**2023 Annual Report**

**Independent Commission Against Corruption**

**Hong Kong Special Administrative Region**

**of the People’s Republic of China**



Submitted to the Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region in accordance with section 17 of the *Independent Commission Against Corruption Ordinance* (Cap 204).

**Vision, Mission, Values and Code of Ethics**

**Vision**

To become a world-acclaimed exemplar in the graft-fighting arena, entrench the reputation of Hong Kong as a city of probity, and drive global collaboration in anti-corruption efforts.

**Mission**

With the community, the Independent Commission Against Corruption is committed to fighting corruption through law enforcement, education and prevention to keep Hong Kong fair, just, stable and prosperous. We also foster international cooperation among anti-corruption agencies worldwide in the common fight against graft.

**Values**

**I**ntegrity  
**C**ommitment  
**A**bility  
**C**ourage

**Code of Ethics**

Officers of the Independent Commission Against Corruption will at all times uphold the good name of the Commission and:

* adhere to the principles of integrity and fair play;
* respect the rights under the law of all people;
* carry out their duties without fear or favour, prejudice or ill will;
* act always in accordance with the law;
* not take advantage of their authority or position;
* maintain necessary confidentiality;
* accept responsibility for their actions and instructions;
* exercise courtesy and restraint in word and action;
* strive for personal and professional excellence.

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**Chapter 1 Introduction**

The Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) was established on 15 February 1974 with the enactment of the *Independent Commission Against Corruption Ordinance* (Cap 204).

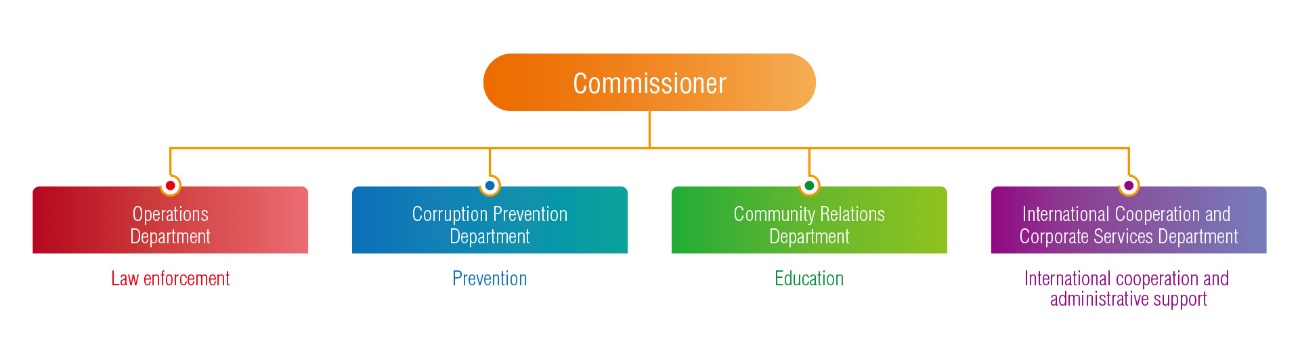
Since its establishment, the ICAC has been adopting a “three-pronged” strategy in fighting corruption effectively through law enforcement, prevention and education. Entering its 50th anniversary, with the unwavering support of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and its citizens, the ICAC will persist in its anti-corruption mission, advancing towards another new milestone in promoting probity.

**CONSTITUTION**

The ICAC derives its charter from the *ICAC Ordinance*. Its independence is guaranteed in Article 57 of the *Basic Law* and established by the Commissioner being formally and directly responsible to the Chief Executive. In carrying out its work, the ICAC functions as an independent organ of the public service.

**ORGANISATION**

The ICAC comprises the office of the Commissioner and four functional departments - Operations, Corruption Prevention, Community Relations and International Cooperation and Corporate Services. Its organisation is shown in the chart at Appendix 1.



**ADVISORY COMMITTEES**

The work of the ICAC comes under the scrutiny of independent committees comprising prominent citizens drawn from different sectors of the community and appointed by the Chief Executive. Membership lists and reports on the work of the Advisory Committee on Corruption, the Operations Review Committee, the Corruption Prevention Advisory Committee and the Citizens Advisory Committee on Community Relations are contained in a separate publication.

**Citizens Advisory Committee on Community Relations**

**Corruption Prevention Advisory Committee**

**Operations Review Committee**

**Advisory Committee on Corruption**

**RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COMMISSIONER**

The Commissioner is directly responsible to the Chief Executive for the following duties set out in section 12 of the *ICAC Ordinance*:

1. to receive and consider complaints alleging corrupt practices and investigate such of those complaints as he considers practicable;
2. to investigate -
3. any alleged or suspected offence under this Ordinance;
4. any alleged or suspected offence under the *Prevention of Bribery Ordinance* (Cap 201);
5. any alleged or suspected offence under the *Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Conduct) Ordinance* (Cap 554);
6. any alleged or suspected offence of blackmail committed by a prescribed officer by or through the misuse of his office;
7. any alleged or suspected conspiracy to commit an offence under the *Prevention of Bribery Ordinance*;
8. any alleged or suspected conspiracy to commit an offence under the *Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Conduct) Ordinance*; and
9. any alleged or suspected conspiracy (by two or more persons including a prescribed officer) to commit an offence of blackmail by or through the misuse of the office of that prescribed officer;
10. to investigate any conduct of a prescribed officer which, in the opinion of the Commissioner, is connected with or conducive to corrupt practices and to report thereon to the Chief Executive;
11. to examine the practices and procedures of government departments and public bodies, in order to facilitate the discovery of corrupt practices and to secure the revision of methods of work or procedures which, in the opinion of the Commissioner, may be conducive to corrupt practices;
12. to instruct, advise and assist any person, on the latter’s request, on ways in which corrupt practices may be eliminated by such person;
13. to advise heads of government departments or of public bodies of changes in practices or procedures compatible with the effective discharge of the duties of such departments or public bodies which the Commissioner thinks necessary to reduce the likelihood of the occurrence of corrupt practices;
14. to educate the public against the evils of corruption; and
15. to enlist and foster public support in combatting corruption.

**Chapter 2 A Year of**

**Fruitful Endeavours and Accomplishments**

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**Y M WOO**

**Commissioner of the Independent Commission Against Corruption**

**Hong Kong Special Administrative Region**

Since its inception in 1974, the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) has been fighting corruption without fear or favour, prejudice or ill will. With the aim to eradicating corruption, the ICAC spares no effort in keeping Hong Kong fair, just, stable and prosperous. With the concerted efforts of the ICAC, the Government and different sectors of the community over the past 50 years, Hong Kong has evolved from a place plagued by corruption to become one of the cleanest cities in the world.

In 2023, the ICAC forged ahead against all difficulties and combatted corruption with its holistic “three-pronged” strategy. This strategy encompasses the carrying out of proactive approach and robust enforcement actions to create a deterrence effect; setting up institutional and systemic prevention mechanisms to plug corruption loopholes and minimise corruption opportunities; and implementing public education to entrench a probity culture and instil the value of integrity in citizens thereby changing their attitude towards corruption and eliminating the root of corruption. Meanwhile, the ICAC also leveraged Hong Kong’s unique advantage of being “backed by the motherland and connected to the world” in fostering closer collaboration with anti-corruption counterparts worldwide, leading the International Association of Anti-Corruption Authorities (IAACA), and organising a number of pilot training programmes in the course of establishing the Hong Kong International Academy Against Corruption (HKIAAC), with a view to sustaining the advancement of the international anti-corruption cause. Riding on the synergy of the powerful tripartite partnership to be formed with the IAACA and the HKIAAC, the ICAC seeks to safeguard the remarkable achievements made in its anti-corruption journey over the past half-century, and to contribute to the country’s “Belt and Road” (B&R) Initiative, the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) development strategy, as well as the advancement of the global anti-corruption cause.

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| The ICAC, the International Association of Anti-Corruption Authorities and the Hong Kong International Academy Against Corruption forming a powerful tripartite partnership |

**STEADFAST COMMITMENT TO ERADICATING CORRUPTION ON ALL FRONTS**

In 2023, the corruption situation in Hong Kong remained well under control. The civil service and public bodies were generally clean and honest, while a level-playing field for business was maintained for the private sector.

The ICAC received a total of 2 001 corruption complaints during the year, representing an increase of 9% when compared to the previous year, but a decrease of 13% when compared to 2019 before the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Complaints involving government departments, public bodies and the private sector which respectively accounted for 23%, 6% and 72% of all corruption complaints, recorded a year-on-year decrease of 6.5%, 1.1% and increase of 27.5% respectively. This shows that the increase in corruption complaints in 2023 was attributed to the significant rise in the complaints concerning the private sector, which was closely associated with the gradual resumption of economic activities in Hong Kong as the pandemic subsided.

Corruption is a highly insidious crime which is difficult to detect. With the rapid development of technology and increase in cross-boundary activities, the *modi operandi* of criminals are becoming more complex and ever-changing. For all the time, the ICAC has been determined to pursue every single corruption case. In 2023, 204 persons were prosecuted (same as 2022) in relation to 102 cases (representing a 2% year-on-year decrease), and 139 persons were convicted. The person-based and case-based conviction rates were 74% and 83% respectively. In addition, 23 persons were formally cautioned for minor offences[[1]](#footnote-1).

***Clean Civil Service***

A clean civil service lays a solid foundation for maintaining public confidence in the Government as well as a stable and prosperous society. It is also a key factor enabling Hong Kong to advance towards its new chapter “from stability to prosperity”. In 2023, although 13 civil servants were prosecuted for corruption and other offences, the civil service remained clean and honest with no sign of resurgence of syndicated corruption. In any case, the ICAC will continue to pursue each and every case without fear or favour and in strict accordance with the law.

Apart from law enforcement, the ICAC also actively supported the Government in enhancing “governance capability” and “governance efficacy” through strengthening multi-faceted collaborations with government departments. On the one hand, the ICAC fostered public service integrity and honesty by continuing to provide systematic integrity training for public officers. On the other hand, it assisted government departments in enhancing internal controls and corruption prevention measures to strengthen governance and overall effectiveness through corruption prevention advice on key government policy initiatives such as the “Enhanced Supplementary Labour Scheme”, mega projects and public services, as well as facilitation of smart city and e-Government development.

***Level Playing Field for Business***

Regarding corruption complaints in the private sector, the three sectors attracting the most complaints were building management (complaints went up to 544 from 420 in 2022), finance and insurance (complaints went up to 142 from 105) and construction industry (complaints went down to 131 from 133).

The building management industry, which recorded a substantial increase of 30% in corruption complaints, remained the top industry with the most complaints in the private sector. With the determination to safeguard public interests, the ICAC has always been dedicated to combatting corruption in this industry. In January 2023, a large-scale enforcement operation codenamed “Fire Net” was mounted, resulting in the successful neutralisation of a sophisticated corruption syndicate. Upon legal advice of the Department of Justice, the ICAC swiftly charged 23 persons, including backbone members of the syndicate, project consultants and contractors, members of owners’ corporations and staff of property management companies (PMCs), with offer and acceptance of bribes totalling over $6.5 million and conspiracy to defraud in respect of various contracts of renovation and other projects of 10 residential and commercial buildings with a total sum of around $520 million. This case marks the largest building maintenance corruption case in our history. The operation not only served as a strong deterrent to the industry, but also enhanced public awareness of corruption prevention in building management and maintenance, leading to a surge in related complaints during the year.

As building management is closely related to people’s livelihood and constantly recording the highest number of complaints, the ICAC will continue to address people’s livelihood issues and concerns by combining its time-tested investigation strategies with early intervention actions to promptly frustrate possible corrupt activities. To promote corruption prevention work among stakeholders from the building management industry, and to ensure their adoption of ethical practices in building management and maintenance, the ICAC organised seminars, talks and various training activities to heighten stakeholders’ corruption prevention awareness, and also provided independent advice to owners’ corporations and PMCs. During the year, the *Corruption Prevention Guide for Property Management Companies* was also launched to assist PMCs in identifying and mitigating corruption risks in areas such as general management services, building maintenance, procurement and staff administration, and to empower PMCs to build a resilient ethical culture.

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|  | ICAC officers attending the press conference of Operation “Fire Net” to brief the public on the largest corruption case involving building maintenance in our history |
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As for the finance and insurance industry, the ICAC has already signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Securities and Futures Commission (SFC) and with the Accounting and Financial Reporting Council (AFRC) respectively to strengthen cooperation in sustaining fair and stable operation of the financial market. During the year, riding on the synergy created by these MoUs, the ICAC mounted a number of joint operations with the SFC and the AFRC and yielded solid results. These operations included the ICAC’s first ever tripartite joint operation with the SFC and the AFRC mounted in October 2023 against two Hong Kong-listed companies suspected of carrying out bogus corporate transactions amounting to almost $200 million in Hong Kong and the Mainland. This joint operation bears remarkable significance as it not only demonstrates the ICAC’s and the regulators’ determination to uphold a clean financial market, but also serves to consolidate Hong Kong’s status as an international financial centre.

Moreover, the ICAC also explored opportunities for collaboration with regulators of various industries. In October 2023, an MoU was signed with the Insurance Authority for cooperation in the fight against corruption and related illicit activities in the insurance sector. The aim is to enhance governance and professional conduct in the industry, and at the same time boost stakeholders’ confidence, which is conducive to establishing a business environment with greater integrity and transparency.

With regard to the banking sector, the ICAC’s efforts included the launch of a bespoke online self-learning toolkit *Unveil the Secret: Integrity Myths in the Banking Industry* to help frontline bank staff understand common corruption “myths” in the industry; production of a leaflet *Bank Client Smartpedia* for distribution to bank clients to avoid inadvertent breaches of the law and dispel common misconceptions; and reach out to all authorised institutions under the supervision of Hong Kong Monetary Authority to promote the ICAC’s preventive education resources.

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| Deputy Commissioner Ricky YAU Shu-chun and the Insurance Authority Chief Executive Officer Clement CHEUNG Wan-ching signed a Memorandum of Understanding for cooperation |
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With the recent launch of a number of major infrastructure projects in Hong Kong, the ICAC has been closely monitoring the corruption risks in the construction industry, particularly those relating to public works and bribery risks over job referrals. As a result of an earlier ICAC operation in relation to the Three-runway System Project of the Hong Kong International Airport, 10 persons were charged as at the end of 2023, including two former senior executives of the Airport Authority Hong Kong and a number of sub-contractors, for bribery over the award of works and materials supply contracts and also administrative and financial matters concerning the Project. The total amount of bribes involved was about $7.7 million, and the total value of the contracts and materials purchase orders concerned was as high as $260 million. The ICAC will continue to take robust law enforcement actions to combat corruption in the industry. On the front of preventive education, the ICAC launched a new certificate course titled “Public Works Integrity Leadership Training” for senior staff engaged in infrastructure projects to assist them in strengthening project governance and to enhance their integrity management capabilities and corruption prevention awareness. Besides, integrity training was offered to about 10 400 construction industry practitioners participating in the Construction Industry Integrity Charter which was subscribed by over 420 construction companies. To address the issue of illegal referral fees in the construction industry, the ICAC also joined hands with the Development Bureau and the Construction Industry Council to step up efforts on dissemination of anti-corruption messages and provision of corruption prevention resources to stakeholders.

In an effort to sustain the clean business environment in Hong Kong, the ICAC launched the Business Sector Integrity Charter in collaboration with the Chinese Manufacturers’ Association of Hong Kong, and continued to offer free and confidential advisory services to the private sector to enhance their corruption prevention capabilities. Through the Corruption Prevention Advisory Service web portal and online seminars, corruption prevention information and training were also provided to the private sector and the general public in a more effective manner.

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| Commissioner calling for active participation of all trades at the launching ceremony of the “Business Sector Integrity Charter” |
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***Upholding Clean and Fair District Council Election***

The *District Councils (Amendment) Ordinance 2023* which was gazetted and came into effect in July 2023 has not only reformed the composition of District Councils (DCs), but also improved district governance, realising further implementation of the principle of “patriots administering Hong Kong”. The first large-scale territory-wide election since the reform of the DCs was held successfully on 10 December 2023.

Under the new electoral arrangement upon improvement of the electoral system and reform of district administration, the ICAC adopted an “all-embracing” strategy combining prevention and intervention to ensure that the 2023 DC Election would be conducted fairly, openly and honestly, and free from corrupt and illegal practices. A series of educational and publicity activities under the theme of “Abide by the Rules Support Clean Elections” were carried out to help stakeholders, including candidates, election helpers and electors, better understand the electoral law. Members of the public were also called upon to actively participate in the election to fulfil their civic responsibility and join hands with the ICAC in upholding the clean election culture. On the polling day, over 900 ICAC officers were deployed to polling stations across the territory and various ICAC Regional Offices to handle public complaints and enquiries.

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| The ICAC deployed over 900 officers on the polling day of 2023 District Council Election to the polling stations to ensure a fair and clean election. The photo showing the control centre in operation on the polling day |

During the election period, the ICAC proactively investigated and took robust actions to curb any illegal acts that might constitute offences of manipulating and sabotaging the election. Seven persons who had allegedly committed the offence of “inciting another person not to vote, or to cast invalid vote, by activity in public during election period” under Section 27A of the *Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Conduct) Ordinance* were arrested, and two of them were swiftly charged. The ICAC will remain dedicated to keeping all future public elections clean and fair.

**SOWING SEEDS OF INTEGRITY AND SPREADING ANTI-CORRUPTION MESSAGES**

“Hong Kong will prosper only when its young people thrive”.The ICAC has been dedicated to organising tailor-made preventive education activities for students at different stages of learning with a view to nurturing them from an early age, helping them build positive values such as integrity, honesty and sense of responsibility. Apart from continuing to organise the “i Junior Leaders” programme targeted at primary students, the ICAC launched the first ever “ICAC’s Kids Classroom” for kindergarteners during the year. Led by teachers and parents, kindergarteners visited the ICAC and participated in shared reading of educative picture books and interesting activities, by which they were able to learn through play. Besides, the first “ICAC ELITE Youth Leadership Programme” was also launched to provide senior secondary and tertiary students with diversified leadership training activities. Arrangement was made for participants to visit a GBA city to learn about the latest anti-corruption work of the country; assist in receiving representatives of overseas anti-corruption agencies (ACAs) during their visits to the ICAC; and visit other disciplined forces, so as to enrich their learning experience and groom them to become pillars of our society, who would embrace national identity and a global vision as well as the determination to uphold integrity and the rule of law.

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| The “ICAC’s Kids Classroom” was launched to nurture kindergarteners to become a new force for safeguarding integrity |
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| Led by the Commissioner, “iELITE Youth Leaders” taking an oath pledging contribution to the country and Hong Kong’s integrity development |

To expedite the reception of latest anti-corruption messages by citizens and to expand the ICAC’s reach to them, the “Hong Kong ICAC” WeChat official account was launched in the year. Meanwhile, the ICAC’s Facebook Fanpage and Instagram account were also enhanced to include creative videos produced in a light-hearted and easy-to-understand approach, so as to promote closer sharing with the public on the ICAC’s latest activities, to publicise anti-corruption messages and showcase the professionalism of ICAC officers to a wide spectrum of the community.

**ENHANCING GLOBAL COOPERATION TO CO-BUILD CLEAN SILK ROAD**

To fulfill its obligations under the *United Nations Convention against Corruption* (UNCAC), and to tie in with the country’s anti-corruption policy, B&R Initiative and GBA development strategy, the ICAC continues to strengthen liaison and cooperation with ACAs worldwide and international organisations, and at the same time promotes Hong Kong’s sound rule of law, robust anti-corruption regime and clean and stable social environment thereby telling the good stories of “One Country, Two Systems” and our city.

In 2023, with the full support of the Central People’s Government and the HKSAR Government, I took over the Presidency of the IAACA. During the year, the IAACA organised a number of international and regional anti-corruption training programmes, providing ACAs worldwide and international organisations with an opportunity to exchange experience on diversified subjects. The membership of the IAACA has grown from around 120 at the end of 2021 to nearly 170 at the end of 2023, and its members include law enforcement, corruption prevention, prosecution, audit and other relevant specialised agencies from around the world. Today, the IAACA is one of the biggest and most iconic international platforms for anti-corruption cooperation.

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| Commissioner serving as President of the International Association of Anti-Corruption Authorities | | |
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In September, I led a delegation to Austria and held bilateral meetings with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the International Anti-Corruption Academy to explore ways to advance international anti-corruption exchange and cooperation. Subsequently, a working group was set up by the ICAC and the UNODC to sustain collaboration in promoting cooperation in different regions and on important issues. In December, seasoned ICAC officers, as members of the Chinese delegation or representatives of the IAACA Secretariat, participated in the 10th Session of the Conference of the States Parties to the UNCAC. During the conference, the ICAC co-organised two special events, one with the UNODC, and the other with the United Nations Global Operational Network of Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement Authorities[[2]](#footnote-2) (GlobE Network) and the Basel Institute on Governance, to explore practical approaches to international cooperation in advancing global anti-corruption efforts, and to explain to the international community the importance of promoting youth engagement in anti-corruption work.

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|  | | Commissioner meeting with United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Executive Director Ms Ghada WALY in Vienna, Austria to strengthen anti-corruption collaboration |
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| ICAC representatives participating in the 10th Session of the Conference of the States Parties to the UNCAC held in Atlanta, the United States to share Hong Kong’s anti-corruption experience with participants from around the world |  | |
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The year 2023 marks the 10th anniversary of the country’s B&R Initiative. The ICAC has been actively sharing its experience in combatting and preventing corruption with ACAs of B&R countries and providing training to them, so as to support the building of clean B&R. In October, I attended the “Third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation” held in Beijing and delivered a speech at the “Thematic Forum on Clean Silk Road” sharing the ICAC’s efforts and achievements in promoting integrity in support of the B&R Initiative. Additionally, the ICAC sent a representative for the first time to take part in the study visit organised by the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau for business delegation of enterprises of B&R countries operating in Hong Kong to introduce to the participating enterprises the ICAC’s role in facilitating the B&R Initiative.

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| Commissioner delivering a speech at the “Thematic Forum on Clean Silk Road” |
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| Commissioner leading a delegation to visit the National Commission of Supervision in Beijing |
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The ICAC has been maintaining close liaison and cooperation with ACAs in the Mainland and Macao, working together to fighting graft. During the year, I visited the Mainland with my colleagues on a number of occasions to exchange views with relevant authorities and agencies on anti-corruption development in the two places. To render full support for the development of the GBA, the ICAC has reached a consensus with its counterparts in the Mainland and Macao to strengthen collaboration through organising joint workshops on law enforcement, developing a guide for doing business with integrity and organising professional anti-corruption training for enterprises in the GBA.

**A NEW ROAD AHEAD FOR ANTI-CORRUPTION WORK**

Since its inception, the ICAC has been making every effort and joining hands with the government and different sectors of the community to safeguard the core values of probity and integrity in Hong Kong. Together, we have attained remarkable achievements in the anti-corruption cause. The year 2024 marks the historic moment of the ICAC’s golden jubilee. Apart from sustaining its anti-corruption efforts to keep Hong Kong fair and just, thereby upholding Hong Kong’s reputation as a city of probity, the ICAC will also, with the support of the country and the HKSAR Government, establish the HKIAAC in February 2024. The mission of the HKIAAC is to organise professional training programmes for graft fighters from around the world and local public and private organisations, and to provide an exchange and research platform for experts and scholars worldwide. The ICAC hopes to showcase the determination and achievements of both the country and Hong Kong in fighting corruption to the international community through the HKIAAC, and to promote global anti-corruption collaboration.

