

## Chapter 16

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# Public Order

*Hong Kong is one of the safest cities in the world.  
The overall crime rate, meaning the number of crimes  
per 100,000 population, fell 4 per cent in 2018 while the  
violent crime rate fell 3.3 per cent compared with 2017.  
The overall crime detection rate was 46.5 per cent.*

The Security Bureau is responsible for security-related policies, including the maintenance of law and order, exercising immigration and customs control, rehabilitating offenders and drug abusers, and providing emergency fire and rescue services.

### **Fight Crime Committee**

The Fight Crime Committee (FCC), chaired by the Chief Secretary for Administration, provides advice and recommendations to prevent and reduce crime, coordinates crime-fighting efforts and monitors their results. In 2018, it monitored the overall crime situation, the trend of commercial crime and technology crime, the progress of the Police Superintendent's Discretion Scheme, youth crime, the drug situation and the Correctional Services Department's publicity campaign for rehabilitated people. Deception, sexual assault and drug abuse were targeted in its 2018-19 publicity strategy.

Working with the FCC are the 18 District Fight Crime Committees (DFCCs), which monitor the crime situation at district level, reflect community concerns about law and order and organise district publicity programmes to increase crime prevention awareness. The FCC held an annual dinner and the Fight Crime Conference in March and December respectively to reinforce closer links with the DFCCs.

### **Police Force**

The Hong Kong Police Force's commitment to maintaining law and order helps ensure Hong Kong remains one of the world's safest and most stable cities.

At the end of 2018, the police had about 30,800 and 4,600 police officer and civilian posts respectively, reinforced by some 4,500 volunteers serving in the Hong Kong Auxiliary Police Force. It appointed 229 inspectors and 1,185 constables during the year.

### **Crime**

Reported crimes in 2018 totalled 54,225, a decrease of 3.2 per cent compared with 2017. The crime rate went down 4 per cent to 728 cases per 100,000 population. There were 8,884 violent crimes, down 2.2 per cent.

Overall thefts declined 10.5 per cent to 21,309 cases. Robberies dropped 9.8 per cent to 147 and burglaries fell 15.9 per cent to 1,575. The number of robberies and burglaries was at a record low since 1969.

Of the reported crimes, 46.5 per cent, or 25,213 cases, were detected, resulting in the arrest of 28,966 persons. Among these, 928 were juveniles aged between 10 and 15, while 1,841 were young persons aged between 16 and 20. Arrests of youths were mostly for wounding and serious assault, miscellaneous thefts, shop theft and serious drug offences.

The number of triad-related crimes decreased 4.6 per cent to 1,715 compared with 2017, accounting for 3.2 per cent of all reported crimes in 2018.

The police strive to combat triad activities. An annual tripartite operation codenamed 'Thunderbolt' is mounted with the Guangdong Provincial Public Security Department and Macao Unitary Police Service. During the execution of Thunderbolt between May and August, 4,283 persons were arrested in Hong Kong and crime proceeds worth over \$310 million were seized.

### **Commercial Crime**

The Commercial Crime Bureau tackles serious commercial crime and the counterfeiting of monetary instruments. The bureau's Fraud and Money Laundering Intelligence Taskforce, established in 2017, strengthened intelligence exchange between the public and private sectors and facilitated 31 intelligence-led operations during an 18-month pilot period, resulting in the arrest of 123 persons and interception of crime proceeds of \$146 million. The bureau's Anti-Deception Coordination Centre, formed in the same year, enhanced coordination between the police and local and overseas stakeholders, working with the banking sector to intercept \$1.2 billion in crime proceeds in 2018. The centre's Anti-Scam Helpline, 18222, offered anti-deception advice to the public, receiving over 25,000 calls in 2018.

### **Technology Crime**

The Cyber Security and Technology Crime Bureau combats technology crime and maintains Hong Kong's cyber security through partnership with the community, stakeholders and overseas law enforcement agencies. Of the 7,838 technology crimes reported in 2018, 81 per cent were internet deception cases, meaning scams perpetrated through the use of internet platforms such as social media and email. In view of the increasing trend of technology crime, the police raised public awareness through cyber security drills, seminars and campaigns. A training facility called Cyber Range was established in December to enhance police capabilities against cyber attacks.

### ***Dangerous Drugs***

The police adopt a multi-agency approach, enlisting community support to combat drug abuse and trafficking. In 2018, the number of persons arrested for drug offences totalled 3,784, of whom 48 per cent involved the seizure of methamphetamine, also known as Ice, and cocaine.

The Narcotics Bureau maintains a strategic partnership with Mainland and overseas law enforcement agencies. To tackle international drug trafficking, 12 joint operations were conducted in 2018, involving the seizure of 4,088kg of illicit drugs. The bureau also works to amend legislation and devise intervention strategies against challenges posed by newly emerged dangerous drugs.

### ***Financial Investigation***

The Financial Investigations Division and the Joint Financial Intelligence Unit combat money laundering and terrorist financing activities, while the Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing Risk Assessment Unit conducts corresponding risk assessment exercises. During the year, 79 persons were convicted of money laundering offences, with criminal assets of about \$7.9 billion restrained and \$596.1 million confiscated.

### ***Forensic Support***

The Identification Bureau collects and compares fingerprints, examines firearms, takes photographs and gathers DNA evidence from crime scenes to support crime investigations and prosecutions. In 2018, fingerprint evidence linked 1,447 persons to 1,293 criminal cases.

### ***Liaison***

The Liaison Bureau is the designated contact point with law enforcement agencies of the Mainland, Macao, Taiwan and overseas countries, and with foreign liaison officers stationed in Hong Kong, on all police-related matters. As a sub-bureau of the Interpol National Central Bureau China, it deals with all Interpol-related matters in Hong Kong.

Apart from assisting in investigations, the bureau coordinates requests about mutual legal assistance, the surrender of fugitive offenders and the handling of notifications under a reciprocal notification mechanism with the Mainland.

