

Public Order

The overall crime rate increased 7.1 per cent in 2020, but violent crimes, burglaries and thefts all fell, by 3.1 per cent, 12.5 per cent and 2.2 per cent respectively. The overall crime detection rate was 37.8 per cent, up from 37.1 per cent in 2019.

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, 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 2020, 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. Violence, burglary, theft, deception, sexual assault and drug abuse were targeted in its 2020-21 publicity strategy.

Working with the committee are 18 District Fight Crime Committees, 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.

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 2020, the police had about 33,000 and 4,700 police officer and civilian posts respectively, reinforced by some 4,000 volunteers serving in the Hong Kong Auxiliary Police Force. It appointed 166 inspectors and 391 constables during the year.

Crime

In 2020, 63,232 crimes were recorded, an increase of 6.8 per cent over 59,225 crimes recorded in 2019. The crime rate went up by 7.1 per cent to 845 cases per 100,000 population. There were 9,391 violent crimes, down 3.1 per cent. Robberies rose 25.7 per cent to 264 and burglaries decreased 12.5 per cent to 2,095. Thefts numbered 20,314, down 2.2 per cent.

Of the reported crimes, 37.8 per cent, or 23,933 cases, were detected, resulting in the arrest of 29,565 persons. Among these, 1,218 were juveniles aged between 10 and 15, while 2,769 were young persons aged between 16 and 20. Arrests of youths were mostly for offences against public order, wounding and serious assault, and shop theft.

The number of triad-related crimes increased 30.2 per cent to 1,761 compared with 2019, accounting for 2.8 per cent of all reported crimes in 2020.

The police 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 combats serious commercial crime and the counterfeiting of monetary instruments. In 2020, the bureau's Fraud and Money Laundering Intelligence Taskforce facilitated 21 intelligence-led operations, resulting in the arrest of 118 persons and freezing and restraining crime proceeds of \$75.99 million. In August, the taskforce was ranked top in three performance indicators in a survey by the Royal United Services Institute, a UK-based think tank, on financial intelligence sharing when compared with 22 other public-private partnerships across the globe. The Anti-Deception Coordination Centre intercepted around \$3.1 billion of crime proceeds from local and overseas accounts and coordinated the arrests of 95 persons and interception of three suspects. The anti-scam helpline received 22,668 calls from the public.

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, 12,916 technology crimes were reported, involving a total monetary loss of \$2.96 billion.

Dangerous Drugs

The police adopt a multi-agency approach, enlisting community support to combat drug abuse and trafficking. During the year, 3,587 persons were arrested for drug offences, mostly involving methamphetamine, also known as 'ice' (22.5 per cent of the arrests), and cannabis (21.9 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

29 kilograms 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 activities, while the Risk Assessment Unit conducts corresponding risk assessment exercises. During the year, 69 persons were convicted of money laundering offences, with criminal assets of about \$268 million restrained and \$127 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 2020, fingerprint evidence linked 1,694 persons to 1,510 criminal cases.

Liaison

The Liaison Bureau is the designated police unit for liaison with law enforcement agencies outside Hong Kong on crime investigation, mutual legal assistance, surrender of fugitive offenders, and notifications under the Reciprocal Notification Mechanism with the Mainland. As a sub-bureau of the Interpol National Central Bureau China, it deals with Interpol-related matters.

Counter-terrorism

Hong Kong has a sound legal framework and enforcement capability to prevent and tackle terrorist activities. The police work with other law enforcement agencies through the Inter-departmental Counter Terrorism Unit to monitor international and domestic terrorism trends, enhance counter-terrorism strategies, formulate action plans in collaboration with relevant departments, gather intelligence and promote public education.

National Security

The Law of the People's Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region came into effect on 30 June. The police's National Security Department, established on 1 July, is responsible for collecting and analysing intelligence and information concerning national security; planning, coordinating and enforcing measures and operations for safeguarding national security; investigating offences endangering national security; conducting counter-interference investigations and national security reviews; carrying out tasks of safeguarding national security assigned by the Committee for Safeguarding National Security of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region; and performing other duties and functions necessary for the enforcement of the national security law.

Traffic

During the year, 15,298 traffic accidents involved casualties, with 1,912 and 96 cases recording serious injuries and fatalities respectively. The data represented 5 per cent fewer accidents involving casualties and 3.6 per cent more accidents involving serious injuries or fatalities than in 2019.

