
PARTICIPANTS' PAPERS

STAFF TRAINING FOR CORRECTIONAL LEADERSHIP: THE HONG KONG EXPERIENCE

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Hong Kong Correctional Services Department (“HKCSD”) has experienced tremendous changes in the past few decades. While we are primarily sanctioned to segregate persons having breached the criminal code, it is recognized worldwide nowadays that, with the more sophisticated philosophies of the modern correctional services, more is expected to be done for offenders than just locking them up. Meanwhile, the ever increasing public expectations in providing a wide range of quality custodial and rehabilitative services to offenders has imposed considerable responsibilities on us. Needless to mention, the society also expects a high level of integrity of correctional officers so sanctioned. Besides that, our recent internal review reveals that there will be a tide of natural wastage looming in the coming ten years. To ensure that the Department is geared up to meet the new challenges ahead, the HKCSD has given increased emphasis to human resources management practices on building a team of highly effective, disciplined and well-motivated staff.

In this paper, we will first briefly explain the challenges arising from the transformation. After that, we will share our practice and strategy on strengthening staff members with operational experience and knowledge management, which aims to cope with the challenges arising from the ever changing development of the Department.

II. CURRENT CHALLENGES FACED BY THE HKCSD

Similar to our worldwide counterparts and other enterprises, apart from many undesirable factors significantly affecting the operation of correctional facilities, i.e. the prudent government budgets, high turnover rates, technological innovations and other new legal mandates, the HKCSD also faces various challenges arising from the transformation. Nevertheless, the most significant challenges are the following:

A. Change of Role for Correctional Officers

Over the past three decades, the HKCSD has undergone a major transformation. The change of its name from the original “Prison Department” to current “Correctional Services Department” signified that the scope of services provided by the Department had been extended from a purely custodial nature to a comprehensive means of facilitating offender rehabilitation. Being an integral part of the criminal justice system nowadays, apart from playing a primary role in taking care of offenders committed to our custody, we also have the responsibility to prepare those offenders for reintegration into society upon discharge as law-abiding citizens. Therefore, on top of providing traditional quality custodial services, HKCSD now has to put more efforts into the rehabilitation of offenders.

In this new era, Correctional Officers in Hong Kong are performing “Dual Roles”, i.e., “Society Guardian” and “Rehabilitation Facilitator”. By enforcing Dual Roles, apart from acting as a “Society Guardian”, who protects the public by ensuring the safe custody of those offenders sentenced by court, our officers are also taking up the role as “Rehabilitation Facilitators”. We facilitate the rehabilitation of offenders and their reintegration into the society as law-abiding citizens by working in collaboration with the community and other stakeholders. This again helps reduce recidivism and protect the public.

In adopting the Dual Roles, correctional officers should never again perceive their role only as that of “keepers” and relate to inmates in a custodial fashion, but instead should have the sense of humanity in

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helping offenders reintegrate into the society.

B. Rise of Public Expectations

In recent years, it has been a common phenomenon that public expectations about treatment of offenders have become an area of concern again and again all over the world. Worse still, fear of maltreatment of offenders via media coverage in reporting suicide cases and violent acts among offenders often generates a spate of criticisms against the penal system, demanding more openness and accountability. Correctional officers spend considerable time in managing public outcries and complaints raised through various channels.

We should understand that no system can stay in a vacuum, neither can it claim to be perfect or complete because every system is a dynamic force of changes and development. In most societies, check and balance is the major safeguard against abuse of power and infringement of rights. We have to admit the principle that the primary function of the criminal justice system is to serve and protect all the people of our society. Such a view requires a public engagement strategy in which correctional officers must understand and respect public expectations and take public concerns more seriously. Therefore, while there has been an increase in workload due to the rise of public expectations, we should treat the public attention on penal management as a positive phenomenon in the course of modernization.

Learning from experience, HKCSD has been working actively with the community and viewing the public as a partner in the treatment of offenders towards this direction. Over the past few years, public campaigns were launched, committees including community celebrities were appointed in committees, district councils and community organizations alike were engaged in the formulation of strategies to promote a supportive community for the offenders. After learning about how an offender should be treated and managed properly and having a chance to deliberate over it, the public is now much more open to change than conventional wisdom would suggest.