### ***Counterterrorism***

As part of ongoing efforts to strengthen counterterrorism capabilities, the police conduct training and exercises regularly with other organisations to maintain the highest level of readiness. The police work closely with Mainland and overseas law enforcement agencies to protect Hong Kong from the threat of terrorism. In view of terrorism-related challenges posed by the increasingly complex international landscape, the police promote 'Run-Hide-Report' as the public's rule of thumb to ensure safety, and heighten awareness of counterterrorism.

### ***Traffic***

During the year, 15,935 traffic accidents involved casualties, with 1,682 and 107 cases recording serious injuries and fatalities respectively. The data represented 1 per cent more accidents

involving casualties and 18 per cent fewer accidents involving serious injuries or fatalities than in 2017.

### **Public Order Events**

Hong Kong residents enjoy freedom of speech and the right to peaceful assembly, procession and demonstration. The police facilitate all lawful and peaceful public events fairly and impartially and strive to uphold public order and safety, seeking to strike a balance between facilitating public events and minimising the impact of these events on other members of the public. During the year, 11,880 public meetings and processions were held.

### **Public Relations**

The Police Public Relations Branch (PPRB) works in partnership with the media and the community. It disseminates information about police activities to local and overseas media round the clock and releases information on unforeseen incidents through an interactive electronic platform. The branch also helps the FCC plan and implement publicity campaigns.

The PPRB makes use of online platforms, including the police website, mobile application, YouTube channel, Facebook page and Instagram, to enhance policing and its ability to connect with the community.

The PPRB's *Police Magazine*, *Police Report* and *Police Bulletin* provide information on crime prevention measures and the work of individual police units. The branch also helps television broadcasters and film production companies produce dramas, documentaries and films related to police work, and offers advice and assistance on location filming. It publishes a fortnightly newspaper, *OffBeat*; the monthly *Junior Police Call Newsletter*; the quarterly *Senior Police Call Newsletter* and the annual *Hong Kong Police Review*.

### **Engaging the Community**

The Junior Police Call (JPC) scheme and Police School Liaison Programme serve as bridges between the police and young people, while the Senior Police Call (SPC) scheme promotes crime prevention, fight crime and road safety messages among the elderly. Police Community Liaison Assistants are recruited to build long-term relationships with the non-ethnic-Chinese community.

JPC@Pat Heung, set up by the PPRB, serves JPC and SPC members, students, youth organisations and non-ethnic-Chinese residents. It promotes awareness of abiding by the law, instils positive values in the young and enhances their self-confidence and leadership skills through activities such as physical fitness training.

The police present Good Citizen Awards, which are sponsored by the Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce, to recognise residents' assistance in fighting crime. In 2018, 79 people received the awards.

### **Planning and Development**

In September, a new-generation Report Room was commissioned in Tseung Kwan O Police Station, the first police station equipped with a padded temporary holding area inside a report

room. Police facilities at West Kowloon Station of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link and the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge Boundary Control Point were commissioned in September and October respectively. At the Heung Yuen Wai Boundary Control Point, and the Kowloon East Regional Headquarters and Operational Base and Ngau Tau Kok Divisional Police Station, police facilities are scheduled for completion in the third and fourth quarters of 2019 respectively.

### ***Information and Communications Technology***

On 27 June, a new e-Report Centre was launched on the police's website to address increasing demand for online case reporting from the public. The new platform offers a wider variety of report forms, a user-friendly interface and a file attachment uploading function. It replaces the e-Report Room, which had been in use for years.

### ***Training***

The Police College equips officers with policing knowledge and skills through diversified training, so as to help the police remain a professional force serving the community and maintaining law and order. To enhance trainees' experience and maximise training effectiveness, it uses virtual reality, simulation technology and a mobile application, and leverages the expertise of external talent, including local and overseas academics. In 2018, the training priorities were in capacity building, the use of technology and the enhancement of research capability.

International collaboration is strengthened through the joint organisation of courses such as the International Executive Development in Policing Programme with the Canadian Police College, and the Master of Studies in Applied Criminology and Police Management with the University of Cambridge.

The Police College's standard of training is well commended. A number of training programmes have won international awards, including the US-based Training Top 125 Award for the detective training programme in 2018, in recognition of the college's achievements in manpower training.

### ***Service Quality***

The Service Quality Wing promotes excellence and continuous improvement in strategic planning, quality management and innovation in police services delivery. In 2018, it began preparing for the next Force Inspection Process, published the Environmental Scan Report and continued to work on the formulation of the police's Strategic Directions and Strategic Action Plan 2019-21.

### ***Complaints and Internal Investigations***

Under a statutory two-tier police complaint handling system, the Complaints Against Police Office handles all complaints lodged by the public against the police and supports the Independent Police Complaints Council (IPCC) in performing statutory functions. The office received 1,501 reportable complaints in 2018, 18.6 per cent lower than the yearly average of 1,845 from the past five years.

The police's Internal Investigations Office embeds ethics and integrity in the police through education and culture building, governance and control, enforcement and deterrence, and reintegration and support.

### **Independent Police Complaints Council**

The IPCC is an independent statutory body. Its key functions are:

- To observe, monitor and review the police's handling and investigation of reportable complaints;
- To monitor actions taken or to be taken against any member of the police force by the Commissioner of Police in connection with reportable complaints;
- To identify any fault or deficiency in police practice or procedure that has led to or might lead to reportable complaints, and to make recommendations accordingly;
- To advise the Commissioner of Police and/or the Chief Executive of its opinion and/or recommendation in connection with reportable complaints; and
- To promote public awareness of the role of the council.

Members and observers of the IPCC are drawn from a wide spectrum of society with diverse expertise, and are appointed by the Chief Executive and the Secretary for Security respectively. They may attend interviews and observe the police's collection of evidence about reportable complaints to ensure investigations are conducted fairly and impartially.

In 2018, the IPCC scrutinised and endorsed the findings in 1,522 investigation reports on reportable complaints received during the year or carried forward from previous years, involving 2,539 allegations. Of these, 79 allegations were found to be substantiated or partially substantiated and the police have taken appropriate action against the officers involved.

