

Press release

IPCC's statistics for 2010 show significant increase in allegations
Neglect of duty, misconduct and improper manner remain top allegations

(HONG KONG - 6 July 2011) The Independent Police Complaints Council (IPCC) today released its 2010 statistics regarding the number and nature of reportable complaint cases it has endorsed. The number of allegations and of endorsed cases both increased significantly compared to 2009. The figures were released in the third issue of the IPCC newsletter. The newsletter also includes the story of a complaint case against the police, in which the Council rejected a "no fault" judgement by the police, finding instead that the charge against police was "not fully substantiated".

A total of 4,368 reportable complaint cases were endorsed involving 7,952 allegations. These figures represent a 44.4% and 57.3% increase in reportable complaint cases and allegations respectively. There were 3,486 allegations regarding neglect of duty, which account for nearly 44% of the total number of allegations. Allegations concerning the attitude of police officers, including misconduct, improper manner and the use of offensive language, amounted to 2,919, representing close to 37% of the total allegations.

Mr Albert Cheng Jinghan, Chairman of the IPCC's Publicity and Survey Committee, said: "In view of the nature of these allegations, many of these complaints can be avoided if the police pay more attention to details. We understand that the police have strengthened their training in soft skills to better equip their frontline officers for dealing with the general public. We hope this training can effectively help reduce the number of allegations and facilitate the frontline officers' work when encountering the public."

Mr Ricky Chu, Secretary General of the IPCC, also shared a real complaint case against the police in which one allegation was reclassified from "no fault" to "not fully substantiated". In this complaint case, a valuable watch was stolen by a friend of the complainant's domestic helper, who pawned the watch for HK\$6,300. The watch was then recovered from a pawnshop. The court ordered that the watch be returned to the police for disposal and that the HK\$6,300 proceeds of the crime should be confiscated. This arrangement meant the complainant had to negotiate with the pawnshop regarding the ownership of the

watch.

After the IPCC's query and discussion with the Complaints Against Police Office (CAPO), CAPO agreed that the disposal of the property could have been handled in a more equitable way by considering returning the watch to the complainant, while the money seized from the culprit could be returned to the pawnshop instead of being confiscated by the court, which meant no party would suffer any loss in the incident.

Mr Albert Cheng Jinghan said: "In the coming years, we plan to further strengthen public awareness of the IPCC as well as the police complaints handling system. While we recognise that the Hong Kong Police's quality of service is among the best in the world, we also notice increasing public expectations concerning the police's quality of service and their exercise of constabulary power. As such, it is necessary for us to educate the public about the two-tier police complaints system and the importance of the IPCC as an independent oversight body. To better communicate with our stakeholders, we plan to increase the frequency of our newsletter from a semi-annual to a quarterly basis starting from the next issue."

The third issue of the IPCC newsletter, released today, is available on the IPCC's website at http://www.ipcc.gov.hk/en/reports_newsletter.html

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Notes to editor:

About the Independent Police Complaints Council

The Independent Police Complaints Council (IPCC) is an independent body established under the Independent Police Complaints Council Ordinance (IPCCO) (Cap. 604) to observe, monitor and review the handling and investigation of reportable complaints (RCs) against the Police by the Commissioner of Police (CP). The IPCC has become a statutory body since the commencement of IPCCO on 1 June 2009.