

Security Bureau Task Force to follow up Report of Independent Police Complaints Council held its first meeting (with photo)

The Task Force of Security Bureau held its first meeting today (May 28) to follow up various recommendations set out in the Thematic Study Report of the Independent Police Complaints Council (IPCC). The work plan of the Task Force was laid down at the meeting.

The Secretary for Security, Mr John Lee, who supervises the Task Force, presided over the first meeting. Participants included representatives of the Security Bureau and the Police. The Deputy Commissioner of Police (Management), Mr Kwok Yam-shu also attended the meeting.

IPCC made a total of 52 recommendations in the Thematic Study Report. Mr Lee considered that the Police should accord priority to dealing with recommendations in a number of areas, including dissemination of information to the public, arrangements for reporters in large-scale public order events, co-ordination among the Police themselves and with other departments, temporary detention facilities and police officers' identification.

At the meeting, Mr Lee set out a clear direction on the work of the Task Force. Due to the wide scope of the 52 recommendations, the Task Force will categorise the 52 recommendations into five areas, and set up five sub-groups under the Task Force to focus on following up the work of the respective concerned area. The five areas are – enhancing release of public information and review of media relations; review of guidelines on the use of force; improvement of arrangements for temporary holding areas; enhancement of police operational deployment and strategies; and strengthening of the Police's internal management, co-ordination and training.

Mr Lee required the five sub-groups to assess the complexity and urgency of relevant issues with a view to determining the review and follow-up arrangements, reporting back and commencing the related work. Those items that are relatively less complex should be implemented as soon as possible. Examples include: following earlier indication by the Police that they have ceased using the San Uk Ling Holding Centre to detain persons arrested at public order events, they should submit to the Task Force a clear policy for implementing such arrangement within the coming month; review and improvement of the protocols for organising press conferences with other departments or institutions as soon as possible; and improvement of manpower deployment, equipment and other arrangements at detention facilities for handling large-scale operations. The Task Force will consider inviting other departments and institutions to participate in the discussion and research of relevant issues, having regard to the need of specific items.

Mr Lee indicated at the meeting that the Task Force would regularly submit work progress report to the Chief Executive. The first progress report is initially planned for submission to the Chief Executive in August, followed by quarterly reporting. The Police must also report to and discuss with IPCC its follow up actions in accordance with the mechanism under the IPCC Ordinance. The meeting and work arrangements of the Task Force will tie in with the Police's progress reports to IPCC.

IPCC published the Thematic Study Report on May 15, putting forward 52 recommendations for improving the Police practices and procedures. The Chief Executive has requested the Secretary for Security to establish a task force and personally supervise the task force to study the report and follow up its recommendations, as well as to communicate with relevant departments and organisations.