### **Correctional Services Department**

The Correctional Services Department (CSD) runs a comprehensive range of programmes for adult and young persons in custody under two broad headings: prison management and rehabilitation of offenders.

As at 31 December, the department was managing 28 correctional facilities of different security grading, with 6,551 staff looking after 8,181 persons in custody and 1,412 people under supervision after discharge. Offenders sentenced to imprisonment are assigned to correctional institutions according to their gender, age and security ratings. Separate institutions are provided for male and female adults and young persons in custody. Young offenders aged between 14 and 20 may be admitted to a training centre or rehabilitation centre. Males aged between 14 and 24 may undergo a detention centre programme. Drug addicts found guilty of an offence punishable by imprisonment may be placed in a drug addiction treatment centre.

All persons in custody receive proper care. Their diets follow approved scales of nutritional values with regard to their health, religious and dietary requirements. All convicted adults, unless certified physically unfit, are required to work six days a week. They are assigned to different work posts according to their fitness and security ratings, personal experience and balance of sentence. They receive earnings, which may be used to buy approved articles and canteen items, as an incentive to acquire good working habits and vocational skills. They can watch television and read newspapers and library books. They may send and receive letters, receive visits and take part in religious services.

### **Correctional Facilities**

Among the 28 correctional facilities, nine are for adult male offenders and two are for adult female offenders. Young males aged between 14 and 24 are housed in one correctional institution, one detention centre, one training centre and two rehabilitation centres, while young females aged between 14 and 20 are accommodated at one correctional institution and two rehabilitation centres. Hei Ling Chau Addiction Treatment Centre, Lai Sun Correctional Institution, Nei Kwu Correctional Institution and part of Lai King Correctional Institution accommodate convicted drug addicts. Siu Lam Psychiatric Centre separately houses males and females in custody of all categories who require psychiatric observation, treatment or assessment. Seven of the correctional facilities cater for remanded people of different age groups. Each correctional facility typically has dormitories, a kitchen, dining rooms, a laundry, workshops, areas for exercise and recreation, a library and a hospital.

Two custodial wards in public hospitals accommodate persons in custody who need special medical care or surgery. Three halfway houses help those released under supervision reintegrate into society. Their residents may go out to work or attend school during daytime.

### **Penal Population**

During the year, 9,588 adults (6,599 men and 2,989 women) were sentenced to imprisonment, 5,488 adults (4,198 men and 1,290 women) were remanded, 148 young offenders (116 males and 32 females) were sentenced to imprisonment, and 250 young persons (220 males and 30 females) were remanded. In addition, 115 offenders (103 males and 12 females) were sentenced to detention in training centres, rehabilitation centres or the detention centre in Sha Tsui, 561 offenders (435 males and 126 females) were placed in drug addiction treatment centres, and 1,190 offenders (1,009 males and 181 females) were remanded pending suitability reports for sentencing to one of these centres.

### **Pre-sentence Assessment**

Young offenders and offenders with drug addiction problems who are sentenced to imprisonment may be remanded in custody for up to three weeks to assess their suitability for admission to a correctional facility. The Rehabilitation Unit under the CSD prepares suitability reports for the courts, while the Young Offender Assessment Panel, comprising CSD and Social Welfare Department representatives, considers cases referred by the courts and recommends to magistrates and judges the most suitable rehabilitation programmes for young offenders.

In 2018, the unit recommended 216 males and 22 females for admission to a rehabilitation centre, a training centre or a detention centre, and 550 males and 151 females as suitable for a drug addiction treatment centre. The panel received 50 cases from the courts for assessment.

### ***Training, Detention and Rehabilitation Centres***

The two training centres provide young people with custodial correctional training for between six months and three years, comprising half-day educational classes and half-day vocational training. They also receive character development training in the form of scouting and guiding. Upon release, they are subject to three-year statutory supervision.

At the detention centre in Sha Tsui, males aged between 14 and 20 go through one to six months of detention, and males aged between 21 and 24, three to 12 months. Its programmes emphasise strict discipline, strenuous training, hard work and a vigorous routine. After release, they are placed under one-year statutory supervision.

The rehabilitation centres provide a sentencing option for the courts to deal with young offenders aged between 14 and 20 who need a short-term residential rehabilitation programme. Those released are put through one-year statutory supervision.

### ***Education***

Offenders under 21 receive education and assistance to sit local and overseas accredited public examinations. Adults are encouraged to take self-study courses or tertiary-level distance learning programmes offered by accredited institutions. Those pursuing further studies may apply for financial help from the Prisoners' Education Trust Fund and other education subsidy schemes.

### ***Vocational Training***

The CSD helps offenders reintegrate into society as law-abiding citizens. Those under 21 may undergo half-day vocational training programmes to acquire job skills, obtain accreditation and develop work habits, while eligible adult offenders<sup>1</sup> can take pre-release vocational courses. Seventeen correctional facilities offered full-time and part-time courses in 2018.

### ***Correctional Services Industries***

The department provides work for adult offenders as required by law to keep them gainfully employed and to help them develop good working habits, a sense of responsibility and self-confidence. Through the training received at work, they acquire work skills to facilitate their reintegration into society.

In 2018, a daily average of 4,392 persons in custody were engaged in productive work, providing government departments and subvented bodies with goods and services that covered office furniture, uniforms, leather products, hospital linen, filter masks, fibreglass products, traffic signs, precast concrete products, metal products, laundry services, book binding, printing work, file jackets and envelopes. Precast concrete and signage products for

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<sup>1</sup> 'Eligible adult offender' means an adult offender who is allowed to be employed or work and is not subject to any condition of stay in Hong Kong after discharge.



major infrastructure projects, including the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge and the Central-Wanchai Bypass and Island Eastern Corridor Link, were delivered on schedule. The market value of these goods and services was \$442 million.

### ***Welfare and Counselling***

Rehabilitation officers look after the welfare of persons in custody and help them deal with personal problems arising from their detention or imprisonment. The officers provide counselling and rehabilitation programmes such as pre-release reintegration orientation courses, make arrangements for the persons in custody to meet their families and supply information on community resources.

