

**For information  
on 7 February 2017**

**Legislative Council Panel on Security**

**2017 Policy Address  
Policy Initiatives of Security Bureau**

This paper elaborates on the Security Bureau's initiatives in the 2017 Policy Address and Policy Agenda.

**New Initiatives**

**Relaxing Visa Requirements for Nationals of the Belt and Road Countries**

2. To foster co-operation and exchanges between Hong Kong and the Belt and Road countries, the Government will consider relaxing the application visa requirements for employment, study and visit visas for nationals of those countries.

3. The HKSAR Government has reached consensus with Belarusian Government on mutual visa exemption to provide greater travel convenience for visitors of the two places. Under the new arrangement, holders of valid HKSAR passport and holders of valid national passport of Belarus will enjoy mutual visa-free access for a stay of up to 14 days. The two governments seeks to complete relevant formalities and put in place the mutual visa exemption arrangements as soon as possible.

4. Besides, the HKSAR Government is also planning to relax the visa requirements to allow Cambodian nationals to apply for visas to take up employment and study in Hong Kong. The arrangement will be implemented within the first quarter this year.

**The strategy of handling non-refoulement claims**

5. Last year, the Government launched a comprehensive review of the strategy of handling non-refoulement claims. As regards pre-arrival control, since February last year, our law enforcement agencies (LEAs) have worked with relevant authorities in the Mainland to step up

enforcement against syndicates who make arrangements for the passage of non-ethnic Chinese illegal immigrants (NECIIs) to Hong Kong. The Government also amended the law to substantially enhance penalties against these syndicates<sup>1</sup>. Initial results of these measures are beginning to show. The number of NECIIs intercepted or surrendered in 2016 was 2 221, a 42% drop comparing to that in 2015 (3 819 NECIIs); and 3 838 non-refoulement claims were received, 24% lower than that in 2015 (5 053 claims). As at end of 2016, 9 981 claims were pending screening by the Immigration Department (ImmD). Separately, ImmD will introduce a risk-based online pre-arrival registration requirement for Indian visitors in January 2017 to prevent those with higher immigration risks from arriving at Hong Kong under the visa-free arrangement and making non-refoulement claims after arrival<sup>2</sup>.

6. This year, the Security Bureau will devote efforts on amending the Immigration Ordinance (Cap. 115) to improve screening procedures, with a view to introducing an amendment bill to the Legislative Council (LegCo) within the 2017-18 session. Meanwhile, to reduce pending claims, ImmD has streamlined administrative procedures and optimized manpower deployment, planning to dispose of over 5 000 claims (a 75% increase) in 2017-18. To tie in with this target, the Government will invite some 500 lawyers who have received relevant training and possess sufficient experience to join a supplementary roster, under which 10 claims would be handled per day in addition to the 13 claims being handled by the Duty Lawyer Service now, increasing the number of claims to be handled to 23 claims per day (i.e. over 5 000 claims per year), such that the backlog of cases can be worked down as soon as practicable, whilst ensuring the same quality and standard of legal assistance is rendered to claimants. Moreover, LEAs will continue to strive to step up on investigation, detention and removal, in order to combat illegal immigration and overstaying.

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<sup>1</sup> At the meeting of the Executive Council on 10 May 2016, the Council advised and the Chief Executive ordered that, pursuant to section 37B of the Immigration Ordinance, the Immigration (Unauthorized Entrants) (Amendment) Order 2016 should be made in order to expand the definition of Unauthorized Entrants to include major source countries (other than Vietnam) where NECIIs originate, i.e. Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Somalia, and Sri Lanka, thereby immediately enhancing penalties against smuggling of NECIIs from these countries to up to imprisonment for 14 years and a fine of \$5,000,000.

<sup>2</sup> The top four source countries of non-refoulement claimants are India, Pakistan, Vietnam, and Bangladesh. Amongst these countries, only Indian nationals may travel to Hong Kong visa-free. Claimants from Pakistan, Vietnam and Bangladesh are mainly illegal immigrants.

