

Chapter 16

Public Order

The overall crime rate increased 2.8 per cent in 2021, but robberies, burglaries and thefts all fell, by 53.4 per cent, 29.7 per cent and 6.1 per cent respectively. The overall crime detection rate was 38.5 per cent, up from 37.8 per cent in 2020.

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 2021, 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. Its 2021-22 publicity strategy targets enhancing the law-abiding awareness of young people, burglary, theft, deception, sexual assault and drug abuse.

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 is committed to maintaining law and order to ensure Hong Kong continues to be one of the world's safest and most stable cities.

At the end of 2021, the police had about 33,000 and 4,700 police officer and civilian posts respectively, reinforced by some 3,000 volunteers serving in the Hong Kong Auxiliary Police Force. It appointed 157 inspectors and 424 constables during the year.

Crime

In 2021, 64,428 crimes were recorded, an increase of 1.9 per cent over 63,232 crimes recorded in 2020. The crime rate went up by 2.8 per cent to 869 cases per 100,000 population. There were 9,587 violent crimes, up 2.1 per cent. Robberies dropped 53.4 per cent to 123 and burglaries decreased 29.7 per cent to 1,472. The detection rates for robbery and burglary reached nearly 78 per cent and 34.9 per cent respectively, the highest in the past 45 years. Thefts numbered 19,065, down 6.1 per cent.

Of the reported crimes, 38.5 per cent, or 24,825 cases, were detected, resulting in the arrest of 29,218 persons. Among these, 1,114 were juveniles aged between 10 and 15, while 1,907 were young persons aged between 16 and 20. Most of the youths were arrested for serious drug offences, wounding and serious assault, or criminal damage.

The number of triad-related crimes increased 7.2 per cent to 1,888 compared with 2020, accounting for 2.9 per cent of all reported crimes in 2021.

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 2021, the bureau's Fraud and Money Laundering Intelligence Taskforce facilitated 15 intelligence-led operations, resulting in the arrest of 95 persons and freezing and restraining crime proceeds of \$57 million. During the year, the taskforce has extended its membership to 23 banks (15 local retail banks and eight virtual banks). The Anti-Deception Coordination Centre intercepted around \$2.35 billion of crime proceeds from local and overseas accounts and coordinated the arrests of 133 persons and interception of two suspects. The anti-scam helpline received 27,935 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, 16,159 technology crimes were reported, involving a total monetary loss of \$3.02 billion.

Dangerous Drugs

The police adopt a multi-agency approach, enlisting community support, to combat drug abuse and trafficking and to raise public awareness, especially among young people. Meanwhile, the Narcotics Bureau maintains a strategic partnership with the Mainland and overseas law enforcement agencies to combat international drug trafficking activities involving Hong Kong. In 2021, 4,303 persons were arrested for drug offences, mostly involving cannabis (26.4 per cent) and methamphetamine, also known as 'ice' (18.6 per cent). The police also

detected two of the largest-ever drug trafficking cases with 706kg of cocaine and 1,266kg of ketamine seized separately.

Financial Investigation

To strengthen the police's capabilities in targeting and investigating money laundering and terrorist financing activities, the Financial Investigation Division, the Joint Financial Intelligence Unit and the Risk Assessment Unit were merged to form the Financial Intelligence and Investigation Bureau (FIIB) from 1 June. The FIIB continued to combat money laundering and terrorist financing activities and conduct corresponding risk assessment exercises. During the year, 85 persons were convicted of money laundering offences, with criminal assets of about \$259 million restrained and \$148 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 2021, fingerprint evidence linked 1,550 persons to 1,384 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 robust legal framework and strong enforcement capability to prevent and tackle terrorist activities. Through the Inter-departmental Counter Terrorism Unit, the police monitor global and domestic terrorism trends, refine counter-terrorism strategies and formulate action plans. A particular focus has been set on effective and collaborative intelligence gathering and strengthening the protection of critical infrastructure and other vulnerable locations. The police prepare and refine response and contingency plans, and strengthen inter-unit and inter-departmental operability through intensive and realistic training and exercises. A great emphasis has also been attached to public education and publicity to achieve a 'whole-of-community' approach to counter-terrorism.

National Security

The National Security Department 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 investigation and national security review; 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.

