

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

WITNESS STATEMENT OF

TSANG SHUK-YIN

I, TSANG Shuk-yin, Chief Superintendent of Police, Hong Kong Police Force, of the Police Headquarters, No. 1 Arsenal Street, Wan Chai, Hong Kong do say as follows:-

1. I am the Chief Superintendent, Complaints and Internal Investigations Branch, Hong Kong Police Force (“**Force**”) of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. I have joined the Force for 27 years since about 1998 and was promoted to the present rank on 17 March 2022. My main responsibilities include managing the Complaints and Internal Investigations Branch, which consists of Complaints Against Police Office (“**CAPO**”), Internal Audit Action Group and Internal Investigations Office of the Force; implementing Force policy concerning complaints against police and misconduct by police officers; and in relation to the Wang Fuk Court Fire Incident (“**Incident**”), overseeing the operation of the Casualty Enquiry Unit (“**CEU**”) as the officer-in-command of the CEU.
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 Department of Justice dated 19 January 2026 (“**19 January Letter**”) in which specific questions were raised in paragraphs 1 to 19 (“**Questions**”). 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 Questions 19, a., ii. (only

with regard to the handling of enquiries from the public regarding casualty and missing persons) and 19, d. of the 19 January Letter, and explain the operation of the CEU throughout the Incident. Other Questions which are within the Force's purview will be addressed in the witness statements of other relevant officers of the Force to the Committee.

4. This Witness Statement is divided into the following parts:-
 - (1) Part A provides a detailed description of the operation of the CEU in answer to Question 19, a., ii. (only with regard to the handling of enquiries from the public regarding casualty and missing persons); and
 - (2) Part B describes my knowledge of whether Government departments other than Police were involved in handling enquiries regarding missing persons in answer to Question 19, d.

Part A – The Operation of the CEU

Duties and Composition of the CEU

5. As soon as an emergency or disaster is declared as a Major Incident (“MI”) by the Assistant Commissioner of Police, Operations (“ACP OPS”), the CEU may be mobilised, depending upon the nature and scale of that particular situation. Its purpose is to handle public enquiries relating to casualties arising from the incident concerned. It also provides facilities for the collection and collation of information with a view to handling the identification of casualties and notification of their next of kin.
6. The manpower of the CEU is drawn from the CAPO, with a reserve pool of 60 officers from the Hong Kong Police College (“HKPC”) to be maintained at all times. For the CEU to perform the stated functions, the manpower deployed to the CEU during a particular shift will be assigned to one of the six teams, namely (i) CEU

Headquarter, (ii) Public Enquiry Team, (iii) Reception Team, (iv) Indexing Team, (v) Matching Team, and (vi) Investigation Team. Each team is commanded by an Inspectorate officer. The manpower of each team will be adjusted to cope with the workload as the incident develops. The CAPO adopts a first call standby system for the manning of the CEU. Three CAPO Regional offices, namely CAPO (Hong Kong Island), CAPO (Kowloon) and CAPO (New Territories), rotate monthly to perform the first call standby.

7. The CEU is accommodated at Major Incident Investigation and Disaster Support System (“MIIDSS”) Suite, 6/F, Arsenal House, East Wing, Police Headquarters, No. 1 Arsenal Street, Wan Chai. For CAPO officers, a two-day induction training will be provided to the untrained officers and the annual one-and-a-half-day refresher training will be arranged for the trained officers. As for HKPC officers, an annual half-day training on hotline enquiries handling will be provided.

Command Structure

8. According to the standard protocol, Senior Superintendent of the CAPO is the designated officer-in-command of the CEU. However, in light of the exceptional complexity and the casualty magnitude associated with the Incident, I assumed the command of the CEU starting from its first day of activation (i.e. 26 November 2025) and was assisted by the Senior Superintendent of the CAPO, Mr. YU Wai-kit, who served as the second-in-command of the CEU.

Operation Outline for the Incident

9. The CEU operation for the Incident was divided into three distinct phases.
 - (1) In Phase 1 (from 26 November 2025 to 20 December 2025) –
 - The hotline service (Telephone Number: 1878999) operated round-the-clock.
 - The CEU was operated on two 12-hour shifts daily from 26 November 2025 to 3 December 2025, and on three 8-

hour shifts daily from 4 December 2025 to 20 December 2025, with each shift staffed by a minimum of 29 CAPO officers.

- (2) In Phase 2 (from 21 December 2025 to 4 January 2026) –
 - The service hours were adjusted to 0700 hours until 2300 hours, from Sunday to Saturday, on two 8-hour shifts with each shift staffed by two CAPO officers.
- (3) In Phase 3 (from 5 January 2026 to 26 January 2026) –
 - The service hours were further adjusted to 0900 hours until 1800 hours, from Monday to Friday, with the single shift staffed by one CAPO officer.

10. On 27 November 2025, in response to the prolonged operational hours and the high volume of enquiry calls, I authorized the mobilization of reserved manpower from the HKPC to reinforce the Public Enquiry Team and Investigation Team (as a follow up to the hotline enquiries only). The manpower drawn from the HKPC was adjusted daily due to the evolving scale of the Incident, ranging from 5 to 37 officers. On 4 December 2025, all officers from the HKPC were released from the CEU and resumed normal duty at the HKPC.

The Specific Duty of CEU Teams

11. The CEU Headquarters Team was to assist me and the second-in-command of the CEU in coordinating all CEU teams, collating data and information, liaising with the Security Bureau (Emergency Monitoring and Support Centre), other Government departments and Police units, and arranging logistics matters for the operation.
12. The Public Enquiry Team was assigned to handle the public enquiries, to assess the likelihood of the subject person being involved in the Incident, and to document the details of the enquiry which would be passed to the Reception Team.
13. The Reception Team was assigned to provide administration support for the CEU, to process all the incoming information that was likely to be related to the subject person, prior to its

dissemination to the Indexing Team, and to maintain a filing system.

