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Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(2)1365/20-21

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Ref : CB2/PL/SE

Panel on Security

Minutes of meeting
held on Tuesday, 6 July 2021, at 2:30 pm
in Conference Room 1 of the Legislative Council Complex

**Members
present**

: Hon CHAN Hak-kan, SBS, JP (Chairman)
Hon YUNG Hoi-yan, JP (Deputy Chairman)
Hon CHAN Kin-por, GBS, JP
Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun, SBS, JP
Hon WONG Kwok-kin, GBS, JP
Hon Paul TSE Wai-chun, JP
Hon Steven HO Chun-yin, BBS, JP
Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming, SBS, JP
Hon YIU Si-wing, SBS
Hon MA Fung-kwok, GBS, JP
Hon CHAN Han-pan, BBS, JP
Hon LEUNG Che-cheung, SBS, MH, JP
Hon Alice MAK Mei-kuen, BBS, JP
Hon Christopher CHEUNG Wah-fung, SBS, JP
Hon Elizabeth QUAT, BBS, JP
Hon CHUNG Kwok-pan
Hon Jimmy NG Wing-ka, BBS, JP
Dr Hon Junius HO Kwan-yiu, JP
Hon Holden CHOW Ho-ding
Hon SHIU Ka-fai, JP
Hon Wilson OR Chong-shing, MH
Hon CHAN Chun-ying, JP
Hon CHEUNG Kwok-kwan, JP
Dr Hon CHENG Chung-tai
Hon Tony TSE Wai-chuen, BBS, JP

Public Officers attending : Item III

Mr Chris TANG Ping-keung, PDSM
Secretary for Security

Ms Jenny CHAN Wai-man
Principal Assistant Secretary for Security A

Mr YUEN Yuk-kin
Deputy Commissioner (Operations) (Acting)
Hong Kong Police Force

Mr Peter LEUNG Wai-ki
Senior Superintendent (Inter-departmental Counter-Terrorism Unit)
Hong Kong Police Force

Ms Betty CHAN Ka-yee
Assistant Commissioner (Quality Assurance)
Correctional Services Department

Mr CHAN Tsz-tat
Assistant Commissioner (Intelligence and Investigation)
Customs and Excise Department

Mr CHAN Kam-fai
Assistant Director (Fire Safety)
Fire Services Department

Captain James SZE Wan-lung
Chief Pilot (Operations)
Government Flying Service

Mr CHAN Wai-lit
Assistant Director (Enforcement)
Immigration Department

Item IV

Mr Sonny AU Chi-kwong, PDSM, PMSM, JP
Under Secretary for Security

Mr Kevin LAI Ming-fai
Principal Assistant Secretary (Narcotics) 1
Security Bureau

Mr Jimmy TAM Yat-keung, CDSM, CMSM
Assistant Commissioner (Excise and Strategic Support)
Customs and Excise Department

Ms Catherine YIP Wai-sim
Senior Staff Officer (Project Planning and Development)
Customs and Excise Department

Item V

Mr Sonny AU Chi-kwong, PDSM, PMSM, JP
Under Secretary for Security

Ms Jenny CHAN Wai-man
Principal Assistant Secretary for Security A

Captain West WU Wai-hung, MBS, GDSP, AE
Controller
Government Flying Service

Captain James SZE Wan-lung
Chief Pilot (Operations)
Government Flying Service

Mr Sunny SUEN Chi-wah
Senior Aircraft Engineer (Maintenance) 2
Government Flying Service

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| Clerk in
attendance | : Miss Betty MA
Chief Council Secretary (2) 1 |
| Staff in
attendance | : Mr Timothy TSO
Senior Assistant Legal Adviser 1

Ms Gloria TSANG
Senior Council Secretary (2) 7

Ms Kiwi NG
Legislative Assistant (2) 1

Ms CHAU Kwan-bing
Legislative Assistant (2) 7 |
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I. Information paper issued since the last meeting

Members noted that no information paper had been issued since the last meeting.

