

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY UNIT OF THE HONG KONG POLICE FORCE

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I. INTRODUCTION TO HONG KONG

A. Geographical Location

Hong Kong is located in Eastern Asia, the southeast coast of the People's Republic of China, facing the South China Sea. Geographically, it consists of three main territories namely, Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and the New Territories.

B. Size and Population

The area of Hong Kong is 1,104 sq km. The population at the end of 2012 was 7,173,000.

C. The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

The Chief Executive (CE) is the head of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR). The main administrative and executive functions of the Hong Kong Government are carried out by three secretary departments, 12 policy bureaux (consisting of 61 departments and agencies) and other services.

(a) Secretaries of Departments

- Chief Secretary for Administration
- Financial Secretary
- Secretary for Justice

(b) Directors of Bureaux

- Secretary for Transport and Housing
- Secretary for Home Affairs
- Secretary for Labour and Welfare
- Secretary for Financial Services and Treasury
- Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development
- Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs
- Secretary for Security
- Secretary for Education
- Secretary for Civil Service
- Secretary for Food and Health
- Secretary for the Environment
- Secretary for Development

(c) Other Services

- Commissioner of Police
- Commissioner of Independent Commission Against Corruption
- Commissioner of Customs and Excise
- Director of Immigration
- Director of Audit

The civil service employed approximately 156,000 people, or about 4% of the Hong Kong workforce. Apart from administering public services, its main tasks are to assist the Chief Executive and principals in formulating policies and carrying out decisions.

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D. Special Features

Hong Kong's free economic system and low tax rate have created a favourable environment for the city's development in finance, banking, trade, industry and commerce, real estate, shipping and civil aviation. Hong Kong is one of the most densely populated places in the world. The land population density in mid-2012 stood at 6,620 persons per sq km.

E. Visitors

In the year 2012, Hong Kong registered a record of 48.62 million visitor arrivals. Mainland visitors reached 34.91 million in 2012 and continued to be the largest source of visitors to Hong Kong.

F. Crimes

In 2012, a total of 75,930 crimes were reported. The overall crime rate was 1,064 per 100,000 persons.

Special Features

II. HONG KONG POLICE FORCE

A. Command and Structure

The Hong Kong Police Force (the Force) is headed by the Commissioner of Police who is responsible to the Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region for the administration and operational efficiency of the Force. He is assisted by two Deputy Commissioners. The Deputy Commissioner of Police (Operations) is responsible for operations, crime and security; whereas the Deputy Commissioner of Police (Management) is responsible for personnel, training, management services, finance, administration and planning. Structure of Hong Kong Police Force is provided in Chart 1 on page 92.

