

## Chapter 9

# Public Order

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Hong Kong is one of the safest cities in the world and in 2023, the law and order situation was stable. The Security Bureau and its disciplined services, through innovative technology, strive to provide the public with more convenient services and to enhance the law enforcement capability, as well as the efficiency of rescue operations.

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 2023, 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 2023-24 publicity strategy targets deception, drug abuse, promoting the law-abiding awareness of young people and guarding against child 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 enhance 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 2023, 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.

### **Crime**

In 2023, 90,276 crimes were recorded, an increase of 28.9 per cent over 70,048 crimes recorded in 2022. The crime rate went up by 25.6 per cent to 1,198 cases per 100,000 population.

The increase in overall crime was mainly attributed to the rise of deception cases, with 39,824 cases (44.1 per cent of overall crime), a 42.6 per cent rise on 2022. About 70 per cent of the reports were online deception and the police arrested 9,239 persons for deception and related money laundering offences in 2023, up by 75.5 per cent. To curb the problem at source, the police have been working with the telecommunication and banking industries, and also stepped up publicity and education work to enhance public awareness against deception.

Although levels of most traditional crimes returned to pre-epidemic levels, some recorded a significant drop compared with 2018. There were 10,122 violent crime cases, up 14.6 per cent. Robberies increased 26 per cent to 97 compared with 2022, but decreased 34 per cent compared with 2018. Burglaries increased 52.8 per cent to 1,354 compared with 2022, but were down 14 per cent compared with 2018. Both robbery and burglary figures were the second lowest since records began in 1969. The detection rate for robberies reached a record high, increasing by 8.5 percentage points to 82.5 per cent, while the detection rate for burglaries reached 37.4 per cent, the second highest on record.

Of the reported crimes, 31.1 per cent, or 28,060 cases, were detected, resulting in the arrest of 34,135 people. Among these, 1,035 were aged between 10 and 15, while 2,006 were aged between 16 and 20. Most of the youths were arrested for deception, wounding and serious assault or criminal damage.

The number of triad-related crimes decreased 8.6 per cent to 2,334 compared with 2022, accounting for 2.6 per cent of all reported crimes in 2023. The police combat triad activities by mounting enforcement actions and intelligence-led operations in Hong Kong, and targeting triad expansion and sources of income. They also participate in the annual tripartite operation codenamed 'Thunderbolt' with the Guangdong Provincial Public Security Department and Macao Unitary Police Service.

### **Commercial Crime**

In 2023, the police's Fraud and Money Laundering Intelligence Taskforce facilitated 23 intelligence-led operations, resulting in the arrest of 124 persons. The Anti-Deception Coordination Centre (ADCC) intercepted around \$1.29 billion of crime proceeds from local and overseas accounts, coordinated the prevention of 584 cases and assisted with the arrest of 86 people. The Anti-Scam Helpline 18222 received 52,458 calls from the public. In November, the ADCC collaborated with 10 major retail banks to establish the Anti-Deception Alliance with a view to enhancing the partnership with the banking industry so as to foster the effectiveness of processing stop payments, immediate scam intervention, investigation and enforcement actions.

### **Cyber Security and Technology Crime**

The police combat technology crime and maintain Hong Kong's cyber security through partnerships with the community, stakeholders and overseas law enforcement agencies. During the year, 34,112 technology crimes were reported, involving \$5.5 billion in losses. The mobile application version of the one-stop scam and pitfall search engine, 'Scameter+', was also introduced to further help the public identify frauds and online pitfalls.

### **Dangerous Drugs**

The police adopt a multi-agency approach, enlisting community support, to combat drug abuse and trafficking and to raise anti-drug awareness among the public, particularly the youth. They maintain a strategic partnership with local, Mainland and overseas law enforcement agencies to combat international drug trafficking involving Hong Kong. In 2023, 3,060 people were arrested for drug offences, mostly involving cocaine (23 per cent) and cannabis (22.6 per cent).

### **Financial Investigation**

The police combat money laundering and terrorist financing activities and assist in relevant ongoing risk assessment. During the year, 205 people were convicted of money laundering offences, with criminal assets of about \$169 million restrained and \$15 million confiscated.

### **Forensic Support**

The police collect and compare fingerprints, examine firearms, take photographs and gather DNA evidence from crime scenes to support crime investigations and prosecutions. In 2023, fingerprint evidence linked 1,546 persons to 1,386 criminal cases.

### **Liaison**

There is a 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 in China, it deals with Interpol-related matters.

