

Chapter 16

Public Order

Overall crime figures in the first half of 2019 were the lowest since 1977, when half-year crime statistics were first kept. However, the violent acts of rioters during processions and demonstrations starting in June caused law and order to deteriorate in the second half.

Both the 2019 overall crime rate and violent crime rate rose 8.4 per cent compared with 2018.

The overall crime detection rate was 37.1 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 2019, 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 (CSD) publicity campaign for rehabilitated people. Online deception, sexual assault and drug abuse were targeted in its 2019-20 publicity strategy.

Working with the FCC are 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 Reception Dinner 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 2019, the police had about 31,200 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 188 inspectors and 841 constables during the year.

Crime

Reported crimes in the first half of 2019 totalled 25,295, a decrease of 1,255 cases, or 4.7 per cent, from the same period of 2018. Overall crime figures were at a record low since 1977, when half-year crime statistics were first kept. The downward trend in crime figures reversed in June, when the city started seeing the first of many processions and demonstrations that turned violent. A hard core of rioters hurled petrol bombs and bricks, lit fires, vandalised and burned shops and public transport facilities, and assaulted people with different views, causing a deterioration in the law and order situation. Considerable police manpower was deployed to handle these public order events and the violent acts of rioters. Routine policing work, such as crime prevention and patrols, was inevitably affected as a result. Despite the challenges, the police continue to stand fast and enforce the law without fear or favour to enable society to return to normal as soon as possible.

In 2019, 59,225 crimes were recorded, an increase of 9.2 per cent over 54,225 crimes recorded in 2018. The crime rate went up by 8.4 per cent to 789 cases per 100,000 population. There were 9,690 violent crimes, up 9.1 per cent. Robberies rose 42.9 per cent to 210 and burglaries increased 52 per cent to 2,394. Thefts numbered 20,761, down 2.6 per cent.

Of the reported crimes, 37.1 per cent, or 21,965 cases, were detected, resulting in the arrest of 28,058 persons. Among these, 1,140 were juveniles aged between 10 and 15, while 3,128 were young persons aged between 16 and 20. Arrests of youths were mostly for offences against public order, wounding and serious assault, and criminal damage.

The number of triad-related crimes decreased 21.1 per cent to 1,353 compared with 2018, accounting for 2.3 per cent of all reported crimes in 2019.

The police strive to combat triad activities by mounting enforcement action and intelligence-led operations in Hong Kong, targeting triad expansion and sources of income. The police also participate in the annual tripartite operation codenamed 'Thunderbolt' with the Guangdong Provincial Public Security Department and Macao Unitary Police Service.

Commercial Crime

The Commercial Crime Bureau tackles serious commercial crime and the counterfeiting of monetary instruments. In 2019, the bureau's Fraud and Money Laundering Intelligence Taskforce facilitated 24 intelligence-led operations, resulting in the arrest of 58 persons and interception of crime proceeds of \$575 million. The Anti-Deception Coordination Centre intercepted over \$3 billion of crime proceeds and coordinated the arrests of 148 persons, while the anti-scam helpline 18222 provided services to the public in 18,799 calls. In October, a new International Stop Payment Mechanism was established jointly with Interpol to mitigate losses.

Cyber Security and 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. During the year, 8,322 technology crimes were reported, involving a total monetary loss of \$2.91 billion. An international Cyber Command Course was held to exchange knowledge and techniques on combating technology crimes with law

enforcement agencies worldwide. Cyber security drills, seminars and campaigns were organised to raise awareness of cyber threats.

Dangerous Drugs

The police adopt a multi-agency approach, enlisting community support to combat drug abuse and trafficking. During the year, 1,923 persons were arrested for drug offences, mostly involving methamphetamine (27 per cent of the arrests), also known as Ice, and cannabis (16.7 per cent).