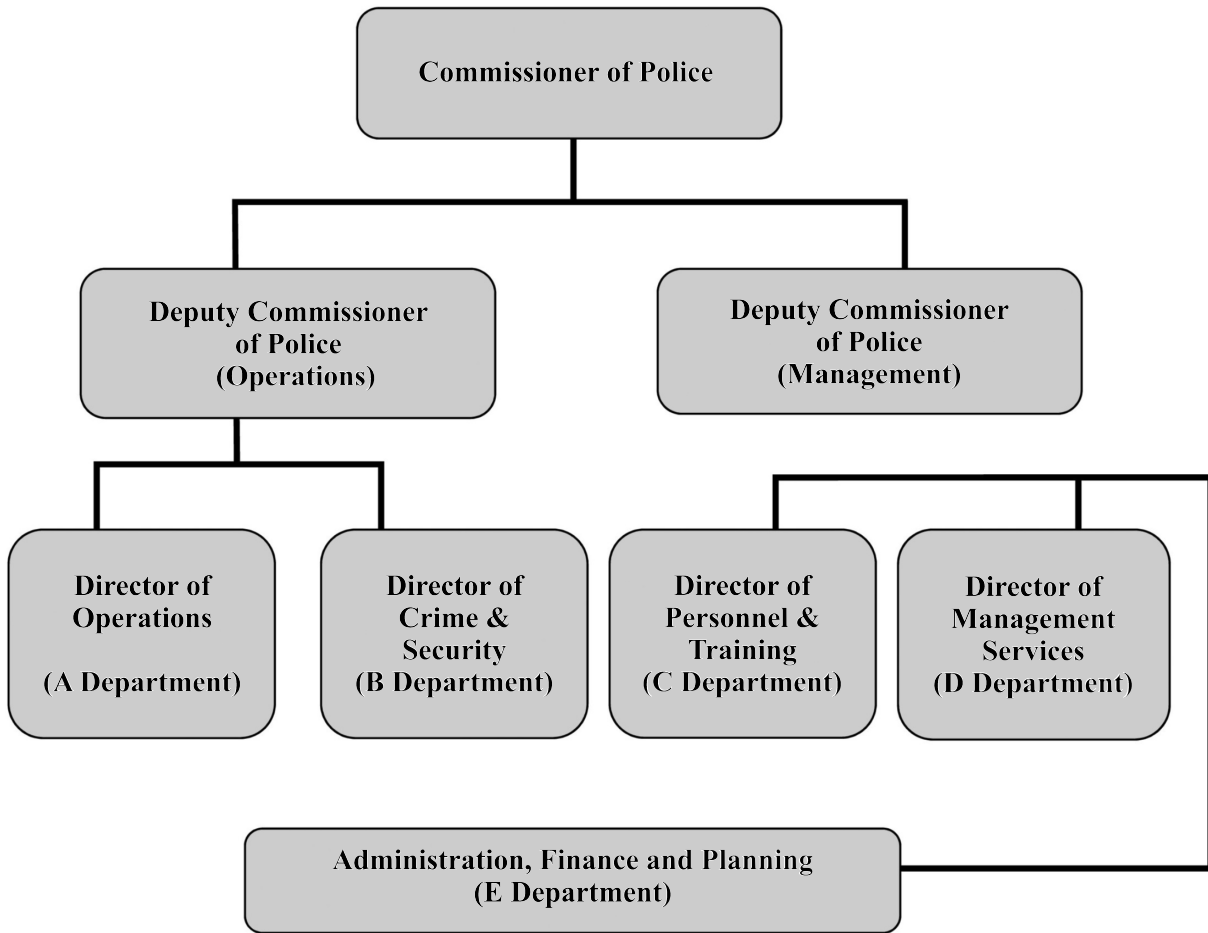
At the end of 2012, the Force had 28,400 regular police officers, 4,700 civilian staff, and 4,500 auxiliary police officers. The police-population ratio in 2012 was 394 regular officers for every 100,000 persons.

B. Vision and Common Purpose

The Force's Vision and Statement of Common Purpose are:

Vision	That Hong Kong remains one of the safest and most stable societies in the world
Common Purpose	The Hong Kong Police Force will ensure a safe and stable society by: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● upholding the rule of law● maintaining law and order● preventing and detecting crime● safeguarding and protecting life and property● working in partnership with the community and other agencies● striving for excellence in all that we do● maintaining public confidence in the Force

Chart 1: Hong Kong Police Organizational Structure



C. Strategic Directions and Operational Priorities

Every year, the Commissioner of Police addresses challenges through a structured strategic planning process that identifies and prioritizes future requirements to enable the Force to build on its success as a respected and trusted police service locally and abroad. Strategic Directions and Operational Priorities were then formulated.

The Strategic Directions 2012-2014 cover Engaging the Community, Enhancing Personal and Professional Qualities of Force Members, Strengthening Criminal Intelligence Gathering Force-wide, and Supporting Frontline Units.

The Commissioner’s Operational Priorities 2013 are Violent Crime; Triad, Syndicated and Organized Crime; Dangerous Drugs; Quick Cash Crime; Technology Crime; Public Safety; and Terrorism. Under the first operational priority Violent Crime, Domestic Violence is identified as one of the main issues; and it is the direction of the Commissioner of Police that all reports of domestic violence should be professionally handled and investigated.

The Child Protection Policy Unit (CPPU) within the Hong Kong Police Force is a designated unit responsible for dealing with amongst others, policy matters of domestic violence. This paper describes the roles and functions of the CPPU.