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| Commissioner encouraging the graft fighters and law enforcers from different jurisdictions participating in the Leadership and Executive Development Programme at the course closing ceremony to upkeep their anti-corruption determination |
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During the year, the ICAC commenced the preparatory work for the HKIAAC and organised a number of overseas and local strategic and professional anti-corruption training programmes in order to consolidate experience and provide reference for the programmes of the HKIAAC in the future. For international training, the ICAC organised tailor-made courses for ACAs of eight Asian and African countries, namely Indonesia, Kenya, Mauritius, Mongolia, Morocco, Senegal, South Africa and Thailand; the “Professional Anti-corruption Training in Major Infrastructure Projects” programme for representatives of ACAs of 13 B&R countries, with site visits to major infrastructure projects in Hong Kong and the Mainland, including the Three-Runway System Project of the Hong Kong International Airport and Shenzhen-Zhongshan Link, for participants to learn about how corruption prevention measures and maintaining a clean atmosphere could be effective in ensuring safety, quality and efficiency in the work process of major infrastructure projects; and the “Leadership and Executive Development Programme” for 31 middle management executives of local and overseas anti-corruption and law enforcement institutions, with a study visit to the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. Moreover, upon invitation of the UNODC, the ICAC also held workshops in Vienna, Austria for the first time to share its experience in utilising technology to enhance efficacy in corruption investigations.

As for local training, the ICAC conducted strategic professional anti-corruption courses for managerial staff from the banking, insurance and also large corporations in 2023.

Apart from organising professional anti-corruption training programmes, the HKIAAC will also establish an international platform for anti-corruption academic studies and exchange, with a view to advancing the global anti-corruption cause. During the year, the ICAC initiated discussions with a number of renowned tertiary institutions in the Mainland, Hong Kong and Macao on future personnel exchange and collaboration in anti-corruption studies, and prepared for the signing of Memoranda of Understanding with these institutions.

**STAND FIRM TO OUR BELIEFS AS THE MISSION CONTINUES**

With the steadfast determination of the HKSAR Government and the full support of the general public, Hong Kong has gained international recognition as a pioneer in anti-corruption efforts after decades of arduous work. The ICAC’s successful experience in combatting corruption and promoting integrity has served as a reference for many countries. As the ICAC approaches its golden jubilee, a significant milestone in its journey, a series of celebratory activities have been launched under the theme of “Fighting Corruption: The Mission Continues”. Through these activities, the ICAC recaptures some of the highlights in the long-fought battle together with the citizens of Hong Kong to remind every one of us to remain committed to safeguarding the probity culture of Hong Kong and pass on the mission from generation to generation.

The evil of corruption transcends borders. Consolidating its 50 years of anti-corruption experience in law enforcement, corruption prevention and community education, the ICAC is ready to embrace the future by joining forces with the HKIAAC and the IAACA in promoting international cooperation among anti-corruption partners and facilitating exchange through training, thereby opening up new possibilities and initiating a new chapter in the global fight against corruption. This new strategy will bring the ICAC’s work to a higher level, solidifying Hong Kong’s reputation as a city of probity, and providing solid support for Hong Kong’s advancement from stability to prosperity, whereby Hong Kong can make substantial contribution to the country’s development and continue to tell the good stories of our country, “One Country, Two Systems” and our city to the international community.

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| Commissioner and guests firing the starting gun for the “Fighting Corruption: The Mission Continues” Kick-off Run at the Peak in December to commence a series of activities marking the 50th Anniversary of the ICAC |

The ICAC was born in the Year of the Tiger. Over the past half century, the ICAC has been demonstrating its extraordinary strength by fighting corruption unwaveringly without fear or favour. In the next 50 years to come as it turns over a new chapter, the ICAC will continue to make relentless efforts to ensure that corruption has no foothold, the corrupt nowhere to hide, and illicit proceeds no place to reside, so as to keep Hong Kong prosperous, stable, clean and fair.

**Chapter 3 International Cooperation and Corporate Services Department**

**Duties**

The International Cooperation and Corporate Services Department (ICD) comprises the International Cooperation Branch (ICB) and Corporate Services Branch (CSB). The major responsibilities of ICB are to:

* promote Hong Kong’s anti-corruption experience, probity culture and strong rule of law to the international community through training and exchange, contributing to our country's development of a clean Belt and Road (B&R);
* sustain anti-corruption collaboration in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA);
* conduct anti-corruption research and analysis; and
* operate the Secretariat of the International Association of Anti-Corruption Authorities (IAACA).

CSB assists the Commissioner in exercising his statutory duties under the *Independent Commission Against Corruption Ordinance* (Cap 204), and is responsible for the general administration of the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC), including matters relating to:

* revision and execution of the *Commission Standing Orders*;
* control of finance and estimates of expenditure;
* human resource management;
* staff relations and welfare; and
* publication of *ICAC Annual Report*.

CSB is also responsible for the procurement and supplies of goods and services, office accommodation management, general office support, translation, records management and green management.

**StrategIES**

In respect of international cooperation, it is to:

* enhance collaboration with international counterparts to advance the global fight against corruption and sustain the ICAC as the forerunner in the international anti-corruption cause;
* engage anti-corruption agencies (ACAs) worldwide in preventing and fighting corruption to foster the implementation of the *United Nations Convention against Corruption* (UNCAC) and keep fighting corruption a common front;
* encourage capacity building, knowledge and experience sharing to fulfil the ICAC’s obligations under the UNCAC; and
* in support of the national B&R Initiative and the development strategy of the GBA, ICB actively leverages Hong Kong’s anti-corruption experience to foster a high-quality and clean B&R and GBA.

The strategy for corporate services is to:

* provide multi-faceted resource management and administrative support services to facilitate the smooth and efficient operation of the ICAC;
* formulate and co-ordinate policies to strengthen corporate governance and safeguard compliance with government policies, rules and regulations; and
* scrutinise and prioritise the use of government resources to ensure cost-effectiveness, affordability and sustainability.

**international Cooperation**

***International Engagement and Publicity***

The ICAC leverages its unique advantage of “backed by the motherland and connected to the world” to exchange experiences with ACAs worldwide under the framework of the UNCAC to foster a clean B&R, contributing to the global anti-corruption cause.

By the end of 2023, ICB has established connections for training cooperation with over 70 States Parties to the UNCAC, most of which are B&R countries.

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| The ICAC, the International Association of Anti-Corruption Authorities and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime launching jointly the *Policy Guide for National Anti-Corruption Authorities on Meaningful Youth Engagement in Anti-Corruption Work* |
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ICB made use of a wide range of channels, including arranging ICAC representatives to pay overseas visits and speak in international conferences, receiving overseas anti-corruption officials and government/business leaders, releasing information through the online platform “International Perspective” on the ICAC’s corporate website and e-News, to promote Hong Kong’s strong rule of law, effective anti-graft system and clean society, as well as to extend the ICAC’s international liaison network.

In September 2023, ICB coordinated the Commissioner’s visit to Austria. During the visit, bilateral meetings were held with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the International Anti-Corruption Academy to explore joint advancement of international anti-corruption exchanges and cooperation. Subsequently, a working group was established between the ICAC and UNODC to map out future collaboration blueprints.

Additionally, experienced ICAC officers shared Hong Kong’s successful anti-corruption model, experiences, and good practices in various international events, and engaged in meetings with representatives from ACAs around the world to explore collaboration. These international events included the “Regional Workshop on Enhancing the Collaboration between Supreme Audit Institutions and Anti-Corruption Bodies”, the “International Seminar on Enhancing Capacity to Recover Stolen Assets in Southeast Asia”, the “Plenary Meeting of the South East Asia Justice Network”, the “11th Regional Conference of the Anti-Corruption Initiative for Asia and the Pacific” organised by the Asian Development Bank and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the “Pacific Anti-Corruption Regional Conference”, “Third Tashkent Anti-Corruption Forum” and the UNCAC training course organised by the United Nations Asia and Far East Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders.

In December 2023, UNODC held the 10th Session of the Conference of the States Parties to UNCAC in the United States. The ICAC sent representatives to participate in the conference as members of the delegation of the People’s Republic of China and on behalf of the IAACA. During the conference, the ICAC co-organised two special events with UNODC and other international organisations, offering global representatives insights into international collaboration in anti-graft law enforcement, as well as launching the *Policy Guide for National Anti-Corruption Authorities on Meaningful Youth Engagement in Anti-Corruption Work*. This policy guide, jointly developed by the ICAC, the IAACA and UNODC, serves as a practical reference for ACAs worldwide in strengthening youth participation in the fight against corruption. Additionally, ICAC officers shared experiences in financial investigations and corruption prevention at the special events organised by the United Nations Global Operational Network of Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement Authorities and the National Authority for Probity, Prevention and Fight Against Corruption of Morocco, respectively.

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| ICAC representatives attending the 10th Session of the Conference of the States Parties to the *United Nations Convention against Corruption* to share with participants from around the world on Hong Kong’s anti-corruption good practices |
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| Assistant Director of the Operations Department participating in the Pacific Anti-Corruption Regional Conference in Fiji to share with anti-corruption experts the ICAC’s proactive approach in the fight against corruption |
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***Anti-Corruption Collaboration with the Mainland and Macao Special Administrative Region***

The ICAC has maintained close connections with the counterparts in the Mainland and Macao. In 2023, the Commissioner paid official visits to the Mainland to exchange views on the latest anti-corruption initiatives and developments with the National Commission of Supervision (NCS), related central authorities and commissions of supervision of different provinces and cities. To fully support national anti-corruption policies and the development strategy of the GBA, the Commissioner also visited the GBA in July 2023 and met the heads of the Guangdong Provincial Commission of Supervision, the Commission Against Corruption of Macao (CCAC), and the municipal commissions of supervision of Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Dongguan, and Zhuhai. NCS and CCAC agreed to work hand in hand with the ICAC to implement collaborative initiatives, including organising joint practical workshops on law enforcement, developing a guide for doing business with integrity and providing joint anti-corruption training programmes for enterprises in the GBA. Under the support and coordination of the NCS, it is planned that the first joint practical workshop on law enforcement will be held in 2024. The ICAC is also actively working on the development of the guide for doing business with integrity.

The ICAC fully supports the national B&R Initiative and leverages Hong Kong’s anti-corruption experience to contribute to the high-quality development of the clean B&R. In October 2023, the Commissioner attended the “Third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation” held in Beijing, and shared at the “Thematic Forum on Clean Silk Road” the ICAC’s work and achievements in contributing to the clean B&R. The ICAC also participated in the “Belt and Road Business Mission to GBA for Overseas Enterprises in Hong Kong” organised by the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau in December 2023 and promoted the ICAC’s role in the development of the clean B&R to the business delegates from B&R countries.

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| Commissioner visiting authorities in the Mainland and Commission Against Corruption of Macao respectively for exchanging views on anti-corruption initiatives | |
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***Anti-Corruption Research and Analysis***

Research studies are part and parcel of the ICAC’s work in international cooperation. During the year, ICB conducted research projects on different subjects to support the anti-corruption capacity building training. In addition, ICB closely monitored Hong Kong’s probity rankings released by international institutions, and prepared analyses of these reports for devising suitable work strategies.

***International Association of Anti-Corruption Authorities***

Since January 2022, the ICAC has assumed the presidency of IAACA, taking a leadership role in the global anti-corruption arena and promoting international cooperation to effectively implement the UNCAC. In April 2023, the new office of the IAACA Secretariat was officially inaugurated, marking the ICAC’s full commitment to supporting the development of the IAACA.

Under the coordination of the ICAC, the IAACA organised international or regional training activities in 2023, enabling ACAs from around the world and international organisations to exchange experiences on topics such as financial and forensic investigations, international anti-corruption cooperation, as well as anti-corruption education and youth engagement.

In 2023, the IAACA held three Executive Committee Meetings and one General Meeting to discuss its work strategies and plans. The Commissioner also had 14 bilateral meetings with members of the Executive Committee to exchange views on the development of the IAACA and collaboration between the parties. In September 2023, the IAACA launched an official Facebook page to strengthen connections with graft-fighters around the world and share the latest anti-corruption information. International anti-corruption leaders were invited to share their insights on this Facebook page, thereby fostering the sharing of experiences.

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|  | Commissioner sharing his visions as President of the International Association of Anti-Corruption Authorities with members of the Association | | |
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| Commissioner greeting the Executive Committee members of the International Association of Anti-Corruption Authorities during their visit to the ICAC and the opening of the office of the Secretariat of the Association | | | |
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| With the support of the ICAC, the Secretariat of the International Association of Anti-Corruption Authorities holding an Executive Committee Meeting | | | |
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**Corporate Services**

***Finance Matters***

The ICAC is financed from a single head of expenditure. Its annual estimates are considered by the Advisory Committee on Corruption, before submission to the Chief Executive for approval in accordance with section 14(1) of the *Independent Commission Against Corruption Ordinance*. The ICAC’s accounts are administered according to government regulations and procedures and are subject to examination by the Director of Audit in the same way as the accounts of other government departments.

***Human Resource Management***

The establishment and staff strength of the ICAC as at 31 December 2023 are shown in Appendix 1. During the year, 76 departmental grades officers and 31 general and support grades officers ceased service with the ICAC, resulting in an overall wastage rate of 7.8%.

Figure 3-1: Establishment and Staff Strength

**Strength**

**1 341**

**Establishment**

**1 521**

ICAC staff are normally appointed on gratuity-bearing agreements. Some 78% of the staff are departmental grades and are remunerated on ICAC Pay Scale. Their pay and conditions of service are subject to the advice of the Standing Committee on Disciplined Services Salaries and Conditions of Service. The remaining staff members belong to general and support grades and are paid the same salaries as their counterparts in the civil service.

***Training and Development***

The Human Resource Development Section (HRD) is responsible for the training and development of departmental grades officers from the Corruption Prevention Department, the Community Relations Department, ICD and the general and support grades officers, as well as arranging general training for officers of the Operations Department. HRD also manages the training facilities of the ICAC, including its Learning Resources Centre, Cyber Learning Centre, Training Camp, multi-purpose hall and gymnasium.

In 2023, 65 in-house courses and seminars were conducted and officers were arranged to attend various training courses organised by government departments and external training institutions, with accumulated attendances of 3 325 and 1 237 officers respectively. They included a Training Series on National Development with seminars covering national policy and development planning, political system and government structure, new economic development and strategies, environment and ecosystem protection policies and the GBA’s innovative technology and development prospects, with a total of 983 officers attending.

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| Seminar on National Policy and Development Planning | |
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| Seminar on National Political System and Government Structure | Seminar on National Environment and Ecosystem Protection Policies and Development Strategies |
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In-house seminars and courses were also conducted to help officers keep abreast of the latest trend in their related fields as well as to further enhance their professional competencies and job skills. They included workshops on Media Handling, Content Marketing on Social Media, English Correspondence Writing according to International Protocols, International Laws, Conventions and Treaties, Event Management, Smartphone Photography and Videography, Software Applications and Team Building, with a total of 390 officers attending.

To enhance officers’ understanding about the District Council Election, inter-departmental briefings on District Council Election were organised for 824 officers who were deployed to provide support for the District Council Election. In addition, a total of 94 officers participated in Structured Management Training Curriculum covering presentation skills, effective interpersonal and networking skills, creative problem solving and decision making, and influencing and negotiation skills. Team Building Workshop for the Corruption Prevention Department and Induction Course for Departmental Grades Officers were organised and attended by 45 and 15 newly recruited officers respectively.

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| Event Management Workshop | Workshop on Media Handling | |
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| Smartphone Photography and Videography Workshop | | Team Building Workshop |
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| Team Building Workshop for the Corruption Prevention Department | | |

National Studies Programmes fully resumed in 2023. A total of 47 officers attended the National Studies Course for ICAC Officers held in Guangdong and the National Studies Course for ICAC Senior and Middle-Ranking Officers held at National Academy of Governance in Beijing. The subsequent sharing sessions by course participants on the National Studies Course was attended by 533 officers. Separately, two officers attended the Senior Management Programme organised by Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore.

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| National Studies Course for ICAC Senior and Middle-Ranking Officers held at National Academy of Governance |

In support of the designated “National Security Education Day” for 15 April each year, HRD organised a prize-winning online quiz in March to raise staff’s awareness of national security and enhance their knowledge of the *Constitution of the People's Republic of China*, *Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region* and *Law of the People's Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region*. A total of 140 officers participated in the quiz. Additionally, to enhance staff’s alertness to cyber security, all staff had to complete the Anti-Phishing Online Training.

***Staff Relations and Welfare***

Staff Relations Section (SR) is designated to take care of the well-being of staff members. To facilitate staff members to achieve a work-life balance, SR and the ICAC Staff Club organise wellness and welfare activities from time to time. Besides, they encourage staff to participate in volunteer services and charitable activities to offer assistance to the community in need, contributing to the society. Through the time-tested staff consultative committee system, SR has enhanced communications between management and staff on matters relating to conditions of service, welfare and issues of common concern. Moreover, SR implements the Staff Suggestions Scheme to encourage staff to make suggestions to improve resource management, work efficiency and environmental protection measures, etc.

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| **Sporting, recreational, wellness and social activities** | |
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| Certified aromatherapist delivering a workshop on aromatherapy and aroma massage | Staff attending “Horticultural Therapy” workshop to enjoy the fun of pot planting and making their own bonsai |
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| Staff actively participating in the Dragon Boat Race and ICAC sports competitions | |
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| Staff forming “family teams” with their children to experience the fun of orienteering | |
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| **Volunteer services and charitable activities** |
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| Staff participating in the volunteer services of the Standard Chartered Hong Kong Marathon and its Disciplined Services Challenge Cup |
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| Staff together with their family members and members of Youth Chapter of the “ICAC Club” joining the volunteer services of “CUHK Jockey Club Myopia Prevention Programme” to safeguard the health of children's eyes |
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| Staff together with their family members joining “Food Angel” - Meal Box Preparation to advocate the virtue of cherishing food and to promote positive energy for the community |
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| Staff participating in the Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics Hong Kong to make contribution for charity |
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| Commissioner and staff participating in the Lifeline Express Charity Run/Walk |
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| More than 60 staff, retired staff, “ICAC Ambassadors” and “ICAC Club” members joining Oxfam Trailwalker to provide volunteer services |

**Awards and Commendations**

In 2023, one officer was awarded the Hong Kong ICAC Medal for Distinguished Service and two officers were awarded the Hong Kong ICAC Medal for Meritorious Service. In addition, 130 officers received long service awards while seven officers and seven groups/sections received the ICAC Heads of Department’s Commendations.

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| Commissioner and directorate officers taking photo with the awardees of the Hong Kong ICAC Medal for Distinguished Service and the Hong Kong ICAC Medal for Meritorious Service | |
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**NON-LOCAL Visitors**

As one of the leading ACAs in the world, the ICAC regularly shares its experience in fighting and preventing corruption with organisations from all over the world. In the year, 1 584 persons from three international organisations and 40 countries and territories visited the Commission. On the other hand, the ICAC continued to maintain close contact with counterparts from other jurisdictions and shared with them our anti-corruption experiences through online platforms.

**Chapter 4 Operations Department**

**STATUTORY DUTIES**

* Receive and consider complaints alleging corrupt practices, and conduct investigations as far as practicable.
* Investigate any alleged or suspected offences under the *Prevention of Bribery Ordinance* (POBO) (Cap 201), the *Independent Commission Against Corruption Ordinance* (ICACO) (Cap 204) and the *Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Conduct) Ordinance* (ECICO) (Cap 554).
* Investigate any alleged or suspected offences of blackmail committed by a prescribed officer by or through the misuse of office.
* Investigate any conduct of a prescribed officer, which is connected with or conducive to corrupt practices, and report thereon to the Chief Executive.

**POWERS**

Operations Department (OPS) officers are empowered to conduct investigations, and exercise powers including arrest, detention, search, access to accounts, request for surrender of travel documents, restraint on suspects’ possession or control of assets, in accordance with law or, where appropriate, with court authorisation.

**OPERATIONS REVIEW COMMITTEE**

Appointed by the Chief Executive, the Operations Review Committee (ORC) operates independently in overseeing the investigative work of the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC). ORC members meet regularly to review reports prepared by OPS and give recommendations. These reports include:

* updates on the progress of major investigations;
* cases investigated for over a year;
* cases where ICAC bail has been granted for over six months;
* updates on prosecutions; and
* completed investigations.

For completed investigations, the ICAC will make reports to the ORC on recommendation to curtail those investigations, and where necessary, refer matters uncovered during the course of investigations to relevant government bureaux/departments (B/Ds) and public bodies for consideration of disciplinary or appropriate action.

**PROSECUTION**

The ICAC is responsible for undertaking corruption investigations, and analysing and forwarding the evidence gathered to the Department of Justice (DoJ) for consideration of institution of prosecution. Under the POBO, the consent of the Secretary for Justice is required for the prosecution of offences listed in Part II of the ordinance, including solicitation or acceptance of advantages, bribery, corrupt transactions with agents and possession of unexplained property.

**SOURCES OF CORRUPTION CASES**

***Corruption Complaints***

Members of the public may report any suspicion of corruption to the ICAC regardless of whether or not substantial evidence is available. They are encouraged to report corruption in person at the ICAC Report Centre or any of the seven ICAC Regional Offices. Alternatively, they may report corruption via the Complaint Hotline (25 266 366) or by letter (GPO Box 1000). Directorate officers of OPS consider all new complaints received on each working day to decide whether to conduct investigation or, where appropriate, refer them to other government B/Ds and public bodies for action.

While the public is encouraged to report corruption, it is necessary to ensure that the report mechanism is not abused. Under section 13B of the ICACO, any person who intentionally makes a false report to an ICAC officer shall be guilty of an offence. Besides, to ensure the ICAC’s effective enforcement of the anti-corruption laws and to protect the reputation of the subject of an investigation, section 30 of the POBO provides that the details of a corruption investigation or the identity of the subject person shall not be disclosed without lawful authority or reasonable excuse.

***Proactive Approach***

Since corruption is an insidious crime among consenting parties, OPS adopts a proactive strategy to detect unreported corruption and identify corruption-prone sectors. This approach demonstrates the ICAC’s determination to seek out and eradicate corruption wherever it may be, and is proven effective in uncovering serious cases of corruption with a view to safeguarding public interests.

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|  | The 2023 District Council Election was held smoothly on 10 December. Over 900 ICAC officers were deployed to polling stations across the territory that day to handle enquiries and complaints from the public once received, with a view to ensuring a clean and just election |
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**STATISTICS ON CORRUPTION COMPLAINTS**

In 2023, OPS received a total of 2 001 corruption complaints (excluding election complaints[[3]](#footnote-3)), of which 1 566 were pursuable complaints. These figures represented a year-on-year increase of 9% (or 166 and 127 complaints respectively) in the number of complaints received and the number of pursuable complaints. A breakdown of the corruption complaints in 2022 and 2023 by sectors is shown in Table 4-1. The three government B/Ds, public bodies and private sector industries attracting the most corruption complaints in 2023 are shown in Appendix 2.

**Table 4-1: Corruption Complaints (Excluding Election Complaints)**

**Received in 2022 and 2023 by Sectors**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Received in 2022 | | Received in 2023 | |
| Pursuable Complaints | Non-Pursuable Complaints | Pursuable Complaints | Non-Pursuable Complaints |
| Government Bureaux/ Departments | 372 | 161 | 298 | 153 |
| Public Bodies | 77 | 44 | 80 | 31 |
| Private Sector | 990 | 191 | 1 188 | 251 |

[The total number of election complaints received by the ICAC in 2023 was 84 (79 of which were pursuable), including 39 (37 of which were pursuable) related to the Rural Ordinary Election held in January 2023, and 36 (34 of which were pursuable) related to the District Council Ordinary Election held on 10 December 2023.](https://www.elections.gov.hk/dc2023/chi/index.html)

**INVESTIGATIONS AND PROSECUTIONS**

***Investigations***

OPS initiated investigation on 1 508 new cases (excluding election cases) in 2023, recording a year-on-year increase of 7%. During the year, 1 503 cases were completed and 98 were pending, awaiting legal advice. The number of cases carried forward and number of cases completed in 2022 and 2023 are set out in Table 4-2. Separately, investigation was initiated on 78 new election cases in 2023. The time spent on the outstanding investigations is shown in Appendix 3.