### **Counter-terrorism**

Through the Inter-departmental Counter Terrorism Unit, the police monitor global and domestic terrorism trends, optimise counter-terrorism strategies and formulate action plans. The focus is effective and collaborative intelligence gathering, alongside strengthening the protection of critical infrastructure and other vulnerable locations. The police have strengthened inter-unit and inter-departmental operability through specialised training and exercises.

Emphasis is also put on public education and publicity to achieve a whole-of-community approach to counter-terrorism. The first experience centre with the theme of counter-terrorism in Hong Kong, the Safe Community Hub, was launched in October to enhance the public's counter-terrorism awareness.

### **National Security**

The National Security Department of the police 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 laws related to safeguarding national security.

The department has a reporting hotline for the public to provide information or report cases concerning national security, as well as a WeChat official account for disseminating national security-related information. More than 650,000 pieces of information had been received as of end-2023.

### **Traffic**

During the year, 17,189 traffic accidents involved casualties, of which 96 were fatal and 1,000 serious. The data represented 14 per cent more traffic accidents involving casualties and 3 per cent fewer involving fatalities or serious injuries than in 2022.

### **Public Events**

Hong Kong residents enjoy freedom of speech, peaceful assembly and procession. The police endeavour to ensure that public order events are conducted in a peaceful and lawful manner, while safeguarding national security, public order and safety through comprehensive risk assessments and deploying adequate resources for crowd management. In 2023, 12,764 public meetings and 314 public processions were held.

### **Public Relations**

In 2023, the police launched the online programme *Offbeat 360*, featuring crime prevention and fraud prevention information, and used online platforms and live streaming to strengthen the police's connection with the community, enhance public knowledge of police work and tell the public good stories of the police.

They also facilitate television and film production related to police work, and offer advice on location filming. They publish 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 implement the Animal Watchers Programme to unite efforts at the community level and raise public awareness on the prevention of cruelty to animals.

The Let's T.A.L.K. child protection campaign was launched in June with a series of activities aiming to help caretakers relieve stress and foster their mental health, so as to raise public awareness on child protection.

### **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 2023, a new report room was commissioned at Sau Mau Ping police station.

During the year, the Regional Higher Command of Hong Kong Island, the District Operations Rooms of Kowloon City, Kwai Tsing and Airport Districts and the Police College Control Room completed upgrading works to enhance operational capability and effectiveness.

### **Information and Communications Technology**

The police spearheaded the introduction of 19 mobile applications and various innovative digital policing initiatives in 2023. Nine self-service kiosks were launched respectively at Admiralty Station, the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge Hong Kong Port Passenger Clearance Building, the Airport Reporting Centre and six police station report rooms, to make it easier to

file reports of lost property and non-emergency cases. In November, the police launched the one-stop Online Applications Platform which allows the public to conveniently submit and check the progress of permit applications, and make online payments.

### **Training**

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

The college has collaborated with the School of Public Policy and Management, Tsinghua University to provide an Executive Master of Public Administration programme since 2021. So far, three cohorts with a total of 72 police officers have been admitted.

### **Complaints and Internal Investigations**

Under the statutory two-tier police complaint handling system, the Complaints Against Police Office handles public complaints against the police and works with the Independent Police Complaints Council (IPCC) in performing its statutory functions and duties. As society returned to normalcy, there was an increase in police-public encounters and enforcement actions. The office received 1,736 reportable complaints in 2023, 6.4 per cent higher than the yearly average of 1,632 over the past 10 years.

The police's Internal Investigations Office reinforces ethics and integrity in the police force through education and cultural activities, governance and control, enforcement and deterrence, and reintegration and support, while the Integrity Audit Action Group strengthens the investigation of serious misconduct involving police officers and implements integrity management measures to identify officers in need.

### **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 opinions and/or recommendations 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 2023, the IPCC examined and endorsed the findings in 1,612 investigation reports on reportable complaints received during the year or carried forward from previous years, involving 2,329 allegations. Of these, 82 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 6,494 staff managing 9,079 persons in custody and 1,145 people under statutory 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 has been developing 'smart prison' technology to promote the modernisation of correctional facilities and enhance the efficiency of prison management, the level of security and effectiveness of rehabilitation programmes. In 2023, the department and the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation signed a memorandum of understanding to deepen their cooperation, injecting new impetus into the sustainable development of smart prisons.

### **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, part of Lo Wu 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 treatment or assessment. Tai Tam Gap Correctional Institution and Nei Kwu Correctional Institution are used

for detaining adult males and females respectively 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.