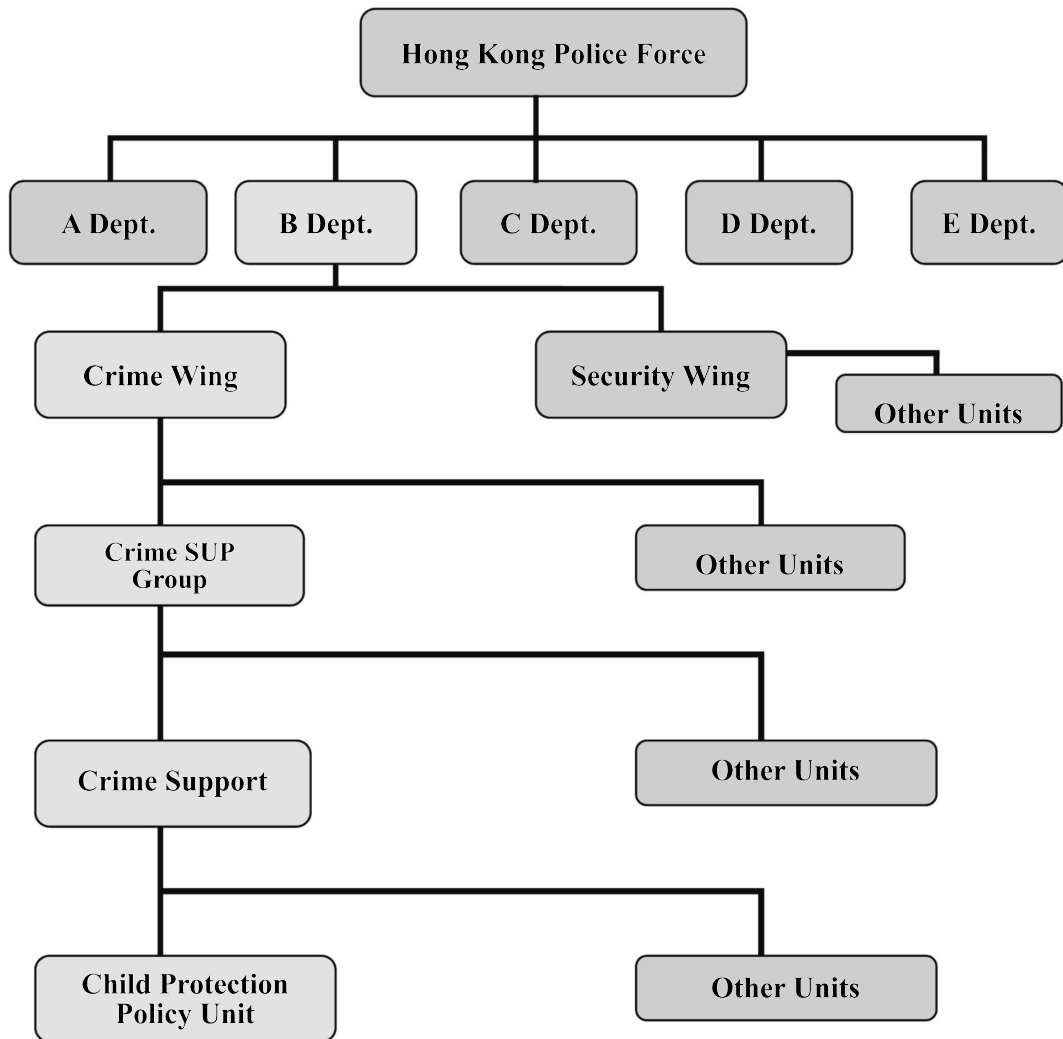
III. CHILD PROTECTION POLICY UNIT

A. Command and Structure

The Child Policy Protection Unit (CPPU) was established in 1997 under B Department (Crime and