Public Assemblies and Processions

Hong Kong residents enjoy freedom of speech and the right to peaceful assembly, procession and demonstration. The police facilitate all lawful and peaceful public meetings and processions fairly and impartially, while ensuring public order and safety is maintained and seeking to minimise the impact of these events on other members of the public. During the year, 9,750 public meetings and processions were held.

Public Relations

The Police Public Relations Branch 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 Fight Crime Committee plan and implement publicity campaigns.

The branch uses online platforms, including the police website, mobile application and social media, to strengthen the police force's connection with the community. Live reports are conducted to increase public understanding of police work and gain public support and trust. During 2020, the branch held press conferences and case briefings and produced videos to disseminate timely information to the public.

The branch's *OffBeat On Air* provides 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 scheme and Police School Liaison Programme serve as bridges between the police and young people, while the Senior Police Call 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, the branch's Junior Police Call Permanent Activity Centre, serves junior and senior police call scheme 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. In March, the centre was converted to a temporary COVID-19 quarantine centre.

Planning and Development

The police have been implementing the New Generation Report Room project since 2010 to provide greater privacy for the public in making reports and to enhance security. In 2020, a new report room was commissioned at Sha Tin Police Station. Police facilities at the new Heung Yuen Wai Boundary Control Point and the new Kowloon East Regional Headquarters and Operational Base cum Ngau Tau Kok Divisional Police Station were also commissioned in 2020.

Information and Communications Technology

The police promote 'smart policing' through exploring and developing innovative technology, mobile applications and online services to enhance operational efficiency and provide more convenient services to the public.

Training

As a 'Programme Area Accreditation' Operator, the Police College continued to operate its Qualifications Framework-recognised training programmes for new recruits and serving officers. The college formed a Police Anti-Coronavirus Contingent comprising 200 serving and retired police officers to support the government in its anti-pandemic work.

In 2020, the college continued its partnership with the University of Cambridge in running a Master of Studies in Applied Criminology and Police Management. Since 2017, 41 police officers have completed the programme. In 2020, the Police College entered into partnership with Tsinghua University to operate an Executive Master's in Public Administration. Qualified officers will pursue a 2.5-year part-time programme starting from September 2021.

Service Quality

The Service Quality Wing promotes excellence and continuous improvement in strategic planning, quality management and innovation in police services delivery.

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 1,211 reportable complaints in 2020, 21.4 per cent lower than the yearly average of 1,541 over 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. The Integrity Audit Action Group was established in May to further strengthen proactive investigation of serious misconduct and illegal activities involving police.

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 2020, the IPCC scrutinised and endorsed the findings in 1,211 investigation reports on reportable complaints received during the year or carried forward from previous years, involving 2,068 allegations. Of these, 88 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 under two broad categories: prison management and rehabilitation of offenders.

As at 31 December, the CSD was managing 28 correctional facilities, with 6,583 staff looking after 7,107 persons in custody and 837 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.

The CSD's 'Smart Prison' system applies innovative technology to enhance operations and security, and to strengthen the ability of persons in custody to manage themselves, in preparation for their 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, 6,074 adults (4,351 men and 1,723 women) were sentenced to imprisonment, 4,261 adults (3,312 men and 949 women) were remanded, 78 young offenders (67 males and 11 females) were sentenced to imprisonment, and 324 young persons (296 males and 28 females) were remanded. In addition, 124 offenders (116 males and eight females) were sentenced to detention in the training centre, rehabilitation centres or the detention centre in Sha Tsui, 318 offenders (245 males and 73 females) were placed in drug addiction treatment centres, and 788 offenders (676 males and 112 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 CSD's Rehabilitation Unit 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 2020, the unit recommended 203 males and 27 females for admission to a rehabilitation, training or detention centre, and 318 males and 97 females as suitable for a drug addiction treatment centre. The panel received 91 cases from the courts for assessment.

Training, Detention and Rehabilitation Centres

The training centre provides 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 incorporate counselling and emphasise strict discipline and a hard-working attitude. 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.

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 offenders 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 2020.

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 2020, a daily average of 3,480 persons in custody were engaged in productive work, providing government departments and subvented bodies with goods and services that included office furniture, uniforms, leather products, hospital linen, personal protective equipment (including 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 \$497 million in 2020.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, in early 2020 the CSD converted the existing workshop at Lo Wu Correctional Institution to produce filter masks, operating round the clock. Since February, over 2,500 off-duty and retired correctional officers have volunteered to help mask production at Lo Wu Correctional Institution. Mask production output rose from an average of 1.1 million per month in the past to a peak of about 5 million in June. The CSD also established additional production lines in other correctional institutions for small-size masks and other personal protective equipment such as protective gowns and caps.