### **Number of Admissions**

During the year, 8,802 adults (5,987 males and 2,815 females) were sentenced to imprisonment, 5,924 adults (4,383 males and 1,541 females) were remanded, 119 young persons (99 males and 20 females) were sentenced to imprisonment, and 305 young persons (245 males and 60 females) were remanded.

In addition, 220 offenders (187 males and 33 females) were sentenced to detention in the training centre, rehabilitation centres or the detention centre; 379 offenders (296 males and 83 females) were placed in drug addiction treatment centres; and 939 offenders (805 males and 134 females) were remanded pending suitability reports for sentencing to one of these centres. Besides, 268 males and 312 females were detained in Tai Tam Gap Correctional Institution and Nei Kwu Correctional Institution respectively under the Immigration Ordinance.

### **Pre-sentence Assessment**

Young offenders and offenders with drug addictions who are sentenced to imprisonment may be remanded 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 the most suitable rehabilitation programmes for young offenders.

In 2023, the unit recommended 282 males and 43 females for admission to a rehabilitation, training or detention centre, and 344 males and 90 females as suitable for a drug addiction treatment centre. The panel received 134 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 can also take part in a character development programme in the form of scouting and guiding. Upon release, they are subject to three-year statutory supervision.

At the detention centre, 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 providing basic health care. Persons in custody who need specialist treatment are referred to visiting specialists or public hospitals.

### ***Education***

The CSD provides 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. In 2023, the department and eight University Grants Committee-funded universities signed a memorandum of understanding to provide more comprehensive study support for persons in custody, including assisting students in custody that need credit transfers to continue their university studies after release. The CSD also set up the Ethics College at Pak Sha Wan Correctional Institution and Lo Wu Correctional Institution to provide a one-year full-time Diploma of Applied Education programme for adult persons in custody.

### ***Vocational Training***

Eligible adult persons in custody have the option of taking market-oriented vocational training courses that issue accredited and recognised qualifications. Persons in custody under 21 may take half-day vocational training programmes. Sixteen correctional facilities offered over 40 full-time and part-time courses in 2023.

### ***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 2023, a daily average of 4,121 persons in custody were engaged in productive work, providing government departments, public bodies and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) with goods and services that included office furniture, uniforms, leather products, hospital linen, personal protective equipment, fibreglass products, traffic signs, envelopes, laundry, book binding and printing. The market value of these goods and services was \$481 million in 2023.

### ***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. Pre-release reintegration orientation courses supply information on community resources to help persons in custody reintegrate into society.

### ***Psychological Services***

The department provides services to improve the psychological well-being of persons in custody and change their wrong values and 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 to the courts, review boards and institutional management on request.

Multi-purpose family and rehabilitation service centres provide psychological and counselling services for rehabilitated offenders and their families, as well as a video visit service for relatives and friends of persons in custody.

### ***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, 1,145 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 NGOs and government departments.

### ***Community Education***

The Rehabilitation Pioneer Project encourages young people to safeguard their country and home, stay away from crime and drugs and support offender rehabilitation through various community education programmes. The Rehabilitation Express promotion vehicle visits primary schools to promote national security, national education and crime prevention, as well as anti-drug and support for offender rehabilitation messages.

### ***Visiting Justices***

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

### ***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 Legislative Council members.

## **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 7,579 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 2022-23, the department collected \$12 billion in excise duties, 3.9 per cent less than in 2021-22.

The department assesses the taxable values of motor vehicles under the Motor Vehicles (First Registration Tax) Ordinance, resulting in the collection of \$5 billion first registration tax by the Transport Department in 2022-23, during which more than 56,000 motor vehicles were first registered.

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

In 2023, the department detected 11,805 cases involving the smuggling, storage, distribution and peddling of illicit cigarettes, a 244 per cent increase from 2022, and seized 652 million illicit cigarettes, an 11 per cent decrease from 2022. Fines were imposed on 9,837 travellers, a year-on-year rise of 367 per cent, for bringing into Hong Kong a total of 1.7 million cigarettes in excess of their duty-free concession.

The department also acts to stamp out illicit fuel activities. In 2023, it detected 33 illicit fuel cases, arrested 61 people and seized 47,200 litres of illicit fuel. The number of cases was 30 per cent less than in 2022.

### ***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 on the import and export of cargoes.

In 2023, the department dealt with 969 drug trafficking cases, smashed 31 drug storage and distribution centres and two manufacturing and attenuating centres, seized 9,476kg of assorted dangerous drugs and arrested 296 people. Cross-boundary enforcement cooperation led to the seizures of 1,460kg of dangerous drugs and arrest of 27 people in the Mainland 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 2023, through air, land and sea channels, 19,263 smuggling cases were detected, and \$9.3 billion worth of goods seized.