### ***Drug Addiction Treatment***

Convicted drug addicts may undergo a compulsory treatment programme as an alternative to imprisonment. Addicts aged between 14 and 20 are accommodated separately from the adults. The length of treatment is the same, ranging from two to 12 months of in-centre treatment followed by one year of statutory supervision.

### ***Health Care***

All correctional institutions have on-site hospitals staffed by qualified personnel to provide basic health care. Persons in custody who need specialist treatment are referred to visiting specialists or public hospitals.

### ***Psychological Services***

Psychological services seek to improve the psychological well-being of persons in custody and to change their offending behaviour. Clinical psychologists and trained officers provide treatment for sex offenders, violent offenders, drug addicts, and young persons and women in custody. They submit assessment reports to the courts, review boards and institutional management on request. The department assesses the person's risk of reoffending upon discharge. In November, the Life Gym was opened at Stanley Prison as Hong Kong's first positive living centre for male persons in custody, to help them desist from crime and cultivate positive living.

### ***Statutory Supervision***

Statutory supervision aims to help supervisees reintegrate into society. It is provided to young persons discharged from custody, people discharged from training, rehabilitation, detention and drug addiction treatment centres, and those discharged under various statutory schemes. A breach of the supervision conditions may result in recall for a further period of training, treatment or imprisonment. At the year end, 1,412 people were under active statutory supervision.

### ***Community Support***

Community acceptance and support are paramount to an offender's rehabilitation and reintegration into society. The Committee on Community Support for Rehabilitated Offenders is a non-statutory advisory body appointed by the Commissioner of Correctional Services to advise on rehabilitation, reintegration and publicity measures. It comprises community leaders,

professionals and representatives of NGOs and government departments. The CSD organises publicity activities to appeal for public support for offender rehabilitation.

### **Community Education**

The department reaches out mainly to secondary students with its Rehabilitation Pioneer Project to encourage youths to stay away from crime and drugs and support offender rehabilitation. Programmes include the Creation and Rehabilitation drama and music performance and the Reflective Path programme, which simulates real imprisonment experience. In July, Rehabilitation Pioneer Leaders, a youth uniformed group, was established to raise the effectiveness of community education. Youngsters with leadership potential are provided with training to broaden their horizons and develop their potential. They are encouraged to contribute to society by promoting inclusive, law-abiding values for a better Hong Kong.

### **Visiting Justices**

Two Justices of the Peace visit each penal institution fortnightly or monthly, depending on the type of facility. The Justices of the Peace receive and investigate complaints from persons in custody, inspect their diets and examine their living and working conditions.

### **Quality Assurance**

To uphold and improve service standards, the department initiates enhancements of safety, security and overall workflow through regular inspections, management studies, and innovation and technology.

### **Complaints**

The Complaints Investigation Unit handles and investigates complaints related to the department. All investigation reports are examined by the CSD Complaints Committee. A complainant dissatisfied with the outcome of an investigation may appeal to the CSD Complaints Appeal Board. Persons in custody may lodge complaints with any CSD officer or through other channels, such as the visiting Justices of the Peace, the Ombudsman and Legislative Councillors.

## **Customs and Excise Department**

The Customs and Excise Department is responsible primarily for the collection of revenue on dutiable goods, prevention of duty evasion, suppression of drug trafficking and abuse, prevention and detection of smuggling, and protection of intellectual property rights. The department also enforces legislation to protect consumer interests, safeguard and facilitate legitimate trade and industry, uphold Hong Kong's trading integrity and fulfil relevant international obligations. At the year end, it had 6,970 posts (see also Chapter 5).

### **Revenue Protection and Collection**

The department collects excise duties from commodities stipulated in the Dutiable Commodities Ordinance: liquor, tobacco, hydrocarbon oil and methyl alcohol. It administers a licensing and permit system to ensure no dutiable commodities, whether imported or locally

manufactured, are released for local consumption unless full duty has been paid. During the 2017-18 financial year, the department collected \$10.7 billion in excise duties, a 4 per cent increase from 2016-17.

The department assesses the taxable values of motor vehicles under the Motor Vehicles (First Registration Tax) Ordinance, resulting in the collection of \$8.6 billion first registration tax by the Transport Department in 2017-18, during which 61,135 motor vehicles were first registered.

The Customs and Excise Department takes sustained enforcement action against illicit cigarette activities on all fronts and cooperates with Mainland and overseas customs authorities to stamp out cross-boundary cigarette smuggling through intelligence exchange.

In 2018, the department solved 13,582 cases involving the smuggling, storage, distribution and peddling of illicit cigarettes, a 71 per cent increase from 2017, and seized 53.4 million illicit cigarettes. Among these cases, fines were imposed on 11,159 people, a year-on-year increase of 75 per cent, for bringing into Hong Kong a total of 2.6 million cigarettes in excess of their duty-free concession.

The department takes sustained action to stamp out illicit fuel activities. In 2018, it solved 31 illicit fuel cases, arrested 45 people and seized 96,500 litres of illicit fuel. The number of cases was 11 per cent lower than in 2017.

### ***Anti-narcotics Operations***

The department takes vigorous enforcement action to prevent and suppress the unlawful manufacture, distribution and trafficking of dangerous drugs; to trace, confiscate and recover drug proceeds from illegal drug activities; and to prevent the diversion of chemicals used for the illicit manufacture of dangerous drugs. To combat cross-boundary drug trafficking, the department deploys officers and detector dogs flexibly to boundary control points to strengthen enforcement, and maintains close cooperation, exchanges intelligence and mounts joint operations with local, Mainland and overseas law enforcement agencies. A mechanism of communication and intelligence exchange with the logistics industry is in place to strengthen enforcement on the import and export of cargoes.

In 2018, the department dealt with 222 drug trafficking cases, smashed 14 storage and distribution centres and five manufacturing and attenuating centres, seized 1,352kg of assorted dangerous drugs<sup>2</sup> and arrested 393 people. Cross-boundary enforcement cooperation led to the seizure of 1,338kg of assorted dangerous drugs and the arrest of 39 people in the Mainland and overseas.