The Narcotics Bureau maintains a strategic partnership with counterparts in Mainland and overseas law enforcement agencies. During the year, joint operations resulted in the seizure of 184.5kg of illicit drugs. The bureau formulates strategies regularly to address 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 (ML/TF) activities, while the Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing Risk Assessment Unit conducts corresponding risk assessment exercises. During the year, 101 persons were convicted of money laundering offences, with criminal assets of about \$180 million restrained and \$113 million confiscated.

In September, the international Financial Action Task Force published the *Mutual Evaluation Report of Hong Kong*, commending Hong Kong's efforts and confirming that the city had a strong legal foundation and effective system for combating ML/TF. The report noted that the system was particularly effective in risk identification, law enforcement, asset recovery, counter-terrorist financing and international cooperation. The Hong Kong regime was assessed to be compliant and effective overall, making it the first jurisdiction in the Asia-Pacific region to achieve an overall compliant result in the latest round of evaluation.

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 2019, fingerprint evidence linked 1,289 persons to 1,177 criminal cases.

Liaison

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

The bureau handles requests on crime investigation, mutual legal assistance, the surrender of fugitive offenders, and notifications under a reciprocal notification mechanism with the Mainland.

Counter-terrorism

Hong Kong has a sound legal framework and sufficient enforcement capability to guard against and deal with terrorist activities. As part of counter-terrorism efforts in response to an increasingly complicated international landscape, the police work with other law enforcement agencies through the Inter-departmental Counter Terrorism Unit to enhance counter-terrorism strategies, action plans, cross-departmental coordination, intelligence gathering, training and public education.

Traffic

During the year, 16,102 traffic accidents involved casualties, with 1,831 and 107 cases recording serious injuries and fatalities respectively. The data represented 1 per cent more accidents involving casualties and 8.3 per cent more accidents involving serious injuries or fatalities than in 2018.

Public 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, 11,436 public meetings and processions were held.

In June, in response to the series of large demonstrations relating to proposed amendments to the Fugitive Offenders Ordinance, the police launched Operation 'Tiderider' to deal with the destructive and unlawful acts, such as large-scale road blockages, vandalism of shops, arson and violent assault. Between June and December, the police conducted resolute operations, took appropriate measures and adjusted the enforcement strategy to maintain law and order and safeguard public safety.

Public Relations

The Police Public Relations Branch (PPRB) 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 good use of online platforms, including the police website, mobile application, YouTube channel, Facebook page, Instagram, Weibo and Twitter, to strengthen the police force's capacity to connect with the community. Live reports are conducted to increase public understanding of police work and gain public support and trust. During 2019, the PPRB held press conferences and produced videos to disseminate timely information to the public, rebut biased and unfounded allegations, explain police work, increase the transparency of the force and safeguard the public's right to information.

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, crime fighting 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.

Planning and Development

The police are implementing the New Generation Report Room project, launched in 2010, to provide greater privacy for the public in making reports and to enhance security. In 2019, New Generation Report Rooms at North Point Police Station and Mong Kok Police Station were commissioned. The new Kowloon East Regional Headquarters and Operational Base cum Ngau Tau Kok Divisional Police Station, as well as police facilities at the Heung Yuen Wai Boundary Control Point, are scheduled for commissioning in 2020.

Information and Communications Technology

The police promote 'smart policing' through exploring and developing innovative technology to address policing needs in the digital age, so as to provide effective policing services and strengthen digital capabilities for criminal investigation. Mobile applications are developed to enhance operational efficiency.

Training

The Police College is committed to developing trainees at different levels with the correct mindset, knowledge and skills to discharge their duties in order to serve Hong Kong with honour, duty and loyalty.

It forged an unprecedented collaboration with the University of Cambridge in 2017 to run a Master of Studies in Applied Criminology and Police Management. The first cohort completed their studies in July 2019 with eight police officers graduating with distinction.