With the full resumption of normal travel between Hong Kong and the Mainland after the epidemic, the risk of smuggling activities using land channels has increased. The department keeps abreast of smuggling trends and strengthens its enforcement efforts against illicit import and export of goods accordingly. It also works closely with other law enforcement agencies to combat smuggling through intelligence exchange and joint 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 an emergency ambulance service, 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 possible response 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 10,729 uniformed and 758 civilian members, and operated 465 fire appliances, 536 ambulances, 248 supporting vehicles and 28 fire vessels.

### ***Firefighting and Rescue***

Of the 36,103 fire calls received in 2023, nine were classified as major fires and triggered the No 3 alarm or above. Accidents while cooking were the major cause of fires, accounting for 1,006 cases. General electrical faults caused 1,000 fires, while the careless handling or disposal of lighted materials, such as cigarette ends, matches and candles, caused 537 fires. Unwanted alarms, triggered mainly by faulty automatic alarm systems, made up 77 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 premises, 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 40,763 such calls in 2023.

### **Ambulance Service**

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 command handled a daily average of 2,237 calls in 2023.

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 2023, first responders responded to 43,012 cases.

### **Communications Centre**

The 24-hour Fire Services Communications Centre mobilises 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 2023, the command vetted 19,309 building plans, including those for tunnels and bridges, handled 579 submissions in relation to matters such as building plans and fire engineering reports, and offered fire safety advisory services on 875 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 2023, the command handled 1,933 submissions and carried out 1,791 acceptance inspections of FSIs at new railway projects, and of alterations, additions and extensive station improvement works for existing lines.

The Licensing and Certification Command regulates the manufacture, storage, conveyance and use of dangerous goods and takes enforcement action against related offences. In 2023, it issued or renewed 4,291 storage licences for dangerous goods or timber, and 1,855 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

more than 1,200 inspections and 24 interdepartmental enforcement operations, seized nearly 500,000 litres of fuel and instituted prosecution in 211 cases.

The command monitors the status of FSIs in buildings, handles complaints and oversees the professional standards of registered FSI contractors. In 2023, it conducted 93,500 compliance inspections of FSIs in new buildings and developments, and another 95,274 inspections of existing FSIs. It issued 2,896 fire hazard abatement notices against irregularities found and took legal action against 134 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 2023, it carried out 81,807 inspections of such premises and issued 1,505 fire hazard abatement notices, of which 73 resulted in prosecution.

### **Community Collaboration Network**

The Community Collaboration Network, comprising the chairpersons of 18 District Fire Safety Committees, facilitates the implementation of the department's policies and measures, and disseminates messages on fire safety and community emergency preparedness at the district level.

### **Resuscitation Alliance**

The Resuscitation Alliance, comprising the Fire Services Department, the Auxiliary Medical Service, the Civil Aid Service, the Hong Kong Red Cross, the Hong Kong St John Ambulance, the Hospital Authority and the Resuscitation Council of Hong Kong, was established in June to promote community resuscitation. As of end-2023, around 70,000 citizens who completed cardiopulmonary resuscitation and automated external defibrillator training became alliance members.

### **Youth Development**

The Fire and Ambulance Services Teen Connect (FAST Connect) uniformed group aims to help young people cultivate positive thinking, aspirations to serve the community, law-abiding awareness, discipline and team spirit through various activities. With a view to offering this learning platform to more young people, FAST Connect has been expanding its membership by promoting at the district level through the 18 District Fire Safety Committees and inviting children of serving members of the department to join. As at end-2023, there were nearly 450 members.

## **Government Flying Service**

The Government Flying Service provides a 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 65 civilian members. In 2023, members flew a total of 6,654 hours, helped in 709 search and rescue operations and took 1,713 people to hospitals by helicopter. By the end of 2023, it operated three fixed-wing aircraft and nine helicopters for operations and flight training.

## **Immigration Department**

The Immigration Department exercises immigration control, issues Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) identity cards and travel documents, handles nationality and residency matters, and registers births, deaths and marriages. It had 7,232 and 1,582 disciplined and civilian posts respectively at end-2023.

### ***Immigration Control***

In accordance with the Basic Law, the HKSAR Government exercises immigration control on entry into, stay in and departure from Hong Kong. Immigration officers conduct checks at control points and vet entry applications to detect undesirable people, including international criminals and dubious visitors. The entry of 23,171 people was refused in 2023.