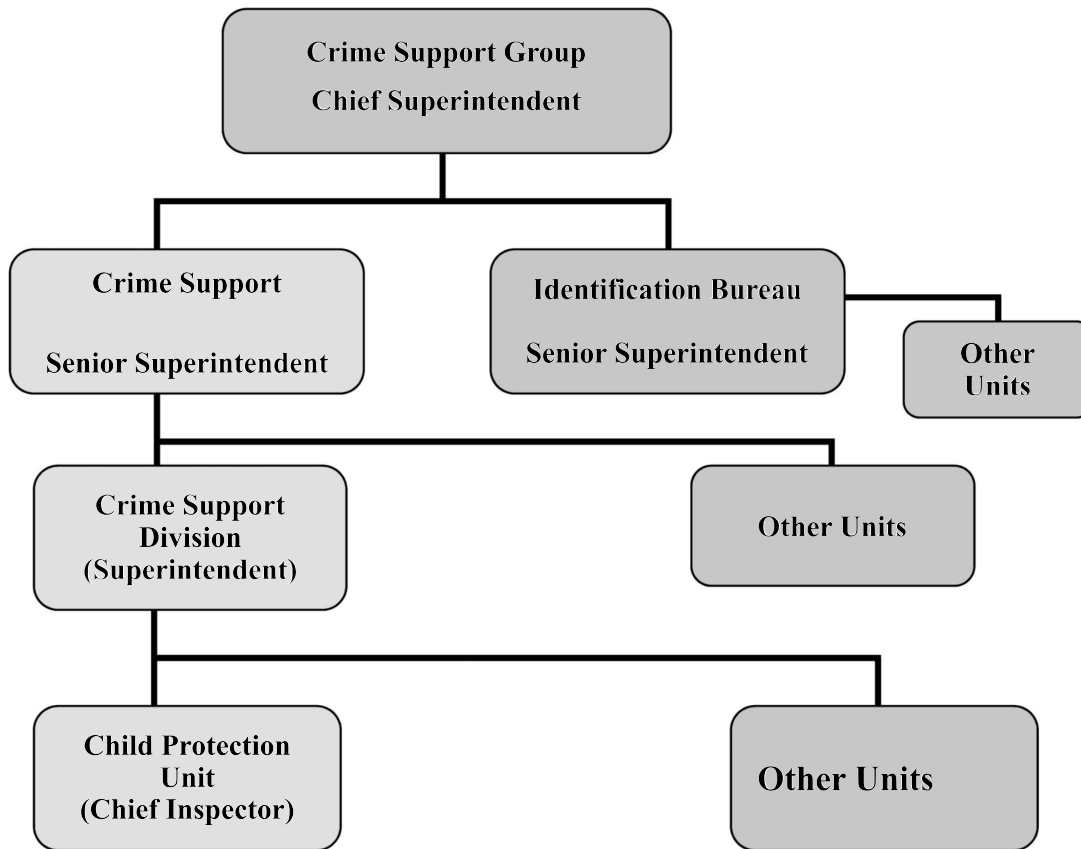
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Security) of the Hong Kong Police Force (the Force), and is a unit within the Crime Support Group under Crime Wing. The overall command of the Crime Support Group is a Chief Superintendent. He/she is assisted by two Senior Superintendents, one of which is in charge of the CPPU. The position of CPPU within the Force organizational structure is as follows:



At the time when CPPU was set up in 1997, its primary duties were to deal with policies on child protection. Over the years, its charter has been expanded to also handle policies, procedures and training in relation to domestic violence, child abuse, elder abuse, sexual violence, which are commonly known as abusive offences; the Police Superintendent Discretion Scheme (PSDS) for juvenile crimes; and child pornography. Actions are in hand to amend the nomenclature of the unit with a view to better reflect its current roles and functions.

CPPU consists of a Chief Inspector, three Inspectors, a Sergeant, three Constables, and a Police Clinical Psychologist (PCP). The major functions of the PCP are providing advice on formulation of policy and procedural guidelines on victim protection; and training in handling child and vulnerable victims/witnesses. He/she also assists the Force in conducting psychological assessment of persons involved in criminal cases, which is commonly known as criminal profiling, and gives expert evidence in court. The structure of CPPU is as follows:



B. Roles and Functions

CPPU combats abusive offences and juvenile crimes by adopting multi-agency and cross-sectoral approach in pursuit of the twin goals of protecting victims and prosecuting offenders. The roles and functions of CPPU are as follows:

- (a) Formulation and implementation of Force policies
 - As a policy unit, CPPU is responsible for devising, formulating and implementing government and Force policies and procedures in respect of child abuse, domestic violence, sexual violence, elder abuse and juvenile crime cases to ensure appropriate and coordinated response to reports of these cases in collaboration with multi-agency professionals.
- (b) Liaison with other government departments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs)
 - CPPU works closely with individual governmental departments and non-governmental organizations on multi-disciplinary procedures, inter-agency cooperation, training and coordination on subject matters under its purview. Representatives of CPPU are currently attending three working groups/committees that are set up by the government to examine and deal with problems of abusive offences and to map out preventive strategies. CPPU keeps the Force abreast of the latest development in governmental policies and formulates plans for effective implementation within the Force.
- (c) Liaison with overseas law enforcement agencies, victim and witness care agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs)
 - CPPU keeps regular contact with overseas law enforcement agencies, victim and witness care agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) on new initiatives and practices in respect of investigation and presentation of evidence in criminal proceedings involving children, mentally incapacitated persons and battered spouses.
- (d) Assist in legislation issues
 - CPPU assists the Hong Kong Government in introducing and amending legislation on

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subject matters under its purview. The unit also identifies implications to the Force in terms of policy, procedures and resources consequent to the enactment of relevant legislation and makes recommendations to Force management where appropriate.