Thus, correctional officers nowadays are required to have the calibre to interact with public expectations in order to create the boundaries leading the community to support and to accept penal policies.

C. Staff Wastage and Succession Problems

HKCSD has a team of around 5,000 Rank & File grade staff and some 1,000 staff at the grade of Officer and above. The Department is commanded by a Commissioner who is assisted by a deputy Commissioner, and its Headquarters is made up of five divisions, namely the Operations Division, the Rehabilitation Division, the Quality Assurance Division, the Human Resource Division and the Administration and Planning Division, where each division is headed by an Assistant Commissioner or equivalent civilian officer. Frontline policing is delivered by 29 correctional institutions. In general, each institution is headed by a Superintendent (a Senior Officer of the Officer Grade), with the assistance of a group of middle managers (Officer Grade) and the frontline staff (Rank and File Grade) to carry out various correctional duties (*For the details of our organizational chart as well as the grade structure of HKCSD, please refer to Appendix A and B respectively*). Owing to the uniqueness of penal settings, correctional officers are required to have a comprehensive understanding of the actual operation of the Department and the management of penal institutions with practical experience. However, we consider that these valuable experiences and understanding of the day-to-day operation of penal institutions and management of frontline staff can only be acquired through years of active engagement in the profession. Therefore, we always value our staff as one of the greatest assets to the Department.

Though there was no alarming indication on the attrition rate for the HKCSD in the past few years, it is always in our mind that we cannot underestimate the difficulty in maintaining a stable workforce. As a matter of fact, we are now facing a challenge as around 1,600 out of 5,000 staff at Rank & File grade and 400 out of 1,000 staff at Officer and above grade will leave the service due to normal retirement at the age of 55 in the coming 10 years. Apart from those concerning the Rank & File and Officer Grades, of far greater significance is that 86 out of 113, or 76%, of the senior executives are currently above the age of 50 and will retire from service by 2020. This may result in a substantial impact to the Department, particularly the brain drain and outflow of talent.

Therefore, good succession planning is extremely important to maintain the stability of the Department

and to sustain the smooth-running of service. In the context of HKCSD, it is indispensable to achieving smooth transitions of leadership by grooming effective senior managers as well as creating a pool of candidates with high leadership potential, which indeed is an on-going process which takes years to develop and accomplish.

III. INITIATIVES SHAPING HKCSD INTO AN EFFECTIVE AND MOTIVATED PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

To tackle the challenges aforementioned, the HKCSD considers that the quality of correctional officers is critical. Thus, it is important for our administrators to accord to staff training to help our staff members re-conceptualize their role, reconsider their values and adopt approaches that can cope effectively with the ever-rising public expectation for correctional services. Moreover, the commitment and motivation of staff members are critical and the essential elements for success. Over the years, HKCSD has given increased emphasis to human resources management practices on building a team of highly effective, disciplined and well-motivated staff. Below, this paper illustrates the initiatives that the HKCSD has taken to gear up our staff members and to provide opportunities for potential officers to develop themselves through experience.

A. Departmental Vision, Mission and Values (“VMV”)

It is important for staff members to have positive values for the change of role for correctional officers. Strong resistance might arise if our staff members have misunderstanding of the issue. Abraham Maslow suggested that the need to belong was a major source of human motivation¹. He thought that it was one of five human needs in his hierarchy of needs, along with physiological needs, safety, self-esteem, and self-actualization. These needs are arranged in a hierarchy and must be satisfied in order. After physiological and safety needs are met, an individual can then work on meeting the need to belong and be loved. According to the theory of Maslow, if the belonging needs are not met, an individual cannot completely achieve his self-actualization.

