

ROYAL HONG KONG POLICE FORCE

Introduction

This Annex gives a brief account of the duties and responsibilities of the Royal Hong Kong Police, its rank structure, its organisation and the methods by which it meets the demands of the law and the people of Hong Kong.

General

2. The Hong Kong Police was established in 1842. The title Royal was bestowed on the force by Her Majesty the Queen in recognition of its services during a period of civil unrest in 1967. Over the years the police force has emerged from being a small colonial para-military organisation to a large highly sophisticated law enforcement body with an internal security capability.

3. The police force is governed by the Police Force Ordinance (Chapter 232 of the Laws of Hong Kong) which charges the Commissioner of Police, subject to the orders and control of the Governor, with the supreme direction and administration of the police force : institutes the constitution of the force : bestows powers on police officers : makes provision for disciplinary regulations for the police force : lays down the duties the police force must perform.

Establishment and strength

4. The establishment/strength figures for the police as at 1st April from 1979 to 1988 are given in Annex 2.1 - Appendix I.

5. The police force had on 1st June 1988 a strength of 32,444 which was composed of 26,829 disciplined officers and 5,615 civilian staff. It is supported by the Royal Hong Kong Auxiliary Police which has a strength of 5,203.

6. The regular officer strength is made up of 24,061 Junior Police Officers, 2,299 Inspectorate Officers and 469 Gazetted Officers. Of these 941 are expatriates and 2,324 are women.

7. Wastage figures by rank are given in Annex 2.1 - Appendix II.

Budget

8. The budgets for the police force from 1979/80 to 1988/89 are detailed at Annex 2.1 - Appendix III.

Organisation structure

9. At Annex 2.1 - Appendix IV of this Annex are charts which show the organisational structure of Police Headquarters, Regions, Districts and Divisions. The strength of major formations is at Annex 2.1 - Appendix V.

Rank structure

10. There are four ranks in the Junior Police Officer cadre. They are Police Constable (PC), Senior Police Constable (SPC), Sergeant (Sgt) and Station Sergeant (S/Sgt). The SPC is reached by advancement after 18 years service and is functionally equivalent to the PC rank. The Sgt and S/Sgt ranks are supervisory ranks which are reached by competitive promotion.

11. A PC, including SPC, performs beat patrol duties, crime investigation duties, traffic patrol, coxswain and launch mechanic duties, and Special Branch duties to name just a few.

12. A Sgt is the leader of first reaction teams, commands a column of men in an Internal Security (IS) situation, commands small police launches, is the Duty Officer in small stations and above all is the first level of supervision.

13. A S/Sgt's duties include commanding small posts, crime investigation teams, Sub-Units and police launches. He is the Duty Officer in Divisional Stations and responsible for prisoners, bail, property and dealing with all reports made by the public.

14. Three ranks, Inspector of Police (IP), Senior Inspector of Police (SIP) and Chief Inspector of Police (CIP), form the inspectorate cadre. The SIP rank is reached by advancement and is functionally equivalent to the IP rank. The CIP rank is reached by competitive promotion from SIP.

15. An IP/SIP is a commander at Sub-Unit level. This may be in the Uniform Branch, the Crime stream, Traffic, Special Branch or other specialised formation. In an IS situation an IP/SIP will command a Light Striking Force or a platoon of 40 men within a company. An IP/SIP has a planning and directing role as well as a man-management function.

16. CIPs command at unit level within a District or Division in either uniform or crime formations. A typical command for a CIP would be about 150 men. While some CIPs perform administrative and training duties the majority of officers of this rank are in command of units involved in

operational policing.

17. There are seven ranks in the Gazetted Officer cadre. They are Superintendent (SP), Senior Superintendent (SSP), Chief Superintendent (CSP), Assistant Commissioner (ACP), Senior Assistant Commissioner (SACP), Deputy Commissioner (DCP) and Commissioner (CP).

18. SPs command Divisions or are Staff Officers at District, Regional or Force level. In addition, SPs command IS Companies. A typical command for an SP would be about 350 men. A typical Division would have a population of 200,000.