- (e) Monitor crime trends
 - CPPU monitors trends in crimes against children and mentally incapacitated persons, domestic violence, sexual violence, elder abuse and juvenile crime with a view to improving relevant strategies, policies and procedures in dealing with these offences.
- (f) Training
 - CPPU devises and develops inter-agency training and a tiered Force training programme on child abuse investigation, domestic violence handling, sexual violence investigation, juvenile crime prevention and after care services.
- (g) Assist Department of Justice
 - CPPU assists the Department of Justice in liaising with police formations in matters pertaining to child abduction under the Hague Convention on International Child Abduction.
- (h) Contact point with Social Welfare Department on the Witness Support Programme
 - CPPU coordinates and processes all requests under the Witness Support Programme and liaises with Social Welfare Department for subsequent arrangement.
- (i) Research on related issues
 - CPPU works closely with local universities and other research institutes/associations on research projects; and where appropriate, organizes seminars to update Force members on new issues that can be of relevance in enhancing the Force's overall capabilities in tackling abusive offences.

C. Highlights of Engagement

1. Overseas Liaison and Exchange of Expertise

CPPU takes an active approach in the exchange of experience and expertise with other international focus groups and law enforcement agencies; and proactively engages international and local communities through participation in workshops, seminars and exchange programmes. Through these activities, CPPU shares its experience, expertise and knowledge with other counterparts, and introduces good practices of the Force. Most of the counterparts are representatives of other law enforcement agencies, academics, experts and non-governmental organizations.

During the past two years, CPPU officers have participated in the following major events:

- (a) The 9th International Symposium of Best Police Practices in Dubai
 - CPPU shared good practices on children's rights and child violence with participants from Western, Asian, Middle East and African countries.
- (b) The 1st South East Asia Working Party Meeting of the Interpol Specialist Group on Crimes against Children in Bangkok
 - CPPU and participants from Western and Asian countries shared experiences on tackling crimes against children.
- (c) The 12th Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao Exchange Programme
 - CPPU and law enforcement agencies from Guangdong and Macao exchanged experience and good practices in handling of domestic violence.
- (d) The 31st Meeting of the Interpol Specialist Group on Crime against Children in Lyon, France
 - CPPU and participants from different countries shared and exchanged opinions on latest crime trends, and strategy and technology adopted to combat crimes against children.
- (e) Overseas Development Programme at Singapore Police Force

- CPPU's representative shared with Singapore Police on training on handling abusive offences.

2. Inter-Departmental Liaison

In the context of victim protection, the Force will not be successful without the cooperation and support of other governmental departments and agencies. CPPU enters into partnerships with the Social Welfare Department, Department of Health and Department of Justice to work out plans for formulating policies and cooperation protocols in relation to protection of victims of crime.

CPPU represents the Force to attend working groups and committees that provide a platform for relevant stakeholders from the government, non-governmental agencies and experts to examine the problems of abusive offences and work out corresponding measures. These working groups and committees are:

- (a) Committee on Child Abuse chaired by the Director of Social Welfare to examine problems of child abuse and map out strategies to address the problem identified
- (b) Working Group on Combating Violence chaired by the Director of Social Welfare responsible for mapping out strategies to address the problem of spouse battering and sexual violence
- (c) Working Group on Elder Abuse chaired by the Assistant Director of Social Welfare (Family and Child Welfare) responsible for examining the issue of elder abuse and proposing strategies to address the problem

3. Inter-Departmental Training

The Force fully realizes the importance of professional ability and knowledge that its members should equip in fighting crime and providing protection and support to victims to safeguard their rights, well-being and welfare. In order to enhance the overall professionalism of Force members, CPPU invites the Social Welfare Department to jointly organize the Child Protection Special Investigation Course (CPSIC), which is a tailor-made training programme for detectives, clinical psychologists and social workers engaged in dealing with abusive offences. Only after attending the training, officers are qualified to take part in the investigation of cases involving serious sexual abuse or violence against children or mentally incapacitated persons.

CPPU also proactively engages its stakeholders in training and experience sharing sessions with a view to enhancing cooperation and collaboration for mutual benefits. Recent exchanges include a training session with the Social Welfare Department where CPPU shared experience in handling victims and safeguarding their rights and welfare in domestic violence cases, and a training session with the Correctional Service Department where CPPU shared experience in handling youth offenders by way of caution (Police Superintendent Discretion Scheme — PSDS) instead of prosecution.