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 CSD 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.

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 31 December, 837 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 and government departments.

Community Education

The Rehabilitation Pioneer Project targets secondary school students to encourage them to stay away from crime and drugs, and uses social media platforms to help young people develop positive values. The project's community education programmes encourage support for offender rehabilitation, and include the uniformed group Rehabilitation Pioneer Leaders, established to promote inclusive and law-abiding values.

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 CSD's Complaints Investigation Unit 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 members of the Legislative Council.

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 31 December, it had 7,403 posts.

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 2019-20 financial year, the department collected \$11.4 billion in excise duties, about 7 per cent more than in 2018-19.

The department assesses the taxable values of motor vehicles under the Motor Vehicles (First Registration Tax) Ordinance, resulting in the collection of \$7.2 billion first registration tax by the Transport Department in 2019-20, during which 53,293 motor vehicles were first registered.

The 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 2020, the department detected 3,160 cases involving the smuggling, storage, distribution and peddling of illicit cigarettes, an 82 per cent decrease from 2019, and seized 205.3 million illicit cigarettes, a 270 per cent increase from 2019. Fines were imposed on 1,796 travellers, a year-on-year drop of 88 per cent, for bringing into Hong Kong a total of 400,000 cigarettes in excess of their duty-free concession.

The department takes sustained action to stamp out illicit fuel activities. In 2020, it detected 42 illicit fuel cases, arrested 160 people and seized 169,500 litres of illicit fuel. The number of cases was 35 per cent more than in 2019.

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 for communication and intelligence exchange with the logistics industry is in place to strengthen enforcement of the import and export of cargoes.

In 2020, the department dealt with 336 drug trafficking cases, smashed five storage and distribution centres and four manufacturing and attenuating centres, seized 3,530kg of assorted dangerous drugs¹ and arrested 198 people. Cross-boundary enforcement cooperation led to the seizure of 86kg of assorted dangerous drugs and the arrest of 21 people in the Mainland and overseas.

As part of the government's efforts to combat youth drug abuse, the department works with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to encourage young people to stay away from drugs and lead a healthy life.

Anti-smuggling Operations

In 2020, through air, land and sea channels, a total of 6,774 smuggling cases were detected and \$3.315 billion worth of goods seized. With the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting restrictions on passengers, as well as more stringent quarantine and monitoring measures for cross-boundary drivers, smugglers shifted to using air and sea cargo shipments and attempted to smuggle larger quantities of goods. The Customs and Excise Department strengthened its enforcement efforts against illicit air and sea cargoes accordingly.

The department continues to work closely with other law enforcement agencies to combat smuggling through intelligence exchange and joint enforcement operations.

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.

¹ Not including 4kg of khat, which contains substances subject to control under the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance.

The department has well-trained personnel, advanced communications systems and modern equipment. As at 31 December, it employed 10,417 uniformed and 795 civilian members, and operated 1,140 fire appliances, ambulances and supporting vehicles and 25 fire vessels.

Firefighting and Rescue

Of the 33,632 fire calls received in 2020, four were classified as major fires and triggered the No 3 alarm. Accidents while cooking were the major cause of fires, accounting for 1,058 cases. General electrical faults caused 739 fires, while the careless handling or disposal of lighted materials, such as cigarette ends, matches and candles, caused 631 fires. False alarms, triggered mainly by faulty automatic alarm systems, made up 71.3 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, 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 32,358 such calls in 2020.

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 1,885 calls in 2020.

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 2020, first responders responded to 24,881 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 2020, the command vetted 19,178 building plans, including those for tunnels and bridges, handled 718 submissions in relation to matters such as building plans and fire engineering reports, and offered fire safety advisory services on 1,068 occasions concerning the development of Hong Kong International Airport.

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 2020, the command handled 2,425 submissions and also carried out 2,515 acceptance inspections of FSIs at new railway projects (including the Shatin to Central Link) and of alterations, additions and extensive station improvement works for the existing lines.