Hong Kong welcomes visitors and adopts an open visa policy. People from about 170 countries and territories may visit Hong Kong visa-free for seven to 180 days. Around 212 million people entered and left the city in 2023, a rise of around 39 times from 2022.

The e-Channel is an electronic system installed at boundary crossings. It provides automated immigration clearance for Hong Kong residents, enrolled Consular Corps Identity Card holders and eligible visitors. The Smart Departure service allows eligible visitors holding electronic travel documents to perform automated departure clearance through e-Channels without prior enrolment. Reciprocal use of automated immigration clearance services is in place with Australia, Germany, Korea, Singapore and Thailand.

The Contactless e-Channel for Hong Kong residents provides a faster, more convenient and hygienic automated immigration clearance service. It allows enrolled residents to use their identity card or generate an encrypted QR code on their smartphone for self-service immigration clearance through facial verification technology, without touching any shared equipment throughout the process.

The Flight Token e-Channel for Hong Kong residents was also launched to tie in with the Airport Authority Hong Kong's implementation of the Flight Token service. Eligible Hong Kong residents only need to face towards cameras to enter Flight Token e-Channels. Departure clearance will be completed upon successful facial verification.

The government in February expanded the Pilot Scheme on Immigration Facilitation for Visitors Participating in Short-term Activities in Designated Sectors from 10 to 12 sectors. The scheme enables visitors invited by authorised host organisations to participate in specified short-term activities without an employment visa. By enabling global talent to gather, it boosts Hong Kong's strength as a place to connect and excel under 'one country, two systems'. As at end-December, 13,218 non-local talents had benefited, including those participating in the 2023 Hong Kong International Dragon Boat Races, Hong Kong Sevens rugby tournament and international horse racing events.

### ***Right of Abode***

Article 24 of the Basic Law states that Hong Kong permanent residents, regardless of their nationalities, have the right of abode in the HKSAR and may obtain permanent identity cards.

### ***Entry for Residence***

The Mainland is the major contributor to Hong Kong's immigrant population. In 2023, about 40,800 Mainlanders joined their families in Hong Kong under the One-way Permit Scheme, which has a daily quota of 150.

### ***Personal Documentation***

#### ***Travel Documents***

The department issues HKSAR passports to Hong Kong permanent residents who are Chinese nationals with the right of abode in the HKSAR holding valid Hong Kong permanent identity cards. In 2023, the department received 1,457,553 HKSAR passport applications, including 3,462 from overseas and 8,192 from the Mainland.

The department lobbies for greater travel convenience for HKSAR passport holders. As of December, 171 countries and territories have granted visa-free access or visa-on-arrival to HKSAR passport holders.

The Document of Identity for Visa Purposes (Doc/I) is issued for international travel to Hong Kong residents who are not eligible for the HKSAR passport and are unable to obtain a travel document of any other country or territory. The Re-entry Permit (REP) is issued to eligible Hong Kong residents for travel to the Mainland and Macao. During the year, 54,650 Doc/Is and 95,182 REPs were issued.

The department takes strict measures against the use of forged travel documents and carries out special operations against forgery syndicates. In 2023, it detected 419 forged travel documents.

#### ***Identity Cards***

The department issues two types of identity cards to Hong Kong residents: the Hong Kong permanent identity card for residents who have the right of abode in Hong Kong and the Hong Kong identity card for those who do not.



### ***Smart Identity Cards***

In 2018, the department started issuing a new form of smart identity card with enhanced security features and chip technology that provide better protection of personal data and against counterfeiting. An improved contactless chip interface enables faster clearance at e-Channels. During the year, 1,405,336 new smart identity cards were issued by the department.

### ***Illegal Immigration***

The government keeps a close watch on illegal immigration and liaises closely with Mainland and overseas law enforcement agencies on population movements and illegal migration.

In 2023, the city arrested 351 Mainland illegal immigrants and 1,313 non-ethnic Chinese illegal immigrants.

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

The department combats illegal employment. It conducted 17,248 raids and arrested 2,924 illegal workers in 2023. 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. During the year, 759 people were deported, meaning they are prohibited from returning. Another 1,271 people were removed from Hong Kong, comprising 484 illegal immigrants, 749 people who had breached their conditions of stay and 38 people who were refused entry.

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

The department lays charges against persons who commit 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 establishing or joining 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 investigating 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.

### **Nationality Matters**

The department is authorised by the Central People's Government to handle Chinese nationality applications from Hong Kong residents. In 2023, there were 366 declarations of change of nationality, 2,147 applications for naturalisation as Chinese nationals, 261 applications for renunciation of Chinese nationality and 15 applications for restoration of Chinese nationality.

