

## Rehabilitation service shows ‘we care’

### CORRECTIONAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

A new philosophy of rehabilitation was born in Hong Kong when the Prisons Department changed its name to Correctional Services Department in 1982. Guided by the motto, “We Care”, the department has gone a long way in raising the quality of its service and has some of the best correctional institutions in the Asia-Pacific Region.

The department not only houses inmates in a dignified manner, taking into account the safety of the public and the individual prisoners, but also helps offenders to reintegrate into society. It strives to provide prisoners with correctional education programmes, technical skills training, work opportunities and counselling in positive social values needed for their successful reintegration into the community. It also appeals for community support through education, publicity and public participation to give prisoners the best possible opportunities to make a fresh start.

The excellence of the department in delivering quality custodial and rehabilitative services is recognised worldwide, resulting in the acquisition of internationally acclaimed standards and the prestigious inaugural President’s Award, presented by the International Corrections and Prisons Association (ICPA) in October 2002.

Established in 1988, the ICPA now has more than 400 members from 71 countries and regions, and provides a forum for co-operation among international criminal justice professionals. The Correctional Services Department became a member in 2000.

The ICPA launched the ICPA Awards Program in 2002 to recognise outstanding correctional practices in prisons and outside communities, particularly those achievements that advanced a humanitarian approach to correctional services. To qualify for evaluation, nominees for the President’s Award – the highest in the four-category programme – must have made an outstanding contribution to correctional services or criminal justice.

ICPA President Dr Ole Ingstrup said the Hong Kong team had worked “hard, wisely and diligently” to achieve greater operational efficiency and professional certification. The department had also made major improvements to staff morale and shown great dedication to rehabilitating offenders and reintegrating them into society.

*General Manager of Correctional Services Industries Mr Daniel Hui (left) and former Commissioner Mr Benny Ng receive the President’s Award from ICPA President Dr Ole Ingstrup.*



"This is an impressive display of real results in the real world and also of 360 degrees improvement and of systems thinking at its best," Dr Ingstrup said.

Brigadier-General Haim Szmulewitz, Chair of the Awards Committee, also said the Hong Kong initiative added value to people and practices in prison management, co-operation with partners, staff development and prisoners' rehabilitation.

## Hong Kong prisons provide a winning model

The idea of integrating rehabilitation and work for prisoners has proved an overwhelming success. At the ICPA Annual Conference 2002 in the Netherlands, attended by delegates from 53 countries and regions, the department's model of work rehabilitation was showcased, receiving praise from correctional services counterparts all over the world. These are some of the comments:

*"Very impressive effort on the treatment of offenders in Hong Kong. It is a good model for all Asian regions."* – Ms Sivakorn Kuratanavej, Director of Foreign Affairs, Department of Corrections, Thailand.

*"A progressive administration which is a model for other organisations to look up to, especially in inmates' management and risk assessment."* – Mr Lohman Yew, Deputy Director of Prisons of Singapore.

*"I am most impressed with the quality of products coming out of your industries. I wish you the very best ..."* – Judge Paddington Garwe, High Court of Zimbabwe.

*"You are a professional organisation and an example to the rest of the world. Keep it up!"* – Dr T E Nxumalo, South Africa.

*"Very good display, and congratulations on the good work you are doing in your country."* – Ms Kathy Louis, Regional Vice Chairperson, National Parole Board, Canada.

*"I am certainly impressed with the direction your prison system is heading. From the discussions with you, I'm even more impressed with your prison industries. My country [thinks it] would be good to expand ours and engage inmates in more meaningful activities and to facilitate their rehabilitation on a greater scale."* – Mr Martin Martinez, Sr Superintendent of Prisons, Trinidad and Tobago Prison Service.

Mr Daniel Hui, General Manager of the department said the award belonged to all the staff of Hong Kong Correctional Services who had worked so hard to uphold the rule of law, provide humane treatment and to rehabilitate prisoners.

"The benchmarking of international standards acts as an enabler and prompts us to keep pace with changes. As no external consultant services have been employed, staff teamwork and committed participation is the key to our success."