## **Strengthening the Legislation on Anti-terrorism and Enhancing Emergency Response**

7. The ring of terrorist activities has spread across the globe in recent years. We must be vigilant and stay alert. In this connection, the anti-terrorism legislation and counter-terrorism (CT) regime would have to be further improved. Having regard to the mandatory requirements of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2178 and the recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force, we propose to amend the United Nations (Anti-Terrorism Measures) Ordinance (Cap. 575) to prohibit Hong Kong permanent residents and any person in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region from committing the following acts –

- (a) the travel or attempt to travel to a state other than their states of residence or nationality for the purpose of the perpetration, planning, or preparation of, or participation in, terrorist acts, or the providing or receiving of terrorist training;
- (b) the willful provision or collection of funds to finance the travel of (a) above;
- (c) the willful organization, or other facilitation, of the travel of (a) above; and
- (d) the dealing with the property of a person, knowing that, or being reckless as to whether that person is a specified terrorist or terrorist associates .

8. We consulted LegCo Panel on Security on the above proposals on 3 January 2017, and a public consultation, which will end on 3 March 2017, is underway. We will carefully consider the views received before finalising the amendment bill.

9. At present, the terrorist threat level in Hong Kong remains "moderate". However, we have to stay vigilant at all times and enhance our capability in emergency response and tackling terrorism-related activities. In the past five years, the Government conducted 259 CT and major incident contingency exercises, most of which were joint exercises by government departments and public organizations. The disciplined services will also enhance their emergency response and relevant training so as to provide continued protection for Hong Kong people.

## **Improving Fire Safety of Old Industrial Buildings**

10. The two fires at old industrial buildings last year aroused public concern about the fire safety of these buildings and mini-storage facilities. After the fires, the departments immediately stepped up inspections and law enforcement, requiring non-compliant mini-storage facilities to improve the layout of their storage cubicles, means of escape, etc. The Government also plans to legislate for enhancing the fire safety standards of old industrial buildings. We plan to consult the relevant Panels of the LegCo and the trades in the first half of 2016 before introducing a bill to LegCo.

## **Ongoing Initiatives**

### **Attracting talent from outside Hong Kong**

11. We have implemented since May 2015 a list of measures<sup>3</sup> to facilitate outside talent, professionals and entrepreneurs to come and stay in Hong Kong, thereby building up human capital in response to the population challenges of an ageing population and declining workforce. In particular, the ImmD received 417 applications under the Admission Scheme for the Second Generation of Chinese Hong Kong Permanent Residents by the end of 2016, with 235 of them approved. The response has been positive so far. We have stepped up publicity of these measures through overseas duty visits<sup>4</sup> and through various HKSARG offices outside Hong Kong<sup>5</sup> and will continue our publicity efforts.

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<sup>3</sup> These measures include –

- (i) a pilot scheme to attract the second generation of Chinese Hong Kong permanent residents who have emigrated overseas to return to Hong Kong;
- (ii) to relax the stay arrangements for entrants under the General Employment Policy (GEP) and the Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals to facilitate the entry and stay of professionals and entrepreneurs;
- (iii) to relax the stay arrangements for entrants under the Quality Migrant Admission Scheme (QMAS) and adjust the QMAS scoring scheme to attract quality migrants with an outstanding education background or international work experience; and
- (iv) to list clearly the factors to be considered under the GEP investment stream to attract more overseas entrepreneurs to establish businesses in Hong Kong.

<sup>4</sup> Since May 2015, ImmD has visited various places in Europe (including United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Belgium, Spain, Ireland and France), North America (covering 13 cities across the East and West coasts) and Australasia (Australia and New Zealand) to promote various talent admission schemes.

<sup>5</sup> Between 2015 and October 2016, HKSARG offices outside Hong Kong organised or participated in 793 promotional activities relating to attraction of outside talent. These activities include 620 receptions, business seminars and meetings with business and local Hong Kong communities; 145 talks and seminars organised with major universities and student bodies; and 28 job and trade fairs.

