

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

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**WITNESS STATEMENT OF**

**YU SIU-CHUEN**

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I, YU Siu-chuen, 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 Superintendent of the Counter Terrorism and Major Incidents Division under the Operations Wing of the Hong Kong Police Force (**“Force”**) of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. I have joined the Force for 28 years since about 1997 and was promoted to the present rank on 11 June 2018. My main responsibilities include overseeing the division primarily responsible for the formulation of the Force’s strategies and policies in response to major incidents (**“MI”**) and terrorism; the continued review and update of related operational manuals and contingency plans; staffing policies and organising command training for senior officers; and coordinating thematic training and exercises related to MI and disaster response.
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 Question 19, a., ii. to v., and f. of the 19 January Letter and furnish a factual account and overview pertaining to the Force's operational response to the Wang Fuk Court fire incident ("**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.

**Question 19., a., ii.: details of the tasks performed by the Force in respect of the fire (including but not limited to maintaining public order, regulating traffic, handling enquiries from the public regarding casualty and missing persons, etc.)**

#### **Police Responsibilities in MIs**

4. An MI is defined as "any actual, imminent or potential emergency/disaster/incident that requires the implementation of immediate, large-scale and special mobilisation by one or many of the emergency services". Once an incident is declared as an MI, the Force takes primary responsibilities for securing the scene, facilitating rescue, coordinating all agencies on the ground, managing casualty information and public enquiries, as well as restoring normality to the affected community.
5. In the event of an MI, the Force's responsibilities are generally categorised into three phases outlined below:-
  - (1) In the "Rescue" phase, the Force focuses on saving life and property. Key responsibilities include securing approach routes, prioritising access for emergency services' personnel and vehicles, and supporting the lead department – the Fire Services Department ("**FSD**") operations while maintaining overall coordination.

- (2) In the “Recovery” phase, once the injured persons have been removed and the area is safe, the Force assumes full responsibility for the site, arranges for the collection of human remains, identifies fatalities, and ensures the safe custody of unattended property.
- (3) During the “Restoration” phase, the Force ensures that all investigations and on-site activities are completed before formally handing the site back to lawful owners or other appropriate authorities.

### **Force Readiness in MIs**

6. In the “Rescue” phase, the Force aims to provide a professional, effective and rapid response, together with other stakeholders, when responding to an MI. This aim is achieved through the following:-
  - (1) Command structure – the Force adopts a three-level command structure wherein designated officers will be mobilised to exercise specific roles and responsibilities. The Regional Commander concerned will exercise strategic command from the Incident Command Centre (“ICC”), while trained officers of Senior Superintendent of Police or above, drawn from a pool of the Command Cadre (“CC”), will be appointed as the Tactical Commander at different shifts to command at the Forward Control Point (“FCP”) established at the scene.
  - (2) Coordinated response of Force resources – in addition to frontline Police duties (e.g. District and Divisional officers, Emergency Units (“EU”), Police Tactical Unit (“PTU”)), specialised units such as the Casualty Enquiry Unit (“CEU”),

the Disaster Victim Identification Unit (“**DVIU**”), and Casualty Documentation Teams (“**CDT**”) will be mobilised with support from the Major Incident Investigation and Disaster Support System (“**MIIDSS**”) to perform various operational functions, including casualty documentation, public enquiries and victim identification.

- (3) Multi-agency approach – a multi-agency approach is adopted by the Force, facilitated through the Headquarters Command and Control Centre (“**HQCCC**”) in collaboration with relevant Government departments to ensure effective coordination of the rescue operation.

### **Casualty Management and Handling of Public Enquiries**

7. In addition to response capability, the Force’s efficiency in managing massive casualties and enquiries from friends and relatives during the “Rescue” and “Recovery” phases is of paramount importance. Details of pertinent Police roles and responsibilities shall be addressed by relevant Police unit(s).

### **Timeline of the Incident Response**

8. A timeline summarising critical Police command and coordination actions in the Incident is outlined as follows:-

| <u>Date</u>      | <u>Time</u>  | <u>Actions</u>                                                   |
|------------------|--------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 26 November 2025 | • 1452 hours | Police received the first report of the fire through “999” call. |
|                  | • 1459 hours | 1 <sup>st</sup> Police unit (EU car) arrived at the scene.       |
|                  | • 1502 hours | FSD upgraded the fire alarm to No.3.                             |

