

**Independent Committee in relation to the
Fire at Wang Fuk Court in Tai Po**

**WITNESS STATEMENT OF
WONG CHEUNG-HING**

I, WONG Cheung-hing, Chief Inspector of Police, Hong Kong Police Force, of the New Territories North Regional Headquarters, No.6 On Po Lane, Tai Po, New Territories, Hong Kong do say as follows:-

1. I am the Chief Inspector of Police, Regional Crime Prevention Officer of Regional Crime Prevention Office, Crime New Territories North Region ("Unit"), Hong Kong Police Force ("Force") of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. I have joined the Force for 13 years since about 2013 and was promoted to the present rank on 10 July 2022. My main responsibilities include the supervision of the Unit, and the handling of any other duties as directed by the senior officers of the New Territories North Region.
2. I make this Witness Statement pursuant to the request of the Independent Committee ("Committee") in relation to the fire at Wang Fuk Court in Tai Po as set out in a letter from Messrs. Lo & Lo, Solicitors for the Committee, to the Commissioner of Police dated 23 December 2025 ("23 December Letter") in which 5 categories ("Category/Categories") of documents were requested. Save where otherwise appears, the facts deposed hereto are within my personal knowledge or are derived from office files and records and sources to which I have access and which are true to the best of my knowledge, information and belief.
3. In this Witness Statement, I shall address Category 4 of the 23 December Letter, and the process of identification of the deceased persons.

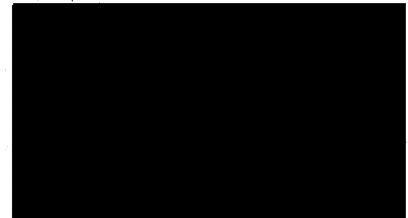
4. A serious fire ("**Fire**") broke out in Wang Fuk Court, Tai Po on 26 November 2025, at seven blocks, resulting in 79 injuries and 168 confirmed deaths. On 27 November 2025, Ms WONG Wai-chi, Superintendent (Administration and Support) of Crime New Territories North Regional Headquarters, designated me as the Officer-in-Charge of Kwong Fuk Community Hall ("**KF Hall**"). KF Hall was assigned as a temporary photo-identification centre for fire fatalities. KF Hall opened at 1500 hrs on the same day, approximately 24 hours after the outbreak of the Fire, to expedite the identification process. KF Hall provided a secure, dignified and controlled environment where photographs of the deceased could be shown to relatives and friends for preliminary visual identification.
5. Each recovered body's images were photographed at the on-site temporary mortuary, whenever a body was sent there, by designated officers from Regional Crime Unit ("**RCU**") 2A, Regional Anti-triad Unit ("**RATU**"), Regional Technology and Financial Crime Unit ("**RTFCU**") from Crime New Territories North Regional Headquarters or Organized Crime and Triad Bureau ("**OCTB**"). The photographs were subsequently organised into two parallel albums sorted by gender and prepared by designated officers from RCU 2A, RCU 2B, RCU 3A, RCU 3C, RTFCU or OCTB. For those bodies that were severely burnt, only found locations were included in a list without displaying any photo. This dual classification allowed searchers to narrow their focus when visual features were unrecognisable.
6. When a viewer made a positive visual identification, the attending officer would record the assertion on a standard registration form and obtained the viewer's signature. Designated officers from RTFCU or OCTB then arranged appointments with the relatives or friends of the deceased for confirmatory viewing at Fu Shan Mortuary later on. When family members arrived at Fu Shan Mortuary for identification, the pathologist would interview them and compare distinguishing features and medical history provided by the family members. If satisfied with the information, the pathologist would record the identification as initial. DNA swabs were then collected from the family

members by police officers responsible for corpse identification at Fu Shan Mortuary. For negative identifications, the same details would be documented on a standard registration form; for some cases, the family members might have to visit KF Hall multiple times until a positive identification could be made.

7. Bodies that were completely carbonised were excluded from subsequent visual identification because the pathologist could not verify identity by appearance. These cases were referred for forensic examination including DNA and fingerprint comparison. DNA sampling from family members, who had not been arranged for visual identification at Fu Shan Mortuary, was conducted at KF Hall from 8 to 10 December 2025. This effort aimed to collect samples for scientific confirmation of identities of the deceased pending DNA matching. KF Hall was closed on 15 December 2025, following completion of the DNA collection process. A total of 32 individuals from 31 families visited KF Hall and provided 38 DNA samples, looking for 41 potential deceased.
8. As Officer-in-Charge, I retained custody of all raw data collected from relatives who attended KF Hall to view photographs or to provide DNA samples as well as all data from the on-site temporary mortuary. The raw data included personal particulars of the presumed deceased supplied by family members along with discovery details recorded by the Fire Services Department or the Disaster Victim Identification Unit.
9. To manage this information effectively, I devised a comprehensive Excel worksheet titled "Forensic Identification of Identified Deceased". The worksheet recorded, for each body recovered from the Fire, (i) personal particulars, (ii) type of identity indicating their presence in Wang Fuk Court during the Fire, and (iii) the associated address in Wang Fuk Court. The worksheet also included the four persons (one of them a fire-fighter) who were pronounced dead in hospitals, ensuring that the official fatality tally is complete and accurate. Using the worksheet, I have updated the figures of the confirmed deceased on a daily basis.

10. I understand that the Force has produced to the Committee a schedule (named "Schedule A") for a summary of fatalities (as at 3 January 2026), as attached to the letter from the Department of Justice to Messrs. Lo & Lo dated 12 January 2026. As at 13 January 2026, there are 168 identified deceased, including 58 males and 110 females, aged from 6 months to 98 years old. There is no unidentified human remains and hence the 168 identified deceased is the final death toll. I attach hereto as Annex 1 an updated Schedule A for a summary of fatalities (as at 13 January 2026).
11. I confirm that the contents of this Witness Statement are true to the best of my knowledge, information and belief.

Dated this 16th day of January 2026.

A large black rectangular box redacting the signature of Wong Cheung-hing.

WONG Cheung-hing