As part of the government's efforts in combating youth drug abuse, the department works with NGOs to encourage young people to stay away from drugs and lead a healthy life.

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<sup>2</sup> Not including 868kg of khat, which contains substances subject to control under the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance.

### **Anti-smuggling Operations**

Overall, smuggling in Hong Kong is under effective control. That said, smuggling across the Hong Kong-Mainland boundary remains under close monitoring by law enforcement agencies. During the year, 185 Hong Kong-Mainland smuggling attempts were detected, with 204 people arrested and \$373 million worth of smuggled goods seized. Mobile phones, cameras and accessories, and precious metals were the main items smuggled into the Mainland. Cigarettes, which are cheaper in the Mainland, and counterfeit goods were often smuggled into Hong Kong.

The Customs and Excise Department collaborates with other law enforcement agencies to combat smuggling through intelligence exchange and parallel operations. It works closely with the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department and the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department to detect and prevent the smuggling of food and animals.

### **Fire Services Department**

The Fire Services Department fights fires and protects life and property in the event of fires and other calamities. The department also provides emergency ambulance services, and formulates and enforces fire safety policies and measures. It plans and builds fire stations and ambulance depots to cope with the territory's development and service needs, and to implement the government's policy of providing the fastest response possible to emergencies.

Its Fire and Ambulance Services Academy provides training services for the department, other public and private organisations as well as its Mainland and overseas counterparts.

The department has well-trained personnel, advanced communications systems and modern equipment. It employs 10,205 uniformed and 764 civilian members, and operates 1,074 fire appliances, ambulances and supporting vehicles and 24 fire vessels.

### **Firefighting and Rescue**

Of the 33,463 fire calls received in 2018, seven were classified as major fires of No 3 alarm. Accidents in the process of cooking constituted the major cause of fire, accounting for 1,512 cases. General electrical faults caused 820 fires, while the careless handling or disposal of lighted materials, such as cigarette ends, matches and candles, caused 776 fires. Unwanted alarms, triggered mainly by faulty automatic alarm systems, made up 69.5 per cent of the total number of fire calls.

The department also provides rescue services for traffic accidents, shipwrecks, people trapped in lifts or locked in rooms, gas or hazardous material leakages, building collapses, floods, landslides, industrial accidents, people stranded on hillsides and attempts to jump from a height. It handled 37,815 such calls in 2018.

### **Ambulance Services**

The department's Ambulance Command operates a fleet of emergency ambulances, rapid response vehicles and emergency medical assistant motorcycles manned by paramedics. All the vehicles are fully equipped with life-support equipment such as automated external

defibrillators and selected drugs for conditions including diabetes, shock, heart attack, shortness of breath, convulsion, cardiac arrest, anaphylaxis and drug overdose. The Ambulance Command handled a daily average of 2,205 calls in 2018.

The department trains front-line firefighters to become first responders to provide basic life support to casualties and patients before the arrival of an ambulance crew. In 2018, first responders responded to 49,886 cases.

### **Communications**

The 24-hour Fire Services Communications Centre mobilises all firefighting and ambulance resources to provide timely services. It also receives complaints about fire hazards and dangerous goods, and acts as an emergency coordinator for other government departments and public utilities during major emergencies. The centre provides post-dispatch advice to callers over the phone on more than 30 types of injuries and sicknesses, including burns, cardiac arrest, haemorrhage and childbirth, after dispatching ambulances. Callers receive immediate, comprehensive and appropriate advice to help stabilise patients based on their conditions before the ambulance crew arrives.

At the scene of an incident, a digital trunked radio system is used to ensure effective and efficient radio communication.

### **Fire Safety**

The Fire Safety Command draws up fire safety policies and formulates fire safety measures for buildings and mass transit systems. It devotes much effort to upgrading fire safety in old buildings, initiating fire safety inspections and raising public awareness of emergency preparedness.

In 2018, the command vetted 17,852 building plans, including those for tunnels and bridges, handled 380 submissions such as building plans and fire engineering reports, and offered fire safety advisory services on 285 occasions concerning Hong Kong International Airport's Three-runway System.

On railway infrastructure projects, the command formulates fire safety requirements and recommendations, and scrutinises the associated consultancy study reports, building plans and technical drawings of fire service installations (FSI). In 2018, the command handled 2,771 submissions and carried out acceptance inspections of FSI at new railway projects, including the Hong Kong Section of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link and the East West Corridor of the Shatin to Central Link, and of alteration, addition and improvement works of the existing lines.

In October, the Community Emergency Preparedness Division was established under the command to draw up community emergency preparedness strategies on, among others, disaster preparedness, counterterrorism preparedness, fire safety and community life support, to raise awareness of emergency preparedness, strengthen the public's response capabilities in case of danger or emergencies such as natural disasters or terrorist attacks, and enhance their knowledge of fire prevention, cardiopulmonary resuscitation and the use of automated external defibrillators.

The Licensing and Certification Command regulates the manufacture, storage, conveyance and use of dangerous goods and takes enforcement action against related offences. In 2018, it issued or renewed 4,492 storage licences for dangerous goods or timber, and 2,081 dangerous goods vehicle licences. The command also works with other law enforcement agencies to combat illicit fuelling. During the year, the Anti-illicit Fuelling Activities Task Force carried out 941 inspections and 96 surprise inspections, handled 142 complaints, seized over 240,000 litres of illicit fuel and instituted prosecution in 132 cases.

The command plays an important role in ensuring building fire safety. It monitors the status of FSI in buildings, handles complaints and oversees the professional standards of registered FSI contractors. In 2018, the command conducted 48,778 compliance inspections on FSI in new buildings and developments. It held another 83,977 inspections on existing FSI, issued 3,497 fire hazard abatement notices against irregularities found and took legal action against 81 owners of defective FSI and eight FSI contractors.