- 1515 hours Assistant Divisional Commander (Operations), Tai Po Division (“**ADVC OPS TPDIV**”) arrived at the scene and assumed the role of Tactical Commander.
- 1524 hours Police Duty Officer (“**PDO**”) of the HQCCC immediately notified senior officers including the Assistant Commissioner of Police (Operations) (“**ACP OPS**”) and the Security Bureau Duty Officer.
- 1534 hours FSD upgraded the fire alarm to No.4.
- 1540 hours The Regional Higher Command New Territories North (“**HICOM NTN**”) was activated to oversee the Incident.
- 1544 hours Deputy Commander, Tai Po District (“**DDC TPDIST**”) arrived and took over the role of Tactical Commander from **ADVC OPS TPDIV**.
- 1600 hours HQCCC enhanced manning level activated with resources mobilised and redeployed.
- 1620 to 1655 hours HQCCC alerted both CEU and DVIU for a possible turnout.
- 1709 hours MIIDSS commenced operation.
- 1723 hours CDT was mobilised to hospitals to assist with casualty enquiries.
- 1730 hours All available PTU platoons arrived at the scene.
- 1736 hours The Force (ACP OPS) declared the Incident an MI; ICC was formally activated to supersede **HICOM NTN** (at the same location), and commanded by the Strategic Commander.

- 1800 hours 1<sup>st</sup> appointed CC member attended scene and took over the role of Tactical Commander from DDC TPDIST.
  - 1822 hours FSD upgraded the fire alarm to No.5.
  - 1830 hours CEU in operation.
  - 1832 hours Hotline of CEU for public enquiries was activated.
  - 1946 hours Superintendent of Police of Railway Division (“**SP RAIL**”) was deployed to the Emergency Monitoring and Support Centre (“**EMSC**”) of the Security Bureau and assumed the role as the Force’s liaison officer.
  - 2201 hours Dr FOO Ka-chung, Senior Forensic Pathologist, was assigned by EMSC to assume liaison and coordination roles for Fu Shan Mortuary.
- 28 November 2025 • 1018 hours Fire was extinguished.
- 29 November 2025 • 1120 hours DVIU was deployed to recover human remains and confirm identities of the deceased.
- 3 December 2025 • 1557 hours DVIU search of involved buildings was concluded.

## Observations

### Command Structure

9. In response to the Incident, the Force promptly activated and responded commensurate with the escalation of fire alarm levels, including the activation of command structure. For instance:-

- (1) Strategic Command –

- (a) the Duty Controller of the Regional Command and Control Centre New Territories (“**RCCC NT**”) initially assumed the role of strategic command upon receipt of the fire report;
  - (b) HICOM NTN was sequentially activated to take over command from RCCC NT at 1540 hours;
  - (c) following the declaration of an MI by ACP OPS at 1736 hours, the ICC was formally activated to supersede the HICOM NTN, and was commanded by the Strategic Commander to oversee the Incident;
- (2) Tactical Command –
- (a) the on-ground command was progressively transitioned from the first responder, i.e. an EU car in-charge (who arrived at the scene within 10 minutes at 1459 hours), to ADVC OPS TPDIV (at 1515 hours), to DDC TPDIST (at 1544 hours), and ultimately to the appointed CC member (at 1800 hours) as the Tactical Commander;
  - (b) the FCP, being the onsite command facility, was correspondingly upgraded from a Police patrol vehicle, Mobile Command Unit to a designated Mobile Command Post as the Incident developed; and
- (3) Operational Command –
- (a) respective Operational Commanders were assigned functional duties at the scene under the deployment of the FCP throughout the Incident.

### Coordinated Response of Force Resources

10. Following the Incident, the designated units were observed to have diligently and promptly carried out their roles and responsibilities

during an MI. For instance:-

- (1) The CEU and the DVIU were alerted between 1620 and 1655 hours;
- (2) MIIDSS was activated at 1709 hours;
- (3) All available PTU platoons arrived at the scene by 1730 hours; and
- (4) The CEU became operational at 1830 hours.

#### Multi-agency Approach

11. The Force promptly informed the Security Bureau of the Incident and the EMSC was subsequently activated. Under the coordination of the EMSC, the Force maintained effective external communication and collaboration with the relevant Governments departments to facilitate a cohesive response and enhance rescue efforts. For instance:-

- (1) Security Bureau Duty Officer was alerted by the PDO at 1524 hours for interdepartmental coordination and support;
- (2) SP RAIL was deployed to the EMSC to act as the Force's liaison officer at 1946 hours; and
- (3) Dr FOO of Fu Shan Mortuary was appointed by the EMSC at 2201 hours.

#### Casualty Management

12. The relevant Police units, i.e. the CEU, the DVIU, the CDT, were mobilised with the MIIDSS activated for casualty management and handling public enquiries.

