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Panel on Security

**Information note prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat
for the meeting on 12 April 2016**

Closed-circuit television systems at correctional institutions

According to the Administration, in an inquest into the death of a person in custody conducted at the end of 2012, the Coroner's Court recommended that the Correctional Services Department ("CSD") should, without intruding into personal privacy, enhance the coverage of CCTV systems within the areas of correctional institutions, improve the image resolution and introduce the use of coloured images. In addition, arising from an investigation into a complaint, the Office of The Ombudsman ("The Ombudsman") commented that the 14 days retention period for audio or video recording was not adequate and recommended that CSD should, among others, retain the video recordings for not less than 30 days.

2. When the Panel on Security ("the Panel") discussed the Administration's proposal to replace and enhance the closed-circuit television ("CCTV") systems at Stanley Prison at its meeting on 8 April 2014, members were advised that to ensure the safety of correctional staff and persons in custody and to maintain institutional security, a reliable and secure CCTV system was necessary for each correctional institution to monitor the behaviour of individual persons in custody, support the operation of the institution and enhance its security. According to the Administration, most of the facilities of the correctional institutions in Hong Kong had been in use for years, and many of them were converted from buildings originally used for other purposes. As such, the design of these facilities might not be able to meet the security requirements of correctional institutions nowadays.

3. In the light of the recommendations made by the Coroner's Court and The Ombudsman, the Administration advised that the new CCTV systems at Stanley Prison could provide better images with a higher resolution and clearer video recordings. The recordings could also be retained for up to

31 days. In deciding on the retention period of 31 days, the Administration explained that CSD had made reference to the practice adopted by the Hong Kong Police Force in retaining CCTV data obtained at police stations and the standards stipulated in the guidelines provided by the police of the United Kingdom for users of CCTV systems.

4. When discussing the funding proposal for the replacement and enhancement of the CCTV systems at Stanley Prison at the meeting of the Finance Committee on 12 July 2014, concern was raised whether CSD would consider the replacement or enhancement of the CCTV systems in other correctional institutions so as to meet the target retention period of not less than 30 days for audio or video recordings as recommended by The Ombudsman. Members were advised that CSD would take into account the normal serviceable life and conditions of the CCTV systems as well as cost-effective deployment of financial resources in considering system replacement or enhancement for other correctional institutions. Improvements would be made to the CCTV systems in specific and warranted areas of other correctional institutions including expansion of storage capacity for retention of 31 days of video recording.

5. The Administration will brief the Panel on the proposal to replace and enhance the CCTV systems at Pak Sha Wan Correctional Institution and Siu Lam Psychiatric Centre at the meeting on 12 April 2016.