**Table 4-2: Statistics on Caseload in 2022 and 2023**

**(Excluding Election Cases)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2022 | | | 2023 | | |
| Cases brought forward from previous years |  | 1 087 |  |  | 904 | △ |
| Plus New cases during the year | + | 1 409 | △ | + | 1 508 |  |
| Total caseload during the year |  | 2 496 | △ |  | 2 412 | △ |
| Minus Cases completed |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| those commenced during the year | - | 662 | △ | - | 737 |  |
| those brought forward from previous year | - | 930 | △ | - | 766 |  |
| Cases carried forward |  | 904 | △ |  | 909 | \* |

△ Figures revised to take into account the reclassification of cases and updating of the number of cases completed

* Time spent on investigating the cases is shown in Appendix 3

***Prosecutions and Cautions***

Among the 211 persons prosecuted in 2023, 13 were government servants, six were from public bodies and 167 from the private sector. The rest were 18 private individuals involved in corruption investigations concerning government B/Ds and public bodies and seven involved in election offences.

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| A director and a senior sales manager of two air-conditioning maintenance contractors were respectively sentenced to two years and one and a half years in jail at the District Court for offering bribes of over $1 million to a director of a hotel group for air-conditioning maintenance contracts of a hotel in Macao worth totalling $34 million. In sentencing, the Judge remarked that offering advantages to an agent was a serious offence and that the court would not tolerate any corrupt acts. The case involved bribes of over $1 million offered over the span of two and a half years, hence custodial sentences were inevitable. | | |  |
|  | Three flight attendants of an airline company were sentenced to jail terms ranging from five to six months at the District Court for accepting bribes totalling about $90,000 for assisting others to enjoy the staff benefit of purchasing air tickets at concessionary rates. | | |
| Two driving test candidates offered a bribe (in the sum of $2,000 and $500) to the examiner with an intent to get a pass after making a mistake in the driving test of the Transport Department. One of them was sentenced to four months’ imprisonment at a Magistrates’ Court. The other, who was sentenced to six months’ imprisonment at a Magistrates’ Court, was reprimanded by the Magistrate for defying the law blatantly. It was held by the Magistrate that the corruption offence committed was serious in nature. It struck at the heart of Hong Kong’s interest and values, and tarnished the clean social environment. The court had to mete out a deterrent punishment to convey a proper signal to members of the public. | | |  |
|  | | The ICAC had so far charged 26 people for bribery over referral for employment in relation to the Three-runway System Project of Hong Kong International Airport. Most of the defendants were site team leaders of a sub-contractor of the project. Twenty defendants had pleaded guilty or were found guilty after trial, receiving sentences up to 16 months in jail. Four others were awaiting plea or trial. | |
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The guidelines issued by the DoJ provide that upon legal advice, a caution may be administered by the ICAC for minor offences when it is not in the public interest to prosecute. In 2023, among the 25 persons who were formally cautioned, two were involved in election cases. A breakdown of the number of persons prosecuted or cautioned by the ICAC over the last decade is provided in Appendix 4.

For relatively minor electoral breaches, the ICAC will issue warning letters to the offenders on the DoJ’s advice if it is considered not in the public interest to prosecute or caution the offenders. In 2023, a total of 60 persons were given warnings by the ICAC for minor election offences concerning failure to lodge election returns in accordance with the requirements set out in sections 19, 23(3) and 37 of the ECICO.

The number of prosecutions and number of cautions in 2023 are set out by categories in Appendices 5 to 7.

***Referrals***

During the year, the ICAC referred 387 complaints of non-corruption nature to relevant government B/Ds and public bodies. Details of the referrals are provided at Appendix 8.

**DISCIPLINARY AND/OR ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION AGAINST GOVERNMENT SERVANTS**

On recommendation of the ORC, reports on alleged misconduct of 62 government servants were forwarded to relevant government B/Ds for consideration of disciplinary and/or administrative action in 2023. Cases involving 143 government servants (including 17 in referrals made in 2023) were completed in the year, resulting in disciplinary action taken against 101 government servants (including eight in referrals made in 2023).

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|  | An Assistant Officer II of the Correctional Services Department was sentenced to six months’ imprisonment at a Magistrates’ Court for accepting bribes totalling over $10,000 for introducing various unauthorised articles into Lai Chi Kok Reception Centre for a prisoner. In sentencing, the Magistrate remarked that the case involved offences of serious nature, warranting a deterrent sentence. The Magistrate also made a restitution order in respect of the bribes concerned. Two co-defendants found guilty of offering an advantage to a public servant were sentenced to jail terms of six months and three months respectively. |
|  | A Police Sergeant was sentenced to 18 months’ imprisonment at the District Court for accepting a bribe of $500,000 for assisting a businessman over an investigation regarding a debt collection matter involving a triad society. In sentencing, the Judge reprimanded the defendant for using his connection in the Police to commit the offence which undermined the public expectation and the trust placed on the Police, warranting a deterrent sentence. |
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**REPORT CENTRE AND DETENTION CENTRE**

***Report Centre***

The Report Centre receives reports and handles enquiries from the public on a 24-hour basis. Reports and enquiries made to the ICAC Regional Offices are also referred to the Report Centre for handling. In 2023, 71% of the complainants identified themselves when reporting corruption.

**Table 4-3: Mode of Reporting Corruption Complaints in 2023^**

**(Excluding Election Complaints)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | All Complaints | Non-anonymous Complaints |
| By phone | 38.8% | 52.5% |
| In person | 22.8% | 32.0% |
| By letter/fax | 25.6% | 4.9% |
| Referred by government bureaux/departments and public bodies | 8.1% | 8.2% |
| By electronic means | 4.6% | 2.5% |

^ Total percentage of each item may not equal 100% as figures are rounded up or down to one decimal place

***Detention Centre***

OPS provides comprehensive detention facilities as the ICAC’s power to detain arrested persons is provided for in section 10A(2) of the ICACO. Persons under detention will receive a *Notice to Persons in Custody* listing the rights and entitlements of persons detained as set out in the *ICAC (Treatment of Detained Persons) Order* (Cap 204A). This Notice is also displayed in detention cells, interview rooms and various conspicuous places inside the Detention Centre.

In 2023, OPS arrested 629 persons, including 18 government servants, as compared to 495 persons including 32 government servants, in 2022.

Justices of the Peace visited the Detention Centre on 24 occasions in 2023 and received requests or complaints from detainees. Such visits ensure that the detention facilities of the ICAC are subject to external monitoring. The ICAC will report every visit to the Justices of the Peace Secretariat, detailing the requests or complaints made by detainees, and also the follow-up actions taken.

**QUICK RESPONSE TEAM**

The Quick Response Team deals with minor cases, enabling other investigation teams in OPS to focus on cases of substance and complexity. Notwithstanding the minor nature of the cases, the investigation reports concerned are submitted to the ORC for scrutiny. In 2023, the Quick Response Team initiated investigation on 231 new cases, which accounted for 15% of all pursuable cases (excluding election cases) in the year.

**FORENSIC ACCOUNTING**

Established in 2011, the Forensic Accounting Group (FAG) comprises a group of officers, all with the qualification of a certified public accountant and extensive forensic accounting experience, and most with internationally-recognised professional qualifications in anti-money laundering, fraud examination or other financial areas. The FAG provides professional support to investigating officers in dealing with cases of increasing complexity from a financial and accounting perspective. The support includes the provision of expert opinion in court, the conduct of financial analyses and investigations, and assistance in search operations and interviews with relevant professionals. In 2023, the FAG provided professional support in a number of cases, handling financial analyses involving an aggregate sum of approximately $3 billion.

In addition, FAG officers conducted a number of training courses for OPS officers as well as law enforcers and regulators from local and overseas agencies to enhance their skills and knowledge in financial investigation. Participants of these courses included members of the Hong Kong Institute of Certified Public Accountants, senior managerial staff of local banks, students undertaking the Master of Accounting Programme at the University of Hong Kong, officers from the Commission Against Corruption of Macao, officers from the Corruption Eradication Commission of Indonesia, officers from the Indonesian National Police, prosecutors from Indonesia and officers from Senegal’s anti-corruption agency. Besides, FAG officers also shared their experience in financial investigation at various international conferences and forums, including the “11th Regional Conference of the Anti-Corruption Initiative for Asia and the Pacific” co-organised by the Asian Development Bank and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, and the “7th International Forum on International Cooperation Regarding Persons Sought for Corruption and Asset Recovery (International Cooperation and Denying Safe Haven to Corruption)” co-organised by the Beijing Normal University G20 Anti-Corruption and Asset Recovery Research Centre and the Shanghai East China University of Political Science and Law.

**ASSET RECOVERY OFFICE**

Corruption and money laundering are often inextricable. While the origin of illicit funds obtained from corrupt activities are often concealed through money laundering, the ICAC will analyse fund flows and trace proceeds of crime when investigating corruption and related crimes. Money laundering offences facilitated by or connected with corruption will also be pursued if revealed in the course of corruption investigations.

The ICAC established the Proceeds of Crime Section (now known as the “Asset Recovery Office”) in 2010 to deal with restraint, disclosure and confiscation of assets under the *Organized and Serious Crimes Ordinance* (Cap 455) in order to deprive criminals of their crime proceeds. In 2021, the ICAC restructured the Proceeds of Crime Section to form the current Asset Recovery Office and incorporated it into the FAG, aiming to enhance the effectiveness in recovering crime proceeds. As at the end of December 2023, assets valued at $1.54 billion continued to remain restrained, of which assets amounting to $109.9 million were restrained pursuant to six restraint orders issued by court during the year. In addition, the Asset Recovery Office also secured confiscation of assets with a total value of $72.69 million with five confiscation orders obtained from court during the year.

In accordance with section 14C of the POBO, applications may be made to court by the ICAC to restrain assets in the possession or under the control of suspects. As at the end of December 2023, assets valued at $67.19 million remained restrained under the POBO.

Being an inter-governmental body dedicated to preventing global money laundering and terrorist financing, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) recommends jurisdictions to identify, assess, understand and mitigate money laundering and terrorist financing risks specific to them. To address the risks, Hong Kong has put in place a robust and effective regime conforming to the international standards set by the FATF. While a comprehensive risk assessment is conducted periodically to examine money laundering and terrorist financing threats facing the territory and its business community, continued efforts are made to explore optimised initiatives to address these threats by individual sectors.

Hong Kong is currently conducting the third money laundering and terrorist financing risk assessment. As one of the stakeholders in the assessment, the ICAC will do its best to cooperate and provide information and data to assist in the assessment of corruption-related money laundering threats.

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|  | | Four employees of a bank conspired together to accept bribes of over $200,000 for divulging confidential information of over 680 customers in the bank computer system to others for touting personal loan business. Three of them were sentenced to jail terms ranging from 10 to 45 months, and the other to a community service order of 240 hours. The Judge also ordered two of the defendants to make a restitution of the crime proceeds. In sentencing, the Judge reprimanded the four defendants for committing the offences premeditatedly in an organised manner. The offences constituted a breach of trust, undermined the reputation of the bank and eventually affected the public’s confidence in the banking system. | |
| A parent was sentenced to four months’ imprisonment at a Magistrates’ Court for offering a bribe of $20,000 in cash to a headmistress of a government primary school in a bid to secure a primary one placement for her son. In sentencing, the Magistrate remarked that bribing public officials was a serious offence which would undermine a clean society and fair competition. | | |  |
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|  | A former lay member of the Medical Council of Hong Kong was sentenced to two and a half years’ imprisonment at the District Court for abusing her public office by disclosing personal information of a complainant and details of the complaint to tout business as a solicitor and purse private gain. In sentencing, the Judge remarked that the defendant had successfully obtained business deals by making use of the information obtained by her public office. The behaviour was not acceptable even though it only happened once. | | |
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**WITNESS PROTECTION**

The success in criminal investigation and prosecution always hinges on whether the witnesses can testify in a safe and uninterrupted manner for the prosecution in criminal proceedings. In this regard, witness protection programmes are established and implemented in accordance with the *Witness Protection Ordinance* (Cap 564) to provide protection and assistance to witnesses whose personal safety or well-being may be at risk as a result of acting as witnesses for the ICAC. The Commission has a dedicated section to deal with matters concerning witness protection, and the officers deployed to this section have all received intensive training in the specialised areas of firearms, witness protection tactics and confrontation management.

**OPERATIONAL LIAISON**

The ICAC is committed to forging partnership with various sectors of the community in its fight against corruption. To this end, regular operational liaison is maintained with government departments and public bodies to facilitate effective communication. In 2023, senior officers of OPS continued to hold liaison meetings with the disciplined services and individual government departments to discuss matters of mutual interest. In June, an Assistant Director of OPS promoted the probity culture to civil servants under the Ethical Leadership Programme. In December, the Head of Operations briefed directorate and senior officers participating in the Advanced Leadership Enhancement Programme of the Civil Service College on the importance of maintaining a clean government and civil service. Directorate officers of OPS and the Prosecutions Division of the DoJ also met regularly to exchange views on legal and enforcement issues warranting concern. The meeting held in October 2023 was co-chaired by the Head of Operations and the Director of Public Prosecutions.

As sustained efforts to enhance communication with public bodies, OPS stepped up collaboration with the management of a number of public bodies including the Hospital Authority, the Hong Kong Jockey Club, the Hong Kong Productivity Council, the Airport Authority Hong Kong and the Urban Renewal Authority through meetings or seminars to consolidate their probity culture by optimising their integrity management systems and enhancing staff awareness of corruption.

Meanwhile, OPS continued to work closely with private sector stakeholders and regulators to strengthen cooperation in areas such as law enforcement and internal training. From time to time, OPS held work meetings with the Hong Kong Monetary Authority, the Securities and Futures Commission (SFC), the Accounting and Financial Reporting Council (AFRC), the Insurance Authority (IA) and the Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing Limited with a view to maintaining a robust and clean financial system in Hong Kong. Following the signing of separate Memoranda of Understanding with the SFC and the AFRC, the ICAC conducted the first-ever tripartite operation with the two in 2023 to tackle suspected corruption and corporate fraud. The case involved two Hong Kong-listed companies which were suspected to have falsified corporate transactions totalling nearly HK$200 million. As regards the flourishing insurance industry, the ICAC signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the IA in October 2023 to enhance collaboration and achieve synergy in the common fight against corruption and illegal conduct in the industry.

As for the building maintenance and management industry, the ICAC continued to maintain close liaison with stakeholders such as the Home Affairs Department, the Hong Kong Police Force, the Property Management Services Authority, the Urban Renewal Authority and the Competition Commission to combat and prevent corruption and other illegal conduct through law enforcement, prevention and education. As a result of a large-scale operation mounted by the ICAC in early 2023 targeting a corruption syndicate involved in building management and maintenance projects, 23 persons were prosecuted in September, including the head of the syndicate, staff of property management companies, contractors and a consultant, members of an owners’ corporation and a number of middlemen. This case well demonstrated to the public and stakeholders the ICAC’s commitment to bringing the corrupt to justice, with a view to curbing corruption and related crimes in the industry, and protecting the interest of the public and property owners.

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|  | In early 2023, the ICAC mounted a large-scale operation codenamed “Fire Net”, neutralising a sophisticated corruption syndicate. To date, 23 arrestees including backbone members of the syndicate have been charged with conspiracy to offer and accept bribes totalling over $6.5 million and conspiracy to defraud in respect of various contracts worth a total of around $520 million in the recent five years. The case marks the largest prosecution in relation to building management and maintenance in the ICAC’s history. |
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**INTERNATIONAL AND MAINLAND LIAISON AND MUTUAL ASSISTANCE**

With increasing corruption activities across boundaries, international cooperation is crucial in the fight against corruption. The International and Mainland (Operational) Liaison Section of OPS is responsible for maintaining effective operational liaison and cooperation with international, Mainland and Macao anti-corruption and law enforcement agencies. In 2023, as Hong Kong returned to normalcy after the pandemic, OPS sent officers to attend different international conferences in person, and mutual case assistance and collaboration also became more frequent.

Pursuant to the *Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Ordinance* (Cap 525), the *United Nations Convention against Corruption* (UNCAC) and the *United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime*, authorised ICAC officers may assist in conducting inquiries into corruption-related matters in response to requests from overseas law enforcement agencies and judicial authorities. In 2023, the ICAC handled eight such requests, while its overseas counterparts offered assistance in response to two requests from the ICAC.

The Commission believes that collaboration with its counterparts from other jurisdictions as well as international and regional organisations is conducive to facilitating global efforts in preventing and eradicating corruption. In 2023, the ICAC, in the name of Hong Kong, China or as a member of the Chinese delegation, participated in events organised by various international organisations, including meetings of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Anti-Corruption and Transparency Experts Working Group (ACTWG) and Network of Anti-Corruption Authorities and Law Enforcements Agencies (ACT-NET) held in Palm Springs, the United States in February; the 11th Regional Conference of the Anti-Corruption Initiative for Asia and the Pacific co-organised by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in Manila, Philippines in May; meetings of the Global Operational Network of Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement Authorities under the auspices of the United Nations (GlobE Network) held in Vienna, Austria in July; and the 10th Session of the Conference of the States Parties (COSP) to the UNCAC held in Atlanta, the United States in December.

**INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

***Computer Forensics***

The continuous advancement and penetration of information technology (IT) has made it an integral part of not only our daily lives, but also commercial activities and public services. Criminals are no exception. They exploit IT or electronic devices, such as smartphones, to communicate and even carry out illicit activities. To cope with the challenge in this respect, the Computer Forensics Section has a pivotal role to play. Computer forensics refers to the process of collecting, analysing and interpreting data in computer systems, networks and digital devices to secure and restore evidence of an offence. The Section not only provides support to frontline investigators in processing and analysing electronic data, but also assists them in extracting from electronic devices evidence which is admissible in court. In 2023, the Section took part in various operations and processed about 250 terabytes of data (equivalent to about 250 million computer files) contained in about 900 electronic devices seized. Apart from the work mentioned above, the Section is also responsible for maintaining close liaison with other law enforcement agencies and the IT industry to keep abreast of the latest technological development and trend in IT and computer forensics.

The ICAC has been incorporating artificial intelligence in different detection and ancillary systems to keep pace with the cutting-edge technology for continuous enhancement of investigation and work efficiency. The Computer Forensics Section will strive to strengthen its capability in the independent development of data processing software to enhance reliability and efficiency of the solutions it provides.

***Information Technology Support***

The mandate of the Information Technology Management Unit is to provide professional advice and support and implement IT and information security policy for the ICAC. The Unit is committed to maintaining a secure, reliable and stable IT infrastructure to facilitate the daily operation of the Commission. Meanwhile, efforts are made to ensure continuous development and enhancement of the application systems, so as to streamline the ICAC’s administrative and investigative processes and enhance work efficiency, with a view to meeting the evolving IT and operational needs. For example, to meet the upsurging demand for online activities under the new normal, the Unit provides facilities in ICAC premises for officers to organise and attend various online meetings, sharing sessions, and training activities. The Unit is dedicated to providing convenient and efficient computer systems for the ICAC and ensuring that it stays abreast of the latest technological developments.

**STAFF DISCIPLINE**

***Internal Investigation and Monitoring***

The ICAC’s Internal Investigation and Monitoring Group is responsible for investigating breaches of discipline and allegations of corruption against ICAC staff, as well as non-criminal complaints against the ICAC or its staff. Operationally, the Group is under the direct command of the Director of Investigation (Private Sector), who reports to the Commissioner.

Appointed by the Chief Executive, the ICAC Complaints Committee monitors and reviews all non-criminal complaints against the ICAC or its staff, and advises on optimisation of the ICAC’s operational procedures.

All complaints of corruption and related criminal offences against the ICAC staff are referred to the DoJ for advice. Every allegation is examined and considered to decide whether there is sufficient basis to warrant a criminal investigation and whether the investigation should be carried out by the Group. All criminal investigations completed by the Group are reported to the ORC, while other cases are referred to the appropriate authorities for investigation.

On the DoJ’s advice, no complaint of corruption and related criminal offences concerning ICAC officers required investigation during the year.

***Non-Criminal Complaints Against the ICAC or its Staff***

During the year, 20 non-criminal complaints made against the ICAC or its staff were processed. One of the complaints was received in 2021 and it was found unsubstantiated. Of the remaining 19 complaints, which were received in 2023, one was found substantiated, 14 unsubstantiated and the remaining four still under investigation as at the end of the year.

The substantiated case involved an ICAC officer at the Report Centre who was impolite and impatient while handling a citizen’s telephone enquiry. As the officer left the Commission subsequently, no disciplinary action was taken. However, to avoid reoccurrence of similar incidents, all officers of the Report Centre were reminded of the importance of maintaining courtesy and patience when handling public enquiries.

**TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT**

In order to meet the public demand for a clean society, the Training and Development (T&D) Group is committed to providing training and impetus for the development of anti-corruption professionals with the highest level of integrity and competence.

The T&D Group is mainly responsible for:

* recruitment of departmental grades staff in OPS;
* provision of training for ICAC officers on investigation procedures and skills, legal knowledge, etc.;
* formulation of career development policies, including the Mentoring Programme for young investigating officers; and
* development and management of the Information and Knowledge Management System of OPS.

Training provided for newly recruited Assistant Investigators spans a two‑and‑a‑half year period and is split into three induction courses totalling 24 weeks interspersed with on-the-job training. A 16-week induction course commencing May 2023 provided 33 recently appointed Assistant Investigators with comprehensive training covering a wide range of subjects, including the application of laws, rules of evidence, investigation procedures and skills, computer forensics, financial investigation, interviewing techniques, physical fitness and team building.

To enhance leadership and professional capabilities of serving investigating officers, the T&D Group organised Investigators’ Command Course 2023 for newly promoted Investigators.

With the implementation of the *Law of the People’s Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region* (NSL) on 30 June 2020, the ICAC bears the responsibility and shall perform its duties in safeguarding national security. In this regard, the NSL has been included in the syllabuses of induction courses and examinations in respect of internal regular training programmes and promotion exercises. ICAC officers are required to have a full understanding of the NSL provisions and the significance behind enactment of the law.

OPS continued to hold the joint anti-corruption workshop in collaboration with the University of Hong Kong, Chinese University of Hong Kong and City University of Hong Kong for a total of about 300 students undertaking the Postgraduate Certificate in Laws (PCLL) Programme. These workshops, which were held between October 2023 and January 2024, targeted the future pillars of the legal profession, highlighting the importance of the rule of law and the joint efforts for combatting graft, while reinforcing the students’ understanding of Hong Kong’s anti-corruption regime and the ICAC’s law enforcement work.

***Post-Secondary Student Summer Internship Programme of OPS***

For the first time ever, OPS engaged four tertiary students for an eight-week summer internship programme between July and August 2023. Apart from receiving three-day training on the basics of investigation and legal knowledge, the interns were deployed to assist in the production of training materials, anti-corruption promotional videos and knowledge management products; conduct research on selected legal topics; and engage in software design, development and testing. They were also invited to share with the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner their experience during the period. The Programme provided tertiary students with an invaluable learning experience, engaging them in meaningful activities and contribution to anti-corruption efforts.

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| For the first time ever, OPS engaged tertiary students for an eight-week summer internship programme to allow these youngsters to experience firsthand the work of the ICAC and understand the importance of upholding integrity and the rule of law. They were deployed to various positions, and were also given the opportunity to receive three-day training on the basics of investigation and legal knowledge. The picture shows the interns participating in a simulated arrest exercise. |  |
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***ICAC Recruitment Experience Day***

To tie in with its latest recruitment exercise for Investigators and Assistant Investigators, the ICAC held the Recruitment Experience Day twice in August 2023 for potential job applicants to gain firsthand experience of anti-corruption work and a better understanding of the ICAC. The response to this activity was overwhelming, with a total of more than 800 participants received. Major highlights of the Recruitment Experience Day included a recruitment talk, tours of the ICAC’s facilities and simulated enforcement actions including arrest, search and suspect interviewing. Participants could apply for the posts of Investigator and Assistant Investigator on the spot and attend a physical fitness test. Those who passed the physical fitness test would have their results recorded and be recognised as meeting the relevant requirements for the recruitment exercise of the year.