The department launched a hotline for the public to provide information or report cases relating to national security, which has received over 220,000 pieces of information since it began operation in November 2020.

Traffic

During the year, 17,831 traffic accidents involved casualties, with 1,824 and 94 cases recording serious injuries and fatalities respectively. The data represented 17 per cent more accidents involving casualties and 4.5 per cent fewer accidents involving serious injuries or fatalities than in 2020.

Public Events

Hong Kong residents enjoy freedom of speech and the right to peaceful assembly, procession and demonstration. The police endeavour to facilitate all lawful and peaceful public events, while maintaining public safety and public order. In 2021, 20,783 public meetings and 76 public 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. It 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 streaming is conducted to increase public understanding of police work and gain public support and trust. The branch also holds press conferences and case briefings and produces videos to disseminate timely information to the public.

The branch's *OffBeat On Air* broadcast shares information on crime prevention measures and the work of individual police units. The branch also helps television and film production companies on all filming 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.

To combat crimes against animals, the police implemented the Animal Watchers Programme to unite the efforts of animal lovers at the community level and raise public awareness on the prevention of cruelty to animals. Major events held in 2021 under the programme included the Fight Poisoning Campaign, the Plank Challenge and the Community Mobile Classroom.

Enforcement of Anti-epidemic Measures

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the police have enforced anti-epidemic measures and closely collaborated with other government bureaus and departments in various joint operations and the implementation of stringent anti-epidemic measures. These include contact tracing, enforcement of compulsory quarantine and testing orders, spot checks on people under quarantine, management of quarantine facilities, inspection of catering businesses and scheduled premises, and crowd management during public events. The police also conducted investigations and enforcement actions against non-compliance cases, such as closure or change in mode of operation at relevant premises and the prosecution of offenders.

In addition, the police have been working with different sectors of the community to enhance overall anti-epidemic awareness and compliance with government measures via education, publicity and partnership.

Planning and Development

To protect the privacy of the public and enhance security, the police have been implementing the New Generation Report Room project. In 2021, new report rooms were commissioned at Tuen Mun and Kwun Tong police stations. The redeveloped Junior Police Officers Married Quarters at Fan Garden, Fanling was commissioned to provide 1,184 new units and the Police Officers' Club in Causeway Bay was also re-provisioned in-situ and commissioned in the year.

Information and Communications Technology

By adopting innovative technology, mobile applications and online services, the police promote 'smart policing' to facilitate digital investigation, optimise workflows and enhance public engagement.

Training

As a Programme Area Accreditation operator, the Police College operates its Qualifications Framework-recognised training programmes for new recruits and serving officers and has internally accredited a host of training programmes up to Qualifications Framework Level 5.

The college has completed its partnership with the University of Cambridge in running a Master of Studies in Applied Criminology and Police Management programme, with 55 police officers graduating in the past few years. The college has collaborated with the School of Public Policy and Management, Tsinghua University to operate an Executive Master of Public Administration programme and the first cohort was admitted in September.

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 1,416 reportable complaints in 2021, 3.7 per cent lower than the yearly average of 1,470 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, while the Integrity Audit Action Group strengthens proactive investigation of serious misconduct and illegal activities involving police officers.

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;
- monitor actions taken or to be taken against any member of the police force by the Commissioner of Police in connection with reportable complaints;
- 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;
- advise the Commissioner of Police and/or the Chief Executive of its opinion and/or recommendation in connection with reportable complaints; and
- 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 collecting evidence about reportable complaints to ensure investigations are conducted fairly and impartially.

In 2021, the IPCC scrutinised and endorsed the findings in 1,819 investigation reports on reportable complaints received during the year or carried forward from previous years, involving 3,025 allegations. Of these, 144 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 department was managing 29 correctional facilities, with 6,592 staff looking after 7,867 persons in custody and 1,035 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 department is developing a 'smart prison' protocol by trialling technology in correctional institutions to enhance the efficiency of penal operations and institutional security. It has also introduced technology applications into its rehabilitation programme, which allow persons in custody to enhance their self-management and provide them with conditions more conducive to their reintegration into society. The first-generation smart prison at Tai Tam Gap Correctional Institution started operation in mid-2021.