### **Assistance to Hong Kong Residents Outside Hong Kong**

The department's Assistance to Hong Kong Residents Unit works closely with the Security Bureau, the Office of the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China in the HKSAR, overseas Chinese diplomatic and consular missions, foreign consulates in Hong Kong, HKSAR Government offices outside Hong Kong and other government departments to provide practical assistance to Hong Kong residents in distress outside Hong Kong. A 24-hour hotline provides emergency assistance. In 2023, the unit handled 3,035 assistance requests.

### **Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages**

Couples may marry at any of the five marriage registries or 272 licensed places of worship, or engage a civil celebrant to celebrate their marriage at any other place in Hong Kong. During the year, 21,555 marriages were celebrated in marriage registries, 1,129 in licensed places of worship and 24,834 by civil celebrants.

Four district birth registries provide birth registration services. During the year, 33,288 live births were registered.

Three death registries and 15 designated police stations in the New Territories and outlying islands handle death registrations. During the year, 56,776 deaths were registered.

The department launched new electronic services on 31 March for eligible informants to complete the registration of births or deaths online and receive the relevant certificates by post, without having to attend a registry in person.

### **Independent Commission Against Corruption**

Hong Kong prides itself on its clean civil service, level playing field for doing business and a society intolerant of corruption. 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. The ICAC Annual Survey consistently shows that the community is highly intolerant of corruption. The majority of respondents indicated they had not encountered corruption personally in the preceding 12 months prior to the interviews, reaffirming the stable probity situation of Hong Kong.

In 2023, the ICAC received 2,001 corruption complaints (excluding election complaints<sup>1</sup>), representing a year-on-year increase of 9 per cent. Of these complaints, 72 per cent, 23 per cent and 6 per cent<sup>2</sup> concerned the private sector, government departments and public bodies respectively. During the year, the ICAC received 84 election complaints, most of which concerned the Rural Ordinary Election (39 complaints) and the District Council Ordinary Election (36 complaints) respectively held in January and December.

### **Enforcement**

In 2023, 211 people were prosecuted (seven in election cases), 25 were cautioned for minor offences and 60 were warned for minor breaches of the electoral law. During the year, 145 people in 107 cases were convicted, representing a 75 per cent in person-based and 84 per cent case-based conviction rates respectively. By year-end, 967 cases, including 58 election cases, were under investigation.

### **Prevention and Education**

The ICAC examines the systems and procedures of government departments and public bodies to identify corruption risks, and gives advice on plugging any loopholes. In 2023, it completed 71 assignment reports and offered advice on 636 occasions. The ICAC provided integrity training to more than 48,000 government officers and staff of public bodies. Briefing sessions were held for new intakes of politically appointed officials of the government and civil servants at all ranks.

Confidential corruption prevention advice is given free to private sector entities on request. During the year, the ICAC offered advice on 1,447 occasions. It also provided free-of-charge integrity training, including talks and online courses, to more than 94,000 employees in the business sector, including professionals in the banking, construction, medical and healthcare industries.

To cultivate important values such as rule of law, law-abidingness and honesty, the ICAC implements moral education programmes for young people from kindergartens to tertiary institutions. Young people are also encouraged to study the country's development and acquire a sense of nationality as well as national identity. More than 270,000 students participated in the ICAC's integrity training and moral education activities in the year.

In 2023, the ICAC partnered with more than 800 organisations to organise activities to promote probity at district levels. Social media and viral videos were used to disseminate ICAC's messages and to encourage the public to report corruption.

For the District Council Ordinary Election, the ICAC launched an all-embracing education and publicity campaign to enhance stakeholders' understanding of the electoral laws, and appeal to electors for casting their votes and upholding a clean election culture.

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

<sup>2</sup> Individual percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

### ***International Cooperation and Mainland Liaison***

The ICAC works closely with anti-corruption agencies from overseas, the Mainland and Macao, and provides training to graft fighters in other countries including those along the Belt and Road. The ICAC Commissioner also expands the international cooperation network to promote Hong Kong's rule of law, anti-corruption regime and integrity culture globally through his role as the President of the International Association of Anti-Corruption Authorities, which has a membership of 168 anti-corruption agencies around the world.

During the year, the ICAC shared Hong Kong's successful anti-corruption model and experiences on various international occasions, and established a working group with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to enhance collaborations such as professional training. The commissioner also attended the Third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation to share the ICAC's work and achievements in contributing to the clean Belt and Road.