Culture is a system of shared beliefs that determines how people act. It pervades every organization and permeates down through each level. Naturally, it bears direct impact on the way the members behave and affects tremendously the organization’s efficacy. Recognizing that a positive culture is instrumental to the success of an organization, the HKCSD has set forth a chain of actions to guide the mindset of its staff and drive the Department towards the desired culture, such as the Integrity Management and the Healthy and Balanced Lifestyle.

Given that we consider the staff commitment towards the Department with positive departmental culture as an essential element for success, the HKCSD therefore always exerts its effort to maintain the strong sense of belongings among staff members. In the late 1990’s, HKCSD adopted a participative approach in creating its first VMV statement. In order to better reflect the shared belief of staff as well as the Department’s roles and commitment, the VMV statement was refined in May 2010 with a view to better reflecting our roles in times of change. All along, staff members are always encouraged to participate in the process of creating the VMV, and it allows all staff of HKCSD to own the VMV as a shared one as well as to carry it through. After establishing its VMV statement, the Department laid the cornerstone to pool the staff in sharing the common organizational goal. This is followed by a number of projects to cultivate an upright and positive cultural growth across the ranks of staff. *(For details of our VMV, please refer to Appendix C)*

With the active participation of staff members in establishing the VMV, these values are not just beliefs but the shared common culture of the whole Department. It maps out the goal of the Department (Vision), a clear indication on our performance (Mission) as well as the way to achieve the objective (Values). All in all, our senior executives are expected to, apart from taking up the role as leaders, actively engage themselves in the promotion of the VMV so as to train up leadership of fellow staff members through leading them to dedicate themselves to the service.

B. Building an Ethical Culture

Following the establishment of positive departmental culture, it is important to translate it into opera-

¹Maslow, A. (1970). *Motivation and personality*, New York: Harper & Row.

tional behaviour and service standards consistent with the strategic objective of the Department. In this regard, it is worth mentioning that HKCSD has established the Departmental Ethics Committee since 2007 for promotion of ethical leadership and integrity management at the departmental level. An integrated ethical management model, namely, "Total Ethics Assurance Management" with elements of "Standard", "Pledge", "Involvement", "Reinforcement", "Inspection" and "Training" (known as the "TEAM-SPIRIT" approach) was introduced with a view to further emphasize integrity as a core value in all aspects of HKCSD. It is through this model that HKCSD has actualized our VMV, Dual Roles and materialized our 3 caring principles (caring for people, caring for the environment and caring for the community) (*For details of the TEAM-SPIRIT approach and the 3 Caring Principles, please refer to Appendix D*).

The TEAM-SPIRIT approach has incorporated the integrity management initiatives introduced by the Department in recent years into a set of strategies which can better address the present-day needs and long-run development needs of the Department. It reflects the determination of the Department in promoting integrity management at a wider level and to more specific targets through a holistic strategy and implementation approach. This is done in order to extend the coverage and strengthen the efforts in promoting integrity management and enhance the ethical culture that has been established.

The TEAM-SPIRIT approach involved staff members throughout the Department, from the top management to individual staff members at the front line working at the institution / section / unit level, allowing them to "own" the responsibility in actualizing the rationale behind it, hence making the ethical culture an organizational culture of HKCSD.

Under the TEAM-SPIRIT approach, the focal point is "Shared". We realize that only if the set of values, behaviours and norms of the organization are shared by members of that organization can it subsequently be considered as the organizational culture of that particular entity. Supervisors at all levels are required to be alerted of unethical pitfalls and to be aware of the supervisory responsibility in managing integrity with a view to raising vigilance of staff against those vulnerable situations. In the meantime, through sustainable education, promotion of the shared values and creating a culture of good governance, every staff member is also empowered and steered towards value-driven behaviour aligned with the departmental strategies. With staff members at all levels nurturing and fostering an ethical working environment, the implementation of integrity management could then be achieved effectively, and the high ethical standard can consequently be upheld and the ethical culture of the Department will be gradually developed and sustained.