Correctional Facilities

Among the 29 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. Tai Tam Gap Correctional Institution is used for detaining adult males under the Immigration Ordinance. Eight of the correctional facilities cater for remanded people of different age groups. Two wards in public hospitals accommodate persons in custody who need special medical care or surgery. Three halfway houses help those released under supervision reintegrate into society. Their residents may go out to work or attend school during daytime.

Penal Population

During the year, 7,511 adults (5,522 males and 1,989 females) were sentenced to imprisonment, 5,183 adults (3,909 males and 1,274 females) were remanded, 114 young persons (97 males and 17 females) were sentenced to imprisonment, and 317 young persons (269 males and 48 females) were remanded. In addition, 284 offenders (262 males and 22 females) were sentenced to detention in the training centre, rehabilitation centres or the detention centre in Sha Tsui; 525 offenders (444 males and 81 females) were placed in drug addiction treatment centres; and 1,246 offenders (1,109 males and 137 females) were remanded pending suitability reports for sentencing to one of these centres. Besides, 131 males were detained in Tai Tam Gap Correctional Institution under the Immigration Ordinance.

Pre-sentence Assessment

Young offenders and offenders with drug addictions who are sentenced to imprisonment may be remanded in custody for up to three weeks to assess which correctional facility is suitable for them. The department'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 2021, the unit recommended 374 males and 45 females for admission to a rehabilitation, training or detention centre, and 573 males and 98 females as suitable for a drug addiction treatment centre. The panel received 112 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

The CSD provides young persons under 21 in custody with half-day education, and assists adult persons in custody to participate in continuing education voluntarily. It also assists persons in custody to obtain accredited qualifications by taking public examinations. Those pursuing further studies may apply for financial help from the Prisoners' Education Trust Fund and other subsidy schemes.

Vocational Training

The CSD provides eligible adult persons in custody with the option of taking market-oriented vocational training courses that issue accredited and recognised qualifications. Young persons in custody under 21 may take half-day vocational training programmes. Fifteen correctional facilities offered over 40 full-time and part-time courses in 2021.

Correctional Services Industries

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

In 2021, a daily average of 3,610 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 \$493 million in 2021.

Welfare and Counselling

Rehabilitation officers handle the welfare of persons in custody and help them 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 services to improve the psychological well-being of persons in custody and change 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 the year end, 1,035 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 them to stay away from crime and drugs and support offender rehabilitation. Through social media platforms, the project launches various community education programmes and helps young people develop positive values. To further enhance the effectiveness of community education, the CSD implemented a crime prevention education programme, Mission in Prison, in 2021. The activity used a smart prison to create a 'classroom', aiming to deepen participants' understanding of duties of CSD staff and to let them observe the custodial environment and beware of the consequences of crime.

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 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 7,401 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 2020-21 financial year, the department collected \$11.9 billion in excise duties, about 4 per cent more than in 2019-20.

The department assesses the taxable values of motor vehicles under the Motor Vehicles (First Registration Tax) Ordinance, resulting in the collection of \$6.6 billion first registration tax by the Transport Department in 2020-21, during which 55,574 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 2021, the department detected 4,008 cases involving the smuggling, storage, distribution and peddling of illicit cigarettes, a 27 per cent increase from 2020, and seized 427.4 million illicit cigarettes, a 108 per cent increase from 2020. Fines were imposed on 2,558 travellers, a year-on-year rise of 43 per cent, for bringing into Hong Kong a total of 570,000 cigarettes in excess of their duty-free concession.

The department takes sustained action to stamp out illicit fuel activities. In 2021, it detected 67 illicit fuel cases, arrested 109 people and seized 62,300 litres of illicit fuel. The number of cases was 60 per cent more than in 2020.

Anti-narcotics Operations

The department takes robust 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 to boundary control points, 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 2021, the department dealt with 321 drug trafficking cases, smashed 21 drug storage and distribution centres and three manufacturing and attenuating centres, seized 3,800kg of assorted dangerous drugs and arrested 217 people. Cross-boundary enforcement cooperation led to the seizure of 42.5kg of dangerous drugs and the arrest of 13 people in Macao and overseas.