II. Date of next meeting and items for discussion

(LC Paper Nos. CB(2)1249/20-21(01) and (02))

Schedule of regular meetings in September and October 2021

2. Members agreed that the Panel would hold regular meetings on 7 September 2021 and 5 October 2021 at 2:30 pm.

(Post-meeting note: The meeting schedule was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(2)1271/20-21 on 7 July 2021.)

3. The Chairman said that he and the Deputy Chairman would discuss with the Secretary for Security the items to be discussed in September meeting. Members would be informed of the details in due course.

Local visit

4. Members noted that a visit to Tai Tam Gap Correctional Institution by the Panel would be arranged in the morning of 23 July 2021 to facilitate members' understanding of the operation of "Smart Prison". The Secretariat would issue invitation notice to all Legislative Council ("LegCo") Members after the meeting.

(Post-meeting note: Relevant circular was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(2)1272/20-21 on 7 July 2021.)

III. Strengthening the prevention and tackling of terrorist activities

(LC Paper Nos. CB(2)1249/20-21(03) and (04))

5. Secretary for Security ("S for S") briefed members on the latest situation regarding the terrorist threat in Hong Kong, as well as prevention and response strategies of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region ("HKSAR") Government.

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6. Members noted an updated background brief entitled "Strengthening the prevention and tackling of terrorist activities" prepared by LegCo Secretariat.

Threat of terrorist attacks faced by Hong Kong

7. The Deputy Chairman and Mr LEUNG Che-cheung noted with concern about the "moderate" threat level of terrorist attacks faced by Hong Kong. S for S explained that "moderate" level meant there was the possibility of an attack, but there was no specific intelligence suggesting that Hong Kong was likely to be a target.

8. Mr YIU Si-wing considered that terrorist threat in Hong Kong was getting serious, and the Administration should stay highly vigilant to terrorist attacks. He was concerned about Hong Kong's counter-terrorism ("CT") capability as compared with other places, as well as the division of labour in the Police for CT work. S for S stressed that while the threat of terrorist attacks remained "moderate", the Government would fully prepare to prevent any form of terrorism from emerging in Hong Kong. He assured members that Hong Kong was highly capable in CT work, as the law enforcement agencies had been professional with outstanding performance in gathering intelligence and conducting operations. Notably, the Counter Terrorism Response Unit and the Inter-departmental Counter-terrorism Unit were set up to strengthen CT work. Depending on the provisions invoked for prosecution, suspected terrorist attacks would be referred to the Organized Crime and Triad Bureau or the National Security Department of the Police Force for further investigation.

9. The Chairman expressed sympathy over the male police officer who was seriously injured by a radical attacker on 1 July 2021, and thanked the disciplinary forces for their efforts in CT work. As some terrorist activities showed signs of going underground and becoming clandestine, and self-made explosives and 3-D firearms were getting more common, he was concerned about the regulation on these "weapons" and chemicals, the assessment of terrorist threat level and the challenges in formulating CT strategy. S for S said that the Government would take into account a wide range of factors and review the threat level as and when appropriate. In addition, the Government was refining the Dangerous Goods Ordinance (Cap. 295). Relevant departments, including the Fire Services Department would step up patrol and strengthen intelligence gathering accordingly.

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Threat of domestic terrorism

10. Mr Holden CHOW expressed sympathy on behalf of the Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong over the male police officer who was seriously injured by a radical attacker on 1 July 2021. He thanked S for S for leading the disciplinary forces to respond promptly to terrorist activities, and called on members of the public not to glorify violence acts. Apart from the online reporting system, he asked whether consideration would be given to setting up a public hotline for reporting suspected terrorism-related information.

11. Mr SHIU Ka-fai expressed sympathy on behalf of the Liberal Party over the male police officer who was seriously injured by a radical attacker on 1 July 2021. While the implementation of the Hong Kong National Security Law ("HKNSL") had restored social stability, he said that members of the public should remain on guard on lone-wolf attacks. The community should also strongly condemn those who attempted to rationalize or down play violent attacks. Furthermore, he urged the Administration to fully investigate and tackle these acts in accordance with the laws.