In addition, the command formulates and enforces fire safety policies for licensed premises and takes enforcement action against fire hazards. It advises licensing authorities on fire protection and carries out fire safety compliance certification relating to the licensing and registration of food premises, places of public entertainment, places of public amusement, converted schools, child care centres, massage establishments, private columbaria, electronic waste disposal facilities and drug treatment and rehabilitation centres. In 2018, it carried out 43,498 inspections of such premises and issued 1,389 fire hazard abatement notices.

### **Public Liaison**

A public liaison group comprising 30 members of the public from different walks of life is appointed annually to encourage public participation in monitoring and improving the delivery of fire and ambulance services.

### **Government Flying Service**

The Government Flying Service provides a wide range of flying services, including round-the-clock search and rescue coverage, casualty and medical evacuation, firefighting and support for other government departments.

It has a staff of 224 disciplined and 60 civilian members. In 2018, members flew a total of 7,234 hours, helped in 442 search and rescue operations and took 1,673 people to hospital by helicopter. By the end of 2019, it will be operating three fixed-wing aircraft and nine helicopters for operation and flight training.

### **Immigration Department**

#### **Immigration Control**

The Immigration Department plays an important role in maintaining law and order by controlling entry into Hong Kong. Immigration officers conduct checks at control points and vet entry applications to detect undesirable people, including international criminals and dubious visitors. The territory refused the entry of 54,195 people in 2018.

### ***Detection of Forged Travel Documents***

The department takes strict measures to guard against the use of forged travel documents and carries out special operations against forgery syndicates. In 2018, it discovered 449 forged travel documents. The department maintains close contact and exchanges information on such documents with local, Mainland and overseas law enforcement agencies and consulates.

### ***Interception of Targeted or Wanted Persons***

In 2018, officers intercepted at immigration control points 328,224 targeted or wanted persons in connection with offences or court orders ranging from failure to settle outstanding fines to serious crime.

### ***Combating Unlawful Employment***

The department's Anti-Illegal Workers Combat Squad combats illegal employment, conducting undercover patrols at illegal worker black spots. In 2018, 16,108 raids were conducted and 6,290 illegal workers were arrested, the vast majority being visitors who had breached their conditions of stay.

Illegal workers are fined and/or jailed before being sent back to their places of origin. Their employers are also liable to be prosecuted.

### ***Deportation and Removal***

The department processes deportation and removal orders. During the year, 630 people convicted of offences punishable with imprisonment of not less than two years were recommended for deportation and 501 were deported, meaning they are prohibited from returning. Another 1,245 were removed from Hong Kong, comprising 574 illegal immigrants, 631 people who had breached their conditions of stay and 40 people who were refused entry.

### ***Investigation and Prosecution***

The department lays charges concerning immigration offences, including remaining illegally in Hong Kong, breaching conditions of stay, making false statements or representations, and using or possessing forged travel documents. Illegal immigrants or persons subject to removal or deportation orders are prohibited under section 38AA of the Immigration Ordinance from taking employment, whether paid or unpaid.

### ***Independent Commission Against Corruption***

Hong Kong prides itself as a city with a clean civil service, a level playing field for doing business and a society highly intolerant of corruption. The latest international studies including the Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index, the World Justice Project's Rule of Law Index and the World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Report have recognised the city as one of the world's least corrupt places.

Established in 1974, the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) safeguards Hong Kong's deep-rooted culture of probity through a holistic strategy of enforcement, prevention and education. Its independence is enshrined in the Basic Law, and its operation is sustained by

a strong political will of the government and supported by a community highly intolerant of corruption.

According to the 2018 ICAC Annual Survey, 97 per cent of the respondents expressed support for the commission. On a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 representing total rejection of corruption and 10 representing total acceptance, the respondents registered a mean score of 0.5, the lowest tolerance level since this question was asked in 2010 for the first time. In addition, 98.4 per cent said they had not personally encountered corruption in the past 12 months.

In 2018, the ICAC received 2,665 non-election-related corruption complaints, down 6 per cent compared with 2017. Of these complaints, 66 per cent concerned the private sector, 27 per cent related to government departments and 7 per cent involved public bodies.

### **Enforcement**

The ICAC investigates complaints on suspected corruption. It initiates prosecution for corruption and related offences and administers cautions for minor offences upon the Department of Justice's advice. Of the prosecutions completed during the year, 127 people involved in 74 cases were convicted, resulting in person-based and case-based conviction rates of 78 per cent and 80 per cent respectively. The commission also prosecuted 149 people and cautioned 34 others. At the year end, the caseload stood at 1,501, including 71 related to elections. Of the 97 complaints concerning elections received in 2018, 44 and 20 related to the two Legislative Council by-elections held respectively in March and November.

### **Prevention and Education**

The ICAC examines the systems and procedures of government departments and public bodies to assess and identify corruption risks, and advises on how to minimise those risks. In 2018, it completed 69 assignment reports and provided timely advice on 559 occasions.

Free corruption prevention advice is dispensed with a pledge of confidentiality to private organisations on request. During the year, the ICAC offered advice on 895 occasions. Corruption prevention resources are available on the commission's website.

Under an Ethics for All approach, the ICAC customises preventive education programmes to different target groups. In 2018, it conducted regular integrity training for over 32,000 government officers, and training on ethical leadership for high-ranking civil servants and other public officials.

In the private sector, the preventive education programmes reached around 44,000 employees, from front-line workers to top management. A three-year Ethics Promotion Programme that ended in 2018 registered the participation of over 2,200 listed companies. The ICAC also developed training materials for listed firms and Mainland-funded enterprises planning to list in Hong Kong, and partnered with major start-up connectors to educate grantees and incubatees of start-up funding programmes.

At the community level, the ICAC drummed up the impact of its 'All for Integrity' territory-wide programme by partnering with some 850 organisations. To mark the commission's 45th



anniversary, virtual and augmented reality games, exhibitions, school-based activities and meet-the-public sessions were organised jointly with the 18 district councils, reaching over a million people.

Young people were engaged through a two-year Youth Integrity Fest Programme that culminated in an integrity-themed youth art fair. A video created based on a clip produced by tertiary students attracted over 800,000 views.