During the year, the Police College also reached new heights in vocational and professional educational training (VPET) by becoming the first VPET operator and government department to attain Programme Area Accreditation status at Qualifications Framework (QF) level 5, the highest level granted by the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational

Qualifications in this regard. From January 2020 to January 2025, the Police College is entrusted with operating internally accredited learning programmes in Law Enforcement and Security Studies up to QF level 5.

Service Quality

The Service Quality Wing promotes excellence and continuous improvement in strategic planning, quality management and innovation in police services delivery. In 2019, it promulgated the new Strategic Directions 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 1,643 reportable complaints in 2019, 1.1 per cent lower than the yearly average of 1,661 from the past five years.

The police's Internal Investigations Office embeds ethics and integrity in the force 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, appointed by the Chief Executive and the Secretary for Security respectively, are drawn from a wide spectrum of society. They may attend interviews and observe the police's collection of evidence about reportable complaints to ensure investigations are conducted fairly and impartially.

In 2019, the IPCC scrutinised and endorsed the findings in 1,340 investigation reports on reportable complaints received during the year or carried forward from previous years, involving 2,166 allegations. Of these, 75 allegations were found to be substantiated or partially substantiated and the police have taken appropriate action against the officers involved.

Correctional Services Department

The CSD runs a comprehensive range of programmes under two broad categories: prison management and rehabilitation of offenders.

As at 31 December, the department was managing 28 correctional facilities, with 6,595 staff looking after 7,023 persons in custody and 1,227 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 or rehabilitation centre. The detention centre programme is designed for males aged between 14 and 24. Drug addicts found guilty of an offence punishable by imprisonment may be placed in a drug addiction treatment centre.

The diets of persons in custody follow approved scales of nutritional values and take into account 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, security ratings, personal experience and balance of sentence. They receive earnings, which may be used to buy 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.

To facilitate development under the two broad categories and the government's smart city initiatives, the department has been developing 'Smart Prison' in recent years and applying innovative technologies to enhance operations and security. New elements are introduced into rehabilitation services using technology to strengthen the self-management abilities of persons in custody and prepare them for reintegration into society.

Correctional Facilities

Among the 28 correctional facilities, nine are for adult males and two are for adult females. Young males are housed in one correctional institution, one detention centre, one training centre and two rehabilitation centres, while young females are accommodated in 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 of all categories who require psychiatric observation, treatment or assessment. Seven of the correctional facilities cater for remanded people of different age groups. 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.

Admission of Sentenced and Remanded Persons

During the year, 8,256 adults (5,670 men and 2,586 women) were sentenced to imprisonment, 4,342 adults (3,348 men and 994 women) were remanded, 131 young offenders (105 males and 26 females) were sentenced to imprisonment, and 229 young persons (196 males and 33

females) were remanded. In addition, 85 offenders (81 males and four females) were sentenced to detention in training centres, rehabilitation centres or the detention centre in Sha Tsui, 361 offenders (278 males and 83 females) were placed in drug addiction treatment centres, and 820 offenders (697 males and 123 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 which type of 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 2019, the unit recommended 196 males and 17 females for admission to a rehabilitation, training or detention centre, and 365 males and 109 females as suitable for a drug addiction treatment centre. The panel received 44 cases from the courts for assessment.

Training, Detention and Rehabilitation Centres

The two training centres provide young persons in custody with correctional training for six months to 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, a hard-working attitude and counselling. 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 focused on reformation. Those released are put through one-year statutory supervision.

Drug Addiction Treatment

Convicted drug addicts undergo a compulsory treatment programme as an alternative to imprisonment. Young addicts aged between 14 and 20 are accommodated separately from the adults. They receive two to 12 months of on-site treatment followed by one year of statutory supervision.

Health Care

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

Education

Offenders under 21 receive education and assistance to take local and overseas accredited public examinations, while adults are also 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 provides eligible adult offenders¹ with the option of taking market-oriented vocational training courses that issue accredited and recognised qualifications. Young offenders under 21 may take half-day vocational training programmes. Sixteen correctional facilities offered over 40 full-time and part-time courses in 2019.