12. S for S said that members of the public were encouraged to report terrorism or national security-related information to the "National Security Department Reporting Hotline". He further said that those glorifying and down playing terrorist activities and violent acts were immoral and endangering the society, as they were encouraging other people to sympathize and support terrorist activities, and might eventually become terrorists. Hence, he appealed to the entire community to strongly condemn these activities. The Government would also spare no effort to tackle such acts in accordance with the law.

13. Ms Elizabeth QUAT considered that the attack on the male police officer on 1 July 2021 a terrorist activity and was shocked that some citizens were trying to make violence heroic and mourn for the attacker. She and Mr LEUNG Che-cheung asked whether advocating violence and glorifying terrorism would be regarded as assisting in terrorist activities and breaching the law. S for S pointed out that various kinds of seditious acts could be prosecuted in accordance with section 9 of the Crimes Ordinance (Cap. 200), Article 27 of HKNSL or the United Nations (Anti-Terrorism Measures) Ordinance (Cap. 575), having regard to the evidence collected.

14. The Deputy Chairman expressed sympathy on behalf of the New People's Party over the male police officer who was seriously injured by a

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radical attacker on 1 July 2021. She was shocked by such a terrorist attack towards a police officer on duty at a densely populated area, and asked whether it was an organized crime. Dr Priscilla LEUNG was concerned about voluminous messages glorifying and rationalizing the attack on the internet, and asked whether there were any persons in control or support behind the scene.

15. S for S said that initial investigation revealed that this was a lone wolf-style act in which the attacker was believed to be radicalized by myriad online information. The Police were conducting thorough investigation into the case including whether it was an organized crime, and would conduct arrests if sufficient evidence was found. So far, three people were arrested for posting seditious message online, including inciting others to attack Police. Besides, the Police would request removal of online messages endangering national security pursuant to Article 43 of HKNSL. The Deputy Chairman further asked whether consideration would be given to installing Closed-Circuit Television systems at public places or cancelling Pedestrian Streets. S for S stressed that the Government would take into consideration various measures to fight crime and tackle terrorism.

Public education and publicity on counter-terrorism

16. Mr Steven HO considered that domestic terrorism activities had existed in Hong Kong since 2019, and was transformed into "lone-wolf" attacks and showed signs of going underground. Given that a staff member in a tertiary institution was arrested of suspected making bombs for terrorist attacks, he expressed concern about CT education and publicity.

17. Mr Christopher CHEUNG expressed sympathy over the male police officer who was seriously injured by a radical attacker on 1 July 2021. Noting that some secondary students were arrested of suspected making bombs recently, he urged the Police to investigate and detect the case as early as practicable. He further called on the entire community to condemn such violent acts and terrorist activities. Given the dissemination of seditious promotional materials on the internet attempting to spread extreme and radical ideologies, he was particularly concerned about CT education and cyber security.

18. S for S reiterated that apart from taking enforcement actions, members of the public should report and condemn terrorist activities and violent acts. Those conniving and glorifying terrorism should be condemned as well. Pursuant to Article 9 of HKNSL, the Government would strengthen its

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work on safeguarding national security and CT education in all aspects. The Chief Secretary for Administration had been coordinating departments/bureaux to take necessary measures to strengthen public communication, guidance, supervision and regulation over matters concerning national security, including those relating to schools, universities, social organizations, the media and the internet. Mr Steven HO urged the Administration to introduce specific measures (other than condemnation) to combat terrorist activities.

Other issues

19. Ms Alice MAK expressed sympathy on behalf of the Hong Kong Federation of Trade Unions over the male police officer who was seriously injured by a radical attacker on 1 July 2021. She thanked the disciplinary forces for their law enforcement, intelligence gathering and investigation in preventing terrorist activities, and enquired about the legislative timetable of Article 23 of the Basic Law ("BL23") and the legislation against fake news. Dr Priscilla LEUNG asked whether consideration would be given to enacting legislation against advocating and spreading of extremism.