As part of the government's efforts to combat 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

In 2021, through air, land and sea channels, a total of 6,495 smuggling cases were detected and \$4.99 billion worth of goods seized. With the COVID-19 pandemic and its restrictions on

passengers, as well as stringent quarantine and monitoring measures for cross-boundary drivers, smugglers made more use of air and sea channels, including sea cargo and speed boats, to smuggle goods and contraband. The department has strengthened its enforcement efforts against illicit import and export of goods accordingly, and works 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 meet the territory's development and service needs and 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. As at end-December, it employed 10,565 uniformed and 761 civilian members, and operated 1,186 fire appliances, ambulances and supporting vehicles and 25 fire vessels.

Firefighting and Rescue

Of the 33,891 fire calls received in 2021, six were classified as major fires and triggered the No 3 alarm. Accidents while cooking were the major cause of fires, accounting for 1,070 cases. General electrical faults caused 827 fires, while the careless handling or disposal of lighted materials, such as cigarette ends, matches and candles, caused 673 fires. False alarms, triggered mainly by faulty automatic alarm systems, made up 72 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 a total of 36,176 such calls in 2021.

Ambulance Services

The department's Ambulance Command operates a fleet of emergency ambulances, rapid response vehicles and emergency medical assistant motorcycles driven by paramedics. All 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 2,098 calls in 2021.

The department trains frontline firefighters to become first responders who can provide basic life support to casualties and patients before the arrival of an ambulance crew. In 2021, first responders responded to 33,578 cases.

Communications Centre

The 24-hour Fire Services Communications Centre mobilises all firefighting and ambulance resources to provide timely services for the public. 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 advice to help stabilise patients 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 2021, the command vetted 20,639 building plans, including those for tunnels and bridges, handled 822 submissions in relation to matters such as building plans and fire engineering reports, and offered fire safety advisory services on 959 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 2021, the command handled 2,464 submissions and carried out 2,731 acceptance inspections of FSIs at new railway projects, including the Tuen Ma Line and the Shatin to Central Link – East Rail Line Extension, and of alterations, additions and extensive station improvement works for 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 2021, it issued or renewed 4,323 storage licences for dangerous goods or timber, and 2,033 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 1,043 inspections and 105 planned operations, handled 402 complaints, seized over 180,000 litres of illicit fuel and instituted prosecution in 128 cases.

The command monitors the status of FSIs in buildings, handles complaints and oversees the professional standards of registered FSI contractors. In 2021, it conducted 70,668 compliance inspections of FSIs in new buildings and developments, and another 93,807 inspections of

existing FSIs. It issued 2,809 fire hazard abatement notices against irregularities found and took legal action against 168 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 2021, it carried out 38,760 inspections of such premises and issued 1,432 fire hazard abatement notices.

Anti-pandemic Efforts

In 2021, the department played an important part in the government's anti-pandemic efforts, handling 3,317 calls relating to confirmed COVID-19 cases, involving over 2,100 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 set up to provide on-site emergency services at the new facilities. Serving and retired department staff participated in support duties, including conducting spot checks on people 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 266 disciplined and 66 civilian members. In 2021, members flew a total of 7,512 hours, helped in 1,069 search and rescue operations and took 1,629 people to hospital by helicopter. By the end of 2021, 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 1,187 people in 2021.

Detection of Forged Travel Documents

The department takes strict measures against the use of forged travel documents and carries out special operations against forgery syndicates. In 2021, it detected 56 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 2021, officers intercepted at immigration control points 32,489 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 through undercover patrols at illegal worker black spots. In 2021, 16,132 raids were conducted and 1,476 illegal workers arrested with the 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 prosecution.

Deportation and Removal

The department processes deportation and removal orders. In 2021, 304 people convicted of offences punishable with imprisonment of not less than two years were recommended for deportation. During the year, 368 people were deported, meaning they are prohibited from returning. Another 608 people were removed from Hong Kong, comprising 270 illegal immigrants, 318 people who had breached their conditions of stay and 20 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, using forged travel documents, illegal employment, and criminal offences related to registrations of birth, death and marriage. Illegal immigrants, persons subject to removal or deportation orders, overstayers or persons who are refused entry are prohibited under section 38AA of the Immigration Ordinance from taking employment, whether paid or unpaid, or establish or join any business.