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| The ICAC organised its first-ever Recruitment Experience Day to tie in with its recruitment exercise for the posts of Investigator and Assistant Investigator, allowing potential job applicants to gain a better understanding of the ICAC and firsthand experience of anti-corruption work. | |
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***ICAC Leadership and Executive Development Programme No. 40***

In November 2023, OPS conducted the three-week ICAC Leadership and Executive Development (LED) Programme, which was attended by 31 participants from 15 jurisdictions, including representatives from law enforcement agencies of Hong Kong, the Mainland, Macao and overseas countries. Restructured from the former ICAC Chief Investigators’ Command Course, which had provided training for over 800 participants worldwide since the late 1970s, the LED Programme is a major initiative of the ICAC in enhancing international anti-graft cooperation. For the first time, politically appointed principal officials of the HKSAR Government were invited to speak at the LED Programme and share their insights, as were other guest speakers who were all renowned leaders in their respective fields. Through case studies, ICAC representatives illustrated to course participants the ICAC’s “three-pronged” strategy encompassing law enforcement, prevention and education, as well as investigative skills and the application of technology. In the six-day study tour to Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, participants visited various authorities including its Commission of Supervision, where they were given the opportunity to gain firsthand knowledge of the Mainland’s latest development in integrity building, industrial technology and environmental conservation. Upon completion of the LED Programme, participants all brought home insights and experience learnt from each other, and laid a solid foundation for fostering international collaboration in the future.

During the year, OPS conducted a number of in-house courses, seminars, and also professional knowledge workshops on the safeguarding of national security, which recorded an accumulated attendance of 3 639 officers. The training covered a diverse array of subjects including the safeguarding of national security, financial regulation and regulatory technology in anti-money laundering, Listing Rules of the Hong Kong Stock Exchange, as well as the *Competition Ordinance* (the briefing on which was given by the Competition Commission).

Other than the training mentioned above, 93 OPS officers benefitted from local external courses organised by other institutions; 51 participated in Mainland courses and study tours to learn about national affairs and integrity building on the Mainland; and 22 attended training organised by overseas agencies.

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|  | 31 representatives from Hong Kong, the Mainland, Macao and overseas law enforcement agencies participated in the ICAC Leadership and Executive Development (LED) Programme No. 40. Restructured from the former ICAC Chief Investigators’ Command Course, the LED Programme is one of the ICAC’s major initiatives in enhancing international anti-graft cooperation, providing training for over 800 local and overseas participants since the late 1970s. |
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***Training Facilities***

The ICAC Building is equipped with modern training facilities, including a shooting range complex, a multipurpose hall, a gymnasium, computer training rooms, a mock court and video interview training rooms. The ICAC Training Camp in Tuen Mun has comprehensive classroom facilities, an outdoor high event challenge course, and mock rooms for scenario-based training on arrest and search operations.

**HONG KONG INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY AGAINST CORRUPTION**

The Chief Executive announced in the 2023 *Policy Address* that the ICAC would establish the Hong Kong International Academy Against Corruption (HKIAAC) in the first quarter of 2024. The HKIAAC, which is situated in the ICAC Building and set up under OPS, is manned by officers redeployed from OPS, the Corruption Prevention Department and the Community Relations Department.

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|  | The Chief Executive announced in his Policy Address 2023 that the ICAC would establish the Hong Kong International Academy Against Corruption in the first quarter of next year. |
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The four strategic foci of the HKIAAC are: (i) to organise professional anti-corruption training programmes and serve as a hub for exchange of graft fighting experience for participants worldwide; (ii) to offer strategic and targeted practical training for leaders from the local public and private sectors to strengthen their anti-corruption capabilities; (iii) to optimise internal training for ICAC officers to enhance their professional standards; and (iv) to provide an exchange and academic research platform for professionals and academics from the Mainland, Hong Kong and overseas to facilitate experience sharing.

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| In an effort to contribute to building a “Clean Silk Road”, the ICAC hosted the first Professional Anti-corruption Training in Major Infrastructure Projects for Belt and Road countries, aiming to enhance the anti-graft capabilities of participating countries through experience sharing. |  |
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To consolidate experience and provide reference for the development of the HKIAAC, the ICAC organised a series of professional training courses in 2023 as pilot programmes of the HKIAAC. In July, at the invitation of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the ICAC hosted anti-corruption workshops in Vienna, Austria for over 100 representatives of GlobE Network members to share on how the ICAC was leveraging the latest technologies to enhance investigative capabilities. In September, the ICAC provided professional training in financial investigation, computer forensics and intelligence management to law enforcement officers of the Commission Against Corruption, Macao. In October, a seven-day “Professional Anti-corruption Training in Major Infrastructure Projects” was organised for anti-corruption agencies of 13 Belt and Road countries and the Macao SAR. Through experience sharing and case studies on major infrastructure projects, seasoned ICAC officers provided course participants with an in-depth analysis of the corruption risks involved and relevant safeguards, plus insights on cultivation of an integrity-based management culture. In addition, the programme also included site visits to study various major infrastructure projects in Hong Kong and the Mainland, whereby participants could get to see by themselves China’s quality development, its anti-graft achievements in major infrastructure projects over the years, and its determination in combatting corruption. During the year, the ICAC also offered separate training programmes to anti-corruption agencies of eight countries (namely Indonesia, Kenya, Mauritius, Mongolia, Morocco, Senegal, South Africa and Thailand) and organised a number of international training workshops to share its anti-corruption experience. As regards local training, the ICAC provided tailor-made professional anti-corruption programmes for senior managerial staff from different industries including the banking, engineering, construction and insurance industries, so as to enhance the anti-corruption awareness and capacities of their respective organisations or sectors.

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|  | For the first time, the ICAC was invited by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to host anti-corruption workshops at its headquarters in Vienna for representatives of the members of the Global Operational Network of Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement Authorities, to share with them how the ICAC leveraged the latest technology to effectively crack corruption cases. |
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|  | The ICAC’s Professional Anti-Corruption Training in Banking Management, attended by representatives of over 30 locally licensed banks, was the first-ever high-level professional anti-corruption training programme in Hong Kong featuring real corruption case analysis. |
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**Chapter 5 Corruption Prevention Department**

**STATUTORY DUTIES**

* Examine the practices and procedures of government departments and public bodies with a view to securing revision of work methods or procedures which may be susceptible to corrupt practices.
* Provide corruption prevention advisory services to public organisations and, on request, private organisations and individuals.

**STRATEGIES**

* Adopt a partnership approach with government departments and public bodies to prevent corruption through good governance and internal control systems.
* Accord priority to areas of public administration impacting on people’s livelihood or safety, issues of public interest or concern, and programmes and projects involving substantial amounts of public money.
* Adopt a prevention-at-source strategy by providing proactive and early corruption prevention input to government departments and public bodies in respect of their new initiatives, services and systems, and offer concurrent corruption prevention services at key stages including formulation and implementation of major programmes (such as large-scale infrastructure projects) to ensure corruption prevention safeguards are put in place in a timely manner.
* Establish partnership with the regulatory authorities/regime and professional bodies of different industries to enhance the corruption prevention capabilities of the private sector by incorporating corruption prevention and integrity elements in the trade regulations/codes of practice and providing preventive guidelines and training.
* Collaborate with the relevant government departments and organisations for promoting the digitalisation of work processes and public services to enhance their corruption prevention capabilities.

**REVIEW OF WORK**

During the year, the Corruption Prevention Department (CPD) continued to address and prevent corruption risks in public administration with emphasis on issues which are important to people’s livelihood or public safety, issues of public interest or concern, and programmes and projects involving substantial amount of public money, covering areas such as public works, public procurement, public health and safety, government funding schemes, law enforcement and regulatory functions. It also continued to help maintain a corruption-free environment and level-playing field for business with a view to facilitating sustainable economic development in Hong Kong.

Deliverables achieved in 2023:

* Completed 71 assignment reports, covering mainly detailed review of corruption risks in specific systems and related practices in government bureaux/departments (B/Ds) and public bodies, with recommendations on preventive measures.
* Provided tailored advice to B/Ds and public bodies on 636 occasions, mainly regarding the formulation/review of legislation, policies or procedures and adoption of corruption prevention safeguards at an early stage.
* Offered advisory service to private sector entities on 1 447 occasions upon request, and handled 1 110 public enquiries through the Corruption Prevention Advisory Service (CPAS) hotline.
* Provided corruption prevention information and services by leveraging the CPAS Web Portal (recorded over 207 000 visits to the web portal and about 108 100 downloads or views of corruption prevention resources).
* Conducted corruption prevention training for over 30 600 persons from both public and private sectors.
* Produced and promoted corruption prevention publications such as the *Corruption Prevention Guide for Property Management Companies*, *Corruption Prevention Guide on Procurement for Public Bodies*, *Corruption Prevention Good Practices on Conveyancing and Related Transactions for Law Firms*, *Corruption Prevention Guide on Governance and Internal Control for Non-governmental Organisations*, *Corruption Prevention Guide for Construction Industry* and *Corruption Prevention Guide – Corruption Prevention through Digitalisation*, illustrating the corruption risks and recommending safeguards for reference by different sectors. The publications were available for access through the CPAS Web Portal or the Government’s Central Cyber Government Office website.

**Proactive and early input to government’s new initiatives**

***Appointment and Operation of District Services and Community Care Teams (Care Teams)***

The Government is setting up Care Teams in the 18 districts to consolidate community resources and forces to support the Government’s district work and strengthen district networks, and the selection of Care Teams is handled by a dedicated group led by the Secretary for Home and Youth Affairs. The Government will provide the appointed Care Teams with some of the resources required and monitor their work. As an early input, CPD provided corruption prevention advice to the Home Affairs Department when the formulation of the application guidelines, funding agreements and monitoring mechanism concerning Care Teams was under way. In addition, CPD also produced the *Corruption Prevention Tips for District Services and Community Care Teams* to help enhance the corruption prevention awareness and capabilities of Care Teams.

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|  | *Corruption Prevention Tips for District Services and Community Care Teams* |
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***Registration Regime for Dealers in Precious Metals and Stones***

To enhance Hong Kong’s regulatory regime for combatting money laundering and terrorist financing, the Government amended the *Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorist Financing Ordinance* (Cap 615) to introduce a registration regime for dealers in precious metals and stones. The Customs and Excise Department (C&ED) is responsible for enforcing the registration requirements and monitoring registrants’ conduct with regard to anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing. Before the amendment came into effect, CPD had put forward a range of corruption prevention recommendations to assist C&ED in strengthening anti-corruption controls over its registration and law enforcement procedures. CPD will continue to assist C&ED in the implementation of the corruption prevention safeguards and offer advice on the regulatory framework when necessary.

***Light Public Housing***

In 2022, the Government launched a Light Public Housing (LPH) initiative targeted to construct about 30 000 LPH units in a standardised simple design in five years (i.e. from 2023-24 to 2027-28). Whereas the construction of the LPH units would be led by the Architectural Services Department (ArchSD), the operation would be managed by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) or property management companies appointed through open tender, and the fund approved for the initiative was about $25 billion. In order to expedite the LPH construction process, ArchSD adopted the “Engineering and Construction Target Cost Contract” option of the “New Engineering Contract” (NEC), and a Modular Integrated Construction (MiC) approach. CPD and ArchSD also launched a number of corruption prevention initiatives covering works supervision, contract administration and other procedures, so as to ensure adequate safeguards were in place in the LPH construction process. In 2023, CPD had offered advice to ArchSD on the integrity requirements for its site supervisory staff and various procedures such as the selection of MiC module suppliers. CPD also advised on the Housing Bureau’s tender and contract documents for the appointment of LPH operators to ensure adequate corruption prevention safeguards in the tender procedures for selecting operators and supervision of LPH operations.

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|  | Interior design of a Light Public Housing unit |
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***NEC Engineering and Construction Contract (Hong Kong Edition)***

The NEC Engineering and Construction Contract aims to enhance project management efficiency and promote collaboration between project management teams and contractors. Since 2009, CPD has been offering corruption prevention advice to the Development Bureau (DEVB) on relevant procedures to ensure adequate safeguards are in place for NEC management by works departments. To cater for the local building regulations and practices, DEVB launched the *NEC Engineering and Construction Contract (Hong Kong Edition)* in 2023. During the drafting process, CPD also offered advice to DEVB on subcontracting, estimation of project cost, deferral of completion date and other work procedures.

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|  | *NEC Engineering and Construction Contract (Hong Kong Edition)* |
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**ISSUES OF PUBLIC CONCERN**

CPD conducts corruption prevention review on areas concerning people’s livelihood, public safety, issues of public concern and those involving substantial public money. The relevant corruption prevention work includes:

***Clean Elections***

The Rural Ordinary Election and District Council Ordinary Election were held in January and December 2023 respectively. CPD reviewed the government guidelines for candidates and new proposals on voting procedures, and deployed officers to observe the polling and vote-counting processes on the election days. Recommendations on further improvement of the polling and vote-counting procedures in relation to the two public elections were made to the Government so as to reduce corruption risks.

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|  | Officers of the Corruption Prevention Department observing operation of a mock polling station |
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***Licensing and Control of Restaurants and Food Factories***

To ensure food safety and environmental hygiene, and for the benefit of food business operators and customers, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) has introduced a Professional Certification System under the current licensing mechanism for food premises. The Professional Certification System, which adopts a “licence first, inspection later” approach, will first be applicable to light refreshment restaurants and food factories for the issue of full licences. FEHD will also take enforcement action against irregularities of food premises. In view of public health and safety, and possible corruption risks associated with the licensing system and enforcement processes, CPD has reviewed and made corruption prevention recommendations on FEHD’s licensing and regulatory systems for restaurants and food factories to enhance procedural controls.

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|  |  | Inspection on licensed restaurants by officers of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department |
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***Corruption Prevention Guide on Procurement for Public Bodies***

In recent years, public bodies have been increasingly entrusted to assume a broader array of public functions, which inevitably involve the procurement of goods and services, often on a substantial scale and with considerable amount of money. However, procurement is inherently prone to corruption and malpractice. To assist public bodies in enhancing their corruption prevention capabilities, CPD conducted a review on the relevant corruption risks and developed the *Corruption Prevention Guide on Procurement for Public Bodies*, which sets out the common inadequacies, red flags, case studies in procurement with corresponding corruption prevention measures. CPD has also developed an infographic pamphlet which summarises the key content of the Guide for reference by frontline procurement personnel. The Guide and pamphlet have been distributed to relevant public bodies and uploaded to the CPAS Web Portal.

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|  | *The Corruption Prevention Guide on Procurement for Public Bodies* aiming to enhance the awareness of personnel of public bodies to common corruption loopholes in procurement and provide them with relevant preventive measures to reduce corruption risks | |
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|  | | *Corruption Prevention Tips on Procurement for Public Bodies* infographic pamphlet, aiming to conveniently equip frontline procurement personnel with and remind them of the corruption prevention measures in procurement |
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***Labour Importation Schemes***

To cope with manpower shortage, the Government launched sector-specific labour importation schemes respectively for residential care homes, construction and transport sectors, and the “Enhanced Supplementary Labour Scheme” in mid-2023. To strengthen corruption prevention safeguards of the schemes, CPD provided recommendations to the Labour Department, relevant B/Ds and public body, including prohibiting agents from soliciting or accepting illegal rebates, strengthening the safeguards to enhance transparency and fairness in the processing and assessment of applications, and ensuring the effectiveness in monitoring the successful applicants’ compliance with scheme requirements by the relevant B/Ds and public body. Moreover, CPD also participated in the briefings for employers under the schemes to provide integrity training to prospective applicants.

***Primary Healthcare Blueprint***

The Health Bureau released the *Primary Healthcare Blueprint* (the Blueprint) in December 2022 to formulate the direction of development and strategies for strengthening Hong Kong's primary healthcare system, with a view to establishing a sustainable healthcare system and enhancing the overall health of citizens. Under the “Chronic Disease Co-Care Pilot Scheme” in the Blueprint, eligible persons are subsidised by the Government to undergo screening and medical treatment by a family doctor of their own choice. To ensure that adequate safeguards were in place for the Scheme, CPD provided the Health Bureau with corruption prevention inputs.

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|  | “Chronic Disease Co-Care Pilot Scheme” launched by the Health Bureau |
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***Recruitment of Construction Workers***

With an array of mega infrastructure projects in the pipeline, the construction industry is set for a golden era of rapid development. In view of this, the ICAC has collaborated with the DEVB and Construction Industry Council (CIC) to formulate corruption prevention measures for combatting the illegal referral fee malpractice by adopting a “corruption prevention combo punch” approach. For instance, the ICAC, DEVB and CIC co-organised the “Building a Clean and Fair Construction Industry Through Collaboration - Anti-Corruption Summit” in May 2023 to appeal to the industry to support the *Integrity Action Agenda* drawn up by CPD and to implement corruption prevention measures against illegal referral fees. The ICAC also worked with CIC in displaying anti-corruption posters at construction sites as well as distributing anti-corruption brochures and showing training videos to frontline workers with a view to enhancing their anti-corruption awareness. In addition, two Integrity Risk Management Plans for Recruitment of Workers covering a variety of integrity risks and control measures related to worker recruitment procedures were published for main contractors and sub-contractors respectively to facilitate the industry in enhancing integrity management.

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|  | | Assistant Director of Corruption Prevention hosting a panel session on corruption prevention and integrity management in the construction industry as part of the “Building a Clean and Fair Construction Industry Through Collaboration - Anti-Corruption Summit” |
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|  | Integrity Risk Management Plans for Recruitment of Workers | |
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***Quality Control of Works of New Buildings***

Building works or street works of private developments in Hong Kong are governed by the *Buildings Ordinance* (Cap 123), which provides that professionals and contractors appointed by owners have to submit supervision plans and employ technically competent persons for quality control purpose. As the rectification of substandard works will often incur substantial costs and result in delay of works, contractors may induce supervisory staff through corrupt means to turn a blind eye to substandard works. As such, CPD has reviewed the relevant procedures of the Buildings Department (BD) and made recommendations to enhance the accountability of staff involved in the quality control of works of new buildings. Moreover, CPD has also recommended the BD to apply innovative technology for mitigating corruption risks therein.

**CORRUPTION PREVENTION WORK IN PRIVATE SECTOR**

To optimise the efficacy in corruption prevention, CPD continuously identifies the needs of specific industries. The major corruption prevention work conducted in 2023 includes:

***Corruption Prevention Guide for Property Management Companies***

Since the full implementation of the licensing regime under the *Property Management Services Ordinance* (Cap 626) in August 2023, there have been growing public expectations on the professionalism and integrity of property management companies (PMCs). Given the diversified services provided by PMCs, coupled with the complex and corruption-prone procedures involved in building management and maintenance, PMCs need to put in place an effective internal control system and corruption prevention measures to reduce corruption risks. To address the issues concerned, CPD launched a *Corruption Prevention Guide for Property Management Companies* in December 2023, covering the regulatory compliance required of PMCs, the basic elements of good governance, case studies, red flags, and the common corruption risks in the major areas of property management (such as general management services, building maintenance, procurement and staff management) with recommendations on preventive measures, so as to assist PMCs in effective corruption prevention and risk management. CPD will organise the “Professional Anti-corruption Training in Property Management” for management of licensed PMCs in 2024 to enhance the governance of PMCs from the corruption prevention perspective through sharing and implementation of the guide.

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|  | The *Corruption Prevention Guide for Property Management Companies* offering effective and practicable guidelines to help property management companies identify and reduce corruption risks in property management and build an ethical culture |
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***The Law Society of Hong Kong – Corruption Prevention Services for Law Firms Engaging in Conveyancing and Related Transactions***

With the support of the Law Society of Hong Kong, CPD has compiled a set of *Corruption Prevention Good Practices on Conveyancing and Related Transactions for Law Firms* to enhance the internal control of law firms engaging in conveyancing and related transactions. It highlights the major corruption risks and red flags in handling conveyancing and related transactions, and provides handy references on internal control measures geared towards mitigating the risks of corruption and malpractice.

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|  | The *Corruption Prevention Good Practices on Conveyancing and Related Transactions for Law Firms* highlighting the corruption risks and red flags in handling conveyancing transactions and providing law firms with handy references on internal control measures |
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| With the support of the Law Society of Hong Kong, the Corruption Prevention Department has compiled a set of *Corruption Prevention Good Practices on Conveyancing and Related Transactions for Law Firms.* In compiling theGood Practices*,* Corruption Prevention Department officers made extensive exchanges with representatives of the Law Society of Hong Kong to understand the roles of law firms in handling conveyancing and related transactions | |
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***Corruption Prevention Work for Non-governmental Organisations***

NGOs rely on government fundings and public donations to provide welfare services to people in need. Given the increasingly diversified services provided by NGOs, public expectations on their integrity standards are on the rise. Hence, CPD has compiled a new edition of the *Corruption Prevention Guide on Governance and Internal Control for Non-governmental Organisations* to assist NGOs in building and strengthening their corruption prevention capabilities in daily operation and entrenching a culture of integrity. The Guide covers the anti-corruption law, good governance and effective internal controls, and sets out the corruption risks and corresponding preventive measures pertaining to the key operation areas (including financial management, provision of welfare services, procurement, management of works and maintenance contracts) of NGOs. It also presents various case studies with analysis and red flags to enhance NGOs’ understanding of the corruption risks. Additionally, the Guide provides the updated *Sample Codes of Conduct for Board Members and Staff of Non-governmental Organisations in Social Welfare Sector*, setting out clearly the integrity requirements (such as the policies on solicitation and acceptance of advantages and entertainment) and the enhanced guidance on managing declared conflicts of interest. Following the launch of the Guide in late 2023, CPD would further promulgate the Guide to NGOs and offer corruption prevention services to individual NGOs on request.

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|  | | *Corruption Prevention Guide on Governance and Internal Control for Non-governmental Organisations* |
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|  | Officers of the Corruption Prevention Department discussing the production of *Corruption Prevention Guide on Governance and Internal Control for Non-governmental Organisations* in a work meeting | |
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***Short Training Videos on Corruption Prevention for Modular Integrated Construction***

Given the Government’s initiative to expedite housing supply through wider adoption of MiC, CPD has launched a series of *Short Training Videos on Corruption Prevention* for MiC this year, following the *Corruption Prevention Checklist – Building Projects Adopting Modular Integrated Construction* published in 2021. The training videos aim to enhance practitioners’ understanding about the corruption risks involved in different aspects (namely integrity management, fabrication at MiC factory and processing after fabrication) of MiC, and the corresponding mitigating measures.

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|  | *Short Training Videos on Corruption Prevention* for Modular Integrated Construction |
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***Corruption Prevention Guide for Construction Industry***

In response to the emerging corruption risks and development of the construction industry in recent years, CPD published a new edition of the *Corruption Prevention Guide for Construction Industry* in September 2023. The Guide sets out the common malpractices in the construction industry, including the management of consultants, letting and administration of works contracts and construction quality control testing, and illustrates the corruption risks and recommended corruption prevention measures. As an added feature, it also includes case studies to assist project staff better understand the corruption risks inherent in the procedures concerned, and enhance their corruption prevention awareness and capabilities.

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| *Corruption Prevention Guide for Construction Industry* |
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***Launching*** ***Business Sector Integrity Charter*** ***in Partnership with the Chinese Manufacturers’ Association of Hong Kong***

As a pilot scheme, CPD launched the Construction Industry Integrity Charter in 2021, aiming to encourage construction companies to adopt an Integrity Management System (IMS) consisting of components including integrity policy and integrity training. More than 400 companies have joined the scheme to date. With a view to promoting the IMS to other industries, CPD collaborates with major local chambers of commerce in phases to launch the Business Sector Integrity Charter (the Charter) campaign, encouraging their member companies to participate voluntarily. The first phase of the campaign commenced in 2023, with the partner being the Chinese Manufacturers’ Association of Hong Kong (CMA). In line with the country’s *High-level Principles on Belt and Road Integrity Building*, the Charter, which was officially launched on 7 November 2023, encourages the private sector to entrench an integrity culture and implement the IMS. The launching ceremony of the Charter was co-hosted by the Deputy Financial Secretary, Commissioner, CMA President, CMA Legislative Council representative, and CMA Executive Vice President. Other guests included representatives of CMA General Committee. All companies joining the Charter are required to appoint an “Integrity Officer” to assist in implementing and monitoring the companies’ integrity policies. Meanwhile, they must also pledge to implement an integrity policy and participate in integrity training. As the Charter Secretariat, CPD is responsible for providing free integrity training, corruption prevention advice and relevant resources for participating companies. Member companies of the CMA have been participating actively in the Charter since its launch. CPD will gradually extend the reach of the Charter to other major chambers of commerce and showcase the partnership between the public and business sectors in telling the good anti-corruption stories of Hong Kong and contributing to the country’s endeavour to build a “Clean Silk Road”.