### ***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. Each committee submits an annual work report to the Chief Executive.

All corruption complaints, whether or not pursuable, 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.

### ***Narcotics Division***

The Narcotics Division coordinates policies and measures to combat the drug problem. It also oversees anti-money laundering and counter-financing of terrorism measures in relation to the supervision of designated non-financial businesses and professions to ensure their compliance with the relevant law.

### ***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 non-official members from the medical, legal, education, media, business, community and social service sectors, and 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 Central Narcotics Bureau of Singapore also sits on the committee.

### **Preventive Education and Publicity**

In view of the regulation of cannabidiol (CBD) as a dangerous drug under the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance from 1 February, the division conducted a large-scale publicity campaign to encourage members of the public to arrange early disposal of CBD products and remind them and visitors about the criminal liability of CBD-related offences. The division also works closely with the Immigration and Customs and Excise departments to enhance publicity at 13 boundary control points to remind the public not to get involved in drug-trafficking activities.

In view of the threat posed by cocaine addiction, the division stepped up its promotion against the harms of the drug with an animated online video at the end of 2023.

The government encourages drug abusers to seek early help through publicity. The division's 24-hour anti-drug hotline 186 186 and instant messaging service 98 186 186 via WhatsApp or WeChat are manned by social workers to provide help for people with drug problems. Drug abusers are referred to NGOs for treatment and rehabilitation.

The Hong Kong Jockey Club Drug InfoCentre is equipped with multimedia interactive facilities and features, including guided tours, parental talks, thematic exhibitions and workshops to help visitors and participants gain a deeper understanding on drugs as well as build a healthy lifestyle.

The division works with the Education Bureau to help students, both inside and outside the classroom, understand the dangers of drugs and the consequences of engaging in drug-trafficking activities.

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 2023-24 school year, 237 secondary schools, partnering with NGOs, implemented the programme.

The Beat Drugs with Sports programme 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 118 participating secondary schools in 2023-24.

### **Treatment and Rehabilitation**

Treatment and rehabilitation services are available to drug abusers with different needs. The CSD implements 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 one centre for drug counselling with two sub-bases.

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.

### **Legislation and Enforcement**

In 2023, five dangerous drugs (2-methyl-AP-237, etazene, etonitazepyne, protonitazene and ADB-Butinaca) were brought under the control of the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance and the Control of Chemicals Ordinance respectively. The effective date of their control was 15 December.

During the year, the police and the Customs and Excise Department seized about 35,200kg of major types of drugs and arrested 3,407 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 5,500 drug abusers in 2023, of whom 36 per cent were new cases, 12 per cent were aged under 21 and 21 per cent abused more than one drug. Heroin continued to be the most commonly abused single drug in Hong Kong, afflicting 43 per cent of drug abusers. Psychotropic substances were abused by 68 per cent of drug abusers. Commonly abused psychotropic substances included cocaine (22 per cent), methamphetamine, commonly known as 'ice' (16 per cent), cannabis (14 per cent) and triazolam/midazolam/zopiclone (12 per cent). Half of the newly reported drug abusers had abused drugs for at least six years before their drug abuse was reported, compared with 4.3 years in 2022.

### **External Cooperation**

Hong Kong works with its counterparts in the Mainland and elsewhere 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 2023, government representatives, as members of the Chinese delegation, joined the 66th session of the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs convened in Vienna.

### **Research**

Drug-related research helps formulate anti-drug measures. The division conducted the triennial survey of drug use among students at upper primary to post-secondary levels in the 2023-24 school year.

### ***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 2023, the fund approved about \$252 million to support 220 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 three-year Anti-drug Community Awareness Building Programme, which began in 2021, to sustain anti-drug efforts and raise the awareness of hidden drug abuse at the community level.

### ***Anti-money Laundering and Counter-financing of Terrorism***

The Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau coordinates overall policies in anti-money laundering and counter-financing of terrorism. The Narcotics Division oversees the implementation of relevant measures in two main areas: facilitating regulatory bodies' risk-based supervision of designated non-financial businesses and professions and raising awareness of relevant measures among these trades, including lawyers, accountants, estate agents and dealers in precious metals and stones; and maintaining a declaration and disclosure system for the cross-boundary movement of large quantities of physical currency and bearer negotiable instruments.

A registration regime for dealers in precious metals and stones was introduced from 1 April, imposing statutory anti-money laundering and counter-financing of terrorism requirements on the sector. The Customs and Excise Department is responsible for supervising the trade's compliance.

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.

### ***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 2022 annual report was submitted to the Chief Executive in June 2023 and tabled in the Legislative Council in October.