Combating Trafficking in Persons

The department's screening mechanism identifies victims of trafficking in persons. A designated section is responsible for the early identification of potential victims and exploitation by screening foreign domestic helper visa applications, and investigates related immigration offences. Identified victims are referred to relevant departments to receive protection and support according to their situation, including urgent intervention, medical services, counselling and shelter.

Independent Commission Against Corruption

Hong Kong prides itself on its clean civil service, level playing field for doing business and society with zero tolerance towards corruption. Hong Kong's anti-corruption efforts were recognised by international studies in 2021, including Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index and World Justice Project's Rule of Law 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 2021 ICAC Annual Survey, 97.3 per cent of respondents felt keeping Hong Kong corruption-free was important to its overall development. On a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 representing total rejection of corruption and 10 representing total acceptance, a mean score of 0.7 was registered. In addition, 98.3 per cent said they had not personally encountered corruption in the past year.

In 2021, the ICAC received 2,264 corruption complaints (excluding election complaints¹), rising 18 per cent from 2020 but 33 complaints fewer than 2019. Of these complaints, 65 per cent concerned the private sector, 28 per cent related to government departments and 6 per cent involved public bodies². Of the 164 election complaints received, eight related to the 2021 Election Committee Subsector Ordinary Elections and 52 concerned the 2021 Legislative Council General Election.

Enforcement

In 2021, on the advice of the Department of Justice, 200 people were prosecuted (10 in election cases), 32 were cautioned for minor offences (three in election cases) and 191 were warned for minor breaches of electoral law. Of the prosecutions completed during the year, 128 people in 82 cases were convicted, resulting in person-based and case-based conviction rates of 72 per cent and 78 per cent respectively. By year-end, 1,198 cases, including 96 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 2021, it completed 69 assignment reports and provided advice on 526 occasions.

Confidential corruption prevention advice is given free to private organisations on request. During the year, the ICAC offered advice on 1,375 occasions.

¹ Election complaints refer to complaints alleging breaches of the Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Conduct) Ordinance.

² Individual percentages in this report may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

The ICAC customises face-to-face and online education programmes. In 2021, over 42,000 government officers received integrity training, including briefings on ethical leadership for senior officials as well as a self-learning e-platform for frontline civil servants. A campaign was launched with training resources provided to public bodies to promote integrity management.

In the private sector, education programmes reached over 67,000 individuals in 2021. An ethics promotion programme was launched to help construction industry stakeholders resist corruption. The ICAC's Hong Kong Business Ethics Development Centre organises thematic webinars for different industries.

To instil integrity and law-abidingness among the young, the iJunior Programme for Primary Schools provides on-campus and online moral education resources.

In response to the improved electoral system, the ICAC launched an education and publicity campaign to convey clean election messages to all stakeholders, including candidates, election helpers, electors and the public.

International and Mainland Liaison

The ICAC promotes Hong Kong's robust anti-corruption environment to the international community and collaborates with counterparts from overseas, the Mainland and Macao. In 2021, anti-corruption programmes were organised for six member economies of the Anti-Corruption Initiative for Asia-Pacific, organised by the Asian Development Bank and Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, while online high-level meetings were held with 19 anti-corruption agencies. The ICAC played an active role in the International Association of Anti-Corruption Authorities and was the convenor of its Training Committee. Close communication was also maintained with the National Commission of Supervision and the Commission Against Corruption of Macao to collaborate in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, with Qianhai as a pilot.

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 would be 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 2020 annual report was submitted to the Chief Executive in June 2021 and tabled in the Legislative Council in October.

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 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, 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

The COVID-19 epidemic has led the division to carry out more of its anti-drug education and publicity initiatives online or through other non-physical means.

'Cannabis is a drug' and 'Don't be K.O'd by ketamine!' were the main themes for the division's anti-drug preventive education and publicity in 2021. The division also continued to publicise the harmful effects of other prevalent drugs such as methamphetamine (commonly known as 'ice') and cocaine. Due to an increase in drug trafficking cases, particularly among young people, the division stepped up publicity against the common tactics used by syndicates to lure people to drug trafficking, as well as about its consequences.

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

The Hong Kong Jockey Club Drug InfoCentre, a dedicated anti-drug education centre, was closed in February to revamp its exhibition and contents. It is expected to reopen in mid-2022.