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| Deputy Financial Secretary and Commissioner, together with the President, Legislative Council representative and Executive Vice President of the Chinese Manufacturers’ Association of Hong Kong, officiating at the launching ceremony of the Business Sector Integrity Charter |
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| Representatives of the Chinese Manufacturers’ Association of Hong Kong General Committee who joined the Business Sector Integrity Charter pledging their support at the launching ceremony |
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***Corruption Prevention in the Banking Industry***

The banking industry is known for its pivotal role in financing business activities. A robust banking system is fundamental to Hong Kong’s role as an international financial centre. Working closely with the Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) and the banking industry, CPD published a brand new *Corruption Prevention Guide for Banks* (the Guide) in 2022, and launched a series of promotional activities in 2023. To start with, the Guide was uploaded to the ICAC and the CPAS Web Portal to help mitigate corruption risks in the banking industry. CPD also promoted the Guide to the banking industry with the help of its partners such as the HKMA and the Hong Kong Association of Banks. For example, the HKMA assisted CPD in distributing physical copies of the Guide to more than 170 authorised institutions, and issuing circulars to encourage banks to make reference to the corruption prevention measures suggested in the Guide when implementing the newly revised regulatory policy. In May 2023, the HKMA also held the first “Regulator’s Dialogue” seminar since the pandemic, and invited the ICAC to share its insights on corruption case trends and the highlights of the Guide with over 450 bank managerial staff. Moreover, CPD provided corruption prevention advice and training upon request by individual banks. Since the launch of the Guide, CPD has provided corruption prevention advisory service by receiving and handling more than 640 enquiries related to the banking industry. It has also organised over 25 sessions of corruption prevention training for various banks and presented the contents of the Guide to over 5 000 banking practitioners.

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|  | Launching the *Corruption Prevention Guide for Banks* to help mitigate corruption risks in the banking industry |
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**EMBRACING TECHNOLOGY TO ENHANCE CORRUPTION PREVENTION**

Digitalisation of work processes and effective adoption of technology can improve the efficiency and service quality of the Government, public bodies and private organisations, and strengthen their anti-corruption capabilities. Riding on the momentum of the e‑Government initiatives launched in recent years, digitalisation becomes a key strategy in corruption prevention. Efforts made by CPD to embrace technology in enhancing resilience against corruption are summarised below:

***Production and Promotion of the Corruption Prevention Guide – Corruption Prevention through Digitalisation***

To support the Government’s policy initiative of advancing development of a digital Government, CPD completed its first-phase study on enhancement of corruption prevention through digitalisation in 2022, and produced the *Corruption Prevention Guide – Corruption Prevention through Digitalisation*, putting forward to B/Ds and public bodies a corruption prevention framework from the integrity management perspective incorporating the application of digital corruption prevention and information technology. CPD has embarked on its second-phase study on making more effective use of the framework to keep pace with the policy measures for developing a digital Government to enhance “governance capability” and “governance efficacy” as announced by the Chief Executive in the 2023 Policy Address.

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| *Corruption Prevention Guide – Corruption Prevention through Digitalisation* | Digital Corruption Prevention Framework |
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A series of work had been carried out in 2023 in connection with the promotion of the Guide. For example, assignment studies were conducted and consultancy services were provided for B/Ds and public bodies, whereby over 100 recommendations on digital corruption prevention for 50 public service workflows had been made, including review of their digitalisation needs, and enhancement of relevant functions and policies for improved corruption prevention efficacy.

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| Officers of the Corruption Prevention Department offering corruption prevention advice to government bureaux/departments on their public service operational information systems | |
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CPD also organised training for managerial staff of B/Ds and public bodies to engage their support in the digitalisation of workflows and public services for enhancement of their corruption prevention capabilities. Moreover, CPD also provided corruption prevention training to private organisations in the innovation and technology sector.

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| Exchanging experience in digital corruption prevention with managerial staff and information technology specialists of public and private sectors | |
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**Chapter 6 Community Relations Department**

**Statutory Duties**

* Educate the public against the evils of corruption.
* Enlist public support in the fight against corruption.

**EDUCATIOn and Publicity strategies**

* Adopt an “Ethics for All” approach to tailor preventive education programmes for different segments of the community.
* Enhance integration of media publicity and face-to-face education.
* Leverage strategic partnership with different sectors in mapping out and executing these programmes.

**REGIONAL OFFICES**

The Community Relations Department (CRD) is headed by a Director and operates through two divisions. The structure of CRD and function of its different units are detailed at Appendix 1.

The Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) has established [seven Regional Offices](https://www.icac.org.hk/en/rc/channel/ro/index.html) in the territory to provide preventive education to different segments of the community, including the Government and public bodies, business sector, the youth, district and non-profit-making organisations, as well as stakeholders of public elections, and reach out to the public to enlist their support for anti-corruption work in Hong Kong.

To encourage members of the public to come forward to report corruption, CRD arranged extensive online and offline publicity to dispel misunderstanding and address common concern about lodging corruption complaints.

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| ICAC Regional Offices, which are situated at focal locations in the territory, offering a convenient channel for members of the public to report corruption and make enquiries. |
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| ICAC displaying street banners in 18 districts to encourage reporting of corruption |
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| A promotional video by secondary school students encouraging timely reporting of corruption |
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**PUBLIC SECTOR**

The ICAC accords priority to integrity promotion in the Government. To entrench probity culture in the civil service, the ICAC arranged briefings for all politically appointed officials to introduce the three-pronged strategy as well as anti-corruption laws and regulations, and continued the partnership with the Civil Service Bureau to organise thematic workshops and seminars under the “[Ethical Leadership Programme](https://www.csb.gov.hk/english/admin/conduct/2628.html)” to assist Ethics Officers of government bureaux/departments (B/Ds) in implementing departmental integrity management. ICAC sharing sessions were also incorporated into the Civil Service College’s flagship leadership development programmes and the Induction Programme for Civil Service New Recruits.

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| Politically appointed officials attending ICAC briefing, recognising the ICAC’s efforts in sustaining a clean civil service |

Public bodies provide services closely related to people’s livelihood. The ICAC encouraged public bodies to extensively adopt its [preventive education services and resources](https://www.icac.org.hk/icac/pb/en/index.html) for sustaining integrity of their employees at all ranks, as well as members of their governing bodies, boards and committees. Besides, the ICAC produced e-leaflets for members of the Legislative Council and District Councils to provide them with a gist of the anti-corruption laws and links to relevant legislation and reference materials.

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| Integrity Training for Public Sector in 2023 |
| * Arranged preventive education seminars for over 32 000 civil servants from 78 B/Ds * Arranged preventive education seminars for over 15 000 employees of public bodies providing public services in transportation, health care, tertiary education and other public utilities |

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| Ethics Officers joining the thematic workshop organised under the “Ethical Leadership Programme” to discuss the proper handling of advantages and entertainment, and exchange views on integrity management | |
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| Assistant Ethics Officers sharing practical experience in entrenching probity culture in their respective departments at a networking session | |
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| ICAC directorate officers exchanging views on ethical leadership with senior government officers at Civil Service College’s flagship leadership development programmes | |
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|  | Seminar on “Misconduct in Public Office” under the “Ethical Leadership Programme” gaining its popularity as a platform for civil servants at all ranks to understand relevant laws and regulations | |
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| ICAC officer explaining to the senior management of public bodies the anti-corruption history of Hong Kong and encouraging them to implement integrity management in their organisations | | |
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**BUSINESS SECTOR**

Established under the auspices of the ICAC and steered by an advisory body comprising representatives from 10 major chambers of commerce in Hong Kong, the [Hong Kong Business Ethics Development Centre (HKBEDC)](https://hkbedc.icac.hk/en) strives to promote business and professional ethics as the first line of defence against corruption.

In coping with the volatile business environment, HKBEDC remained steadfast in delivering various anti-corruption educational and publicity initiatives in the year with the following highlights:

* reached out to all authorised institutions in the banking sector to promote the [online ethics resources](https://hkbedc.icac.hk/en/sector_industry/banking_and_finance/24) and corruption prevention services under the Ethics Promotion Programme for the Banking Industry with an aim to fostering an ethical bank culture;
* produced a dedicated [webpage for the medical and healthcare industry](https://hkbedc.icac.hk/en/sector_industry/medical_and_healthcare) and developed an [*Online Guide for Medical Professionals*](https://hkbedc.icac.hk/medicalguide/) to strengthen professional ethics;
* collaborated with professional bodies to arrange seminars introducing the corruption prevention and education services provided by the ICAC for corporate governance professionals so as to reinforce their guardian role in ethical governance, to enlist their support for the ICAC’s anti-corruption efforts and to safeguard the rule of law in Hong Kong; and
* continued to organise webinars on its [BEDC Channel](https://hkbedc.icac.hk/en/services/bedc_channel) to meet the demand of the business sector for online training, reaching directors of listed companies, SME operators, construction works supervisors, insurance intermediaries, financial services practitioners and other different target groups.

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| Corruption Prevention and Education Services for the Business Sector in 2023 |
| * Reached over 4 600 business organisations * Reached over 94 000 business practitioners and professionals |

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| Self-learning animation series titled “Unveil the Secret: Integrity Myths in the Banking Industry” |

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|  | | | ICAC officer speaking in the “Medico-legal Conference 2023” organised by Hong Kong Medical Association to promote professional ethics to the participating doctors | |
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| Members of the Law Society of Hong Kong and the Legislative Council Member (Legal) joining a visit programme at the ICAC |  | | | |
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|  | | A group of young business executives from the “Future Leaders Class of 2023” organised by the American Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong visiting the ICAC | |
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**IMPORTED WORKERS AND TALENTS**

To tie in with the Government’s various labour importation and talent admission schemes, the ICAC launched an array of education and publicity initiatives to enhance the awareness of the incoming workers and talents on the *Prevention of Bribery Ordinance* and the anti-corruption work of Hong Kong.

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|  | | The ICAC arranging briefings for imported workers of different sectors through collaboration with relevant government bureaux/departments and public bodies |
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| ICAC officer giving a talk on anti-corruption laws to imported construction workers in their centralised quarters |  | |
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|  | | The ICAC staging a publicity booth at the International Talents Summit organised by the Hong Kong Quality and Talent Migrants Association to promote Hong Kong’s clean and fair social environment |
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|  | The ICAC’s educational and publicity materials produced for imported workers and talents from the Mainland and overseas |
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The ICAC continued to partner with B/Ds and non-governmental organisations to disseminate anti-corruption messages to new arrivals and people of diverse race through corruption prevention talks, publicity materials, thematic webpages, radio programmes and other versatile activities.

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| Newly-designed publicity materials reminding members of the public not to offer bribes |
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| Publicity banners and posters at immigration control points accentuating the probity culture of Hong Kong |
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**YOUTH AND MORAL EDUCATION**

Through its moral education programmes designed for youth of different developmental stages, the ICAC is dedicated to nurturing in the younger generation the core values of integrity and law abidingness.

To groom aspiring young people to become future leaders with integrity as well as a strong sense of the rule of law, national identity and global vision, the ICAC launched the “[ICAC ELITE Youth Leadership Programme](https://me.icac.hk/icac/elite/tc/)” in the year. Senior secondary and tertiary students were invited to participate in multifarious leadership training activities characterised by ICAC elements. Apart from exposure visits and exchange activities in Mainland cities, participants were also provided with opportunities to interact and exchange with delegates of overseas anti-graft agencies during the latter’s visits to Hong Kong.

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| Commissioner attending “ICAC ELITE Youth Leadership Programme” launching ceremony to exchange with the first cohort of iELITE Youth Leaders |
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| iELITE Youth Leaders participating in the leadership training camp arranged by the ICAC Training and Development Section to learn about the anti-bribery legislation of Hong Kong and gain first-hand experience on investigation work |
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| iELITE Youth Leaders participating in a Mainland Study Tour to the Greater Bay Area |
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| iELITE Youth Leaders interacting and exchanging with representatives of overseas anti-corruption agencies |
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| iELITE Youth Leaders visiting law enforcement agencies to learn about Hong Kong’s sound rule of law |
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| iELITE Youth Leaders assisting in the ICAC’s publicity and education programmes |
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Through the “[iTeen Leadership Programme](https://me.icac.hk/new/5538/index.html)” and “[ICAC Ambassador Programme](https://me.icac.hk/english-corner/tertiary/index.html#ICAC%20Ambassador%20Programme%20&amp;%20i-League)”, the ICAC recruited senior secondary and tertiary students to organise on-campus integrity promotion activities and encouraged them to unleash their creativity in promoting probity messages to their peers. Moreover, [interactive drama performances](https://me.icac.hk/moral-activity/activity/index_id_27.html) and talks on personal ethics and anti-corruption laws were arranged for secondary and tertiary students to hammer home law-abidingness and integrity messages.

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| ICAC Ambassadors unleashing their creativity in organising face-to-face and online integrity promotion activities for their peers |
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| ICAC Ambassadors from 19 tertiary education institutions attending leadership training to build up team spirit |
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| iTeen Leaders organising on-campus activities to spread integrity messages to their peers |
| iTeen Leaders participating in training workshops to enhance their teamwork skills |
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| School partners and iTeen Leaders attending the award presentation ceremony in celebration of the 10th anniversary of the “iTeen Leadership Programme” |
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| Interactive drama disseminating anti-corruption and integrity messages to secondary school students |
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For young children, the ICAC has been developing various moral education resources to facilitate values education in schools. These included a new series of animation-based teaching package and activity materials on the theme of “fairness” under the “[i Junior Programme for Primary Schools](https://me.icac.hk/icac/ijunior/index.html)”, as well as moral education picture books for kindergartens under the [“Reading for Integrity” Project](https://me.icac.hk/content/picturebook/index.html). The “ICAC’s Kids Classroom” was also launched in the year as a new initiative to promote positive values to young children through arranging kindergarteners and their parents to visit the ICAC and participate in story-telling and parent-child handicraft activities.

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| i Junior Leaders and Little Coffee Bean promoting positive values to the primary school students |
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| i Junior Leaders participating in training workshops to enhance their understanding of the ICAC and activity facilitation skills |
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| Teachers instilling positive values in students through the ICAC’s “Reading for Integrity” picture books and moral education activities |
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| Kindergarteners and their parents enjoying story-telling and colouring activities in the “ICAC’s Kids Classroom” |
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| Youth and Moral Education Activities in 2023 |
| * Reached over 800 tertiary education institutions and schools * Over 270 000 students participated in the ICAC’s integrity and ethics promotion activities/programmes |

The ICAC continued to support educators through the [*ICAC Periodical*](https://me.icac.hk/bookshelf/topsee/index.html)and the [Moral Education website](http://www.me.icac.hk).

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| *ICAC Periodical*, with its 100th issue published in the year, providing educators with food for thought on moral education regularly |
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**DISTRICT ORGANISATIONS**

The ICAC, in celebration of its 50th anniversary in 2024, rolled out a series of public engagement activities under the theme of "Fighting Corruption: The Mission Continues". With the launching of the [thematic website for ICAC’s 50th anniversary](https://www.icac.org.hk/icac/50a/en/index.html) in the year, a photo/video collection campaign was carried out to invite members of the public to contribute photos and videos relating to the anti-corruption history of Hong Kong while a youth video competition was organised to encourage youngsters to unleash their creativity to produce short videos for the ICAC. In the year, the ICAC also elevated its annual running event, the Road Race at the Peak, to become a “Fighting Corruption: The Mission Continues” Kick-off Run to embark on the series of 50th anniversary celebration activities.

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| The ICAC promoting its 50th anniversary in a district event |
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| Entries of the ICAC’s 50th anniversary photo/video collection campaign |
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|  |
| Commissioner, together with directorates and ICAC advisory committees’ members, officiating at the “Fighting Corruption: The Mission Continues” Kick-off Run to mark the commencement of 50th anniversary activities |
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|  |
| ICAC officers, supported by their family members, and members of other disciplined forces participating in the Kick-off Run |
|  |

District Services and Community Care Teams (Care Teams) were set up in the year to consolidate community resources to support the Government’s district work and networking. The ICAC provided training on anti-corruption laws to all Care Teams in 18 districts and mobilised them to incorporate anti-corruption elements in their activities. The ICAC also supported district organisations to organise activities to promote integrity messages to residents.

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|  |
| ICAC officer briefing members of District Services and Community Care Teams on anti-corruption laws |
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| Community Engagement |
| * Over 800 organisations supported the ICAC to organise publicity activities as co-organisers or assisting organisations * More than 13 000 employees and members of non-profit-making organisations received corruption prevention training in the year |

**ICAC CLUB**

Established in 1997, the [ICAC Club](https://www.icac.org.hk/icac/club/en/index.html) strives to engage people from different strata of the community in the anti-corruption cause. With a current membership of about 3 000, the ICAC Club has accumulated over 76 000 hours of voluntary service rendered by its members in different ICAC’s integrity promotion activities since its establishment.

During the year, the ICAC Club organised a diversity of activities including an exchange programme with Friends of the Observatory, a mentoring programme for members of the ICAC Club Youth Chapter and an orientation programme for new members. The ICAC Club also maintained a dedicated website and a Facebook closed group, and published [newsletters](https://www.icac.org.hk/icac/club/en/p2.html) to maintain close ties with members and keep them abreast of the latest anti-corruption work. An award presentation programme was held regularly to commend ICAC Club members for their assistance and contribution in the ICAC’s activities.

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| ICAC Club members sharing their volunteer experiences and insights in probity promotion at the exchange programme with Friends of the Observatory | |
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| Newly-joined ICAC Club members visiting the ICAC exhibition hall and participating in interactive activities in the orientation programme | |
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|  | |
|  | ICAC Club members receiving commendations at the award presentation ceremony for their contribution to the anti-corruption cause |
|  | |
|  | |
| Vocational Training Council actively recruiting students to join the ICAC Club as Youth Chapter members to promote integrity messages and positive values on campus | |
|  | |
|  | |
| Youth Chapter members and retired ICAC officers building up close bonding under the ICAC Club mentoring programme | |
|  | |

**BUILDING MANAGEMENT**

To address the latest corruption trend in building management, the ICAC joined hands with the Home Affairs Department, Urban Renewal Authority and building management related professional bodies to proactively promote clean building management to flat owners and building management bodies such as owners’ corporations, owners’ committees and property management companies, etc.

This year, the ICAC provided preventive education services to around 4 900 people from over 800 building management bodies through talks, seminars and visits. Besides, about 13 800 counts of people were reached through various publicity drives including exhibitions, quizzes, pamphlets and feature articles. The ICAC also maintained the Clean Building Management Enquiry Hotline, social media platforms and a [dedicated website](https://bm.icac.hk/en/home/introduction.aspx) to promote latest anti-corruption information.

With the full implementation of the licensing regime, the ICAC collaborated with the Property Management Services Authority to step up educational efforts for the property management sector. Apart from producing a series of training videos and a self-learning package for industry practitioners, the ICAC also arranged talks to disseminate anti-corruption messages to property management staff. In addition, integrity training was delivered to executives through continuing professional development programmes of various professional bodies and trade associations, as well as to students undertaking property management programmes at tertiary education institutions and vocational schools.

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|  |
| Exhibitions and games on clean building management |
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|  |
| Newly-produced training video series and self-learning package for practitioners of the property management industry |
|  |
| Social media feed promoting ICAC services for building management bodies |
|  |

**CLean elections**

Following the Government’s work on improving district governance and reforming District Council (DC), the ICAC formulated a multi-faceted education and publicity campaign for different stakeholders having regard to the new electoral arrangement of the DC Election, and appealed to members of the public for casting their votes and upholding a clean election.

The ICAC arranged 200 briefings for political associations, members of District Fight Crime Committees, District Fire Safety Committees and Area Committees, election helpers, members of district organisations / building management bodies, polling station staff and post-secondary students to explain the requirements of the *Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Conduct) Ordinance*. A wide range of tailor-made reference materials were distributed to candidates and electors. A [dedicated website](https://www.icac.org.hk/en/ce/index.html) was set up and an enquiry hotline was in operation to provide up-to-date information and enquiry services on clean elections.

Furthermore, the ICAC engaged diversified online and offline channels, including TV and radio broadcast, public transport network, mobile applications, online platforms, social media, large outdoor billboards, as well as community facilities to widely publicise the clean elections messages.

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| ICAC directorate officers and volunteers appealing to members of the public for casting votes in the District Council Election |
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| Flash roadshows promoting clean elections messages to the general public in 18 districts |
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| ICAC officers explaining the requirements of the *Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Conduct) Ordinance* to candidates, election helpers and voters in briefing sessions |
|  |
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|  |
| Reference materials tailored for candidates, election helpers and voters |
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|  |
| Promoting clean elections messages through various online and offline publicity channels |
|  |

**media publicity**

The ICAC continued to use multimedia platforms to disseminate anti-corruption messages and garner public support. An informative video series titled [*Inside 303*](https://www.icac.org.hk/icac/drama/inside303/index.html)was launched to enhance public understanding of the anti-corruption work. Furthermore, short videos inspired by hot topics, trending news and the ICAC’s cases were produced to convey positive values in a lively and light-hearted manner, serving as an effective reminder to sustain public vigilance against corruption.

On the new media front, the ICAC continued to expand its publicity in the realm of social media. In addition to the “Hong Kong ICAC” Facebook fanpage and Instagram account, an [official WeChat account](https://www.icac.org.hk/en/crd/work/mco/wechat/index.html) was launched this year to disseminate ICAC messages to a wider audience. To commemorate the ICAC’s upcoming 50th anniversary, a [thematic website](https://www.icac.org.hk/icac/50a/en/index.html) was launched providing detailed information of various anniversary activities. Through the *Classic Advertisements, Posters and Dramas* and *50 ICAC Stories* columns of the website that depicted Hong Kong’s anti-corruption journey from different perspectives, members of the public were encouraged to work hand in hand with the ICAC to safeguard a corruption-free Hong Kong.

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| Multimedia Platforms to Promote Anti-Corruption Messages |
| * Over 7.29 million aggregate visits to the ICAC and its partners’ online platforms |

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|  |
| Creative videos on social media check-in behaviour, festive gifts, illegal referral fees and building renovation, with the entire production from script writing to acting performances all handled by ICAC officers, communicating integrity messages in an engaging manner |
| The ICAC’s official WeChat account introducing ICAC’s latest information and work initiatives |
| The ICAC’s 50th anniversary “Fighting Corruption: The Mission Continues” thematic website encompassing details of various anniversary activities and interesting information |
| *Inside 303* video series leading audience into the ICAC Building, introducing different aspects of ICAC’s work and the daily application of anti-corruption laws in a light-hearted approach |

**COMMUNICATIONS AND MEDIA RELATIONS**

The Communications and Media Relations Office of the ICAC maintains effective communication and close rapport with the news media to promote the ICAC’s latest anti-corruption initiatives, enhance its transparency and keep the public abreast of the Commission’s developments.

During the year, the ICAC issued over 200 press releases to promulgate the ICAC’s major activities, operations, court cases and preventive education initiatives. Timely responses were provided to the news media to address issues of concern.

The ICAC also arranged various media events, such as feature interviews of the Commissioner and press briefings on corruption cases of public concern, to promote the ICAC’s work focuses in different areas. Through the news media, the ICAC also publicised different aspects of its anti-corruption work and new initiatives in international anti-graft collaborations, including the setting up of the Hong Kong International Academy Against Corruption, provision of professional anti-corruption trainings for local senior executives of different trades and professions, and overseas graft fighters, hosting of the anti-corruption workshop upon invitation of United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in its headquarters in Austria for the first time, the ICAC’s first Recruitment Experience Day as well as the Clean District Council Election education and publicity campaign.