The participation of senior and middle executives throughout the process is the key factor leading to success of this new approach. To implement the ethical working environment, the executives are expected to dedicate themselves in performing effective leadership and displaying full commitment via their work posts and participating in various activities organized by the Department. Besides that, they are also expected to walk the talk by actively involving themselves through their role as leaders. Meanwhile, in the course of active participation under the TEAM-SPIRIT approach, senior and middle executives can gain valuable managerial and executive experience throughout the activities and expand their social network among colleagues.

C. Comprehensive Training Programme

Effective formal course training is always a key to success. In the context of HKCSD, all staff members will be arranged to be provided with various kinds of useful, practical and effective training at different stages in order to equip them with the relevant knowledge for the fulfillment of the VMV of the Department.

1. Recruit Training

For disciplined staff in HKCSD, there are only two recruitment ranks in the Department. One is Officer (Officer Grade) and the other is Assistant Officer (Rank and File Grade). For achieving perfection in custodial and rehabilitative services, newly recruited officers will undergo a residential induction training programme before being posted to the correctional institutions, so as to facilitate the understanding of their mission, the job requirements and operational knowledge. The duration of training for recruit Officers is 26 weeks and that for recruit Assistant Officers II is 23 weeks including a two-week field placement at penal institutions. All induction training courses include eight modules, i.e., with the Penal Knowledge,

Tactical and Physical Training, Drill and Weaponry, Social Sciences and Penal Management Training, Staff Conduct Ethics and Integrity, Psychological Competency, Knowledge Implementation and E-learning.



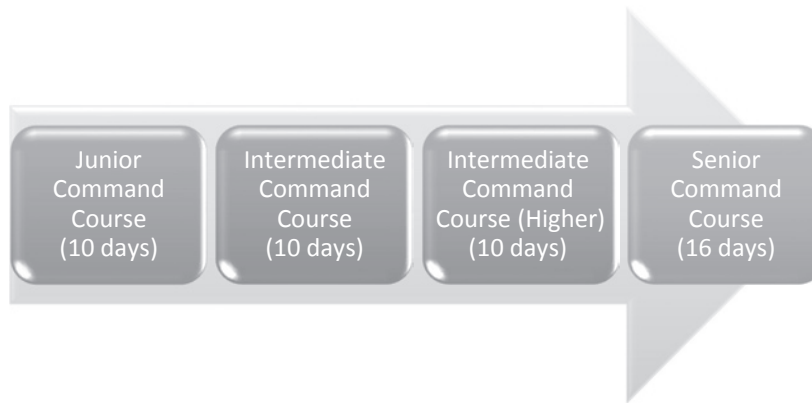
The contents of recruit training emphasize both theory and practice. The training syllabus includes Laws of Hong Kong, rules and regulations, counselling, self-defence, emergency response tactics, the use of weapons and etc. In response to ever-changing societal needs, subjects such as Putonghua have also been included in the training curriculum. At the end of the course, it is expected that all recruits are equipped with basic knowledge and skills for carrying out basic custodial and rehabilitative duties.

Meanwhile, in order to provide newly appointed specialist staff like Clinical Psychologists, Masters, Catering Instructors and technical staff of Correctional Services Industries with a basic understanding of correctional theory, practice, penal operation as well as their respective roles in the Department, we organize orientation training courses for them before they actually take up their offices.

2. Development Training

Besides the recruit training above, we have put a lot of efforts into planning and input at different stages of a staff member's training and career development from time to time. In order to uphold a high standard as society's guardian and rehabilitation facilitator, to strive for excellence in correctional practice and resource optimization, as well as to meet succession needs, the HKCSD has formulated a career training roadmap with four Command Courses (Please refer to the table below), which provides a series of training for staff members from the junior level to senior level. It also aims at advancing the leadership and operational knowledge in the substantive rank. The pedagogy adopted is participatory blended-mode learning. Our approach is to bring in the rich experience of the instructors and guest speakers into the classroom through discussions and to support by the e-Learning platform which blends them with the latest information, rules and regulations in the field. It is supplemented by individual assignments, role plays, lectures, and scenario training.