Correctional Services Industries

The department arranges useful work for adult offenders as required by law, to help them develop good working habits and acquire work skills to facilitate their reintegration into society.

In 2019, a daily average of 4,132 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. The market value of these goods and services was \$469 million. To facilitate the government's implementation of the modern office layout concept, a new series of standard office furniture was produced and would be put into use starting from 2020.

Welfare and Counselling

Rehabilitation officers handle the welfare matters 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 cooperating with different stakeholders in society to hold diversified rehabilitation activities. Pre-release reintegration orientation courses supply information on community resources to help persons in custody reintegrate into society.

Psychological Services

The department provides psychological services to improve the psychological well-being of persons in custody and their offending behaviour. Clinical psychologists and trained CSD officers provide treatment for sex offenders, violent offenders, drug addicts and young persons in custody, and gender-specific treatment programmes for adult males and females. They submit assessment reports, including on the person's risk of reoffending upon discharge, to the courts, review boards and institutional management on request.

¹ '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.

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, 1,227 people were under active statutory supervision.

Community Support

Community acceptance and support are paramount to an offender's rehabilitation and reintegration into society. The non-statutory Committee on Community Support for Rehabilitated Offenders, appointed by the Commissioner of Correctional Services, advises on rehabilitation, reintegration and publicity measures. It comprises community leaders, professionals and representatives of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and government departments.

Community Education

The Rehabilitation Pioneer Project targets secondary school students to encourage youths to stay away from crime and drugs and support offender rehabilitation through community education programmes. These include the uniformed group Rehabilitation Pioneer Leaders, established in 2018 with over 100 members recruited to broaden their horizons and promote inclusive and law-abiding values; and an interactive musical drama campaign, Own Your Life, launched in October 2019. The campaign incorporates familiar pop songs into each drama and invites students to speak up on the spot so as to encourage them to reflect and to enhance the effectiveness of community education.

Visiting Justices

Two Justices of the Peace (JPs) visit each penal institution fortnightly or monthly, depending on the type of facility. The JPs 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 CSD initiates enhancements of safety, security and the overall workflow through regular inspections, management studies, and innovation and technology.

Complaints

The Complaints Investigation Unit under the CSD handles and investigates complaints related to the department. Investigation reports are examined by the CSD Complaints Committee. A complainant dissatisfied with the investigation outcome 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 JPs, 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 7,286 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 2018-19 financial year, the department collected \$10.6 billion in excise duties, about 1 per cent less than in 2017-18.

The department assesses the taxable values of motor vehicles under the Motor Vehicles (First Registration Tax) Ordinance, resulting in the collection of \$9.4 billion first registration tax by the Transport Department in 2018-19, during which 60,997 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 2019, the department detected 17,367 cases involving the smuggling, storage, distribution and peddling of illicit cigarettes, a 28 per cent increase from 2018, and seized 55.5 million illicit cigarettes. Fines were imposed on 15,431 people, a year-on-year rise of 38 per cent, for bringing into Hong Kong a total of 3.4 million cigarettes in excess of their duty-free concession.

The department takes sustained action to stamp out illicit fuel activities. In 2019, it detected 31 illicit fuel cases, arrested 63 people and seized 222,600 litres of illicit fuel. The number of cases was the same as that in 2018.

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 2019, the department dealt with 245 drug trafficking cases, smashed 10 storage and distribution centres and three manufacturing and attenuating centres, seized 2,169kg of

assorted dangerous drugs² and arrested 385 people. Cross-boundary enforcement cooperation led to the seizure of 2,125kg of assorted dangerous drugs and the arrest of 24 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.

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, 196 Hong Kong-Mainland smuggling attempts were detected, with 213 people arrested and \$293 million worth of smuggled goods seized. Electrical and electronic goods, including mobile phones, computer sets and accessories; and meat 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 10,345 uniformed and 787 civilian members, and operates 1,104 fire appliances, ambulances and supporting vehicles and 24 fire vessels.