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|  |
| Commissioner attending a feature media interview to give an update on the ICAC’s work initiatives |
|  |
| ICAC officers attending the press briefing on the operation “Green Grass” against a corruption syndicate over football match-fixing |
|  |
| ICAC officers meeting the press to introduce the Commission’s first Recruitment Experience Day |
|  |
| ICAC officers briefing the media on the first anti-corruption workshop hosted by the Commission at the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in Austria |
|  |
| ICAC officer attending a live TV and radio interview to promote clean District Council Election |
|  |

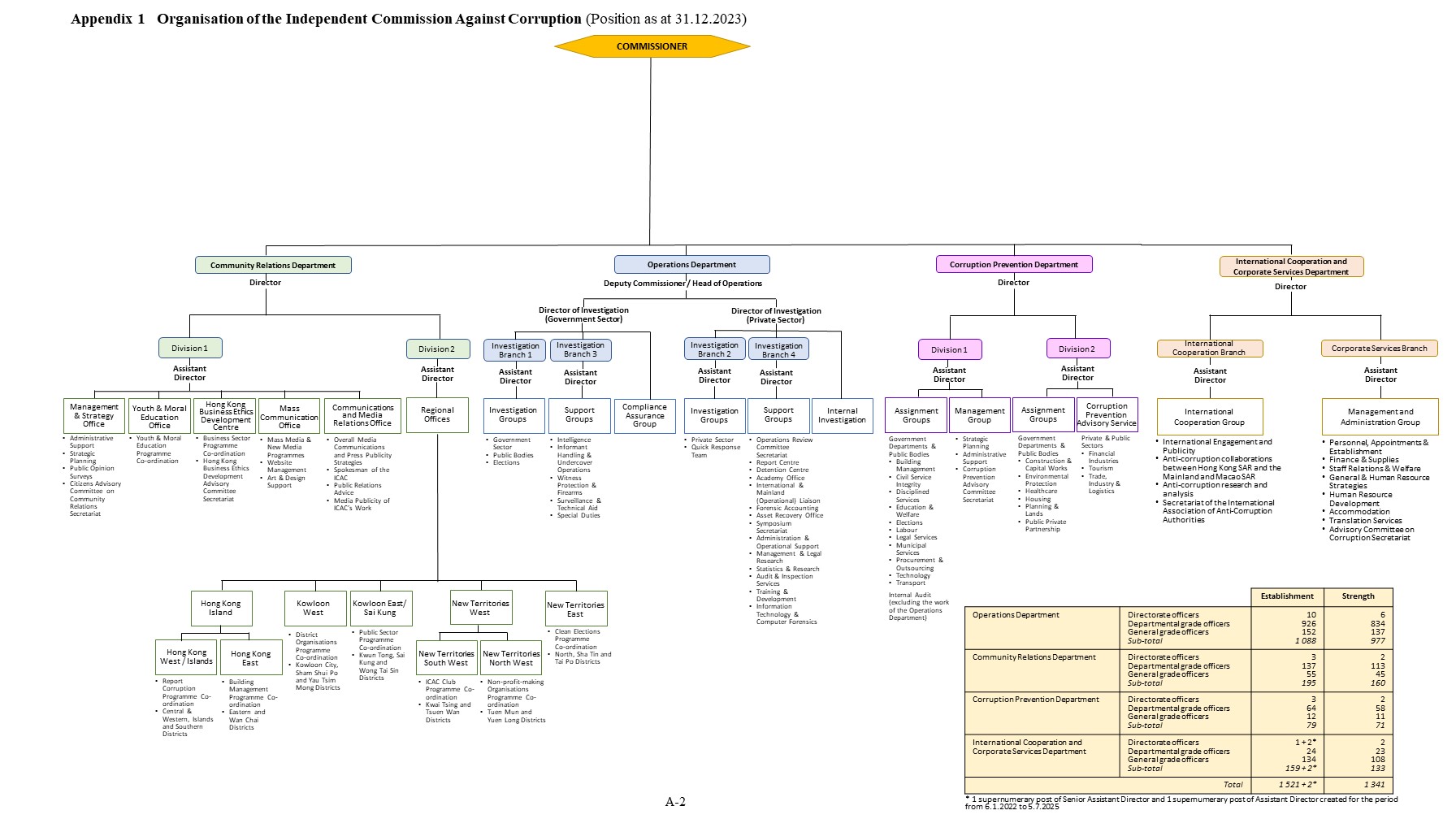
**icac annual survey**

The ICAC keeps on monitoring the community’s attitude towards a corruption-free society and their knowledge about corruption through engaging independent research firms to conduct opinion surveys on an annual basis. The survey findings in the past 10 years consistently revealed that the community was highly intolerant of corruption and majority of the respondents had not encountered corruption personally in the preceding 12 months. These findings reaffirm the stable probity situation and the hard-earned anti-corruption achievements of Hong Kong.

Fieldwork of the ICAC Annual Survey 2023 had started in the year. The ICAC would analyse the data so collected and announce result of the major findings in 2024.

**Appendices**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | Organisation of the Independent Commission Against Corruption | A – 2 |
| 2 | The Three Government Bureaux/Departments, Public Bodies and Private Sector Industries attracting the most Corruption Complaints in 2023 | A – 3 |
| 3 | Progress of Ongoing Investigations as at the End of December 2023 (Excluding Election Cases) | A – 5 |
| 4 | Number of Persons Prosecuted or Cautioned between 2014 and 2023 | A – 6 |
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| 6 | Number of Persons Prosecuted in 2023 (Excluding Election Cases) (Classified by Offences) | A – 8 |
| 7 | Number of Persons Prosecuted for Offences Connected with or Facilitated by Corruption and Specified Offences in 2023 (Classified by Types of Offences) | A – 9 |
| 8 | Non-Corruption Referrals Made to Government Bureaux/ Departments and Public Bodies in 2023 | A – 10 |



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| --- | --- |
| **Appendix 2** | **The Three Government Bureaux/Departments, Public Bodies[[4]](#footnote-4) and Private Sector Industries attracting the most Corruption Complaints in 2023** |

**I. Government Bureaux/Departments**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2022** | **2023** | **% change** |
| Hong Kong Police Force | 124  (84) | 104  (77) | -16%  (-8%) |
| Food and Environmental Hygiene Department | 65  (44) | 61  (34) | -6%  (-23%) |
| Housing Department | 33  (19) | 29  (16) | -12%  (-16%) |

( ) represents the number or percentage change in the number of pursuable corruption complaints

**II. Public Bodies**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2022** | **2023** | **% change** |
| Hospital Authority | 21  (16) | 24  (20) | +14%  (+25%) |
| Hong Kong Productivity Council | 3  (2) | 6  (5) | +100%  (+150%) |
| Hong Kong Polytechnic University | 2  (1) | 5  (4) | +150%  (+300%) |

( ) represents the number or percentage change in the number of pursuable corruption complaints

**III. Private Sector**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | | **2022** | **2023** | **% change** |
| Building Management | | 420  (358) | 544  (461) | +30%  (+29%) |
| Finance and Insurance | | 105  (84) | 142  (119) | +35%  (+42%) |
|  | *Finance* | *76*  *(61)* | *92*  *(77)* | *+21%*  *(+26%)* |
| *Insurance* | *29*  *(23)* | *50*  *(42)* | *+72%*  *(+83%)* |
| Construction | | 133  (108) | 131  (108) | -2%  (0%) |

( ) represents the number or percentage change in the number of pursuable corruption complaints

|  |  |
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| **Appendix 3** | **Progress of Ongoing Investigations as at the End of December 2023**  **(Excluding Election Cases)** |
|  |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Time spent** | **Number of cases** | **Percentage of**  **total number of cases** |
|  |  |  |
| Less than 6 months | 582 | 64.0% |
| 6 months to less than 1 year | 190 | 20.9% |
| 1 year to less than 2 years | 87 | 9.6% |
| 2 years or more | 50 | 5.5% |
| **Total** | **909** | **100%** |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Appendix 4** | **Number of Persons Prosecuted or Cautioned between 2014 and 2023** |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Appendix 5** | **Number of Persons Prosecuted and Cautioned for Corruption and Related Offences (Excluding Election Cases[[5]](#footnote-5)) in 2023[[6]](#footnote-6)  (Classified by Government Bureaux/Departments and Others)** |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Prosecution** | | | | **Caution** |
| **Pending** | **Convicted** | **Acquitted** | **Total** |
| **Government Bureaux/Departments** | | | | | |
| Hong Kong Police Force | 2 | 1 | 0 | **3** | **0** |
| Correctional Services Department | 0 | 2 | 0 | **2** | **0** |
| Housing Department | 1 | 1 | 0 | **2** | **0** |
| Fire Services Department | 0 | 1 | 0 | **1** | **0** |
| Home Affairs Department | 0 | 1 | 0 | **1** | **0** |
| Hongkong Post | 0 | 1 | 0 | **1** | **0** |
| Social Welfare Department | 1 | 0 | 0 | **1** | **0** |
| Water Supplies Department | 0 | 1 | 0 | **1** | **1** |
| Immigration Department | 1 | 0 | 0 | **1** | **1** |
| Leisure and Cultural Services Department | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** | **3** |
| **Others** | | | | | |
| Private Sector | 118 | 41 | 7 | **167[[7]](#footnote-7)** | **16** |
| Public Bodies[[8]](#footnote-8) | 5 | 1 | 0 | **6** | **1** |
| Private Individuals (concerning Government Bureaux/Departments)[[9]](#footnote-9) | 2 | 4 | 2 | **9[[10]](#footnote-10)** | **1** |
| Private Individuals (concerning Public Bodies4) | 9 | 0 | 0 | **9** | **0** |
| **Total** | **139** | **54** | **9** | **204** | **23** |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Appendix 6** | **Number of Persons Prosecuted in 2023[[11]](#footnote-11) (Excluding Election Cases[[12]](#footnote-12))**  **(Classified by Offences)** |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Types of Offences** | **Government Bureaux/**  **Departments** | **Private Individuals (concerning Government Bureaux/Departments or Public Bodies)[[13]](#footnote-13)** | **Public Bodies[[14]](#footnote-14)** | **Private Sector** | **Total** |
| **Soliciting/Accepting** | | | | | |
| s.3 Cap 201[[15]](#footnote-15) | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **1** |
| s.4(2) Cap 201 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 0 | **11** |
| s.9(1) Cap 201 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 32 | **33** |
| **Offering** | | | | | |
| s.4(1) Cap 201 | 0 | 7 | 0 | 0 | **7** |
| s.8(1) Cap 201 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | **1** |
| s.9(2) Cap 201 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 28 | **29** |
| **Agent using documents to deceive principal** | | | | | |
| s.9(3) Cap 201 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 4 | **7** |
| **Disclosing identity of persons under investigation** | | | | | |
| s.30 Cap 201 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | **1** |
| **Offences connected with or facilitated by corruption and specified offences[[16]](#footnote-16)** | | | | | |
| s.10(2)(a) Cap 204[[17]](#footnote-17) | 2 | 1 | 0 | 16 | **19** |
| s.10(5) Cap 204 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 86 | **95** |
| **Total** | **13** | **18** | **6** | **167** | **204** |

|  |  |
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| **Appendix 7** | **Number of Persons Prosecuted for Offences Connected with or Facilitated by Corruption and Specified Offences[[18]](#footnote-18) in 2023[[19]](#footnote-19)**  **(Classified by Types of Offences)** |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Types of Offences** | **Government Bureaux/**  **Departments** | **Private Individuals (concerning Government Bureaux/Departments or Public Bodies)[[20]](#footnote-20)** | **Public Bodies[[21]](#footnote-21)** | **Private Sector** | **Total** |
| ***Theft Ordinance* (Cap 210)** | | | | | |
| Deception offences | 3 | 3 | 3 | 79 | **88** |
| Theft | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7 | **7** |
| ***Crimes Ordinance* (Cap 200)** | | | | | |
| Using a copy of a false instrument/Using a false instrument | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3 | **4** |
| Forgery | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | **1** |
| Access to computer with criminal or dishonest intent | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | **1** |
| ***Organized and Serious Crimes Ordinance* (Cap 455)** | | | | | |
| Dealing with property known or believed to represent proceeds of indictable offence | 0 | 1 | 0 | 9 | **10** |
| **Common Law** | | | | | |
| Misconduct in Public Office | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | **3** |
| **Total** | **5** | **4** | **3** | **102** | **114** |

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Appendix 8** | **Non-Corruption Referrals Made to Government Bureaux/Departments and Public Bodies[[22]](#footnote-22) in 2023[[23]](#footnote-23)** | |
|  | | **Number of referrals** |
|
| **Government Bureaux/Departments** | | |
| Hong Kong Police Force | | 148 |
| Inland Revenue Department | | 25 |
| Housing Department | | 18 |
| Lands Department | | 15 |
| Food and Environmental Hygiene Department | | 14 |
| Social Welfare Department | | 12 |
| Immigration Department | | 10 |
| Education Bureau | | 9 |
| Hong Kong Customs and Excise Department | | 8 |
| Buildings Department | | 7 |
| Civil Service Bureau | | 7 |
| Home Affairs Department | | 7 |
| Fire Services Department | | 6 |
| Leisure and Cultural Services Department | | 6 |
| Other Government Departments | | 35 |
| ***Sub-total*** | | **327** |
| **Public Bodies** | | |
| The Hong Kong Mortgage Corporation Limited | | 21 |
| Securities and Futures Commission | | 11 |
| Hong Kong Competition Commission | | 4 |
| Insurance Authority | | 4 |
| Other Public Bodies | | 20 |
| ***Sub-total*** | | **60** |
| **Total** | | **387** |

**Reports of**

**ICAC Advisory Committees**

**2023**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Advisory Committee on Corruption** |

**Advisory Committee on Corruption**

**ANNUAL REPORT 2023**

**TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

The Chief Executive the Honourable Mr John LEE Ka-chiu,

**TERMS OF REFERENCE AND MEMBERSHIP**

The Advisory Committee on Corruption (ACOC) is the principal advisory body of the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) to oversee its operational, staffing and administrative policies. The terms of reference and membership of the ACOC in 2023 are at **Annexes A** and **B** respectively. The Chairmen of the Operations Review Committee, the Corruption Prevention Advisory Committee and the Citizens Advisory Committee on Community Relations are among the ex-officio members serving the ACOC.

**WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

During 2023, the ACOC held three meetings to review the corruption situation in Hong Kong and the work of the ICAC presented by the heads of its four departments. The ICAC remained relentless and committed to achieving its anti-corruption mission through law enforcement, corruption prevention and community education, and proactively fostered international cooperation against corruption. Approaching its 50th anniversary, the ICAC kicked off a series of celebratory activities during the year, showcasing the professionalism and vibrancy of ICAC officers. The golden jubilee also signified that the ACOC had walked side-by-side with the ICAC on its anti-corruption journey for half a century, and witnessed the fulfilment of its mission.

***Holistic Anti-Corruption Strategy***

The ACOC noted that Hong Kong remained a clean society with a very low level of corruption, and the city had continued to receive international acclaim for its probity. According to Transparency International’s *Corruption Perceptions Index 2023*, Hong Kong ranked 14th among 180 countries and territories assessed. Moreover, in World Justice Project’s *Rule of Law Index 2023*, Hong Kong secured the ninth place among 142 jurisdictions in terms of “Absence of Corruption”. The hard-earned international recognition was clear evidence of the ICAC’s effective work strategy, as well as the robust rule of law and anti-corruption regime of Hong Kong.

In 2023, the ICAC received a total of 2 001 corruption complaints (excluding election complaints), representing a 9% increase when compared to 2022, but a level lower than the pre-pandemic level in 2019. The ACOC understood that this increase in corruption complaints was attributed to the gradual recovery of economic activities in Hong Kong as the pandemic receded, resulting in a corresponding rise in corruption complaints concerning the private sector.

Regarding the public sector, the ACOC noted that the civil service remained clean and honest, despite isolated cases of civil servants being investigated or prosecuted for corruption offences. The ACOC recognised the high public expectations for the integrity of civil servants, and therefore supported the ICAC in continuing to co-organise the “Ethical Leadership Programme” with the Civil Service Bureau, and engaging in exchanges with senior to top-ranking civil servants through the Civil Service College’s “Leadership in Action Programme” and “Advanced Leadership Enhancement Programme”, with a view to deepening the probity culture within government departments. The ACOC was also aware that the ICAC completed 65 corruption prevention studies for government departments and public bodies, as a sustained effort to reduce corruption risks in public administration.

As for the private sector, while the ACOC was concerned about corruption in the building management industry, the construction industry and the finance and insurance industry, the ICAC swiftly responded with a holistic strategy encompassing law enforcement, prevention and education to strengthen the anti-corruption capabilities of different industries and sustain Hong Kong’s clean and fair business environment. The ACOC noted that the ICAC mounted an operation codenamed “Fire Net” during the year, which successfully cracked the largest ever building management corruption case in history. The ICAC also launched a *Corruption Prevention Guide for Property Management Companies* to assist property management companies in corruption prevention and risk management. As regards the construction industry, the ICAC co-organised with the Development Bureau and the Construction Industry Council the “Building a Clean and Fair Construction Industry Through Collaboration Anti-Corruption Summit” to promote the implementation of integrity management systems, as well as the adoption of the ICAC’s *Commitment to Action Agenda* and corruption prevention measures. Regarding the finance and insurance industry, the ACOC strongly supported the ICAC in strengthening collaboration with a number of regulatory bodies to enhance the synergy of law enforcement to combat corruption and illegal activities in the industry, thereby consolidating Hong Kong’s position as an international financial centre.

“Hong Kong will prosper only when its young people thrive”. Young people are Hong Kong’s future. The ACOC appreciated the ICAC’s effort in strengthening its publicity work to enlist public support and raise society’s anti-corruption awareness; and in empowering young people through progammes such as “ICAC Ambassador”, “iTeen Leadership” and “ICAC ELITE Youth Leadership” to become future leaders with a sense of national identity, an international perspective, and the commitment to upholding integrity and the rule of law.

***Support Clean Elections***

The ACOC endorsed the ICAC’s robust law enforcement to combat possible acts of manipulating or undermining elections, as well as its adoption of an “all-embracing” prevention, education and publicity strategy to deepen stakeholders’ understanding of the electoral laws and to ensure the conduct of the 2023 Rural Ordinary Election and the 2023 District Council Ordinary Election (DC Election) in a fair, open and just manner. As regards the DC Election, resolute enforcement action was taken during the election period to arrest 7 persons suspected of inciting others to boycott the DC Election, with two of them charged shortly afterwards. On the polling day, more than 900 ICAC officers were deployed to the polling stations to handle public enquiries and complaints on-site, and to observe the polling and vote-counting processes and then offer recommendations for improvement. The ACOC highly commended the ICAC officers for their effort made in the two elections, which was a full manifestation of their unwavering commitment and utmost professionalism.

***Strengthened International and Mainland Collaboration against Corruption***

The ACOC supported the ICAC in leveraging Hong Kong’s unique advantage of being “backed by the motherland and connected to the world” to contribute to the building of “A Road of Integrity” in full support of the country’s “Belt and Road” Initiative. Through its leadership in the International Association of Anti-Corruption Authorities and participation on various international platforms, the ICAC built connectivity with relevant organisations in various regions round the globe to share its anti-corruption experience and best practices with the international community, including the Belt and Road countries, so as to build a stronger alliance and global force against corruption.

The ACOC was delighted to note the close partnership between the ICAC and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). In July, at the invitation of the UNODC, the ICAC hosted for the first time anti-corruption workshops at the UNODC headquarters in Vienna for representatives of the Global Operational Network of Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement Authorities (GlobE Network). Following that, the ICAC and the UNODC formed a working group to jointly explore and push forward cooperation on important issues, with various efforts made including an international anti-corruption training programme to be held for GlobE members in Hong Kong as the ICAC celebrated its 50th anniversary in February 2024. Besides, the two also jointly developed the *Policy Guide for National Anti-Corruption Authorities on Meaningful Youth Engagement in Anti-Corruption Work.* The Guide, which was launched during the 10th session of the Conference of the States Parties to the *United Nations Convention against Corruption* held in Atlanta, the United States in December, provided practical references for anti-corruption institutions worldwide on enhancing youth engagement in anti-corruption efforts.

The ACOC was also pleased to note that the ICAC maintained close liaison with the National Commission of Supervision to tie in with the national development and anti-graft policy, and to foster anti-corruption collaboration in the Greater Bay Area.

***Establishment of the Hong Kong International Academy Against Corruption***

Hong Kong is recognised by the global community as a pioneer in graft-fighting and the ICAC is taken as a model of success by many countries. Timely grasping the opportunity, and with the support of the country and the Special Administrative Region Government, the ICAC established the Hong Kong International Academy Against Corruption (HKIAAC) in February 2024 to capitalize on its 50 years of anti-corruption experience to promote international cooperation and training exchanges. In 2023, the ICAC had organised pilot courses for a number of overseas anti-graft organisations in order to lay a sound foundation for the HKIAAC. Established within a short period of time and with limited resources, the HKIAAC is an embodiment of the strength, efficiency, unity and courage of ICAC officers in the face of difficulties. The ACOC highly appreciated the extraordinary efforts involved and believed that the establishment of the HKIAAC also represented the grand vision of ICAC officers, which would not only elevate the work of the ICAC to a new level, but also contribute to the anti-corruption work of our country and the world.

***Corporate Governance***

The ACOC continued to exercise an effective monitoring role to advise the ICAC on its work. The ACOC received periodic reports on internal audits of the ICAC, and noticed and supported the ICAC’s efforts in making continual improvements to its internal control and administrative systems for enhanced governance.

The ACOC considered and endorsed the ICAC’s draft Estimates of Expenditure for 2024-25, and also scrutinised the *ICAC Annual Report 2023* before it was submitted to you.

**Appreciation**

I wish to take this opportunity to thank members of the ACOC for their contribution and support. I, together with other members of the ACOC, fully endorsed and highly appreciated the new attempts made by the ICAC under the leadership of the Commissioner during the year, which had broadened the ICAC’s scope of cooperation and exchange with organisations worldwide, and increased its visibility on the international arena, whereby it could better promote the clean culture and tell the good stories of Hong Kong. We would also like to place on record our gratitude to ICAC officers for their reports and detailed replies in answering members’ enquiries. As the ICAC is celebrating its 50th anniversary, we would like to express our sincere appreciation to all ICAC officers, from generation to generation, for their dedication and commitment in fulfilling and carrying on the anti-corruption mission throughout the years, and for their efforts in scaling new heights for Hong Kong’s fight against corruption.



Martin LIAO Cheung-kong, GBS, JP

Chairman

Advisory Committee on Corruption

**Annex A Advisory Committee on Corruption**

**Terms of Reference (as at 31 December 2023)**

1. To advise the Commissioner of the Independent Commission Against Corruption on any aspect of the problem of corruption in Hong Kong, and, to this end:

* 1. to keep the operational, staffing and administrative policies of the Commission under review;

* 1. to advise on action being considered by the Commissioner under section 8(2) of the *Independent Commission Against Corruption Ordinance*;
  2. to receive reports by the Commissioner on disciplinary action taken;
  3. to consider the annual estimates of expenditure of the Commission;
  4. to scrutinise the annual report of the Commission before its submission to the Chief Executive; and
  5. to submit an annual report to the Chief Executive on the work of the Committee.

1. To draw to the Chief Executive’s attention, as it considers necessary, any aspect of the work of the Commission or any problem encountered by it.

**Annex B Advisory Committee on Corruption**

**Membership (as at 31 December 2023)**



|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| The Hon Martin LIAO Cheung-kong, GBS, JP | (Chairman) |
| Ms AU King-chi, GBS, JP |  |
| The Hon Chan Yung, BBS, JP |  |
| Ms Irene CHOW Man-ling, JP |  |
| Mr Victor LAM Hoi-cheung, JP |  |
| Ms Cecilia LEE Sau-wai, JP |  |
| The Hon Dr Lo Wai-kwok, GBS, MH, JP |  |
| Chairman of the Operations Review Committee | (ex officio) |
| Chairman of the Corruption Prevention Advisory Committee | (ex officio) |
| Chairman of the Citizens Advisory Committee on Community Relations | (ex officio) |
| Director of Administration | (ex officio) |
| Commissioner, Independent Commission Against Corruption | (ex officio) |
| Deputy Commissioner and Head of Operations, Independent Commission Against Corruption | (ex officio) |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Operations Review Committee** |

**Operations Review Committee**

**ANNUAL REPORT 2023**

**TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

The Chief Executive the Honourable Mr John LEE Ka-chiu,

**TERMS OF REFERENCE AND MEMBERSHIP**

The Operations Review Committee, comprising 13 non-official members and 4 official members, oversees the work of the Operations Department of the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC). Its terms of reference and membership are at **Annexes A** and **B** respectively. At the end of 2023, Dr Emily Chan Po-shan retired from the Committee after six years of service, and Ms Vivien Lau Man-yee joined the Committee in 2024.

**WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

Eight Committee meetings were held in 2023 to review reports prepared by the Operations Department. During the meetings, the Committee received reports and updates from the Operations Department on current major investigations, cases prosecuted at court, ICAC investigations spanning over a year and cases involving persons who had been on ICAC bail for over six months. The Committee noted that no search warrants had been issued by the Commissioner pursuant to section 17 of the *Prevention of Bribery Ordinance* (Cap 201). During the year, the Committee received reports on 25 completed major investigations.

A Subcommittee with three non-official members sitting in rotation convened on eight separate occasions to consider and advise on 1 504 completed minor investigations and 412 non-pursuable complaints of corruption. Findings of the Subcommittee were reported to the Committee for endorsement.

The Head of Operations attended the Committee meetings to brief members on the work of the Operations Department, corruption statistics and trends and other issues of interest. We also considered the *Annual Report on Corruption and Malpractice in the Government 2022* submitted by the Operations Department for identifying areas susceptible to corruption and malpractices in the Government.

**GENERAL CORRUPTION SCENE**

The corruption situation in Hong Kong continues to be well under control. The civil service and public bodies in Hong Kong remain clean and honest, while a corruption-free and level playing field is maintained for the private enterprises. In 2023, a total of 2 001 corruption complaints (excluding election complaints[[24]](#footnote-24)) were received with 1 566 of them being pursuable reports, representing an increase of 9% in both figures when compared to 2022. Overall, 72% of the corruption complaints concerned the private sector, 23% related to government departments and 6% involved public bodies[[25]](#footnote-25). The increase was largely attributed to a corresponding rise in the number of complaints concerning the private sector following the return of economic activities to normalcy as the epidemic situation subsided.However,the number ofcomplaintsreceivedin 2023 went down by 13% when compared to 2019, i.e. before the pandemic outbreak.

Corruption is a crime which is highly insidious and difficult to be detected. With advancement of information technology and increasingly busy cross-boundary activities, the modus operandi of criminals is more sophisticated and ever-changing. In spite of these, the Committee appreciates that the Operations Department has maintained professionalism and risen to challenges ahead by pursuing each and every corruption case vigilantly with perseverance. In 2023, 204 persons (same as the previous year) involved in 102 cases were prosecuted, down by 2% when compared to 2022. In the same year, 139 persons were convicted. The person-based and case-based conviction rates were 74% and 83% respectively, while 23 persons were formally cautioned for minor breaches of offences[[26]](#footnote-26).

The Committee notes that public support for the ICAC’s anti-corruption work remains strong with 71% of the complainants identifying themselves when reporting corruption.

**CORRUPTION IN THE GOVERNMENT SECTOR**

In 2023, a total of 451 complaints concerning staff of government bureaux and departments were received with 298 of them being pursuable reports, representing a decrease of 15% and 20% respectively when compared to 2022. The number of complaints concerning the government sector registered a decline across the board. A total of 103 cases were referred to the ICAC for action by various government bureaux and departments, accounting for 5% of the overall complaints.

The Committee understood that the citizens of Hong Kong have great expectations of a civil service with a high level of integrity and accountability. Though there were 13 government servants prosecuted for corruption or other illicit acts during the year, the Committee is pleased to note that the civil service lives up to a high standard of integrity and honesty without any sign of resurgence of syndicated corruption. The Committee is confident that the Operations Department will continue to impartially investigate every corruption complaint in accordance with the law, and strive to improve governance by forging continuous collaboration with government bureaux and departments to ensure the integrity and probity required of government servants.

**REFERRAL OF CASES FOR CONSIDERATION OF DISCIPLINARY AND/OR ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION BY HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS**

In 2023, upon a comprehensive review of the investigation reports and recommendations submitted by the Operations Department, the Committee endorsed the referral of 39 cases involving 62 government servants to the relevant bureaux and departments for consideration of disciplinary and/or administrative action. Such referrals mainly involved misuse of authority, acceptance of unauthorised loans, and malpractice in attendance/overtime work.

**CORRUPTION CONCERNING PUBLIC BODIES**

In 2023, a total of 111 corruption complaints relating to public bodies were received with 80 of them being pursuable reports, representing a drop of 8% and an increase of 4% respectively when compared to 2022. The Hospital Authority (24), the Hong Kong Productivity Council (six) and the Hong Kong Polytechnic University (five) together accounted for 32% of the total complaints relating to public bodies.

**CORRUPTION IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR**

In 2023, a total of 1 439 corruption complaints concerning the private sector had been received, among which 1 188 were pursuable complaints, representing increases of 22% and 20% respectively. The top three subsectors attracting most complaints were building management (from 420 to 544), finance and insurance (from 105 to 142) and construction industry (from 133 to 131).

The Committee notices a significant increase of 30% in corruption complaints involving the building management industry, which remains at the top of the list of corruption complaints concerning the private sector. Building management is closely related to people’s livelihood. The Committee is pleased to note that the Operations Department has spared no effort in eradicating corruption in the industry and is unwaveringly determined to protect the interests of the public, as demonstrated in the large-scale operation “Fire Net” mounted in January 2023, which successfully neutralised a sophisticated corruption syndicate. As a result of the operation, 23 individuals, including backbone members of the syndicate, a project consultant, contractors, owners’ corporation members and property management companies’ staff involved in the case, were promptly prosecuted upon advice of the Department of Justice for offering and accepting bribes totalling over $6.5 million and conspiracy to defraud. The case involved grand renovation and other projects of 10 residential and commercial buildings worth a total of $520 million. The Committee is pleased to note that the Operations Department managed to overcome the challenges in cracking down on this largest building maintenance corruption case in history. The case significantly enhanced people’s awareness of corruption prevention in building management and maintenance, which resulted in the increased number of corruption complaints concerning the building management industry in the year. The Committee is confident that the time-tested strategy adopted by the Operations Department will continue to effectively address public concerns.

The Committee also notices that the ICAC had previously signed Memoranda of Understanding with the Securities and Futures Commission (SFC) and the Accounting and Financial Reporting Council (AFRC), thereby strengthening collaboration with the two agencies to further protect the integrity and stability of the financial market. With the synergy created by the memoranda, the ICAC mounted several joint operations with the SFC and AFRC, and achieved remarkable results in the year, including the first tripartite operation conducted in October 2023 against two Hong Kong-listed companies suspected to have made falsified corporate transactions totalling nearly $200 million in Hong Kong and the Mainland. The tripartite operation is a manifestation of the common goals of the ICAC and its financial regulator partners in safeguarding the integrity of the financial market, consolidating Hong Kong’s status as an international financial hub and creating strong impetus for Hong Kong’s growth.

The Committee is pleased to note that the ICAC has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Insurance Authority in October 2023 to join forces in fighting corruption and other malpractices, and enhancing integrity governance and professionalism in the insurance industry. The memorandum has also strengthened the confidence of stakeholders in the industry and is conducive to establishing a corruption-free and open business environment.

The Committee is aware that a number of major infrastructure projects have commenced in Hong Kong in recent years. The ICAC has been closely monitoring the construction industry, and keeping in check the corruption risks involved in public works as well as the illegal practice of accepting bribes as rewards for making referrals in the industry. With regard to the enforcement actions concerning the Three-Runway System Project of the Hong Kong International Airport, the ICAC has already prosecuted 10 individuals, including two former senior executives of the Airport Authority Hong Kong and a number of sub-contractors. They were charged with bribery and other offences in the award of works and material supplies contracts as well as related administrative and financial arrangements. The case involved bribes totalling around $7.7 million over works sub-contracts and material purchase orders worth $260 million in total. The Committee is confident that the ICAC will continue to take robust enforcement actions against corruption in the industry.

**ELECTIONS**

The *District Councils (Amendment) Ordinance 2023*, which was gazetted and took effect in July 2023, not only reshaped the composition of the District Councils, but also improved governance at the district level and further implemented the principle of “patriots administering Hong Kong”. The first large-scale territory-wide election under the reformed District Councils was held on 10 December 2023. The Committee deeply appreciates the perseverance and hard work of the ICAC in safeguarding clean elections.

The ICAC has launched a number of publicity campaigns for this District Council election to encourage people to uphold the clean election culture, and to educate stakeholders and the general public on the gist of the *Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Conduct) Ordinance* through various means. Moreover, the ICAC deployed more than 900 officers at polling stations on the polling day to ensure that the election was conducted in a fair, just, clean, safe and orderly manner.

During the election period, the Operations Department proactively investigated and took robust actions against illegal conducts which might undermine or manipulate the election, including the offence under section 27A of the Ordinance, namely “inciting another person not to vote, or to cast invalid vote, by activity in public during election period”. The Committee is pleased to see the Operations Department’s resolute enforcement action, which resulted in arrest of seven individuals who were suspected to have committed election offences and prompt prosecution of two. The Committee is confident that the ICAC will continue to remain steadfast to ensure that all public elections are free from corruption in the future.

**CONCLUSION AND THE WAY FORWARD**

Since its establishment in 1974, the ICAC has been making every effort to fight corruption and safeguard the core values of probity and integrity in Hong Kong. As a forerunner in the global fight against corruption, the ICAC has achieved remarkable results which are there for all to see. The Committee is pleased to witness with members of the public the historic 50th anniversary of the ICAC.

The country has been dedicated to fighting corruption in recent years. The Committee is pleased to note that the ICAC has established the Hong Kong International Academy Against Corruption (HKIAAC) in February 2024 with the support of the Central People’s Government and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government. Apart from providing professional training for graft fighters from around the world, including those from the Belt and Road countries, as well as local public and private organisations, the HKIAAC also promotes the exchange of anti-corruption experience among experts and scholars from Hong Kong, the Mainland and overseas. The Committee believes that the establishment of the HKIAAC is a major cornerstone in Hong Kong’s partnership with the country and the rest of the world in fighting corruption, and it demonstrates our distinctive advantages of enjoying strong support of the Motherland and being closely connected to the world.

The Committee is also assured that as the ICAC celebrates its 50th anniversary, the Operations Department will continue its graft-fighting mission relentlessly without fear or favour to consolidate the rule of law foundation of Hong Kong and its reputation as a corruption-free city; and promote international anti-graft information exchanges and collaboration through the HKIAAC to contribute to the global anti-corruption cause on behalf of Hong Kong.

**APPRECIATION**

Last but not least, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all members of the Committee for their dedication and contributions in reviewing each and every case in a stringent and objective manner. The Committee also highly commends the unremitting and persistent efforts of the Operations Department in fulfilling its anti-corruption mission.



Bernard Charnwut CHAN, GBM, GBS, JP

Chairman

Operations Review Committee



**Annex B Operations Review Committee**

**Membership (as at 31 December 2023)**

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|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| The Hon Bernard Charnwut CHAN, GBM, GBS, JP | (Chairman) |
| Mr Samuel CHAN Ka-yan, BBS, JP |  |
| Dr Emily CHAN Po-shan |  |
| Ms Clara CHAN Yuen-shan, MH |  |
| Dr Aron Hari HARILELA, BBS, JP |  |
| Prof David HUI Shu-cheong, BBS, JP |  |
| The Hon Carmen KAN Wai-mun |  |
| Mr Johnson KONG Chi-how |  |
| Mr Richard Kendall LANCASTER |  |
| Mr Felix LI Kwok-hing |  |
| Prof LI Pang-kwong, BBS, JP |  |
| Ms Melissa Kaye PANG, BBS, MH, JP |  |
| Ms Nicole YUEN Shuk-kam |  |
| Secretary for Justice (or representative) | (ex officio) |
| Commissioner of Police (or representative) | (ex officio) |
| Director of Administration | (ex officio) |
| Commissioner, Independent Commission Against Corruption | (ex officio) |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Corruption Prevention Advisory Committee** |

**Corruption Prevention Advisory Committee**

**ANNUAL REPORT 2023**

**TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

The Chief Executive the Honourable Mr John LEE Ka-chiu,

**TERMS OF REFERENCE AND MEMBERSHIP**

The Corruption Prevention Advisory Committee (CPAC), comprising 12 non-official and 3 official members, advises the Commissioner of the ICAC on the work of the Corruption Prevention Department (CPD). Its terms of reference and membership are at **Annexes A** and **B** respectively. This year, Mr Stephen CHAN Man, Mr William Junior Guilherme DOO, Ms Amelia FOK Ching-yin, Mr Jonathan LEE Man-kwong and Mr Hendrick SIN have succeeded Ms Kuby CHAN Yin-hung, Mr Sunny CHEUNG Yiu-tong, Mr Alex CHU Wing-yiu, Dr Stephen LAI Yuk-fai and Ms Theresa YEUNG Wing-shan as members of the Committee. Through six subcommittees, each comprising two non-official members, the Committee advises on the focus and priority of the work of the six Assignment Groups of CPD.

**WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

During the year, the CPAC met on six occasions and considered 71 assignment reports presented by CPD. These assignment reports, involving mostly the work of government bureaux/departments (B/Ds) and public bodies (PBs) covering a wide range of systems and functions, were scrutinised by the CPAC to ensure that the recommendations proposed by the ICAC were effective and practical to mitigate the corruption risks identified. A list of the assignment reports endorsed by the CPAC is at **Annex C**. After the issue of reports, the ICAC followed up closely with the B/Ds and organisations concerned on their implementation of the corruption prevention recommendations.

The CPAC noted that apart from the above-mentioned assignment reports, CPD provided timely corruption prevention advice to B/Ds and PBs on 543 occasions[[27]](#footnote-27)\*, mainly in their formulation/review of legislation, policies, systems or procedures for the implementation of new initiatives, public services and public works projects. Furthermore, tailor-made corruption prevention advice was offered to the private sector upon request on 1 320 occasions\*, with each request for services duly responded to within two working days. In addition, the Corruption Prevention Advisory Service handled 1 110 public enquiries through its hotline service. CPD also conducted a total of 220 corruption prevention talks for B/Ds, PBs and private organisations (including non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and consultants/contractors of public works), reaching an audience totalling over 30 600 persons.

**HIGHLIGHT OF WORK**

During the year, the ICAC continued to assist B/Ds and PBs in further reducing corruption risks through enhancing their systems and procedures. The CPAC supports the ICAC in continuing with the strategy of “prevention at source” to help ensure suitable integrity management and corruption prevention elements were built into the systems of B/Ds and PBs, and collaborating with the relevant government departments and organisations for promoting the digitalisation of work processes and public services to enhance corruption prevention and efficiency. The ICAC continued to provide corruption prevention advisory services to the private sector and leveraged on diversified channels, including electronic platforms, to provide the latest corruption prevention information to the private sector. In addition, the ICAC established partnership with regulatory bodies/organisations and professional bodies of different industries in order to enhance the corruption prevention capabilities of the private sector. The highlight of CPD’s work is set out below.

***Early Input to Government’s New Initiatives***

In recent years, the Government has launched a number of new initiatives and programmes to address the needs concerning people’s livelihood and social and economic development. These initiatives included building Light Public Housing units, implementing labour importation schemes for various sectors, setting up Care Teams, formulating the *Primary Healthcare Blueprint*, etc. The ICAC provided early corruption prevention advice to the B/Ds and PBs concerned at the design and preparation stage of these new initiatives and programmes to facilitate their implementation with system integrity. The ICAC would also conduct detailed reviews to plug possible corruption loopholes where necessary. The CPAC is pleased to note that the successful implementation of this approach could enhance the effectiveness of corruption prevention.

***Emphasis on People’s Livelihood, Safety and Issues of Public Concern***

The ICAC attaches particular importance to areas concerning people’s livelihood and public safety, issues of public interest or concern, and programmes and projects involving substantial amount of public money. The CPAC is pleased to note that the ICAC reviewed programmes covering areas such as public election, public works, law enforcement and regulatory functions, food safety, procurement and funding scheme administration, and offered corruption prevention advice to the relevant B/Ds and PBs to mitigate corruption risks during the year. For example, the ICAC offered corruption prevention advice on the “Guidelines on Election-related Activities” and polling arrangement in respect of the 2023 District Council Ordinary Election, the licensing and regulatory regimes for food premises and factories, etc. Moreover, the ICAC launched the *Corruption Prevention Guide on Procurement for Public Bodies* in 2023 to enhance the corruption prevention capabilities of PBs in procurement processes.

Regarding works projects, the CPAC is pleased to note that the ICAC has completed assignment studies and made recommendations on quality supervision of new building works. In view of the emerging improprieties in the worker recruitment procedures of mega projects in recent years, the ICAC promptly made a series of efforts to enhance the industry’s anti-corruption awareness, including jointly organising corruption prevention seminars with the Development Bureau and the Construction Industry Council (CIC); launching Integrity Risk Management Plans on recruitment of workers for main contractors and subcontractors respectively; and distributing anti-corruption posters and pamphlets to about 1 500 construction sites through the CIC.

***Corruption Prevention Work for Private Sector***

The CPAC applauds the ICAC’s innovative and diversified approaches in collaborating with regulatory bodies/organisations of various industries to enhance the integrity management and corruption prevention capabilities of the industries. The ICAC achieved gratifying results in this aspect during the year. Such efforts included the launching of corruption prevention guides for property management, NGOs, the banking industry and law firms to strengthen corruption prevention safeguards and enhance corporate governance in the private sector.

In recent years, the ICAC has committed to enhancing the integrity of different industries by various means such as “collective action”. Following the launching of the Construction Industry Integrity Charter in 2021, the ICAC partnered with the Chinese Manufacturers’ Association of Hong Kong to set up the Business Sector Integrity Charter in 2023 to encourage the business sector to adopt the Integrity Management System. The “Integrity Charter” programme is in line with the country’s *High-Level Principles on Belt and Road Integrity Building*, which include encouraging public-private partnerships to prevent and combat corruption.

***Embracing Technology to Enhance Corruption Prevention***

In line with the Government’s efforts to promote innovation and technology development, the ICAC has been actively assisting B/Ds and PBs in embracing technology for enhancing their corruption prevention capabilities. Apart from launching the *Corruption Prevention Guide – Corruption Prevention through Digitalisation* and reviewing the digital works supervision systems of works departments, the ICAC would also continue to assist them in strengthening their corruption prevention capabilities through the use of information technology. The CPAC considers this area of work very important and offers full support.

**LOOKING AHEAD**

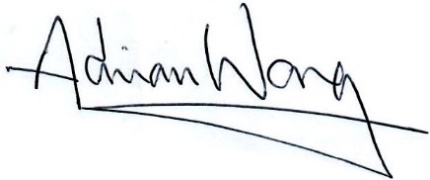
With the experience it gained in the past, the ICAC will continue to assist the public and private sectors in enhancing their corruption prevention capabilities. In the year ahead, the work priorities include strengthening corruption prevention systems and enhancing governance of the stakeholders in NGOs, the building management sector, listed companies and large-scale infrastructure projects.

**CONCLUSION**

CPD continues to play a crucial role in enhancing the integrity governance and internal controls of both public and private organisations in Hong Kong. The CPAC not only affirms the work done by CPD in the past year but also commends the wide range of corruption prevention services offered to the public and private sectors through CPD’s prevention at source and partnership strategies which help maintain Hong Kong as an economy of integrity and competitiveness.

**APPRECIATION**

I have completed my six-year term as Chairman. I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation for the contribution and support of all CPAC members during the year. I also wish to thank ICAC staff for their hard work, professionalism and dedication.



Adrian WONG Koon-man, BBS, MH, JP

Chairman

Corruption Prevention Advisory Committee

**Annex A Corruption Prevention Advisory Committee**

**Terms of Reference (as at 31 December 2023)**

1. To receive and call for reports from the Commission about practices and procedures of government departments, public bodies and the private sector which may be conducive to corruption, and to advise the Commissioner what areas should be examined and the degree of priority to be accorded to each.
2. To consider recommendations arising from such examinations and to advise the Commissioner on further action to be taken.
3. To monitor action taken to implement recommendations made on the advice of the Corruption Prevention Advisory Committee.