19. SSPs command small Districts and Regional Formations such as Crime and Traffic and are Deputy Commanders of large Districts. A typical command for a SSP would be 500 men. SSPs also fill the role of Senior Staff Officers in Regional and Force Headquarters.

20. CSPs command large Districts, training establishments and Headquarters specialist units, are Deputy Commanders of Regions and hold Chief Staff Officers posts in Regional Headquarters. A typical command for a CSP would be about 850 men. A typical District would have a population of 400,000.

21. ACPs command Regions and Wings within Force Headquarters : SACPs command Departments within Force Headquarters : DCPs command the three arms of the force, Operations, Special Branch and Management and the CP commands the force.

Duties of the police force

22. Section 10 of the Police Force Ordinance states :-

"The duties of the police force shall be to take lawful measures for :-

- (a) preserving the public peace;
- (b) preventing and detecting crimes and offences;
- (c) preventing injury to life and property;
- (d) apprehending all persons whom it is lawful to apprehend and for whose apprehension sufficient grounds exists;
- (e) regulating processions and assembles in public places or places of public resort;
- (f) controlling traffic upon public thoroughfares and removing obstructions therefrom;

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- (g) preserving order in public places and places of public resort, at public meetings and in assemblies for public amusements, for which purpose any police officer on duty shall have free admission to all such places and meetings and assemblies while open to any of the public;
- (h) assisting in carrying out any revenue, excise, sanitary, conservancy, quarantine, immigration and alien registration laws;
- (i) assisting in preserving order in the waters of the Colony and in enforcing port and maritime regulations therein;
- (j) executing summonses, subpoenas, warrants, commitments and other process issued by the courts;
- (k) exhibiting informations and conducting prosecutions;
- (l) protecting unclaimed and lost property and finding the owners thereof;
- (m) taking charge of and impounding stray animals;
- (n) assisting in the protection of life and property at fires;
- (o) protecting public property from loss or injury;
- (p) attending the criminal courts and, if specially ordered, the civil courts and keeping order therein;
- (q) escorting and guarding prisoners; and
- (r) executing such other duties as may by law be imposed on a police officer."

23. To perform the wide scope of duties laid down police officers have powers under and take action in respect of the majority of the Chapters of the laws of Hong Kong.

Functions of the police force

24. Within the structure of the police force, set out in chart form in Annex 2.1 - Appendix IV, three separate arms of the force are commanded by Deputy Commissioners. They are : Special Branch, Operations and Management. The functions performed by these three arms are examined below.

Special Branch

25. This arm of the force undertakes the duties normal to a Special Branch, including VIP protection, counter-terrorism and security co-ordination.

Operations

26. Operational policing responsibilities are allocated on a geographical basis to Regions, District and Divisions and on a functional basis to formations in Police Headquarters.

27. There are three land Regions, Kowloon, Hong Kong Island and New Territories. Kowloon has seven geographical Districts and two Districts with specialist responsibilities : Airport and Mass Transit Railway. Hong Kong Island has four geographical Districts and New Territories seven. The fourth Region, Marine, is responsible for policing the waters of Hong Kong and some 244 islands within those waters.

28. A commander of a geographical area is responsible for all aspects of policing in that area. These include watch and ward duties by uniformed personnel, the investigation, detection and prosecution of crime and other offences, the regulation of traffic, combatting vice activities and maintaining a capability to deal with civil disorder.

29. Police officers who work in Divisions and Districts are those with whom the general public come into contact on a day-to-day basis. It is their task to ensure that the peace is preserved and that law-abiding citizens may go about their legitimate business without let or hindrance throughout the 24 hours of a day.

30. Immediate response to calls for assistance is provided by the Emergency Units of Regional Headquarters. These "999 cars" are in constant radio contact with the Regional Command and Control Centre around the clock.

31. Crime Units ensure crimes are investigated and culprits arrested : Special Duty Units are constantly deployed to deal with vice and drug activities and Traffic Units control traffic flow within their areas.

