

Press Release

Press Statement from the Independent Police Complaints Council

(Hong Kong – November 10, 2019) The Independent Police Complaints Council (IPCC) held a Special In-house Meeting on 7 November 2019 during which the Special Task Force (STF) reported the progress of the Thematic Study on recent Public Order Events (the “Thematic Study”). The Council also met with the International Expert Panel (“IEP”) to deliberate and exchange views on various aspects of the Thematic Study.

The IPCC is very grateful to the IEP for the contribution of their time and expertise to the Thematic Study under way. Pursuant to the Sections 8(1) (c) and 8 (2) of the IPCC Ordinance, IPCC aims to through this proactive Thematic Study, make recommendations to the Commissioner of Police and the Chief Executive on how police practices and procedures may be improved.

When IPCC introduced the Thematic Study, it was dedicated to study the events from June 9 to July 2, 2019. But the Public Order Events have continued to this day and thus the study had to be expanded to cover subsequent developments, and has become more complex than originally thought. Because of the expanded scope of the Study and the complexity of the events, the IPCC hopes to produce a preliminary report within the time frame originally disclosed, that is around early 2020. It is hoped that the Preliminary Report will enable the Government, the Police and the Community to consider what next steps to take.

The IEP did produce the document shared by Prof Clifford Stott via his Twitter Account. That document headed “Progress Report” was handed to the Chairman and was not intended for publication, as agreed with the Chairman by IEP members present, including Professor Stott. The IPCC has not seen the Progress Report and it was only fair that the IPCC should see the document first. Due to lack of time, a small-scale press briefing was given by Sir Denis O’Connor with members of the IEP (except Justice Michael Adams, QC, who had to catch a flight) present. In addition to Sir Denis and other members also spoke.

It was and remains the intention of the Chairman to submit that Progress Report to the IPCC for deliberation. The Progress Report published by Professor

Stott is therefore not an announcement of the IEP, but personal action on the part of Professor Stott without prior consultation with the IPCC. The IPCC values the free exchange of ideas but believes that it must be entitled to enter into discussions on the basis of mutual trust. The IPCC is disappointed with Professor Stott's tweet.

As to the content of the Progress Report, the IPCC is fully aware of the limitations of its legal powers and resources. The IPCC has been continually working to enhance its resources and will continue to do so. The IPCC continues to be committed to producing within the time frame originally disclosed, that is in early 2020, a preliminary report with sufficient facts and preliminary conclusions, which will enable the Police Force and the HKSAR Government to take the next steps necessary to bring Hong Kong forward into an era of enduring peace and harmony under our constitutional system. The matters stated in the Progress Report will be fully considered by the IPCC.

The IPCC would remind the public that while working hard on the Thematic Study, it continues to pay strict attention to its monitoring the work of the Complaints Against Police Office (CAPO). So far 339 Reportable Complaints and 694 Notifiable Complaints relating to the Public Order Events since 9 June 2019 have been received. Each complaint will be strictly monitored by the IPCC and its group of 120 Observers.

IPCC continues to appeal to the public to provide information about the current public order events via the following channels to assist the Council in reconstructing the facts as soon as practicable:

Hotline: 2862 8200

E-mail: taskforce@ipcc.gov.hk

Form: https://www.ipcc.gov.hk/doc/en/download/IPCC_Form.pdf

WhatsApp: 9871 9840

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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.