Ahead of the 2019 Rural Representative Election, candidates, helpers and electors were provided with messages promoting a clean election, while the public, including new immigrants and ethnic minorities, received a multilingual publicity package.

### **International Liaison**

The ICAC fosters international cooperation in the fight against corruption and helps anti-corruption agencies of other jurisdictions in capacity building within the framework of the United Nations (UN) Convention against Corruption. It also promotes Hong Kong's corruption-free environment and robust anti-corruption system as the city's competitive edge to the international community.

### **Checks and Balances**

The ICAC is independent of the civil service. To monitor its work adequately, the commission is subject to the scrutiny of four independent committees: the Advisory Committee on Corruption, Operations Review Committee, Corruption Prevention Advisory Committee and Citizens Advisory Committee on Community Relations. The committee chairmen host an annual press conference to account for their oversight of the ICAC.

All corruption complaints, whether pursuable or not, must be reported to the Operations Review Committee for scrutiny. No investigation can be written off without its endorsement. An independent ICAC Complaints Committee, comprising members of the Executive Council and the Legislative Council as well as prominent members of the community appointed by the Chief Executive, monitors and reviews all non-criminal complaints against the ICAC or its officers.

### **Commissioner on Interception of Communications and Surveillance**

The Commissioner on Interception of Communications and Surveillance is an independent oversight authority, appointed by the Chief Executive on the recommendation of the Chief Justice. The Interception of Communications and Surveillance Ordinance provides a statutory regime for the authorisation and regulation of interception of communications and covert surveillance conducted by law enforcement agencies (LEAs) to prevent or detect serious crime and protect public security.

A secretariat assists the commissioner in performing the commissioner's statutory duties, which include overseeing and conducting reviews on the compliance by LEAs and their officers with the ordinance's relevant requirements; carrying out examinations upon applications from persons who suspect that they are subjects of interception or covert surveillance conducted by

LEAs; giving notifications to those affected in cases of interception or covert surveillance without the authority of a prescribed authorisation; and making recommendations to the Secretary for Security on the code of practice issued under the ordinance and to the heads of LEAs to better carry out the objects of the ordinance or the provisions of the code of practice.

The commissioner submits annual reports to the Chief Executive with statistical information and his assessment of overall compliance with the ordinance's requirements. The 2017 annual report was submitted to the Chief Executive in June 2018 and tabled in LegCo in November.

### **Narcotics Division**

The Narcotics Division coordinates policies and measures to combat the drug problem. It also oversees anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing measures concerning two main areas: a declaration and disclosure system on the cross-boundary movement of large quantities of physical currency and bearer negotiable instruments; and outreach to designated non-financial businesses and professions, including lawyers, accountants, estate agents, trust or company service providers and dealers in precious metals and stones, to raise their awareness of relevant measures.

#### ***Anti-Drug Strategy and Coordination***

The government adopts a five-pronged anti-drug strategy: preventive education and publicity, treatment and rehabilitation, legislation and law enforcement, external cooperation, and research.

The Action Committee Against Narcotics advises the government on anti-drug policy and measures. Chaired by a non-official, it comprises 19 non-official members from the medical, legal, education, media, business, community and social service sectors, and six official members, namely the Commissioner for Narcotics and representatives from the Education Bureau, the police and the departments of Customs and Excise, Health, and Social Welfare. Under a reciprocal arrangement with Singapore, the Director of Singapore's Central Narcotics Bureau also sits on the committee.

#### ***Preventive Education and Publicity***

'Stand Firm! Knock Drugs Out!' is the division's main theme in anti-drug preventive education and publicity. Taking into account the latest drug trends, the division focused on publicising the harmful effects of cocaine, cannabis and methamphetamine, commonly known as Ice, in 2018. The publicity activities included an annual citywide campaign organised with RTHK to disseminate anti-drug messages to young people, parents and the community at large to raise awareness of drug problems.

The division's 24-hour hotline '186 186' and instant messaging service '98 186 186', manned by professional social workers, provide convenient channels for people with drug problems to seek help early. Cases are referred to NGOs for treatment and rehabilitation as appropriate.

The division works with the Education Bureau to support schools in conducting anti-drug education programmes for students and to provide professional training for school personnel,

equipping them with the drug knowledge and skills to identify and offer early help to at-risk students.

The Hong Kong Jockey Club Drug InfoCentre is a focal point for promoting anti-drug education. Visitors include students, parents, youth groups, community organisations and overseas delegations. Anti-drug messages are disseminated through talks, training workshops, experience-sharing sessions and movie-sharing sessions for different target groups.

The Healthy School Programme with a Drug Testing Component is a school-based initiative to strengthen students' resolve in refusing drugs and to foster a drug-free campus. In the 2018-19 school year, 155 secondary schools, partnered with NGOs, were implementing the programme. Another school-based programme, 'Participate in Sports, Stay Away from Drugs', is a student-led pilot initiative that promotes healthy lifestyles and an anti-drug culture in secondary schools through students' participation in organising sports and health activities, and by supporting student athletes taking part in sports competitions. It involved 134 secondary schools in 2018-19.

### ***Drug Testing***

The government maintains communication with stakeholders regarding a Rescue Drug Testing Scheme, aiming to identify drug abusers as early as possible so they can receive timely counselling and treatment.

### ***Treatment and Rehabilitation***

A variety of treatment and rehabilitation services is available to drug abusers with different treatment needs. The Correctional Services Department conducts a compulsory treatment programme, the Department of Health provides a voluntary methadone outpatient treatment programme, and the Hospital Authority operates substance abuse clinics at all seven hospital clusters. NGOs run voluntary residential programmes in 37 centres, 11 counselling centres for psychotropic substance abusers and two drug counselling centres.

In March, the division issued the Three-year Plan on Drug Treatment and Rehabilitation Services in Hong Kong for 2018 to 2020 based on the views of anti-drug service providers and stakeholders. The plan sets out priorities and recommended strategic directions on treatment and rehabilitation services in the light of the major drug trends, to help service providers review and develop their programmes.