32. Formations in Police Headquarters have territory-wide responsibilities for selected aspects of policing.

33. Operations Wing comprises the Police Tactical Unit, the Operations Bureau and the Explosive Ordinance Disposal Unit commanded by a bomb disposal expert.

34. The Police Tactical Unit provides an immediate reserve of manpower for use in an emergency. It fills an important training role by providing up-to-date training in all aspects of internal security and crowd control tactics. The unit also

provides a reserve of manpower to deal with situations requiring large numbers of trained police officers. Also under the command of the Commandant, Police Tactical Unit, is the Special Duties Unit (SDU), a highly trained volunteer group which forms the force's counter-terrorist capability.

35. The Operations Bureau consists of three sections - Operations, Counter-Terrorism and Key Points. It also acts as a secretariat charged with the staffing of operational matters, including the formulation and dissemination of policies, collation of resources requirements, provision of services and monitoring of activities in the areas of internal security, illegal immigration, counter-terrorism, major disasters and air/sea/land search and rescue operations.

36. The Explosive Ordinance Disposal Unit (better known as the Force Bomb Disposal Unit) is responsible for the neutralisation of all conventional explosives and improvised explosive devices coming into police hands.

37. Support Wing consists of the Support Bureau, the Police Public Relations Branch and the Royal Hong Kong Auxiliary Police Headquarters.

38. The Support Bureau, comprising Field (including the Police Dog Unit), General and Licensing sections, is responsible for the staffing of operational support units and the formulation and dissemination of related policy.

39. Police Public Relations Branch keeps the public informed about the force and its activities through extensive contacts with the media. It monitors public opinions as reflected in media reports, responds to enquiries and requests originating both locally and overseas. It is also responsible for planning and co-ordinating police community relations activities, with particular emphasis on the Police Community Relations Officer scheme at district level, Fight Crime campaigns, Junior Police Call, recruitment and road safety. It co-ordinates displays and exhibitions and produces television and radio programmes in co-operation with the Information Services Department.

40. Traffic Wing has three main components - the Traffic Management Bureau, the Central Traffic Prosecutions Unit and the Administration Bureau (which includes the Road Safety, Accident Research and Law Revision sections). It is responsible for the formulation and dissemination of the Commissioner's traffic policies, the collation of resource requirements, the processing of traffic prosecutions (other than those dealt with by arrest) and the evaluation of traffic management schemes.

41. Crime Wing comprises two groups : the Organised and Serious Crimes Group and the Administration and Support Group; and two self-contained bureaux : the Commercial Crimes Bureau and the Narcotics Bureau.

42. The Organised and Serious Crimes Group comprises two bureaux - the Organised and Serious Crimes Bureau and the Criminal Intelligence Bureau. The former takes over from Regions major or complex crime investigations which entail extremely difficult and protracted investigations. The latter is the central co-ordinating body for the collection, collation, assessment and dissemination of criminal intelligence throughout the force. The functions of the Criminal Intelligence Bureau are to provide intelligence on key criminals and their activities; to advise on crime trends; and to liaise with other police formations.

43. The Commercial Crimes Bureau deals with commercial fraud, other large frauds and counterfeit and forgery cases.

44. The Narcotics Bureau identifies and acts against syndicates involved in the illegal narcotics trade, concentrating on the import/export and manufacture of narcotics. It collects, collates and assesses intelligence on unlawful trafficking in drugs and disseminates it within the force and to other agencies. Senior officers of the Bureau liaise and collaborate with anti-drug agencies overseas.

45. The Administration and Support Group of Crime Wing consists of the Administration Section, Criminal Records Bureau, Identification Bureau, Ballistics and Firearms Identification Bureau, Interpol Bureau and the Crime Prevention Bureau.

46. The Administration Section deals with amending legislation and new legislation, planning for crime formations, resource requirements, statistics and the formulation of policy.