The Fire Safety Command draws up strategies to prepare for emergencies such as natural disasters or terrorist attacks, and to strengthen the public's capacity to respond. This includes enhancing public knowledge of fire safety and prevention and life support measures, such as 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 2020, it issued or renewed 4,391 storage licences for dangerous goods or timber, and 1,967 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 879 inspections and 102 planned operations, handled 214 complaints, seized over 235,000 litres of illicit fuel and instituted prosecution in 81 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 2020, the command conducted 62,637 compliance inspections of FSIs in new buildings and developments, and another 67,615 inspections of existing FSIs. It issued 3,147 fire hazard abatement notices against irregularities found and took legal action against 188 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 2020, it carried out 32,129 inspections of such premises and issued 1,363 fire hazard abatement notices.

Anti-pandemic Efforts

In 2020, the department played an important part in the government's anti-pandemic efforts, handling 7,557 calls relating to confirmed COVID-19 cases, involving over 2,600 ambulance and

fire personnel. The department also formulated fire safety requirements for quarantine and medical facilities to enable their early commissioning. Rapid Response Teams were also set up to provide on-site emergency services at the new facilities. Serving and retired members of the department's staff proactively participated in a range of support duties, including conducting spot checks on persons under compulsory quarantine, assisting in the collection of specimens for testing and providing administrative support at testing centres for the government's Universal Community Testing Programme.

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 268 disciplined and 61 civilian members. In 2020, members flew a total of 7,989 hours, helped in 1,041 search and rescue operations and took 1,496 people to hospital by helicopter. By the end of 2020, it operated 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 9,387 people in 2020.

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 2020, it detected 98 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 2020, officers intercepted at immigration control points 72,651 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 2020, 13,612 raids were conducted and

1,380 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, 330 people convicted of offences punishable with imprisonment of not less than two years were recommended for deportation and 320 were deported, meaning they are prohibited from returning. Another 500 were removed from Hong Kong, comprising 181 illegal immigrants, 293 people who had breached their conditions of stay and 26 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 launched a victim screening mechanism in 2015 to combat trafficking in persons and set up a new section in 2019 which is mainly responsible for checking all visa applications by foreign domestic helpers to identify as early as possible potential victims of trafficking and exploitation, and conducting investigation of 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 with zero tolerance towards corruption. Hong Kong's anti-corruption efforts were recognised by international studies released in 2020, including the World Justice Project's Rule of Law Index and Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index.

Established in 1974, the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) safeguards Hong Kong's deep-rooted culture of probity through stringent law enforcement, systemic prevention and community education. Its independence is enshrined in the Basic Law, and its operation is sustained by the government's strong commitment to weed out corruption.

According to the 2020 ICAC Annual Survey, 93.2 per cent of 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, a mean score of 0.4 was registered. In addition, 98.4 per cent said they had not personally encountered corruption in the past 12 months.

In 2020, the ICAC received 1,924 corruption complaints (excluding election complaints²), down 16 per cent from 2019. Of these complaints, 59 per cent concerned the private sector, 33 per cent related to government departments and 8 per cent involved public bodies. Of the 361 election complaints received in 2020, 332 related to the 2019 District Council Election and 18 concerned the 2020 Legislative Council General Election.

Enforcement

In 2020, on the advice of the Department of Justice, 154 people were prosecuted (one in an election case), 30 were cautioned for minor offences (two in election cases) and 17 were warned for minor breaches of the electoral law in election cases. Of the prosecutions completed during the year, 110 people in 77 cases were convicted, resulting in conviction rates of 86 per cent (person-based) and 88 per cent (case-based) respectively. By year-end, 1,585 cases, including 388 election cases, were under investigation.

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 plug the loopholes. In 2020, it completed 65 assignment reports and provided timely advice on 464 occasions.

Confidential corruption prevention advice is given free to private organisations on request. During the year, the ICAC offered advice on 509 occasions.

The ICAC customises face-to-face and online preventive education programmes for different sectors of the community. In 2020, the ICAC conducted integrity training for over 21,000 government officers, including briefings on ethical leadership for senior officials. An e-learning platform was also rolled out as a self-learning resource for civil servants.

In the private sector, preventive education programmes reaching over 41,000 individuals were launched during the year. Under an ethics promotion campaign, preventive education services and resources were provided to over 3,200 insurers, insurance agencies and broker firms. Information on ethical governance was publicised through the revamped website of the ICAC's Hong Kong Business Ethics Development Centre.

At the community level, guided tours to buildings or sites relevant to ICAC cases in different districts were organised to foster public support for the anti-corruption cause, and emphasise the importance of the rule of law and abiding by the law.

To instil integrity and positive values among the younger generation, young people were engaged to produce social media programmes while picture books were created for children and promulgated to parents and educators.