Firefighting and Rescue

Of the 37,606 fire calls received in 2019, seven were classified as major fires: six triggered the No 3 alarm while one warranted the No 4 alarm. Accidents in the process of cooking constituted the major cause of fire, accounting for 1,377 cases. General electrical faults caused 791 fires, while the careless handling or disposal of lighted materials, such as cigarette ends, matches and candles, caused 630 fires. Unwanted alarms, triggered mainly by faulty automatic alarm systems, made up 68.7 per cent of the total number of fire calls.

² Not including 116kg of khat, which contains substances subject to control under the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance.

The department also provides rescue services for traffic accidents, shipwrecks, people trapped in lifts or locked in rooms, leakages of gas or other hazardous materials, building collapses, floods, landslides, industrial accidents, people stranded on hillsides and attempts to jump from a height. It handled 35,284 such calls in 2019.

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 2,252 calls in 2019.

The department trains front-line firefighters to become first responders who can provide basic life support to casualties and patients before the arrival of an ambulance crew. In 2019, first responders responded to 69,835 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 2019, the command vetted 23,383 building plans, including those for tunnels and bridges, handled 848 submissions such as building plans and fire engineering reports, and offered fire safety advisory services on 1,016 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 (FSIs). In 2019, the command handled 2,485 submissions and also carried out 2,186 acceptance inspections of FSIs at new railway projects,

including the Shatin to Central Link, and of alteration, addition and extensive station improvement works for the existing lines.

The Community Emergency Preparedness Division under the Fire Safety Command draws up community emergency preparedness strategies on disaster preparedness, counter-terrorism preparedness, fire safety, community life support and other areas, 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 2019, it issued or renewed 4,376 storage licences for dangerous goods or timber, and 2,034 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 1,105 inspections and 109 planned operations, handled 116 complaints, seized over 210,000 litres of illicit fuel and instituted prosecution in 111 cases.

The command plays an important role in ensuring building fire safety. It monitors the status of FSIs in buildings, handles complaints and oversees the professional standards of registered FSI contractors. In 2019, the command conducted 47,395 compliance inspections on FSIs in new buildings and developments. It held another 91,602 inspections on existing FSIs, issued 2,734 fire hazard abatement notices against irregularities found and took legal action against 343 owners of defective FSIs and registered FSI contractors for regulatory contraventions.

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, drug treatment and rehabilitation centres and other types of premises. In 2019, it carried out 43,147 inspections of such premises and issued 1,400 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 department's 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 234 disciplined and 60 civilian members. In 2019, members flew a total of 6,725 hours, helped in 601 search and rescue operations and took 1,618 people to hospital by

helicopter. By the end of 2020, it will be operating three fixed-wing aircraft and nine helicopters for operations 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 57,583 people in 2019.

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 2019, it detected 572 forged travel documents. The department maintains close contact and exchanges information with local, Mainland and overseas law enforcement agencies and consulates.

Interception of Targeted or Wanted Persons

In 2019, officers intercepted at immigration control points 342,687 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 2019, the squad conducted 14,147 raids and arrested 5,444 illegal workers, 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, 572 people convicted of offences punishable with imprisonment of not less than two years were recommended for deportation and 427 were deported, meaning they are prohibited from returning. Another 1,066 were removed from Hong Kong, comprising 400 illegal immigrants, 623 people who had breached their conditions of stay and 43 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.

Combating Trafficking in Persons

The department set up a new section in 2019 that built on a victim screening mechanism launched in 2015 to combat trafficking in persons. The section checks visa applications for foreign domestic helpers to identify as early as possible potential victims of trafficking and exploitation of foreign domestic helpers, and conducts investigation on related immigration offences. Identified victims are referred to relevant departments to receive protection and support according to their individual situations, such as urgent intervention, medical services, counselling and shelter.