Each development command course includes seven major focus areas, i.e., Operational Handling and Incident Management, Integrity, Ethics and Conduct, Media Handling Skills and Public Relations Strategy, Political Sensitivity and National Studies, Penal Management, Administration and Policy Studies, Building Leaders and Sustainable Personal Growth and Departmental Way Forward and Sharing with Directorate. The duration of trainings vary from 10 to 16 days. It maps out the career training roadmap of each officer at different stages of career development, and provides opportunities for officers to equip themselves with the concepts and practices in developing leadership and acquiring management skills of the next higher rank as well as advancing the essential operational skills and visions.



D. E-Platform: Knowledge Management System (“KMS”)

E-Learning is an interactive and highly efficient mixed-mode training programme ensuring extensive staff coverage and substantial reduction in training resources in comparison to the traditional learning process. Its advantages have been proven to be immense and far-reaching, not to mention its flexible and versatile characteristics. All users can universally access the learning material in various media formats anytime anywhere and learn at their own pace. Its cost-effectiveness in terms of cost, manpower and time is also crucial under the existing stringent fiscal environment. Most importantly, this E-learning programme can engender a life-long self-learning culture across the Department and bring ongoing enhancement to the professional and academic standing of our staff.

It is always our belief that experience is valuable in every industry and of paramount importance in the correctional services as our core duties are the management of people, including both our staff members as well as the persons in custody. With the aid of well-structured and well-organized sharing of knowledge and experience, in particular those accumulated with decades in the handling and management of the persons in custody, we can tackle challenges arising from the ever-changing environment swiftly and make suitable response promptly without failing the ever-rising public expectations. In this regard, CSD has developed a KMS, an electronic platform that aims to help staff better cope with challenges from work and foster professional development by taking reference to the precedent available and experience picked up from the predecessor.

Launched in August 2010, the system is equipped with a search engine to provide staff with a one-stop information technology platform for capturing, organizing, storing, disseminating, sharing and updating work knowledge. It consolidates various knowledge-oriented databases from different divisions and institutions. Staff members of HKCSD can retrieve from the KMS those latest information and documents, such as news and events, instructions, memos and guidelines, operational manuals, meeting notes and training materials. In addition, a bilingual “Self-learning Topics” programme has also been introduced for access of staff to enhance their knowledge while fostering a continuous self-learning culture. Through this learning platform, staff can acquire the required knowledge from KMS in a more user-friendly way in problem solving, similar to what we experience in the Internet, which is beneficial and vital to staff succession. Recently, a sharing forum has been introduced on the KMS platform. It enables staff members to express their thoughts and ideas about the Department individually, while at the same time sharing them with the larger community.

E. Institutional-Based Mentorship Programme

On the top of the KMS platform, an Institutional-based Mentorship Programme (“IBMP”) has also been developed for sharing of job-related knowledge among the new and experienced staff through an interactive approach. The IBMP has been fully implemented since June 2011 to allow our staff members who are still under probation to receive advice and guidance from the experienced staff members who have taken up the role as their mentors.

In the contemporary society, the style of different generations working in the same office brings challenges for the management. In general, the new, younger generation gives an impression of less job loyalty and weak commitment to their careers. Some of them may quit their job easily without any significant

clues. However, apart from criticizing the new generation, the unconventional values and lifestyle, and different views on more private and leisure time expectations may also constitute to the generational challenge. We believe the solution is communication but not criticism.

The IBMP offers not only an opportunity for the mentors to share their working experience with their mentees, but also helps our new staff members adapt to the penal working environment and the organizational at an early stage of their careers. It also provides opportunities for different generations to work together and to share. During regular meetings between mentors and mentees, the mentees will be given holistic training and counselling, including career review and assessment, training on stress management and effective communication skills, leadership training, taking part in team building exercises, as well as discussion on current and latest departmental issues. Through the interaction, the new staff members will be instilled with the concept of Integrity Management, Healthy and Balanced Lifestyle, and nurturing a positive work attitude. Thus the *esprit de corps* can also be cultivated between the serving and new staff members by means of establishing a good mentor-mentee relationship. At the end, it enriches the executive and managerial experience of potential officers, which equips them with professional knowledge and skills for further advancement in their careers.