² Election complaints refer to complaints alleging breaches of the Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Conduct) Ordinance.

Support Clean Election programmes were launched for candidates, election helpers and electors at the 2020 Legislative Council General Election. As the election was postponed, the programmes will be revived in 2021.

International and Mainland Liaison

In 2020, the ICAC continued to collaborate with overseas, Mainland and Macao counterparts to promote Hong Kong's integrity environment and robust anti-corruption regime to the international community. Anti-corruption capacity building programmes were conducted for other jurisdictions within the framework of the United Nations (UN) Convention against Corruption.

Checks and Balances

The ICAC functions independently and is accountable to the Chief Executive. Its work 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 is concluded 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, 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 2019 annual report was submitted to the Chief Executive in June 2020 and tabled in the Legislative Council in December.

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 in two main areas: a declaration and disclosure system for 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 and dealers in precious metals and stones, to raise their awareness of relevant measures.

Anti-drug Strategy and Coordination

The government's multi-pronged anti-drug strategy involves 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: 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

The impact of COVID-19 in 2020 led the division to carry out some of its anti-drug education and publicity initiatives online or through other means.

'Cannabis is a drug' was the division's main theme in anti-drug preventive education and publicity in 2020. In view of increased cannabis abuse among youngsters and the possible adverse impact on Hong Kong of legalisation of 'recreational cannabis' in some jurisdictions overseas, the division continued to provide correct information on the dangers of cannabis abuse to rectify misconceptions and counter the case for legalising 'recreational cannabis'. Taking into account the latest drug trends, the division also continued to publicise the harmful effects of other prevalent drugs such as methamphetamine (commonly known as 'ice'), cocaine and ketamine.

The division's 24-hour hotline and instant messaging service 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 and community organisations. 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 2020-21 school year, 182 secondary schools, partnered with NGOs, were implementing the programme. Another school-based programme, 'Participate in Sports, Stay Away from Drugs', is a student-led initiative that promotes a healthy lifestyle and an anti-drug culture in secondary schools through students' participation in sports and health activities. There were 100 participating secondary schools in 2020-21.

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. It also consulted stakeholders on the 2021-23 three-year plan.

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 2020, five dangerous drugs (methoxyacetylfentanyl, FUB-AMB, ADB-FUBINACA, CUMYL-4CN-BINACA and ADB-CHMINACA) and three precursor chemicals (APAA, PMK glycidate and PMK glycidic acid) were brought under the control of the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance and the Control of Chemicals Ordinance respectively, in line with international control requirements. In 2020, the police and the Customs and Excise Department seized more than 4,600kg of major types of drugs and arrested 3,849 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 5,569 drug abusers in 2020, of whom 26 per cent were new cases, 9 per cent were aged under 21 and 22 per cent abused more than one drug. Heroin continued to be the most commonly abused single drug in Hong Kong, afflicting 51 per cent of drug abusers. Psychotropic substances were abused by 62 per cent of drug abusers and 99 per cent of abusers aged under 21. Commonly abused psychotropic substances included ice (22 per cent), triazolam/midazolam/zopiclone (13 per cent), cannabis (12 per cent) and cocaine (12 per cent).

cent). The number of cannabis abusers increased 29 per cent. The drug history of newly reported abusers remained long. Half of them had abused drugs for at least five years before their drug abuse was reported, compared with 5.7 years in 2019.

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 2020, HKSAR Government representatives, as members of the Chinese delegation, joined several videoconference meetings of the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs and associated bodies.

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 2020-21 school year.

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 2020, the fund approved about \$277 million to support 199 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 Security Bureau's Narcotics Division facilitates the risk-based supervision by the relevant regulatory bodies of designated non-financial businesses and professions 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 works 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 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.

Civil Aid Service

The Civil Aid Service (CAS) is a government auxiliary emergency service set up under the Civil Aid Service Ordinance, with 107 civil servants and nearly 8,000 adult volunteers and cadets.

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. The School Partnership Scheme, which offers disciplinary and leadership training to junior secondary students, attracted 1,000 students from 19 secondary schools to apply for the corps in 2020.

CAS members are trained to provide rescue services, to patrol country parks and hiking trails and to assist people in need of help. In 2020, 72 mountain search and rescue assignments were undertaken.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, CAS assisted the Department of Health in managing various quarantine facilities. More than 98,000 CAS man-shifts were deployed in running over 5,900 quarantine units (including units in four designated quarantine hotels) where over 27,000 individuals underwent compulsory quarantine.

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