47. The Criminal Record Bureau operates on a 24-hour basis. It is responsible for collating, recording and publishing information on suspected and wanted persons, stolen property, warrants and vehicles of police interest.

48. The Identification Bureau plays an important role in crime investigation and detection by providing services to all units of the force in relation to fingerprint technology and forensic photography.

49. The Ballistics and Firearms Identification Bureau is concerned with the examination of arms and ammunition and the comparison of striations on fired bullets and cartridge cases. The Bureau also tests and evaluates new types of arms, ammunition and bullet-resistant materials.

50. The Hong Kong Interpol Bureau is part of the International Crime Police Organisation (ICPO - Interpol) network despatching messages by telex or over the Interpol radio net.

51. The Crime Prevention Bureau provides security and crime prevention advice to government departments, private companies and members of the public. It operates in conjunction with the Police Public Relations Branch and Government Information Services, using various methods to publicise advice on crime prevention. Crime prevention teams, established in regions and districts, give practical advice on crime prevention.

Management

52. Three departments make up the Management arm of the force : Personnel and Training : Management and Inspection Services and Civil and Administration.

53. Personnel Wing comprises the Personnel Branch, the Welfare Branch and the Staff Relations Unit.

54. The Personnel Branch consists of four groups with the following primary functions :-

- Career Development - career development, postings, increments and advancements;
- Recruitment - all aspects of local and overseas recruitment;
- Support - discipline, promotions and the administration of departmental quarters; and
- Administration - conditions of service, award and commendations and general administrations of the Branch.

55. The scope of Welfare Branch broadly embraces welfare projects; police children's education; marital, family and personal problems; loans and grants; the well-being of police patients in hospital; police co-operatives; employment for pensioners and members of police families; social; recreational and sports activities; funeral arrangements and holiday projects.

56. The Staff Relations Unit is responsible for staff relations in general and staff associations in particular. It is tasked to identify procedures and policies which adversely affect morale and to suggest remedies, in consultation with force staff associations and the Government Secretariat. Additionally, it provides guidance to district and divisional staff.

57. Training Wing consists of the Force Training Wing Headquarters, the Police Training School and Detective Training School.

58. Force Training Wing Headquarters determines policy for all matters relating to training within the force. The formation is also responsible for the preparation and publication of force technical and professional manuals; the administrative arrangements for force participation in training courses conducted by other agencies in Hong Kong (such as the universities and polytechnics); the administrative arrangements for overseas training courses; and the preparation and administration of professional examinations for the Inspectorate and Junior Police Officers.

59. The Police Training School is responsible for all basic training and for continuation training and training development.

60. The Detective Training School provides training at basic and advanced levels for detectives.

61. The Management Services Wing comprises four branches dealing with Research, Information Technology, Communications and Transport.

62. The Research Branch is responsible for examining proposals intended to improve existing equipment, evaluating requirements for new types of police equipment and conducting reviews of existing police tactics.

63. The Information Technology Branch is responsible for planning, developing and implementing computer facilities for the force. Once initial work to establish feasibility has been carried out and approval and funding have been obtained, multi-disciplined project teams are formed to carry out detailed design work and implement system.

64. The Communications Branch is responsible for planning, designing, managing and maintaining all the communications systems used by the force.

65. The Transport Branch is responsible for the management of the Police Driving School, the force fleet of vehicles and policy matters related to the force driver cadre. It is also responsible for the deployment and use of police vehicles, advising on force transport requirements and on all technical aspects of driver training.

66. The Inspection Services Wing comprises three inspection teams and a small administration group. It conducts regular management reviews of force activities with particular emphasis on the deployment of resources, leadership control, planning and organisation. Every formation, excluding Special Branch, is inspected once in each complete inspection cycle - a period of approximately two-and-a-half years.

Annex 2.1 (Cont'd)

67. The Complaints and Internal Investigations Branch is responsible for ensuring the investigation of all complaints against the police, including allegations of criminal activity, other than corruption. It examines discipline and internal procedures and conducts supervisory accountability studies. The Branch is divided into the Complaints Against Police Office and the Internal Investigations Office.

