

**Meeting of the Independent Police Complaints Council (IPCC)
with the Complaints & Internal Investigations Branch (C&IIB) (Open Part)
held at the IPCC Secretariat Office at 1510 hours on Tuesday, 19 September 2023**

Present:

IPCC

Ms Priscilla WONG Pui-sze, SBS, JP (Chairman)
Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming, GBS, JP (Vice-chairman)
Hon Ronick CHAN Chun-ying, JP (Vice-chairman)
Mr Wilson KWONG Wing-tsuen
Dr Daniel CHAN Ching-yan, BBS, MH
Mr CHAN Chak-ming
Mr Roland WONG Ka-yeung
Mr LEE Man-bun, MH, JP
Ms Jane Curzon LO, BBS, JP
Prof LIN Feng
Dr Desmond NGUYEN Gia-hung

Police

Ms Anna TSANG Yim-sheung, DMS (T)
Ms Monica AU YEUNG Mun-ye, CSP C&IIB
Mr Joe CHAN Hin-kwan, SSP CAPO
Mr Raymond LAM Cheuk-ho, SSP CSFT CSTCB
Ms Vicky CHAN Sze-ting, SP HQ CAPO
Mr Derek TAM Wing-leung, SP CAPO K
Mr Christie LAM Yiu, SP CAPO NT
Ms Lawrence KO Cheuk-hang, SP CAPO HKI
Mr Lester IP Cheuk-yu, CIP CSD CSTCB

Secretariat

Mr Daniel MUI Tat-ming, SG
Ms Regina LAU Ngai-kit, DSG (OPS)
Ms Patricia WOO Wan-shan, DSG (MGT)
Ms Vivian HO Wei-wun, LA

Absent with apologies:

IPCC

Hon Jimmy NG Wing-ka, BBS, JP (Vice-chairman)
Mr Clement CHAN Kam-wing, BBS, MH, JP
Dr Anissa CHAN WONG Lai-kuen, SBS, MH, JP
Miss Mabel CHAN Mei-bo, JP
Mr Randy YU Hon-kwan, MH, JP
Ms Cindi HUI Ming-ming
Mr Ivan SZE Wing-hang, BBS, JP

Opening Address

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting.

I. Confirmation of Minutes of the Meeting held on 20 June 2023 (Open Part)

2. The minutes of the last meeting were confirmed without amendment.

II. Presentation on ‘Combatting Technology Crimes’

3. SSP CSFT CSTCB gave a presentation on the police initiatives in combatting technology crimes. He first gave an overview of the new norm in the digital era and the various modus operandi used by online scammers, then elaborated on the overall technology crime situation and the policing strategies in this respect, namely, equipping the workforce, leveraging technology and engaging the community.

4. The Chairman thanked SSP CSFT CSTCB for his informative presentation and invited questions from Members.

5. Dr Desmond NGUYEN welcomed the new measures launched by the Police and enquired about the relevant statistics which could illustrate the effectiveness of the initiatives. SSP CSFT CSTCB quoted an arrest figure related to technology crimes that 1,970 arrests had been made in the first half of 2023, which exceeded the arrest figures in the whole year of 2022. Also, with the decentralisation of digital forensic services including the establishment of the ‘*Regional Digital Forensics Unit (RDFU)*’ together with the Regional Digital Forensics Laboratory, forensic examination of digital devices involved in simple cases could be completed as fast as in one single day whilst those in complicated cases from two weeks to four months on average.

6. Dr Daniel CHAN enquired about the manpower deployment of the ‘*Technology Crime Investigation and Response Cadre (TCIRC)*’ and the criteria of choosing the sites for the Regional Digital Forensics Laboratory. In response, SSP CSFT CSTCB explained that the TCIRC had consolidated a pool of officers with expertise in technology crime investigation and digital evidence handling. A set of call-out procedures was in place to ensure flexible deployment of all cadre members. In addition, the laboratory sites currently in New Territories North and Kowloon East could effectively save the time of conveying the exhibits between formations and the Digital Forensics Complex

situated at Police Headquarters. It was anticipated that the laboratory network would be further expanded in future.

7. Hon Ronick CHAN enquired about the measures taken by the Police to deter online romance scams and at the same time raise the public awareness of the latest scam tricks. SSP CSFT CSTCB stated that a targeted approach was adopted when disseminating anti-scam messages. The Police always endeavoured to utilise all suitable avenues, e.g. social media platforms and community events, to reach different segments of audience.

8. Hon Frankie YICK enquired whether there was any specialised training related to technology crimes for police officers. SSP CSFT CSTCB stated that basic training on technology crimes was delivered to both new recruits and in-service police officers. On top of that, advanced training courses and specialised thematic training programmes addressing the latest crime trends were held on a regular basis to continuously enhance officers' investigative knowledge and professional handling of digital evidence.

9. SG supplemented that some complaints had arisen from the dissatisfaction about the investigation of technology crimes. He believed that the Police's strategies as elucidated in the presentation could help improve police services in this area, while IPCC would put forward further Service Quality Improvement Initiatives (SQII) as appropriate.

10. DMS (T) stated that the Police took a proactive approach in combatting technology crimes while noting that the number of related complaints remained at a low level. She took the opportunity to call on the public to stay vigilant to different forms of suspicious scams and meanwhile pay attention to the latest crime trends and the details of the anti-deception messages disseminated by the Police.

11. Mr CHAN Chak-ming observed that technology crimes seemed to be ubiquitous nowadays and every sector of the society should stay alert.

12. The Chairman remarked that the elderly were in general more vulnerable to deception and emphasized the importance of protecting them from falling victim to these crimes.