F. Overseas Experience

In addition to the training courses mentioned above, opportunities are also given to our senior executives to participate in international conferences or visit correctional services on the Mainland and overseas. This helps broaden their horizons through meeting the leaders of the correctional services from all over the world and engaging in professional exchanges with them. These conferences and visits include the International Corrections and Prisons Association (ICPA), Asia and Pacific Conference of Correctional Administrators (APCCA), Association of Paroling Authorities International (APAI) Training Conference, Beijing-Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Prison Forum, etc. Regarding the visits, they cover many countries all over the world and also different prefectures in Mainland China.

To deliver continuous improvement in our performance, we need new thoughts, mindsets, strategies and dynamics. We see professional exchanges with other jurisdictions as leverage to generate new ideas, learn alternative practices, help our service measure up to international standards and enhance our organizational competence and capability to adapt to the fast changing environment. After entering into a fruitful, co-operative Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Correctional Service of Canada in 2001, our Department has also signed MOUs with the Singapore Prison Service and the Korea Correctional Service in July 2003 and September 2005, respectively which call for a programme of cooperation and joint work comprising staff exchanges, research and study projects, e-forum and bilateral seminars, etc. Besides, we have been maintaining close relationships with penal institutions in different provinces of Mainland China. Starting from 2003, a "Co-operation Arrangement" has been signed with Macao Prison and the Central Institute of Correctional Police and Guangdong Prison Administrative Bureau on Mainland China in order to strengthen cooperative relationships, and promote the development of correctional services on both sides.