**Annex B Corruption Prevention Advisory Committee**

**Membership (as at 31 December 2023)**

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|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Mr Adrian WONG Koon-man, BBS, MH, JP | (Chairman) |
| Mr Stephen CHAN Man |  |
| Miss Mabel CHAN Mei-bo, JP |  |
| Prof Emily CHAN Ying-yang |  |
| Mr William Junior Guilherme DOO, BBS, JP |  |
| Ms Amelia FOK Ching-yin |  |
| The Hon Doreen KONG Yuk-foon |  |
| Ms Carrie LAU Ka-wai |  |
| Mr Jonathan LEE Man-kwong |  |
| Mr Hendrick SIN, MH |  |
| Mr Albert SU Yau-on, MH, JP |  |
| Mr Winson WOO Lap-kee |  |
| Commissioner of Police or representative | (ex officio) |
| Director of Administration or representative | (ex officio) |
| Commissioner, Independent Commission Against Corruption | (ex officio) |

**Annex C Assignment Reports Completed by Corruption Prevention Department in 2023**

| ***Client*** |  | ***Subject Area*** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. **Government Bureaux/Departments** | | |
| Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department |  | Control of Import and Export of Toothfish and Port Inspection |
|  |  | Registration of Veterinary Surgeons |
| Air Accident Investigation Authority |  | Investigation of Aircraft Accidents and Serious Incidents |
| Architectural Services Department |  | Administration of Slopes Maintenance Term Contracts |
| Buildings Department |  | Control of Unauthorised Building Works in New Territories Exempted Houses |
|  |  | Quality Supervision of New Building Works |
| Civil Aviation Department |  | Air Cargo Security |
| Civil Engineering and Development Department |  | Administration of Capital Works Contracts Adopting New Engineering Contract Target Options |
|  |  | Processing of Payment for Capital Works Contracts Adopting New Engineering Contract Target Options |
| Correctional Services Department |  | Security Control of Correctional Institutions |
| Create Hong Kong |  | Administration of the Film Production Financing Scheme and Scheme for Funding Other Film-related Projects |
| Development Bureau |  | Implementation of the Heritage Impact Assessment Mechanism for Capital Works Projects |
| Education Bureau |  | Regulation of Institutions Offering Non-local Higher and Professional Education Courses |
| Electrical and Mechanical Services Department |  | Management of Operation and Maintenance Service Contracts |
| Environmental Protection Department |  | Operation of Chemical Waste Treatment Centre |
|  |  | Operation of Landfill |
|  |  | Provision of Collection and Recycling Services for Waste Plastics |
| Fire Services Department |  | Procurement and Management of Service Contracts |
| Food and Environmental Hygiene Department |  | Letting and Administration of Public Markets Services Contracts |
|  |  | Licensing and Control of Food Factories |
|  |  | Licensing and Control of Restaurants |
| Government Laboratory |  | Testing of Chinese Medicines |
| Government Property Agency |  | Disposal of Surplus Government Quarters |
| Highways Department |  | Procurement of General Stores and Services |
| Hong Kong Monetary Authority |  | Procurement of Specialist Services |
| Hong Kong Police Force |  | Licensing of Pawnshops |
|  |  | Work of the Police Community Relations Officer Offices |
| Housing Department |  | Letting and Administration of Single Operator Market Tenancies |
| Immigration Department |  | Work of the Harbour Division |
| Inland Revenue Department |  | Tax Inspections and Legal Actions |
| Intellectual Property Department |  | Administration of the Original Grant Patent System |
| Lands Department |  | Control of Tree Maintenance Works |
| Leisure and Cultural Services Department |  | Letting and Administration of Horticultural Maintenance Services Contracts |
|  |  | Management of Community Arts Scheme |
|  |  | Management of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) Inventory and ICH Funding Scheme |
| Liquor Licensing Board and Food and Environmental Hygiene Department |  | Liquor Licensing |
| Office of the Government Chief Information Officer |  | Administration of IT Innovation Lab in Schools Programme |
| Social Welfare Department |  | Administration of the Special Scheme on Privately Owned Sites for Welfare Uses |
| Transport Department |  | Management, Operation and Maintenance of the Electronic Parking Meter System |
| Working Family and Student Financial Assistance Agency |  | Administration of Working Family Allowance Scheme |
| 1. **Public Bodies** | | |
| Airport Authority Hong Kong |  | Administration of IT Services Contracts |
|  |  | Corruption Prevention Work for Three-Runway System Project and Work Plan for Airport City |
|  |  | Procurement of Information Technology Equipment and Software |
| CLP Power Hong Kong Limited |  | Management of Building Maintenance and Minor Works |
| Employees Retraining Board |  | Engagement and Monitoring of Operators under Smart Living Scheme and Smart Baby Care Scheme |
| HKMC Annuity Limited |  | Administration of HKMC Annuity Plan |
| Hong Kong Applied Science and Technology Research Institute |  | Management of Research Projects |
| Hong Kong Cyberport Management Company Limited |  | Letting and Administration of Property Management Contracts |
| Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority |  | Processing and Marking of Answer Scripts |
| Hong Kong Export Credit Insurance Corporation |  | Claims Processing and Debt Recovery |
| Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation |  | Administration of Capital Works Projects  Leasing of Industrial Estates |
|  |  | Quality Control of Capital Works Projects |
| Hospital Authority |  | Letting and Administration of Service Contracts |
| Insurance Authority |  | Licensing of Insurance Intermediaries |
| MTR Corporation Limited |  | Letting of Works Contracts Adopting New Engineering Contract |
| Public Bodies |  | Corruption Prevention Guide on Procurement for Public Bodies |
| The Chinese University of Hong Kong |  | Letting and Administration of Service Contracts |
| The Education University of Hong Kong |  | Admission of Students to Undergraduate Programmes |
| The Estate Agents Authority |  | Licensing Procedures |
| The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts |  | Letting and Administration of Maintenance and Minor Works Contracts |
| The Hong Kong Jockey Club |  | Management of The Jockey Club Kau Sai Chau Public Golf Course |
|  |  | Provision of Goods and Services in Support of Golf Course Operation |
| The University of Hong Kong |  | Administration of Clinical Outside Practice |
| Urban Renewal Authority |  | Acquisition and Clearance Procedures |
| 1. **Others** | | |
| Construction Industry |  | Integrity Management in the Construction Industry |
|  |  | Recruitment of Workers in the Construction Industry |
| Listed Companies |  | Corruption Prevention Work and Initiatives for Listed Companies |
| Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) in the Welfare Sector |  | Corruption Prevention Guide on Governance and Internal Control for NGOs |
| Property Management Sector |  | Corruption Prevention Guide for Property Management Companies |
| The Chinese Manufacturers’ Association of Hong Kong |  | Procurement of Goods and Services |

|  |  |
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|  | **Citizens Advisory Committee on Community Relations** |

**Citizens Advisory Committee on Community Relations**

**ANNUAL REPORT 2023**

**TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

The Chief Executive the Honourable Mr John LEE Ka-chiu,

**TERMS OF REFERENCE AND MEMBERSHIP**

The Citizens Advisory Committee on Community Relations (CACCR), comprising 16 non-official members and one official member, advises the Commissioner of the ICAC on the Commission’s work to foster public support in combatting corruption and educate the public against the evils of corruption. Its terms of reference and membership are at **Annexes A** and **B** respectively. At the end of 2023, Ms Gigi WONG Ching-chi retired from the Committee, whilst Ms Cally KWONG Mei-wan joined as a new member of the Committee in 2024.

**WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

During the year, the CACCR conducted three meetings to discuss and advise on ICAC’s integrity promotion work through face-to-face education and media publicity. In particular, the CACCR discussed ICAC’s education and publicity strategies in 2023/24, ICAC’s 50th anniversary activities under the theme of “Fighting Corruption: The Mission Continues”, as well as the progress and way forward of the ICAC ELITE Youth Leadership Programme.

The CACCR has two subcommittees, namely the Media Publicity and Community Research Subcommittee (MPCRSC) and the Preventive Education and Public Engagement Subcommittee (PEPESC), which scrutinise and give advice on specific aspects of work of the Community Relations Department (CRD) of the ICAC and report to the CACCR.

In the year, the MPCRSC held three meetings and focused the discussion on ICAC’s media publicity strategy in 2023/24 and the direction of community research. The CACCR supported the ICAC to continue its opinion survey annually and adjust the publicity strategy as required. Through such scientific research studies, the achievements made jointly by the general public and the ICAC in fighting corruption can be reaffirmed.

The PEPESC also held three meetings in the year to advise on ICAC’s preventive education services for different segments of the community. The Subcommittee specifically reviewed the effectiveness of the “Journey for Integrity” signature event organised in 2022, and discussed the Commission’s work strategy in promoting clean building management and the ethics promotion programme for the medical and healthcare industry.

**REVIEW OF EDUCATION AND PUBLICITY WORK IN 2023**

The ICAC adopts a three-pronged strategy to fight corruption through the integration of law enforcement, prevention, education and publicity. Despite various challenges, the ICAC has never slowed down its pace in the anti-graft mission and has remained steadfast in safeguarding the value of integrity and the probity culture of Hong Kong. The CACCR noticed that the ICAC had made the necessary preparation during the pandemic and sped up its preventive education and publicity work as soon as Hong Kong returned to full normalcy in 2023, telling the anti-corruption stories of Hong Kong and living up to its reputation as a city of probity to underscore the national development and governance philosophy of the HKSAR Government.

On behalf of the Committee, I would like to report on the achievements of the ICAC during the year.

***Youth and Moral Education***

It is always the top priority of the ICAC to nurture in the younger generation the core values of integrity and law-abidingness. Throughout the years, the ICAC Ambassador Programme for tertiary students and the iTeen Leadership Programme for secondary students had been popular amongst the tertiary education institutions and secondary schools. Leveraging on this solid foundation, the ICAC launched the ICAC ELITE Youth Leadership Programme in 2023 to tailor training and exchange activities for tertiary and senior secondary students, equipping them with the value of integrity, the spirit of the rule of law as well as the sense of national identity and global vision to become future pillars of the society. Apart from experiential activities on law enforcement work, the first cohort of the iELITE Youth Leaders were given the opportunity to receive delegates of anti-corruption agencies from “Belt and Road” countries during the latter’s visits to Hong Kong and join the study tour to Mainland cities to witness their efforts and vision on anti-corruption cause. The CACCR was pleased to see that the ICAC ELITE Youth Leadership Programme, which had generated positive feedback in the first year after its launch, had taken ICAC’s iconic programmes on youth integrity promotion to a new height.

As for the young children, the ICAC continued to support values education in schools by producing a new series of animation-based teaching package and activity materials on the theme of “fairness” under the i Junior Programme for Primary Schools, as well as moral education picture books and activity packages for kindergartens under the “Reading for Integrity” Project. The ICAC also arranged ICAC’s Kids Classroom in the year to invite kindergarteners and their parents to visit the ICAC and participate in story-telling and parent-child handicraft activities to sow the seed of integrity in the minds of the young children.

In 2023, over 270 000 students participated in ICAC’s integrity and ethics promotion activities/programmes. As a member of the expert panel, I took part in the joint project of the ICAC and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime on developing the *Policy Guide for National Anti-Corruption Authorities on Meaningful Youth Engagement in Anti-Corruption Work* and personally met some of the young leaders trained up by the ICAC in the project. I was impressed by both the quality and quantity of ICAC’s youth development work. The CACCR recognised ICAC’s efforts in organising tailored moral education activities for young people at different developmental stages to suit their needs.

***Clean Elections***

The first District Council Ordinary Election after the Government’s improved district governance was completed in 2023. The CACCR was aware that the ICAC had launched a multi-faceted education and publicity campaign a few months before the election to enhance knowledge of various stakeholders on the electoral laws and appeal to members of the public to cast their votes. The ICAC arranged 200 briefing sessions and publicity activities at district level, and produced information booklets and reminder leaflets for reference of candidates and voters respectively. The clean elections enquiry hotline was in operation throughout the year, whilst AI technology was adopted in multimedia productions for better publicity effect. Through these education and publicity activities, the message of clean elections was spread across the territory, contributing to a culture of honesty, fairness and integrity for members of the public to vote for the new term District Councillors for building a better community.

The CACCR would like to express our heartfelt thanks to all ICAC officers who had played a part in safeguarding a clean election. With their meticulous professionalism, ICAC officers cracked down corrupt acts that undermined or manipulated elections by stringent law enforcement. They were also stationed at polling stations as well as regional offices on the polling day to handle public enquiries and complaints in a timely manner.

***Integrity Promotion in the Public Sector***

The CACCR appreciated ICAC’s relentless efforts in providing integrity training for government officers at all ranks, including the arrangement of briefing sessions for all Politically Appointed Officials of the HKSAR Government in their first year of appointment to introduce the anti-corruption laws and ethics management, and the incorporation of ICAC sessions in the compulsory induction programme for all new recruits to entrench the probity culture in the civil service. The ICAC also worked closely with bureaux/departments (B/Ds) to arrange regular integrity training for their staff members. About 60% of B/Ds had adopted integrity training cycles so far. In addition, the ICAC continued to collaborate with the Civil Service Bureau to organise thematic workshops and sharing sessions targeted at senior government officers to sustain the effectiveness of the Ethical Leadership Programme over the years.

The CACCR also learnt that the ICAC had been supporting the Airport Authority of Hong Kong and other public bodies to organise staff training and implement integrity management. Besides, e-leaflets were produced for members of Legislative Council and District Council returned under the improved electoral systems to provide them with a gist of the *Prevention of Bribery Ordinance*, the common law offence of Misconduct in Public Office and relevant points-to-note with a view to sustaining integrity promotion in the public sector.

***Business Ethics Promotion***

The Government had promulgated various labour importation and talent admission schemes in the year. The CACCR supported the ICAC to work swiftly with relevant B/Ds to provide education services and publicity materials to these new arrivals to let them understand the anti-corruption laws of Hong Kong in a timely manner. The Committee noted that ICAC briefing sessions had been arranged for all imported workers who came to Hong Kong under different schemes, while information packs were distributed and publicity activities organised at their workplaces and centralised quarters. The ICAC also established working relationship with the newly established Hong Kong Talent Engage, stepped up its publicity efforts in social media platforms and staged a publicity booth in the 3rd International Talents Summit during the year to promote Hong Kong’s edge on integrity to the incoming talents from the Mainland and overseas.

CRD’s Hong Kong Business Ethics Development Centre (HKBEDC) strives to promote business and professional ethics as the first line of defence against corruption. The CACCR acknowledged HKBEDC’s continued efforts to provide free integrity training services, in the form of face-to-face talks or web courses, for various industries and professions, and organise ICAC visit programmes in partnership with professional bodies and trade associations to assist small and medium start-ups as well as listed and multinational companies to practise business ethics, so as to sustain the competitiveness and economic growth of Hong Kong to commensurate with its “eight centres” positioning. In addition, the Committee was pleased to see that HKBEDC provided on its website a large number of practical ethics training resources tailored for different industries and professions, including the self-learning animation series titled *Unveil the Secret: Integrity Myths in the Banking Industry*, the *Online Medical Guide for Medical Professionals* as well as the online ethics resources for practitioners of pharmaceutical and medical device industry, to address their characteristics and concerns.

The CACCR also noted that the ICAC had approached all authorised institutions under the Hong Kong Monetary Authority in the year to promote the ethics resources newly produced for frontline bank staff and clients and provide training courses and exchange programmes for the banking industry. The ICAC also teamed up with the Construction Industry Council and the Development Bureau to launch an anti-corruption summit to call on the construction industry to implement ethical practices and integrity management. For recreation and sports sector, the ICAC had stepped up its collaboration with the Hong Kong Football Association and arranged integrity training for its football players, referees and staff members. Besides, the ICAC joined hands with the Sports Federation & Olympic Committee of Hong Kong, China, to organise a seminar for its affiliating national sports associations to promote ethics and enhance governance level.

***Community Education***

The CACCR acknowledged ICAC’s continuous efforts to reach out to different building management bodies proactively and to call on flat owners to stay vigilant through their active participation in building management. With the full implementation of the licensing regime in the year, the ICAC collaborated with the Property Management Services Authority to step up their joint efforts to promote professional ethics in the property management sector. Apart from producing a series of training videos and a self-learning package for industry practitioners, the ICAC also arranged talks to disseminate anti-corruption messages to property management staff. In addition, integrity training was delivered to executives through continuing professional development programmes of various professional bodies and trade associations, as well as to students undertaking property management programmes at tertiary education institutions and vocational schools. The ICAC also launched a wave of large-scale publicity work to tie in with the “Fire Net” operation and the new round of applications for Operation Building Bright 2.0 in the year.

District Services and Community Care Teams (Care Teams), which were set up in 2023 to consolidate community resources and forces in support of the Government’s district work and networking, played an important role in the improved district governance structure. The CACCR was delighted to learn that the ICAC had taken prompt action to arrange talks for members of the Care Teams to explain the anti-corruption laws and appeal for their support in disseminating integrity messages to residents through their service networks.

***Telling the Anti-Corruption Stories of Hong Kong through Media Publicity***

The CACCR was happy to learn that the ICAC would, taking the opportunity of its upcoming 50th anniversary and the establishment of the Hong Kong International Academy Against Corruption, further expand its online and offline publicity to show to a wider audience the professionalism of the ICAC in combatting corruption and the probity situation of Hong Kong as one of its competitive edges.

The Committee was delighted to see that the ICAC made a number of breakthroughs in its publicity strategy, such as live-broadcasting press briefings of major ICAC cases on Facebook, and continued to explore new channels to meet the interests of the general public for better publicity mileage and message penetration. It was observed that the ICAC increasingly used its social media accounts on popular platforms (including Facebook and Instagram) as well as its new WeChat account launched in the year to introduce the law enforcement work and latest initiatives of the ICAC. Creative videos were produced and uploaded to the media platforms to introduce to the audience in a light-hearted manner anti-corruption messages, dispel misconception and encourage members of the public to report corruption. The ICAC also reposted interesting stories on the origin of ICAC logo, ICAC’s iconic coffee, relocation of ICAC headquarters and the first ICAC regional office, etc. from the *50 ICAC Stories* column of the 50th anniversary website to the social media platforms for the general public to revisit the anti-corruption history of Hong Kong over the past half century.

***Heading Towards the ICAC’s 50th Anniversary Together***

The CACCR endorsed ICAC’s community engagement strategy to put across anti-corruption messages amongst different sectors of the community and garner their long-term support. In December 2023, members of ICAC’s advisory committees took part in the “Fighting Corruption: The Mission Continues” Kick-off Run to embark the series of public engagement activities for the 50th anniversary and show their support to ICAC officers. Despite the cold weather warning hoisted on the event day, advisory committee members, ICAC officers, their families and friends, ICAC Ambassadors, iELITE Youth Leaders, ICAC Club members as well as representatives of other disciplined forces gathered at the Peak with their fiery enthusiasm and participated in the 3.5km running event. All runners made the best endeavours to excel themselves, upholding the unwavering spirit of the ICAC in fighting corruption.

Together with other Hong Kong citizens, CACCR members are looking forward to the upcoming 50th anniversary activities, including the Running Gala scheduled for February 2024, photo/video collection campaign and other public engagement activities, youth video competition, and so forth.

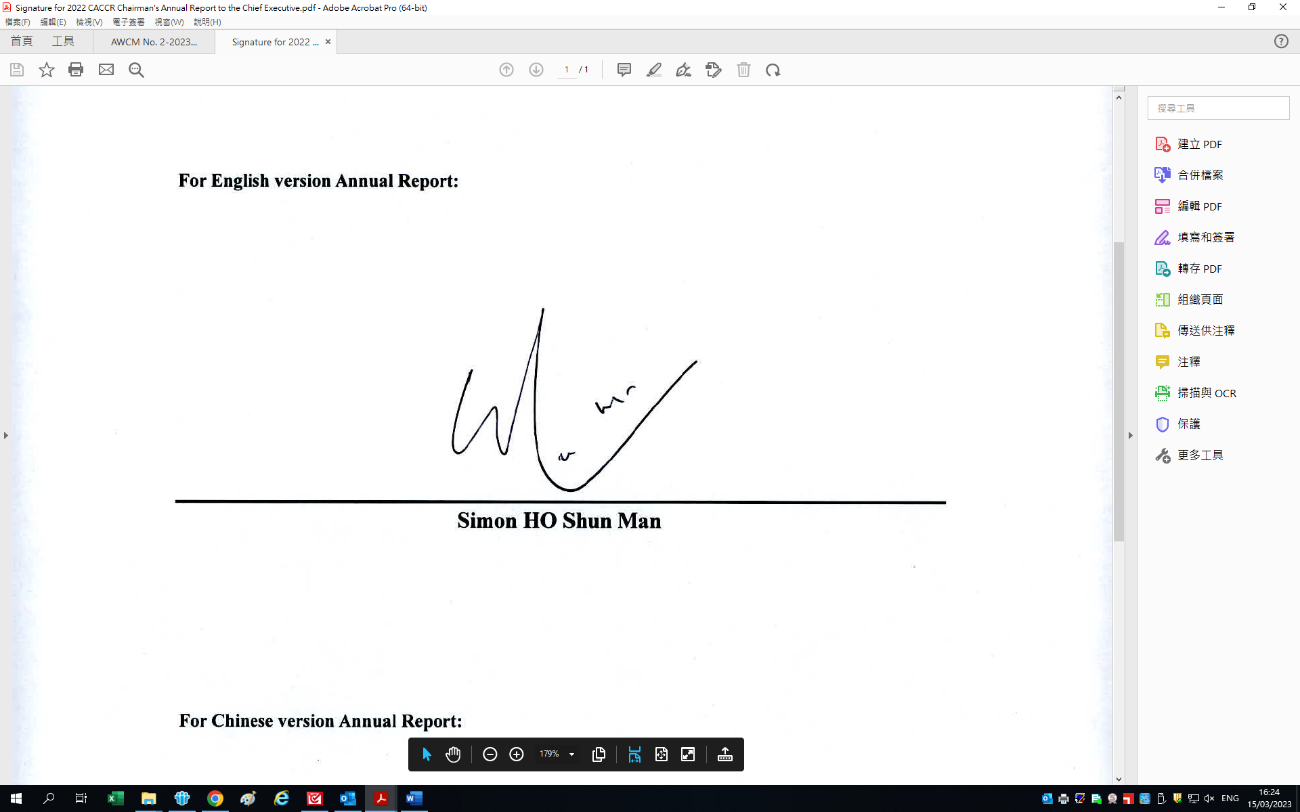
**CONCLUSION**

Past ICAC Annual Surveys consistently reflected that the society of Hong Kong firmly supported the anti-corruption cause. People showed zero tolerance toward corruption and believed that keeping Hong Kong corruption-free was important to the overall development of the city. The CACCR commended the ICAC for its perseverance and pursuit of excellence in the anti-graft journey. Looking ahead to the ICAC reaching its golden jubilee in the coming year, the Committee would build a stronger tie with the ICAC to co-write a new chapter in the work of integrity promotion and expect the establishment of the Hong Kong International Academy Against Corruption bringing graft-fighting and integrity promotion work of the ICAC to a higher level in both local and international arenas.

**APPRECIATION**

I would like to extend my appreciation to all members of the Committee for their contribution and full support. I also treasured the opportunity of working together with these members from various professional fields as well as young members who joined the Committee through the Member Self-recommendation Scheme for Youth to sustain the probity culture of Hong Kong.

The CACCR would also take the opportunity to send our regards to all staff members of the ICAC for their professionalism and dedication to uphold the values of integrity and fairness for the prosperity of Hong Kong in times of difficulties and challenges, while embracing the spirit of “Fighting Corruption: The Mission Continues”.



Simon HO Shun-man

Chairman

Citizens Advisory Committee on Community Relations

**Annex A Citizens Advisory Committee on Community Relations**

**Terms of Reference (as at 31 December 2023)**

1. To advise the Commissioner of the Independent Commission Against Corruption measures to be taken to foster public support in combatting corruption and educate the public against the evils of corruption.
2. To receive and call for reports on action taken by the Community Relations Department of the Commission in pursuance of the above.
3. To monitor community response to the Commission’s work and public attitudes towards corruption in general.

**Annex B Citizens Advisory Committee on Community Relations**

**Membership (as at 31 December 2023)**

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|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Prof Simon HO Shun-man | (Chairman) |
| Mr Mac CHAN Ho-ting |  |
| Ms Amy CHAN Lim-chee, JP |  |
| Ms May CHAN Suk-mei, GBS, JP | |  |
| Dr Albert CHAU Wai-lap |  |
| Ms Pinky LAU Pik-yiu |  |
| Dr Bobby LIU Kam-hing, MH |  |
| Prof Joshua MOK Ka-ho |  |
| Mr Webster NG Kam-wah, JP |  |
| Mr Victor PANG Wing-seng, MH |  |
| Dr Rocky TUNG Yat-ngok |  |
| Mr Andy WAN Ka-kit |  |
| Ms Gigi WONG Ching-chi |  |
| Dr James WONG Kong-tin, BBS, JP |  |
| Mr WONG Wai-kit, MH  Ms Jenny YUNG Ching-yi |  |
| Commissioner, Independent Commission Against Corruption | (ex officio) |

1. Unless otherwise specified, election cases were excluded in the calculation of the number of complaints, as well as persons prosecuted, convicted and cautioned in 2023. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The GlobE Network, established in June 2021, offers a platform for facilitating information exchange and transnational cooperation among anti-corruption and law enforcement authorities around the world to ensure that the States Parties to the UNCAC are equipped with a quick and efficient tool for combatting corruption. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. |  |
   | --- |
   | Election complaints refer to complaints alleging breaches of the ECICO. |

   [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. As defined in the *Prevention of Bribery Ordinance* (Cap 201). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Election cases refer to the cases relating to offences under the *Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Conduct) Ordinance* (Cap 554). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. The figures in the above table denote the number of prosecutions. If a person is prosecuted in different cases, calculation of the figures will take into account the number of prosecutions made against that person. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. One person was discharged as the case was not pursued by the prosecution. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. As defined in the *Prevention of Bribery Ordinance* (Cap 201). [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Private individuals were prosecuted in investigations involving government bureaux/departments and public bodies. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. One person was subject to binding over orders. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. The figures in the above table denote the number of prosecutions. If a person is prosecuted in different cases, calculation of the figures will take into account the number of prosecutions made against that person. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Election cases refer to the cases relating to offences under the *Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Conduct) Ordinance* (Cap 554). [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Private individuals were prosecuted in investigations involving government bureaux/departments or public bodies. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. As defined in the *Prevention of Bribery Ordinance* (Cap 201). [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Cap 201 is the *Prevention of Bribery Ordinance*. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Detailed breakdown at Appendix 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Cap 204 is the *Independent Commission Against Corruption Ordinance*. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Offences described in section 10(2) of the *Independent Commission Against Corruption Ordinance* (Cap 204). [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. The figures in the above table denote the number of prosecutions. If a person is prosecuted in different cases, calculation of the figures will take into account the number of prosecutions made against that person. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Private individuals were prosecuted in investigations involving government bureaux/departments or public bodies. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. As defined in the *Prevention of Bribery Ordinance* (Cap 201). [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. As defined in the *Prevention of Bribery Ordinance* (Cap 201). [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Government bureaux/departments and public bodies which received four or more referrals during the year are shown in the table above. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Election complaints refer to complaints alleging breaches of the *Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Conduct) Ordinance* (Cap 554). [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Individual percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. The figures concerning the number of persons prosecuted, convicted and formally cautioned in 2023 excluded those for election cases. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. \* Statistics exclude the numbers of corruption prevention talks conducted. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)