20. S for S advised that the legislation on BL23 would be commenced as early as possible as it was the constitutional responsibility of HKSAR. Since BL23 covered seven types of acts endangering national security and some of the acts were relevant to the offences stipulated in HKNSL, the Government would review the details of BL23 legislation in the light of recent incidents. While the Government was actively carrying out preparatory work in respect of the enactment of legislation on BL23, it would be difficult to complete in the remaining term of the current LegCo given the relatively short period. S for S further said that the Government had been attaching great importance to combatting fake news, and the Home Affairs Bureau was studying relevant legislation. Ms Elizabeth QUAT hoped that the legislative timetable on the two pieces of legislation would be finalized as soon as practicable.

21. Dr CHENG Chung-tai said that the Administration would now treat every matter relating to governance and politics as merely a law and order issue, including the suicide incident on 1 July 2021. He was of the view that it might not be good for the long-term development of the society. Given the recent controversial discussion in the society on paying tribute and mourning to the death, he was concerned as to whether the offence of slander and disturbing the peace would also be under the scope of the legislation on BL23. S for S did not agree with Dr CHENG's view. Instead, he stressed

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that some people were putting the cart before the horse, by attempting to claim that acts of violence and terrorism were a result of dissatisfaction at the society. He expressed strong disappointment over such claims and stressed that it should be made clear to society that such acts of violence were not acceptable.

22. Mr CHAN Han-pan expressed concern about the equipment of police officers and the security of Police's departmental quarters ("DQs"). S for S said that the Government had since 2019 introduced corrosive-resistant and cut-resistant equipment, as well as less-lethal weapons for use by officers on duty. The Police would review and introduce appropriate equipment as and when necessary. Furthermore, the Police had stepped up patrol at DQs and applied injunction order for DQs. For areas in vicinity of DQs, the Police would conduct risk-assessment and take necessary action.

IV. Smart Customs

(LC Paper No. CB(2)1249/20-21(05))

23. With the aid of video presentation, Under Secretary for Security ("US for S") briefed members on the Customs and Excise Department ("C&ED")'s implementation of Smart Boundary Management as well as Smart Investigation and Case Management, which formed part of its "Smart Customs Blueprint", to enhance customs clearance effectiveness, fortify law enforcement capabilities, and upgrade services to the public.

Issues relating to the "Smart Customs Blueprint"

24. Mr SHIU Ka-fai commended C&ED's work against smuggling in recent years. He was particularly concerned about the application of innovation and technology in combating illicit cigarettes, as well as various issues relating to "cheap whites" cigarettes. US for S said that with dedicated efforts of C&ED, including the application of technology and the adoption of advanced devices at various boundary control points ("BCPs"), the quantity of seizure in illicit cigarettes and dangerous drugs had shown a significant increase over the past couple of years. Assistant Commissioner (Excise and Strategic Support), C&ED ("AC(ES)/C&ED") added that C&ED had been attaching great importance to issues relating to illicit cigarettes and "cheap whites" cigarettes. A multi-pronged strategy had been deployed to combat the problem. In 2020, there was an upsurge of more than 460% in the number of significant cases on illicit cigarettes.

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Besides, C&ED had continued to monitor and take enforcement actions against "cheap whites" cigarettes.

25. Mr Frankie YICK sought statistics on smuggling cases detected by C&ED in 2020. Mr Tony TSE was of the view that the Administration should build up a positive image by providing quantifiable data to members of the public upon implementation of Smart Customs, such as the time saved for customs clearance, impact on manpower resources and specific targets to be met.