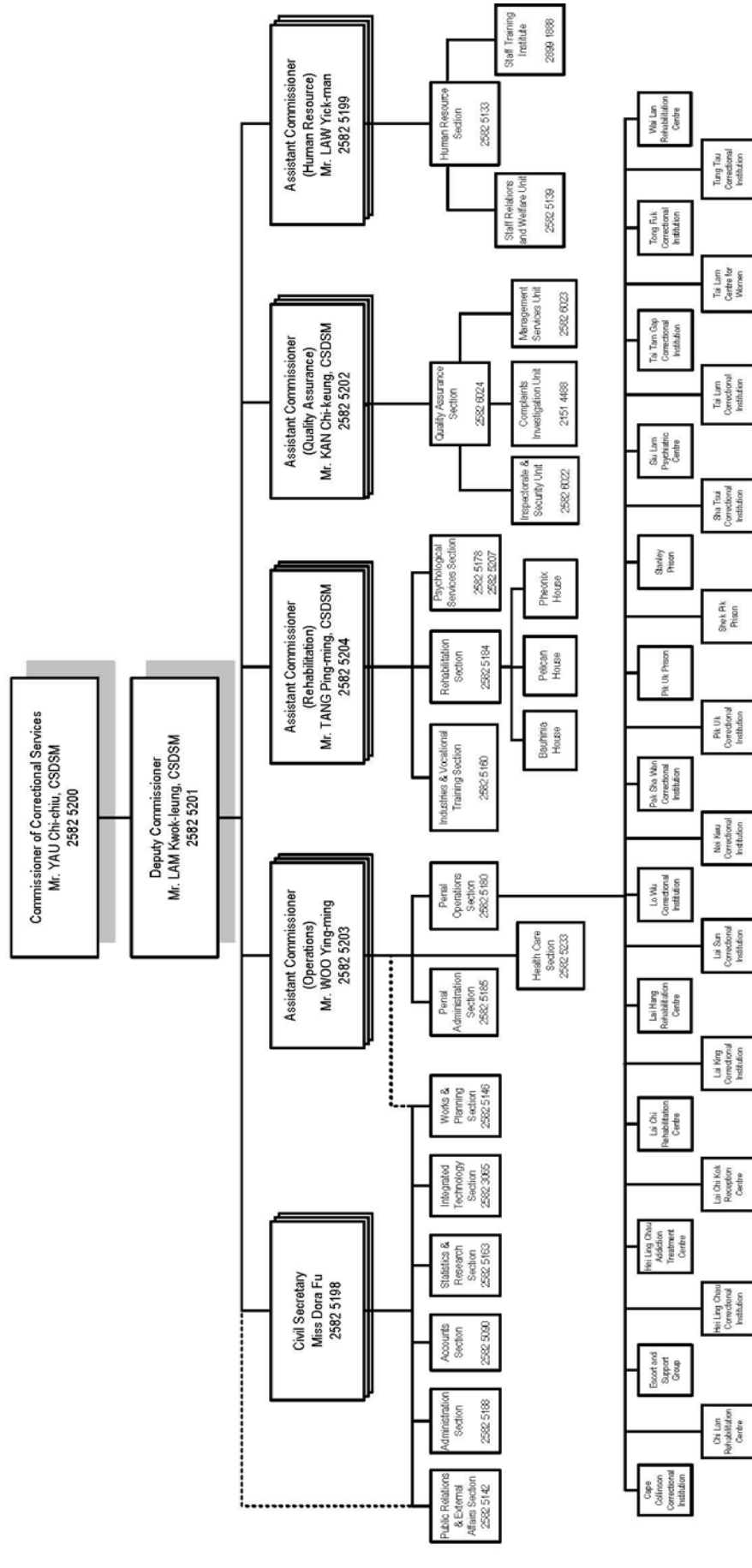
IV. WAY FORWARD

To sum up, the correctional environment has been influenced by the societal developments in the past decade. Over the years, Hong Kong has developed a penal system which places increasing emphasis on correcting and rehabilitating offenders, on top of its primary responsibility of maintaining security and order within the institutions.

In the context of HKCSD, with a team of good quality, well-trained and versatile staff, high standards of correctional work can be ensured and the Department's corrective role in the Criminal Justice System can thus be fulfilled. In the pursuance of professionalism, we will continue committing our efforts to perfect staff training, career development policies and practices.

Organization Chart of HKCSD

Organisation Chart of
Correctional Services Department



..... Functional Responsibility

Appendix B

Grade Structure of Disciplined Staff in HKCSD

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Responsible</u>
Directorate Grade	Commissioner	Divisional Heads in Headquarters
	Deputy Commissioner	
	Assistant Commissioner	
	Chief Superintendent	
Officer Grade	Senior Superintendent	Heads of Institutions
	Superintendent	Middle managers
	Chief Officer	
	Principal Officer	
	Officer	
Rank and File Grade	Assistant Officer I	Frontline staff
	Assistant Officer II	

Appendix C

Vision Mission and Values of HKCSD

Vision

Internationally acclaimed Correctional Service helping Hong Kong to be one of the safest cities in the world

Mission

We protect the public and reduce crime, by providing a secure, safe, humane, decent and healthy environment for people in custody, opportunities for rehabilitation of offenders, and working in collaboration with the community and other agencies.

Values

Integrity

We are accountable for our actions by upholding high ethical and moral standards, and have the honour of serving our society.

Professionalism

We strive for excellence in correctional practice and resource optimisation, and take pride in our role as society's guardian and rehabilitation facilitator.

Humanity

We respect the dignity of all people with emphasis on fairness and empathy.

Discipline

We respect the rule of law with emphasis on orderliness in the pursuit of harmony.

Perseverance

We are committed to serving our society, keeping constant vigilance and facing challenges with courage.

The SPIRIT-TEAM Approach

Standard	Standards be set as departmental guidelines on ethical practices
Pledge	Pledge of the departmental management in upholding an ethical culture through effective leadership and full commitment
Involvement	Involvement of staff members at all levels in nurturing and fostering an ethical working environment
Reinforcement	Reinforcement through supportive departmental policies to ensure sustainability of an ethical culture
Inspection	Inspection on possible risks of unethical practices through the establishment of an effective monitoring mechanism
Training	Training on continuous basis for equipping staff members with relevant knowledge and skills in corruption prevention and integrity management

3 Caring Principles

1. Caring for people
2. Caring for environment
3. Caring for Community