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 Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index, the World Economic Forum's *Global Competitiveness Report* and the World Justice Project's Rule of Law Index, recognise 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 2019 ICAC Annual Survey, 96.3 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 0.3, the lowest tolerance level since this question was asked in 2010 for the first time. In addition, 98.1 per cent said they had not personally encountered corruption in the past 12 months.

In 2019, the ICAC received 2,297 non-election-related corruption complaints, down 14 per cent compared with 2018. Of these complaints, 64 per cent concerned the private sector, 28 per cent related to government departments and 7 per cent involved public bodies³.

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, 105 people involved in 73 cases were convicted, resulting in person-based and case-based conviction rates of 75 per cent and 79 per cent respectively. The commission prosecuted 134 people and cautioned 20 others in non-election cases. Additionally, 23 people were prosecuted for electoral offences and 55 warned for minor breaches in election cases. At the year end, the caseload stood at 1,749, including 547 related to elections. Of the 623 election-related complaints received during the year, 517 and 73 related respectively to the 2019 District Council Ordinary Election and 2019 Rural Ordinary Election.

³ The individual percentages do not add up to 100 due to rounding.

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 2019, it completed 70 assignment reports and provided timely advice on 607 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 737 occasions.

For the Rural Representative Election and District Council Election held in 2019, the ICAC launched Support Clean Election programmes targeted at candidates, election helpers and electors.

Under an Ethics for All approach, the ICAC customises preventive education programmes to different target groups. In 2019, it conducted regular integrity training for over 29,000 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 46,000 employees, from front-line workers to top management. The ICAC worked with the Insurance Authority to spearhead a two-year Ethics Promotion Campaign for Insurance Industry, to enhance integrity training for insurance practitioners. It also formed a start-up connector network to disseminate integrity messages to those companies.

At the community level, the ICAC's All for Integrity programme comprised a series of publicity initiatives to mark the commission's 45th anniversary on 15 February 2019. These initiatives included the ICAC Open Day, coffee-sharing activities, 45-day online countdown activities, a new *ICAC Investigators 2019* television drama series and a new advertising campaign with the slogan, 'Times change. The mission continues.'

Tertiary and secondary students were engaged under the ICAC Ambassador and iTeen Leadership programmes respectively to organise integrity promotion activities for their peers.

International and Mainland Liaison

The ICAC cooperates with overseas anti-corruption agencies as well as Mainland and Macao counterparts in fighting corruption. It assists anti-corruption agencies of other jurisdictions in capacity building within the framework of the United Nations 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. Without its endorsement, the ICAC will not conclude an investigation. 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, where appropriate, reviews the ICAC's handling of non-criminal complaints against the ICAC or its staff.

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 2018 annual report was submitted to the Chief Executive in June 2019 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 (DNFBPs), including lawyers, accountants, estate agents and dealers in precious metals and stones, to raise their awareness of relevant measures.

Anti-drug Strategy and Coordination

The government adopts a multi-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 18 other 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

'Cannabis is a drug' and 'Stand Firm! Knock Drugs Out!' were the division's main themes in anti-drug preventive education and publicity in 2019. Taking into account the latest drug trends, the division focused on publicising the harmful effects of cannabis, cocaine and methamphetamine, commonly known as Ice. The publicity activities included an annual large-scale citywide campaign to disseminate anti-drug messages to young people, parents and the community at large to raise awareness of drug problems. In view of increased cannabis abuse among youngsters and the possible adverse impact on Hong Kong arising from individual overseas jurisdictions' legalisation of recreational cannabis, the division stepped up efforts to provide correct information on the dangers of cannabis abuse, rectify misconceptions and identify cannabis products.

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 other activities 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 2019-20 school year, 174 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 recorded 120 participating secondary schools in 2019-20.

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 outpatient methadone treatment programme, and the Hospital Authority operates substance abuse clinics at all seven hospital clusters. NGOs run voluntary residential programmes in 37 drug treatment and rehabilitation

centres, and provide community-based services in 11 counselling centres for psychotropic substance abusers and two centres for drug counselling.