## **Set up a Junior Police Call Permanent Activity Centre and Integrated Youth Training Camp and increase the number of school liaison officers**

12. To nurture young people's awareness in fighting and preventing crime, sense of social responsibility and leadership, the Police will adopt a multi-pronged approach to enhance the work on Junior Police Call and youth. The Police will set up a Junior Police Call Permanent Activity Centre and Integrated Youth Training Camp at Pat Heung, providing discipline, physical and team-building training for the youth. The Centre is expected to commence operation in the first half of this year. Besides providing services for Junior Police Call members, students and youth organisations, the Centre could also provide services for ethnic minorities and Senior Police Call members.

13. In addition, the Police are increasing the number of school liaison officers in order to strengthen services for schools and students.

## **Anti-drug efforts**

14. We need to ensure that the anti-drug policies and measures could respond to the evolving drug situation. Notwithstanding the trend of decline in the total number of reported drug abusers in the past few years, the problems of hidden drug abuse, drug abuse among young adults, and increased prevalence of methamphetamine ("Ice") abuse still require attention.

15. In view of the latest drug situation, we will strengthen suitable anti-drug measures and programmes based on the five-pronged strategy. For instance, on preventive education and publicity, we will continue to take forward suitable programmes, including the "Anti-drug Community Awareness Building Programme" of the Beat Drugs Fund, to promote community awareness of the drug problem, facilitate early identification of hidden drug abusers and encourage help-seeking. We will also continue to promote the Healthy School Programme with a drug testing component to secondary schools to reinforce students' resolve to stay away from drugs and foster a drug-free culture on the campus. Anti-drug publicity work targeting working youth will be enhanced, including visits to workplaces to promote positive lifestyles, and

launching publicity initiatives through the new media (e.g. popular Internet websites and mobile phone applications). On treatment and rehabilitation, we will sustain the efforts to deepen various services and facilitate collaboration across professional sectors concerned. As regards legislative actions, while having included two new drugs under control in 2016, we will maintain our vigilance to the drug trend and initiate legislative amendments in a timely manner. On law enforcement, law enforcement agencies will continue to actively cooperate with their Mainland and overseas counterparts to combat drug trafficking activities through an intelligence-led approach.

**Establishment of a reporting system on the physical cross-boundary transportation of large quantities of currency and bearer negotiable instruments (“R32 System”)**

16. In an effort to implement the recommendation of the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering, SB conducted a three-month public consultation exercise from July to October 2015 for establishing the R32 System, and reported the consultation results to this Panel in June 2016. Taking into account the consultation results, we are preparing a new piece of legislation on establishing the R32 System for introduction into the LegCo in this legislative session.

**Continuing to improve ageing penal facilities and deliver rehabilitation programmes**

17. The Correctional Services Department (CSD) will continue to provide a safe custodial environment and implement rehabilitation programmes. As some of the penal institutions are overcrowded and aged, we will consider redevelopment and improvement proposals. The partial redevelopment of the Tai Lam Centre for Women was completed in late 2016 and commenced operation in early 2017. We are also planning to replace and enhance the closed-circuit television systems for Tai Lam Correctional Institution, Tong Fuk Correctional Institution and Tung Tau Correctional Institution. In addition, CSD will continue its Rehabilitation Pioneer Project, featuring a range of community education programmes to promote a law-abiding, drug-free and rehabilitation supportive community.

## **Enhancing emergency rescue and ambulance services**

18. We will continue to improve emergency rescue and ambulance services of the Fire Services Department (FSD). The number of emergency calls handled by FSD is on the rise, and their nature increasingly complex. FSD proposes to develop the Fourth Generation Mobilizing System to improve the system's reliability and enhance the efficiency of handling emergency calls and dispatching resources, with a view to strengthening the Department's capability in responding to emergencies. Besides, FSD will continue to promote a fire safety culture in the community and encourage the proper use of emergency ambulance services through public education and publicity.

**Security Bureau**  
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