68. The Civil and Administration Department comprises the Civil Administration Division, the Finance Division and the Stores and Maintenance Division.

69. The Civil Administration Division administers civilian personnel employed in the force and is responsible for various other aspects of general administration including the management of the Police Accounting Computer System and the Personnel and Training Computer System.

70. The Finance Division deals with the management and control of all financial matters and transactions relating to revenue and expenditure in the force. It is also responsible for the internal auditing of police formations to ensure that financial and accounting procedures are properly followed, and to review and advise on general accounting and control procedures.

71. The Stores and Maintenance Division is responsible for the supply, storage and issue of arms, ammunition, uniforms, accoutrements, stationery items, office equipment and furniture, communication equipment and the processing of requirements for the maintenance and repair of police buildings.

72. The Planning and Development Branch reports directly to the Police Administration Officer and consists of the Planning Division, the Development Division and the PHQ Development Division.

73. The Planning Division is responsible for strategic planning; force organisation and structure; the preparation of planning forecasts and related planning documents; the acquisition of land for building projects; and long-term manpower planning. It is divided into two - the Plans and Forecasts Section and the Lands Section.

74. The Development Division is responsible for all new building projects other than the new force Headquarters complex; acquiring leased accommodation and married quarters for junior police officers; and for the major renovation of police buildings. It has two sections, one dealing with operational buildings and the other with leased accommodation, junior police officers' married quarters and recreational facilities.

75. The Police Headquarters Development division is responsible for the development of the new Police Headquarters complex.

Recent developments

76. Since 1979 the educational standard of PC recruits has risen significantly. The minimum entry qualification has been raised from Primary Six to Form III and while in 1979 some 19% of PC recruits were educated at form III standard none were recruited at that level in 1987. Indeed in 1987 some 40% of PC recruits had Form V and were therefore academically qualified for recruitment to the IP rank.

77. Although Form V continues to be the minimum qualification for IP recruitment none was recruited at this level in 1987 and some 33% of IP recruits were degree holders.

78. 1980/81 the management and administrative structure of the force was enhanced by the creation of a deputy commissioner post with responsibility for management functions and directorate posts in Regional Headquarters to supervise the administration of the formations.

79. The operational command structure of Districts and Divisions was strengthened in 1981/82 to recognise the growing responsibilities at these levels. This led for the first time to directorate scale officers commanding districts and to an increase in the directorate establishment of the force from 42 to 66. Since that time the directorate establishment has increased by eight posts.

80. Enhanced training and greater exposure overseas by means of secondments and visits has led to increased professionalism in the officers of the force.

81. This increased professionalism has assisted in meeting the challenge of a more sophisticated criminal who is making use of the greater opportunities created for crime by modern technology and ease of international travel.

82. The introduction of most legislation has an effect on the duties and responsibilities of the force. Since 1979, 59 Bills have been enacted which have resulted in a significant increase in the police's responsibility.

83. In the last ten years the force has introduced a comprehensive inspection system to ensure the maintenance of efficiency and effective procedures. This is coupled with internal investigation procedures which allow for accountability studies to be conducted.

84. Complementing the above regulatory systems are procedures which provide for the most thorough investigation of complaints against police officers.

The future

85. The force will continue to expand to meet the needs of a growing population and of new towns.

86. The increasing workload on police resources in Kowloon and the New Territories will be met by the creation of two new Regions as a result of dividing the existing Regions into two parts.

87. The continuing growth in the sophistication and internationalisation of crime will require the force to enhance its professional expertise to counter the effect by means of training, secondments and increased liaison with other police forces.

88. Perhaps the most significant change in the immediate future will be need for the force to assume the role currently being performed by the military. This will require an increase in strength and more importantly the need to adapt to a completely different role in combatting illegal immigration across the land border.

89. The force is aware of the challenge that the future holds and seeks to ensure that it can meet that challenge with well motivate officers at all ranks.