**Question 19, a., iii.: the manner by which the Force coordinated the deployment of its officers in relation to the Wang Fuk Court Fire**

**whether at the scene or otherwise**

**Command Structure Framework**

13. As stated at paragraph 6(1) above, the Force adopts a three-level command structure to ensure effective coordination of deployment and incident management during an MI. The three-level command structure is delineated as follows:-
  - (1) At the top level, Strategic Command assumes and retains overall command of the operation. It is responsible for formulating operational strategies and setting the policing tone, ensuring that all strategies are legally compliant and proportionate to identified risks. The Strategic Commander also approves tactical plans proposed by the Tactical Commander, and maintains overarching strategic oversight throughout the operation.
  - (2) The Tactical Command is tasked with allocating resources according to tactical and operational needs. It formulates detailed tactical plans and oversees their implementation, ensuring alignment with the strategic objectives established by the Strategic Command.
  - (3) At the operational level, the Operational Command carries out the tactical and operational plans through the deployment of appropriate tactics. It assumes direct command over units at the scene, ensuring effective on-ground execution and real-time response to developing circumstances.
14. The Force established a CC comprising a pool of commanders selected and trained to assume tactical command of major operations or incidents. The primary responsibilities of CC

include taking command of ad-hoc serious incidents which occur either as a result of an unexpected event or deliberate act such as accidents resulting in significant loss of lives or serious injuries, and/or operations involving significant mobilisation of resources.

### **Command Structure adopted for the Incident**

15. As outlined in paragraph 9 above, the Force's command structure was adopted during the Incident. The Regional Commander of the New Territories North Regional Headquarters, Ms LAM Man-han, assumed the role of the Strategic Commander, overseeing the Force's response and maintaining oversight of the Incident from the ICC.
16. Initially commanded by an EU car in-charge (who was the highest ranked officer at scene) and subsequently by ADVOC OPS TPDIV, the onsite tactical command was progressively transitioned to the appointed CC member Chief Superintendent Mr LAU King-lun upon the declaration of MI, being responsible for directing all operational duties and coordinating with other emergency services. He was the first appointed CC member to assume the role of Tactical Commander. A FCP was set up at the scene as a centralised hub to coordinate all Police on-ground actions.
17. To address operational requirements at the scene, designated Operational Commanders were assigned by the FCP to perform specific functional responsibilities, such as cordon control, casualty clearing, site traffic management, communication with relatives of victims, casualty documentation and media reception.

**Question 19, a., iv.: the manner by which the Force coordinated with other Government departments (including the FSD) during the Wang Fuk Court Fire whether on the scene or otherwise**

### **Inter-departmental Coordination**

18. From the Incident occurrence, the EMSC was promptly alerted by the Force. Through the HQCCC, the Force established continued and effective collaboration with the EMSC at the headquarters level, coordinating essential departmental support services required for the operational response. Such collaboration involved various agencies including the FSD, the Hospital Authority (“HA”), the Home Affairs Department (“HAD”), the Social Welfare Department (“SWD”), and the Transport Department (“TD”).
19. Initially, RCCC NT maintained robust communication channels with the Fire Services Communication Centre to manage incoming reports relating to the Incident. Upon the activation of HICOM NTN/ICC, it assumed the role of interdepartmental coordination to maintain the oversight of the Incident and facilitate coordinated responses. In support of the rescue efforts by the FSD and other Government departments, the Force undertook overall coordination among all agencies operating at the scene to ensure the safety of lives and property and to prevent further escalation of the situation.
20. Co-located with the FSD command post, the FCP coordinated all on-ground deployments and served as the central point of contact for all emergency and support services (e.g. the HA, the HAD, the SWD, and the TD) at the scene, facilitating seamless communication and operational synergy throughout the Incident.

**Question 19, a., v.: any difficulties encountered by the Force; and**

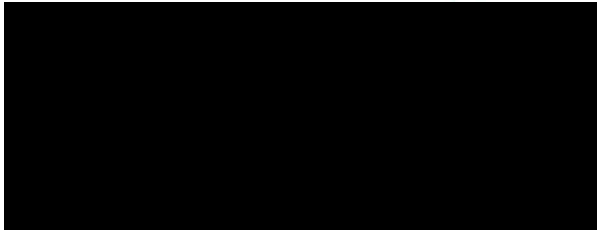
**Question 19, f.: whether in the opinion of the Force,**

- i. **the steps taken by the Force in response to the Wang Fuk Court Fire were adequate in the circumstances;**

- ii. there was adequate coordination between the Force and other Government departments in its response to the Wang Fuk Court Fire; and
- iii. any improvements could and/or should be made to the Force's policies and procedures in responding to mass casualty events

21. Albeit the rapidly deteriorating circumstances and the complexities of the Incident, the Police activated and responded in a timely manner. The actions taken, including the activation of the command structure and the mobilisation of resources, were, in my opinion, consistent with the established policies and procedures.
22. Having said that, an internal review of the Police operation, including lessons learned and best practices, coordination with other departments, and potential amendments to the Force's procedures, will be conducted upon the conclusion of the criminal investigation, and taking into account any feedback or recommendations made by the Committee to look for rooms for improvement as in the past major operations and incidents.
23. I confirm that the contents of this Witness Statement are true to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief.

Dated 24 February 2026.



YU Siu-chuen