III. Matters for Information

(a) CAPO's Monthly Statistics

13. SSP CAPO reported that 1,106 RCs were received in the first eight months of 2023, representing an increase of 344 cases (+45%) when compared with 762 cases in the same period of 2022. As a matter of fact, among the 1,106 RCs, nearly 95% i.e. 1,046 cases, were of minor nature, including 30% of complaints stemming from traffic enforcement and 15% related to daily patrol duties. The trend was consistent with the enhanced police deployment on the streets. Breakdown of RC figures was detailed at Annex-Table 1.

14. Hon Frankie YICK referred to the total number of RCs received in the first eight months of 2023 and enquired about the proportion of complaints requiring full investigation. Moreover, concerning the complaints endorsed by IPCC in the first eight months of 2023, he noted that 783 complaints were classified either as '*Withdrawn*' or '*Not Pursuable*'. He enquired if CAPO had taken any measures to make the public aware of the actual situation.

15. SSP CAPO elaborated that, among the 1,046 minor complaints received in the first eight months of 2023, the investigation of 586 complaints had been completed and endorsed by IPCC, including 4 that had undergone full investigation, 314 classified as '*Withdrawn*', 134 as '*Not Pursuable*' and 134 as '*Informally Resolved*'. The handling of the remaining 460 was still underway. Meanwhile, CAPO had been stepping up publicity initiatives to enhance public awareness of complainants' responsibilities in complaints investigation as well as complaints handling procedures such as Informal Resolution.

*(Post-meeting note: Among the 460 outstanding cases as at 31 August 2023, the investigation reports of 97 cases were submitted to IPCC pending endorsement, including 29 cases that had undergone full investigation, 24 initially classified as '*Withdrawn*', 27 as '*Not Pursuable*' and 17 as '*Informally Resolved*'. The remaining 363 cases were being handled by CAPO.)*

16. Hon Frankie YICK further enquired about CAPO's procedures to deal with malicious complaints or even false allegations, in particular those raised in the course of criminal investigation or legal proceedings.

17. SSP CAPO explained that sub-judice complaints procedures would normally be adopted to avoid prejudicing any ongoing criminal investigation or legal proceedings. Upon the conclusion of legal proceedings, CAPO would re-

open the investigation of complaint and examine the case result and the Court's comments, if any. If deemed necessary, legal advice would also be sought on the complainants' liability.

18. Mr Wilson KWONG noticed an upsurge in the number of complaints categorised as '*Neglect of Duty*' and '*Misconduct / Impoliteness*'. He invited CAPO to account for the recent increase in such allegations; and enquired whether any measures had been taken to address the situation.

19. SSP CAPO explained that a majority of complaints arose from traffic enforcement and frontline day-to-day duties. The increase in such complaints could be attributed to the frequent interaction between the Police and the public. With a view to enhancing officers' professionalism, the Police had rolled out a new wave of '*Living-the-Values*' workshop this year with a focus on empathy, and strengthened the guidelines on dealing with confrontational situations, e.g. the use of body-worn video cameras and making of proper and thorough records to protect officers from malicious allegations.

20. SG supplemented that IPCC had been monitoring complaint trends and examining areas which required special attention. He noted that complaints against police officers nowadays were mostly minor in nature. Having said that, IPCC would make recommendations by way of SQII with a view to preventing unnecessary complaints. He then enquired about the trend of the proportion of '*Withdrawn*' and '*Not Pursuable*' complaints.

21. SSP CAPO responded that the trend was stable in the past few years, while the proportion of complaints resolved by IR had increased significantly since the trial of the enhanced minor complaints handling system. Also, he acknowledged the benefits of SQII in bringing continuous service improvement.

22. Dr Daniel CHAN noted that the Police had been enhancing the quality of police services by using technology, such as the e-Ticketing App. He enquired whether the improvement in overall efficiency brought about by digital policing had alleviated the public's grievances against enforcement actions taken by the Police.

23. SSP CAPO explained that digital policing had successfully streamlined certain enforcement processes and the related administrative procedures which could substantially improve productivity. Given the significant increase in enforcement actions, the number of the complaints generated was still considered proportionally low.

24. Hon Ronick CHAN enquired whether the provision of telephone number was mandatory when complainants made their complaints via electronic means.

25. SSP CAPO responded that the Police had been providing a wider range of e-services in recent years. Upon receipt of emails or e-reports, CAPO would take follow-up actions and get in touch with the complainants by utilising the available contact information including but not restricted to their telephone numbers.

26. The Chairman reiterated that all complaints against police officers should be treated seriously and it would be the responsibility of complainants to provide their full personal particulars to facilitate complaints handling.

(b) CAPO's Criminal and Disciplinary Checklist

27. SSP CAPO reported that relevant information had been provided to Members for their reference prior to the meeting. No question was raised under this item.

IV. Any Other Business

28. There being no other business, the meeting concluded at 1610 hours.

(Vicky CHAN)
Joint Secretary
Complaints and Internal
Investigations Branch

(Patricia WOO)
Joint Secretary
Independent Police
Complaints Council

Table 1 - Detailed Breakdown and Comparison of RC figures

Year (Jan – August)		2023	2023vs2022	2023vs2021
RC (Total)		1,106	+45%	+18%
Minor	Neglect of Duty	582 (53%)	+39%	+16%
	Misconduct/Impoliteness	447 (40%)	+62%	+30%
	Offensive Language	17 (2%)	+13%	-15%
Sub-total		1,046 (95%)	+47%	+21%
Serious	Assault	40 (4%)	+3%	-17%
	Threat	2 (0%)	No change	-67%
	Unnecessary Use of Authority	18 (1%)	+125%	+29%
	Fabrication of Evidence	0 (0%)	-100%	-100%
Sub-total		60 (5%)	+18%	-13%