The division oversees and coordinates initiatives in partnership with stakeholders according to strategic directions set out in its Three-year Plan on Drug Treatment and Rehabilitation Services in Hong Kong (2018-20) and the latest drug scene.

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 2019, five dangerous drugs, namely acryloylfentanyl, furanylfentanyl, ocfentanil, tetrahydrofuranylfentanyl and 5F-MDMB-PINACA, were brought under the control of the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance. The police and the Customs and Excise Department seized 2,250kg of major types of drugs and arrested 2,399 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 5,614 drug abusers in 2019, of whom 28 per cent were new cases, 9 per cent were aged under 21 and 24 per cent abused more than one drug. Heroin continued to be the most commonly abused drug in Hong Kong, afflicting 52 per cent of drug abusers. Psychotropic substances were abused by 63 per cent of drug abusers and 98 per cent of abusers aged under 21. Commonly abused psychotropic substances included Ice (23 per cent), triazolam/midazolam/zopiclone (15 per cent), cocaine (14 per cent) and cannabis (9 per cent). The number of cannabis abusers increased 5 per cent. The drug history of newly reported abusers remained long. Half of them had abused drugs for at least 5.5 years before their drug abuse was reported, compared with 4.9 years in 2018.

External Cooperation

Hong Kong works closely with its Mainland and international counterparts in combating drug crimes. Three international conventions that provide a 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 62nd session of the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs held in Vienna.

Research

Drug-related research helps formulate anti-drug measures. The findings of a 2017-18 survey of drug use among students at upper primary to post-secondary levels were released in March.

Beat Drugs Fund

With a capital base of \$3.35 billion, the fund supports anti-drug community efforts by financing worthwhile projects and research, 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 2019 regular funding exercise, the fund approved about \$135.7 million to support 54 projects and programmes.

Under the fund, a total of \$6.84 million has been granted to the 18 District Fight Crime Committees for the ongoing third round of the Anti-drug Community Awareness Building three-year programme 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 Narcotics Division of the Security Bureau facilitates the risk-based supervision of the DNFBP regulatory bodies to ensure practitioners' compliance with the Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorist Financing Ordinance. The Cross-boundary Movement of Physical Currency and Bearer Negotiable Instruments Ordinance requires 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.

Government Laboratory

The Government Laboratory's Forensic Science Division provides a comprehensive forensic service to the criminal justice system. The division is composed of two operational groups.

The Drugs, Toxicology and Documents Group serves 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; and
- Examination of handwriting and documents, and technical support in testing the production quality of the new generation of Hong Kong smart identity cards and e-passports.

The Criminalistics and Quality Management Group undertakes forensic 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. Since July, the group has been engaged heavily in the forensic investigations of cases arising from social unrest.

Civil Aid Service

The Civil Aid Service (CAS) is a government auxiliary emergency service set up under the Civil Aid Service Ordinance, with 105 civil servants and nearly 8,000 adult volunteers and cadets.

Members are trained to provide rescue services in emergencies. In 2019, they served in more than 50 mountain search and rescue assignments. Publicity on hiking safety was also stepped up to reduce mountaineering accidents and educate the public on what to do and how to save themselves in an accident.

In November, the CAS deployed more than 1,500 officers, members and employees to provide crowd management and logistic support services to help ensure peaceful and orderly conduct of the 2019 District Council Ordinary Election.

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 930 students from 18 secondary schools were attracted to join the corps in 2019.

Websites

Commissioner on Interception of Communications and Surveillance: www.sciocs.gov.hk

Independent Commission Against Corruption: www.icac.org.hk

Narcotics Division: www.nd.gov.hk

Security Bureau: www.sb.gov.hk (links to disciplined services)

Three-year Plan on Drug Treatment and Rehabilitation Services in Hong Kong (2018-20): www.nd.gov.hk/en/three_year_plan_2018_2020.htm