaking, upon receipt of a notification of a public meeting or procession, the Police will maintain an active and close communication with the organiser(s) to offer advice and assistance. Police Community Relations Officer(s) may also be present during an event as required to act as a channel of communication between the organiser(s) and the Field Commander. Appropriate arrangements will also be made by the Field Commander, after taking into account the circumstances and conditions at the scene, to ensure public safety and public order.

6. The Police will continue to uphold their professionalism and handle public order events in a fair and just manner according to the law.

**Security Bureau  
Hong Kong Police Force  
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