26. US for S noted Mr TSE's view and said that apart from enhancing customs clearance effectiveness, the implementation of Smart Customs had strengthened C&ED's intelligence gathering and fortified law enforcement capabilities. For instance, C&ED had detected 17 and 29 smuggling cases with seizure values of over \$10 million in respect of illicit cigarettes and dangerous drugs respectively in 2020, showing a significant increase when compared with one and three such cases in 2018. AC(ES)/C&ED added that notwithstanding the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the new record of smuggling cases in illicit cigarettes and dangerous drugs might be attributable to the use of advanced equipment in detection and artificial intelligence ("AI") in case analysis. US for S further supplemented that it was also C&ED's objective to facilitate travellers and trade development with Smart Customs initiatives. The Chairman acknowledged C&ED's outstanding performance over the past few years.

27. Mr YIU Si-wing considered that the robotic assistants at control points might not be effective as travellers were always in a hurry. Instead, consideration should be given to cooperating with different transport operators and providing timely travel and clearance information to travellers before arrival. AC(ES)/C&ED explained that C&ED had deployed advanced equipment at various BCPs to elevate customs clearance efficiency. For instance, the auto-detection devices for existing X-ray checkers with AI functions embedded would significantly shorten the time needed for recognition of contrabands from 10 to 15 seconds to two seconds. With increasing customs clearance efficiency, the robotic assistants at control points would serve as a supporting service to facilitate travellers and provide immediate information upon enquiry.

28. The Deputy Chairman, Mr Steven HO and Mr Tony TSE expressed support for the "Smart Customs Blueprint" to enhance clearance effectiveness, fortify law enforcement capabilities and upgrade services to the public. The Deputy Chairman was concerned about the application of

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innovation and technology in detecting illegal firearms and component parts, as well as the subsequent reduction in manual work process and effectiveness in crime prevention. AC(ES)/C&ED pointed out that C&ED was going to procure six computed tomography scanners capable of producing high resolution 3-D images of the scanned subject in around late 2021. The six computed tomography scanners would be deployed at different BCPs to enable speedy automatic detection of contrabands, including suspicious firearms and component parts, against voluminous information stored in the database. In addition, C&ED had been procuring 112 sets of auto-detection devices for existing X-ray checkers to assist in screening of suspicious objects in a more efficient and precise manner. With increasing efficiency, more C&ED officers would be deployed to assist in data analysis work to further enhance detection and enforcement capabilities.

29. Mr Steven HO was concerned as to whether the "Smart Customs Blueprint" was able to assist in crime prevention and CT work, in particular on the detection of component parts and raw materials for making various kinds of weapons at BCPs. US for S emphasized that C&ED had all along been playing a key role in CT work and conducting checks on passengers, parcels and cargoes at BCPs. All incoming parcels at the mail centre would be screened by X-ray checkers. In recent years, over 100 cases involving firearms and their component parts were detected by C&ED, and were subsequently referred to the Police for investigation. For raw materials capable of making explosives and which might also be used for civilian purposes, US for S said that relevant control was made by strengthening inspection and intelligence gathering. Mr HO urged the Administration to strengthen the work in this aspect.

30. The Chairman expressed concern about the increasing abuse of cannabis-related products and asked about the measures taken by C&ED to tackle drug supply at source. He further called on the Administration to pay attention to the entry of illegal animal traps into Hong Kong. AC(ES)/C&ED said that C&ED had been monitoring the trend of incoming cannabis-related products and strengthening relevant checks at BCPs and the mail centre. While advanced X-ray checkers and computed tomography scanners could detect organic substances, ion scanners (i.e. trace contraband detectors) would also be deployed to detect and identify different types of dangerous drugs. To prevent smuggling of animal traps, the auto-detection devices for X-ray checkers and the Big Data Analytics System, which was currently under study, would help enhance C&ED's capabilities in relevant investigation and detection.

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Other issues

31. Mr YIU Si-wing enquired about the feasibility of replacing the existing paper arrival card with electronic version. US for S said that the Immigration Department had been studying measures to improve service to travellers.

32. Mr Frankie YICK enquired about the progress of the Trade Single Window ("TSW") and the development of the Cold Chain Logistics. AC(ES)/C&ED said that phase 1 of TSW covered 14 types of trade documents for specific types of commodities with corresponding usage rate up to 87%. The Commerce and Economic Development Bureau, being the policy bureau of the TSW initiative, would implement phases 2 and 3 in due course.