14. The Indexing Team was assigned to record all information with the computer system in the CEU and to pass the information to the Matching Team.
15. The Matching Team was assigned to conduct matching between the incoming information and details/information provided by the enquirers. If the matching result is positive, they would inform the next of kin accordingly. For cases requiring further clarification, they would forward all available information to the Investigation Team. Besides, they would compile a list of unaccounted-for missing persons for follow-up action by the Investigation Team.
16. The Investigation Team was assigned to undertake further enquiries as per the Matching Team's request and on all unaccounted-for missing persons by contacting their next of kin, enquirers, relevant police units, and external agencies. The Investigation Team also initiated checks through various databases to unveil the personal information and the status of the unaccounted-for missing persons.

The Specific Duty of MIIDSS

17. The MIIDSS is a dedicated and specialised unit operating a data management computer system that assists in, amongst others, the management of victim identification and casualty enquiries during MIs. All audio recordings from the CEU hotline and related documentation were maintained by the MIIDSS. The specific duty of the MIIDSS in this Incident is to, amongst others, provide operational, technical and logistical support to the CEU.

Source of Incoming Information

18. The CEU sourced information for matching and investigation from multiple police units and external agencies. Casualty-related information was channelled from the New Territories North Regional Higher Command, and the Casualty Documentation

Team or Disaster Victim Identification Unit deployed at Wang Fuk Court, various hospitals and the Fu Shan Mortuary. The communication with consular offices was routed through the Liaison Bureau of the Force. All press enquiries were handled by the Public Relations Wing of the Force.

19. To ascertain the status of the missing persons, the CEU, via Headquarters Command and Control Centre and the Security Bureau (Emergency Monitoring and Support Centre), established liaison links with numerous Government departments and conducted enquiries with external agencies, including the Hospital Authority, Urban Renewal Authority, Labour Department, Fire Services Department, Immigration Department, Home Affairs Department, and service providers of digital wallets and mobile network.

The Incident Timeline on 26 November 2025

20. The Headquarters Command and Control Centre informed my office that ACP OPS, Mr. David JORDAN, declared the Incident as a MI and instructed to mobilise the CEU at 1736 hours on 26 November 2025.
21. I instructed the second-in-command of the CEU to mobilise the CEU duty at 1738 hours on the same day.
22. The second-in-command of the CEU instructed the Superintendent of CAPO (Hong Kong Island), Mr. CHAN Yin-mat to assemble the first standby team at Police Headquarters for CEU duty at 1739 hours on the same day.
23. The CEU Headquarters Team arrived at the CEU office for venue set-up at 1750 hours on the same day.
24. The Superintendent of CAPO (Hong Kong Island), Mr. CHAN Yin-mat, reported to me that the first standby team commenced CEU duty at 1830 hours on the same day.

25. A total of 10 lines were activated for receiving public enquiries and the Newsroom of the Public Relations Wing published the CEU hotline number at 1832 hours on the same day.

Number of Missing Persons, Deceased and Injured Persons

26. As of 1800 hours on 13 January 2026, among all the enquiry calls received by the CEU, a total of **489** missing person reports were created with the breakdown as follows:-

- (1) **196** reports were related to **166 missing persons who were confirmed dead** in the Incident by forensic examinations (165) and circumstances (one);
- (2) **40** reports were related to **37 missing persons who were injured** in the Incident;
- (3) **31** reports were non-pursuable due to insufficient information for further investigation;
- (4) **One** report was a misunderstanding of which the informant did not intend to make a missing person report, as subsequently clarified by the CEU;
- (5) **31** reports were related to individuals who were confirmed to have passed away before the Incident, as subsequently revealed during investigation by the CEU;
- (6) **Six** reports were related to individuals who had left Hong Kong before the Incident, as subsequently revealed during investigation by the CEU; and
- (7) **184** reports were related to individuals who were confirmed safe after the Incident, as subsequently revealed during investigation by the CEU.

27. A list of the 166 missing persons who were confirmed dead in the Incident is attached hereto as **Annex 1** (“**List of Missing Persons dead in the Incident**”); and a list of the 37 missing persons who were injured in the Incident is attached hereto as **Annex 2** (“**List of Missing Persons Injured in the Incident**”).

28. Since not all the deceased persons and not all the injured persons were reported missing by their friends or relatives, the number of

deceased and injured persons among missing persons (i.e. 166 as shown in the List of Missing Persons dead in the Incident; and 37 as shown in the List of Missing Persons Injured in the Incident) does not exactly match the death toll and the total number of injured persons respectively in the Incident (i.e. 168 – with two deceased persons not appearing in the List of Missing Persons dead in the Incident; and 79). I understand that WONG Cheung-hing, Chief Inspector of Police, has prepared an updated list of fatalities (“**Updated List of Fatalities**”) as Annex 1 to be attached to his 2nd Witness Statement to be submitted to the IC. With reference to the serial number (“S/N”) in the Updated List of Fatalities, the two deceased persons not appearing in the List of Missing Persons dead in the Incident are S/N 92 and S/N 155.

Part B – Government Departments Handling Enquiries of Missing Persons of the Incident

29. To the best of my knowledge, only one hotline service (Telephone Number: 1878999) was set up by the Force for public enquiries in connection with the Incident. No other Government departments handled enquiries of missing persons in connection with the Incident.
30. I confirm that the contents of this Witness Statement are true to the best of my knowledge, information and belief.

Dated this 30 day of January 2026.


TSANG Shuk-yin