## **Government Laboratory**

The Government Laboratory provides forensic service to law enforcement agencies. Its Forensic Science Division has two operational groups.

The Drugs, Toxicology and Documents Group undertakes analysis of:

- abused drugs, hair drug testing, urinalysis, drink and drug driving cases; and
- toxicological examination in coroner's and criminal cases, examination of handwriting and documents, and technical support in testing the production quality of Hong Kong 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 crime scene investigation and consultation service, covering fire investigation, traffic accident reconstruction and bloodstain pattern analysis.

## **Auxiliary Medical Service**

The Auxiliary Medical Service (AMS) is a government department under the Security Bureau, with 99 civil service positions and close to 3,500 adult volunteers and 1,900 cadets. It reinforces regular medical and ambulance services during emergencies and provides backup in normal circumstances. Volunteers come from different walks of life, including health professionals such as doctors, nurses and pharmacists.

The AMS provides first aid services during natural disasters, large-scale incidents, public activities, festivals, and at major sports events. During Sundays and public holidays, its members operate first aid stations in country parks while during Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays, its First Aid Bicycle Teams patrol cycling tracks across the territory. The AMS also organises first aid programmes at schools and public talks on cardiopulmonary resuscitation, the use of an automated external defibrillator and other health topics. Apart from first aid services, the AMS runs the Non-Emergency Ambulance Transfer Service, operating ambulance vehicles to provide inter-hospital transfer and other conveyance service of non-emergency nature.

Cadet members, aged 12 to 17, receive national security education as well as training in Chinese-style foot drill and flag-raising, discipline and medical skills. In 2023, the AMS, in collaboration with the Hong Kong Metropolitan University, launched the enhanced Health Awareness and Promotion Programme for Youth, which promotes diversified development of



young people through various educational activities such as medical and health training, service learning programmes, volunteer services as well as career planning.

### **Civil Aid Service**

The Civil Aid Service (CAS) is a government auxiliary emergency service with around 3,100 adult members and 3,700 cadets, who receive training, administrative and logistics support from 108 civil servants.

Members provide support in times of emergency, such as mountain search and flood rescue, and patrol country parks and hiking trails to offer assistance to those in need. In 2023, the CAS completed 76 mountain search and rescue assignments.

The CAS Cadet Corps helps young people aged 12 to 17 develop leadership potential and cultivate civic awareness through national security education as well as training in Chinese-style foot drill, basic emergency rescue, crowd management, first aid and rock climbing. The School Partnership Scheme implemented by the CAS offers discipline and leadership training to junior secondary students. In 2023, more than 1,000 students from 29 secondary schools applied to the Cadet Corps after participating in relevant activities.

Apart from developing the Cadet Corps, the CAS cooperates with different government departments, NGOs and schools to provide tailor-made short-term courses, visits and talks for the young people. In 2023, more than 4,300 young people participated in the public education programmes organised by the CAS, with over 1,500 students receiving training specifically related to Chinese-style foot drill and flag-raising activities. These activities not only cultivate positive thinking and enhance young people's competence, but also foster a sense of national identity and belonging.

### **Websites**

Auxiliary Medical Service: [www.ams.gov.hk](http://www.ams.gov.hk)

Civil Aid Service: [www.cas.gov.hk](http://www.cas.gov.hk)

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

Correctional Services Department: [www.csd.gov.hk](http://www.csd.gov.hk)

Government Flying Service: [www.gfs.gov.hk](http://www.gfs.gov.hk)

Government Laboratory: [www.govtlab.gov.hk](http://www.govtlab.gov.hk)

Hong Kong Customs and Excise Department: [www.customs.gov.hk](http://www.customs.gov.hk)

Hong Kong Fire Services Department: [www.hkfsd.gov.hk](http://www.hkfsd.gov.hk)

Hong Kong Police Force: [www.police.gov.hk](http://www.police.gov.hk)

Immigration Department: [www.immd.gov.hk](http://www.immd.gov.hk)

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

Independent Police Complaints Council: [www.ipcc.gov.hk](http://www.ipcc.gov.hk)

Narcotics Division: [www.nd.gov.hk](http://www.nd.gov.hk)

Security Bureau: [www.sb.gov.hk](http://www.sb.gov.hk)

Three-year Plan on Drug Treatment and Rehabilitation Services in Hong Kong (2021-2023):  
[www.nd.gov.hk/en/three\\_year\\_plan\\_2021\\_2023.html](http://www.nd.gov.hk/en/three_year_plan_2021_2023.html)