33. Given the different clearance requirements for cross-boundary transportation of film/TV props between HKSAR and the Mainland, Mr MA Fung-kwok asked whether consideration would be given to providing assistance to the performing arts industry to enhance their understanding on Mainland's clearance requirements. US for S replied that C&ED was willing to provide advice to the relevant industry as appropriate. C&ED would be happy to follow up with Mr MA on the matter after the meeting.

V. The strategy of the Government Flying Service on making good use of retired aircraft

(LC Paper Nos. CB(2)1249/20-21(06) and (07))

34. US for S briefed members on the strategy of the Government Flying Service ("GFS") making good use of retired aircrafts.

35. Members noted an information note entitled "The strategy of the Government Flying Service on making good use of retired aircraft" prepared by the LegCo Secretariat.

36. Mr MA Fung-kwok was glad to note that GFS would consider retaining one retired Super Puma helicopter that took part in the rescue operations in Wenchuan earthquake in 2008 and displaying it at a public venue or exhibition hall. He expressed support for whatsoever means to retain the retired Super Puma helicopter and asked whether consideration would be given to engaging non-governmental organizations, such as the

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Hong Kong Aviation Club, for such purpose. US for S said that while the Energizing Kowloon East Office had demonstrated a positive response to the proposal of displaying a retired Super Puma helicopter at the Kai Tak Runway Park, GFS would examine other feasible means to retain retired aircrafts and welcome suggestions.

37. Mr Tony TSE expressed support for GFS's diversified strategy on making good use of retired aircrafts, in particular the consideration of retaining the Super Puma helicopter that took part in the rescue operations in Wenchuan earthquake in 2008. Having said that, he noted the maintenance issues associated with retired aircrafts, and was of the view that the option of selling in the second-hand market should not be ruled out, particularly under the situation where other arrangements (i.e. training, education, exhibition purposes, etc) could not be made. US for S thanked for Mr TSE's view and affirmed that, in arranging public display, GFS would ensure adequate safety measures were in place, as well as provide technical advice on maintenance requirements. US for S further pointed out that some tertiary institutions, including the Hong Kong Institute of Vocational Education and the Technological and the Higher Education Institute of Hong Kong, had expressed an interest in providing their students with opportunities for practical training using retired aircrafts.

38. The Deputy Chairman expressed support for GFS's strategy on making good use of retired aircrafts. To enhance public understanding of GFS's work, she asked whether consideration would be given to setting up a fixed exhibition hall/museum for GFS for public educational purpose. Mr YIU Si-wing also supported the idea of setting up a fixed exhibition hall/museum, adding that it was a worthwhile suggestion to promote the development of Hong Kong's aviation industry to the public and tourists.

39. US for S thanked for members' suggestion and shared similar views. According to the latest plan, four different types of retired aircraft and helicopters would be arranged for public display (including one Jetstream 41 fixed-wing aircraft which was already installed at Kai Tak Runway Park) to raise general understanding of GFS's work and local aviation industry. Besides, on the condition that normal operation of GFS was not affected, GFS had been cooperating with other disciplinary forces to organize various public educational activities.

40. Mr YIU Si-wing asked about the feasibility of using retired aircraft in local air tour and short-haul cross-boundary tour, as well as for public exhibition purpose on the Mainland. US for S said that retired aircrafts and

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helicopters which were not designated for training, education or exhibition purposes would likely be put on sale in the second-hand market. Since all GFS aircraft had undergone extensive modifications to carry out various flying missions, he pointed out that buyers in the second-hand market had to restore the retired aircraft they purchased at their own expenses to meet airworthiness requirements for general passenger carrying and transport. US for S further said that the Government was willing to explore the viability of displaying retired aircraft on the Mainland upon request.

41. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 4:18 pm.

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
11 August 2021