4. Public Engagement

CPPU also commits to engaging the public through education with a view to raising the public's awareness on protection and support to victims of crime. During the past years, CPPU has participated in a series of programmes organized by different public groups, for instances:

- (a) Seminar organized by The Hong Kong University
 - During the seminar, CPPU officers introduced the Force policy and procedures on handling sexual violence cases to university professors, social workers, non-governmental organizations and overseas scholars.
- (b) Seminar organized by the Hong Kong Federation of Women Lawyers
 - Participants of the seminar include members of the public, lawyers, social workers, professionals and legislative councillors. During the seminar, CPPU officers introduced the Force policy and procedures on handling sexual violence cases and highlighted its cooperation with governmental departments and non-governmental organizations in the protection of victims against further trauma. CPPU also shared with participants of the seminar its

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experience in implementing legislation relating to protecting victims of sexual violence.

- (c) Seminar organized by the Philippine Consulate
 - During the seminar, CPPU officers offered advice to Philippine nationals working in Hong Kong on protection against violence and provided information on assistance provided by government departments and non-government organizations (NGOs).
- (d) TV Programme
 - CPPU has designed a TV programme on elder abuse to raise public awareness and advocate protection to elderly victims.

5. Internal Training

CPPU recognizes the importance of training to Force members in handling abusive offences, and has been constantly updating training materials and injecting new initiatives to improve its training. In addition to providing regular training on handling domestic violence, sexual violence, child abuse, elder abuse and juvenile crime in foundation training, criminal investigation courses, and varies development and promotion courses, CPPU has recently developed the following training packages:

- (a) A training package on 'Handling of Elder Abuse' with emphasis on protection and support of the well-being and welfare of elderly victims; and
- (b) A training package 'The Hidden Truth' with emphasis on the importance of applying patience and empathy to different types of victims of abusive offences.

6. Legislation

CPPU has been representing the Force in assisting the Hong Kong Government in introducing new legislation and amendments to existing ordinances in areas under its purview. The following are some examples of CPPU's involvement:

- (a) Child Abduction Legislation (Miscellaneous Amendments) Bill 2013
 - This law protects children from parental abduction. CPPU has offered comments on the practicality of the amended Bill and has been attending Bills Committee Meeting with other government officials on behalf of the Force.
- (b) Sexual Offences Reform
 - The definition of some sexual offences will be redefined and new offences will be created for better coverage and protection. The Senior Superintendent of Crime Support Group in charge of CPPU represents the Force in the Law Reform Sub-committee on Review of Sexual Offences.
- (c) Death of Child
 - To cover grey areas in proving criminal liability of child murders and child abuse. The Senior Superintendent of Crime Support Group in charge of CPPU represents the Force in the Law Reform Sub-committee on Death of Child.

D. Challenges

CPPU considers that the following issues would be major challenges to the Force in the fight against abusive offences and the protection and support to victims of crime.

1. Building Trust with Victims of Crime

Victims of crime may hesitate or are reluctant to report crimes for various reasons. In order to enhance victims' trust in the Force's capabilities in tackling crimes and its abilities to protect and support them, it is considered that more training on officers' professional sensitivity in handling victims should be arranged.

2. Law Reform

Changes in laws and corresponding administrative and procedural adjustments would require extra

resources to train up officers in the implementation of new procedures in order to maintain the Force's professionalism and capabilities.

3. Economic and Financial Stability

Economic and financial stability are often factors affecting the harmony of a family. Generally speaking, financial/economic downturn may lead to an increase in conflicts over family problems and thereby increasing the risk of using violence. It is therefore necessary that the Force continue to maintain a close and constructive relationship with its stakeholders for information sharing in order to enhance the effectiveness in investigation, prosecution, as well as victim protection and support.

4. Aging Population

The population of Hong Kong is aging. By 2016, the percentage of the population over 65 years of age will be 16%. It is anticipated that by the year 2036, that percentage will rise to 29%. The increase in the elderly population and decrease in workforce may lead to an increase in crimes relating to elderly people for instance, more illegal gambling activities involving the elderly, or elderly people becoming victims of crimes such as embezzlement, deception and theft. Providing more training to Force members and continuous collaboration with relevant stakeholders are both essential in maintaining the Force's overall professionalism in dealing with these crimes and providing support to elderly victims.

IV. CONCLUSION

CPPU is committed to maximize the effectiveness of actions in combating abusive crimes and will continue to strengthen multi-agency and cross-sectoral collaboration with other governmental departments, non-governmental organizations and professionals for continuous improvement.

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