The division works with the Education Bureau to help students, both inside and outside the classroom, understand the dangers of drugs and drug traffickers. Training provides school personnel with the knowledge and skills to identify and offer early help to at-risk students.

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 2021-22 school year, 185 secondary schools, partnered with NGOs, implemented the programme. Another school-based programme, 'Beat Drugs with Sports', 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 109 participating secondary schools in 2021-22.

Treatment and Rehabilitation

Treatment and rehabilitation services are available to drug abusers with different 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 coordinates initiatives in partnership with stakeholders according to the strategic directions in its Three-year Plan on Drug Treatment and Rehabilitation Services in Hong Kong (2021-23) and the latest drug scene. To enhance the knowledge of frontline practitioners in the anti-drug sector and related disciplines, the division held an online seminar on cannabis abuse in September attended by about 500 participants, including social workers, healthcare professionals and educators.

Legislation and Enforcement

The division and relevant departments monitor the drug scene closely and regularly review the laws to address any emerging threat. In 2021, eight dangerous drugs (4F-MDMB-BINACA, 5F-AMB-PINACA, 5F-MDMB-PICA, crotonylfentanyl, etizolam, flualprazolam, mitragynine and

7-hydroxymitragynine) and one precursor chemical (methyl alpha-phenylacetoacetate) were brought under the control of the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance and the Control of Chemicals Ordinance respectively. During the year, the police and the Customs and Excise Department seized more than 14,300kg of major types of drugs and arrested 4,634 people for drug-related offences.

Drug Abuse Statistics and Trends

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

The registry recorded 6,019 drug abusers in 2021, of whom 33 per cent were new cases, 15 per cent were aged under 21 and 20 per cent abused more than one drug. Heroin continued to be the most commonly abused single drug in Hong Kong, afflicting 41 per cent of drug abusers. Psychotropic substances were abused by 70 per cent of drug abusers and 99 per cent of abusers aged under 21. Commonly abused psychotropic substances included ice (19 per cent), cocaine (18 per cent), cannabis (17 per cent) and triazolam/midazolam/zopiclone (12 per cent). The number of cocaine and cannabis abusers increased 47 per cent and 33 per cent respectively. The drug history of newly reported abusers remained long. Half of them had abused drugs for at least 3.4 years before their drug abuse was reported, compared with five years in 2020.

External Cooperation

Hong Kong works 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 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. In 2021, government representatives, as members of the Chinese delegation, joined videoconference meetings of the United Nations 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 from 2020 to 2021.

Beat Drugs Fund

With a capital base of \$3.35 billion, the fund supports anti-drug community efforts by financing projects and research, helping treatment and rehabilitation centres to meet statutory licensing requirements and supporting schools in implementing anti-drug initiatives. In 2021, the fund approved about \$231 million to support 218 projects and programmes.

Under the fund, a total of \$9 million has been granted to the 18 District Fight Crime Committees for the fourth round of the ongoing Anti-drug Community Awareness Building

three-year programme, which began in April, 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 certain 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 provides a comprehensive forensic testing service to law enforcement agencies. Its Forensic Science Division is composed of two operational groups.

The Drugs, Toxicology and Documents Group works in three areas:

- abused drugs;
- 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 investigation and consultation service, covering fire investigation, traffic accident reconstruction and bloodstain pattern analysis.

Civil Aid Service

The Civil Aid Service (CAS) is a government auxiliary emergency service set up under the Civil Aid Service Ordinance, with 109 civil servants and nearly 8,000 auxiliary adult members 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. The School Partnership Scheme offers disciplinary and leadership training to junior secondary students and attracted more than 1,000 students from 19 secondary schools to apply for the corps in 2021. The CAS also collaborates with other government departments and NGOs to promote territory-wide, year-round public education programmes to local students and the public.

CAS members are trained to provide rescue services, and patrol country parks and hiking trails to offer assistance to those in need. In 2021, the CAS undertook 81 mountain search and rescue assignments.

During the pandemic, the CAS assisted the Department of Health in managing various quarantine facilities. More than 74,000 CAS shifts were deployed to run over 5,900 quarantine units where over 33,000 individuals underwent compulsory quarantine and health monitoring.

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 (2021-23):

www.nd.gov.hk/en/three_year_plan_2021_2023.html