### ***Legislation and Enforcement***

The division and relevant departments monitor the changing drug scene closely and review the laws regularly to address any emerging threat. In 2018, five dangerous drugs (EPH, MPA, MDMB-CHMICA, 5F-APINACA and U-47700) and two precursor chemicals (ANPP and NPP) were brought under the control of the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance and the Control of Chemicals Ordinance respectively. The police and the Customs and Excise Department seized 1,358kg of major types of drugs and arrested 4,240 people for drug-related offences.

### ***Drug Abuse Statistics and Trends***

The Central Registry of Drug Abuse compiles drug abuser statistics filed by a network of reporting agencies, including law enforcement agencies, treatment and welfare agencies, tertiary institutions, hospitals and clinics.

The registry recorded 6,611 drug abusers in 2018, of whom 25 per cent were new cases, 7 per cent were aged under 21 and 23 per cent abused more than one drug. Heroin continued to be the most commonly abused drug in Hong Kong, afflicting 55 per cent of drug abusers. Psychotropic substances were abused by 59 per cent of drug abusers and 98 per cent of abusers were aged under 21. Commonly abused psychotropic substances included Ice (23 per cent), cocaine (15 per cent) and triazolam/midazolam/zopiclone (14 per cent). The numbers of cannabis and cocaine abusers increased 17 per cent and 10 per cent respectively. The drug history of newly reported abusers remained long. Half of them had abused drugs for at least 4.7 years, compared with 4.6 years in 2017.

### ***External Cooperation***

Hong Kong works closely with its Mainland and international counterparts in combating drug crimes. Three international conventions that provide a treaty-based framework for international cooperation to address the drug problem apply to Hong Kong: the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs as amended by the 1972 Protocol, the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances and the 1988 UN Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

In March, HKSAR Government representatives led by the division joined the Chinese delegation to attend the 61st session of the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs held in Vienna.

### ***Research***

Drug-related research helps formulate anti-drug measures. A survey of drug use among students at upper primary to post-secondary levels was conducted in the 2017-18 school year, with the findings to be released in 2019.

### ***Beat Drugs Fund***

With a capital base of \$3.35 billion, the fund supports anti-drug community efforts by financing worthwhile projects, helping treatment and rehabilitation centres to meet statutory licensing requirements and supporting schools in implementing the Healthy School Programme with a Drug Testing Component and the 'Participate in Sports, Stay Away from Drugs' programme. In the 2018 regular funding exercise, the fund approved about \$123.8 million to support 61 projects and programmes.

Under the fund, a third round of the Anti-drug Community Awareness Building three-year programme was launched in April. A grant of \$6.84 million would be provided to the 18 District Fight Crime Committees to sustain anti-drug efforts and raise awareness of hidden abuse at the local community level.

### **Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorist Financing**

The Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau coordinates overall policies in anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing. The amended Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorist Financing Ordinance became effective on 1 March, requiring lawyers, accountants, estate agents and trust or company service providers to carry out preventive measures against money laundering and terrorist financing. The Cross-boundary Movement of Physical Currency and Bearer Negotiable Instruments Ordinance came into operation on 16 July, requiring declarations or disclosures to be made for the cross-boundary transportation of currency or bearer negotiable instruments with a value of more than \$120,000. The division helped publicise the new statutory requirements extensively to the sectors concerned and the public.

### **Government Laboratory**

The Government Laboratory's Forensic Science Division provides a comprehensive forensic service to the criminal justice system. It has two operational groups, the Drugs, Toxicology and Documents Group and the Criminalistics and Quality Management Group.

The Drugs, Toxicology and Documents Group examines cases in three areas:

- Abused drugs.
- Analysis of blood and urine in drink-driving and drug-driving cases, urinalysis and hair drug testing to support abused drug monitoring programmes, and toxicological examination in suspicious deaths and criminal offences.
- Examination of handwriting and documents. Technical advice and testing is also available to ensure the quality of the new generation of Hong Kong smart identity cards and e-passports.

The Criminalistics and Quality Management Group undertakes laboratory tests on trace evidence, marks and impressions, and human DNA. It provides a round-the-clock crime scene examination and consultation service. Officers are trained to ascertain causes of fires, reconstruct traffic accidents and interpret bloodstain patterns. On 10 February, the group conducted a forensic accident investigation for the police in a bus crash along Tai Po Road with heavy casualties.

### **Civil Aid Service**

The Civil Aid Service (CAS) is a government auxiliary emergency service set up under the Civil Aid Service Ordinance, with 103 civil servants and nearly 8,000 adult volunteers and cadets.

Members are trained to provide rescue services in emergencies. In 2018, they served in 57 mountain search and rescue assignments and 23 vegetation firefighting missions. To cope with Super Typhoon Mangkhut in September, the CAS strengthened pre-typhoon preparations, executed its duties steadfastly during the storm and provided post-typhoon community support. It stepped up publicity on hiking safety to reduce mountaineering accidents and educate the public on what to do and how to save themselves in an accident.

The CAS Cadet Corps develops leadership potential and cultivates civic awareness in cadets aged 12 to 17 through training in foot drill, basic emergency rescue, crowd management, first aid and rock climbing. Special efforts go into recruiting ethnic minority cadets to enhance social inclusiveness. Junior secondary students undergo disciplinary and leadership training in the School Partnership Scheme, through which 1,358 students from 25 secondary schools were attracted to join the corps in 2018.

**Websites**

Commissioner on Interception of Communications and Surveillance: [www.sciocs.gov.hk](http://www.sciocs.gov.hk)

Independent Commission Against Corruption: [www.icac.org.hk](http://www.icac.org.hk)

Security Bureau: [www.sb.gov.hk](http://www.sb.gov.hk) (links to Disciplined Services)

The Three-year Plan on Drug Treatment and Rehabilitation Services in Hong Kong (2018-2020): [www.nd.gov.hk/en/three\\_year\\_plan\\_2018\\_2020.htm](http://www.nd.gov.hk/en/three_year_plan_2018_2020.htm)