## ISO 9001 standard shows commitment to quality

The department's commitment to adding value is evident in its ISO 9001 practices at three large laundries managed by its Correctional Services Industries (CSI) and manned by prisoners. These laundries, the Pik Uk Laundry, Tuen Mun Hospital Laundry and Shum Wan Laundry, provide services to public hospitals, clinics and ambulance depots. Every day, more than 500 prisoners work in the laundries as

part of their rehabilitation. The successful acquisition of the ISO 9001 quality management certification in December 2001 was an important milestone in the department's initiative. In November 2003, Pak Sha Wan Laundry also achieved quality certification.

CSI runs 13 enterprises, including the manufacture of uniforms and leather accoutrements for the disciplined forces, government office furniture, traffic signs, litter bins, linen and bedding for hospitals and book binding for public libraries. Its sign-making business and the department's Complaints Investigation Unit also obtained ISO 9001 certification for their management systems. The entire island of Hei Ling Chau where three institutions are located has adopted the ISO 14001 environmental management system.



*Commissioner of Correctional Services Mr Kelvin Pang (left) receives the ISO Certificate from Mr Chan Siu-kam, Executive Director of Hong Kong Quality Assurance Agency.*



*Prisoners learn to make traffic signs.*

### **Industry-focused rehabilitation means benefits for all**

This ICPA winning initiative of teaching inmates a trade has numerous benefits for all. For prisoners, they acquire enhanced technical skills in a specific trade, thus improving their prospects of reintegration after release. They also develop co-operation skills, and better understand the concepts of responsibility, quality and customer satisfaction.

For staff, the initiative strengthens teamwork at all levels, and enhances their confidence, professional knowledge and technical skills. The overall process has resulted in a shared vision and a commitment to continuous improvement through international standards. Through the process, the workplace is safer for both prisoners and staff. For their partners, this initiative has meant improved service in terms of reliability and quality.



*CSI prisoners provide laundry services required by the Hospital Authority and Department of Health.*

For management, resources are better focused and operational effectiveness can be enhanced in both the custodial and rehabilitative processes. The laundries are able to foster a quality service culture, raising the public awareness of work rehabilitation in Hong Kong.

Mr Hui said ISO certification was only one step in generating “leveraging effects”. “It can be a successful model for other areas in-house for fostering a quality service culture,” he said. “These good management practices are also being extended to other areas of CSI, such as shoemaking, furniture making, concrete products and fibreglass manufacture. Much more work will be done in time.”



Left: Industrial safety concepts are gained through making concrete blocks.

Right: Prisoners learn to sew uniforms.

Staff members have also taken the opportunity to broaden their professional knowledge. In 2002, five middle managers obtained the Certified Laundry Linen Manager qualification from the National Association of Institutional Linen Management. In November 2003, five more CSD officers obtained this international qualification.

Staff and prisoners wear full protective gear in one of CSI's laundries.

CSI laundries provided special support to Hong Kong people during the SARS outbreak in 2003. Millions of kilograms of hospital linen and uniforms were cleaned and disinfected during the period. Measures similar to those in hospitals were in place to ensure that the SARS virus would not find its way into prisons. The pressure on members of staff and prisoners to be extremely careful in handling these high-risk items was tremendous.



CSI could not afford to make the slightest error – it had to ensure the killer virus was not spread through the prisons. So while staff and prisoners focused on providing a quality service for the customers, they also learned the importance of personal and environmental hygiene.

### Finding direction in life

Every day, motorists rely on traffic signs to make sure they are heading in the right direction. Producing these signs are offenders who have themselves lost their way. Their rehabilitation work helps them find their way back – from prisoners to law-abiding, contributing members of society.

Thirty-six-year-old Ah Kei is now serving a life sentence, but he has found a way to serve the community while working in the graphic media workshop, designing publicity materials for the department:

*“I have learnt a lot of computer graphic design techniques and am very interested in it. In order to gain more ideas, my family members bought me reference books. The job has changed my character and I am now more proactive. More importantly, I am not worthless. I can contribute to society too.”*



Computer graphic image designed by Ah Kei.

*Rehabilitation service shows 'we care'*

Sentenced to 16 years' jail for drug trafficking, 31-year-old Ah Keung makes waterproof and vapour permeable patrol shoes bearing the Gore-Tex trademark for the Hong Kong Police Force:

“My mother is so happy to see police officers wearing Gore-Tex shoes produced by her son. The workshop training has changed my values. Even behind bars, I can contribute to society. I regret what I have done. I am more serious about life and I care for my family. Now, I am studying a management course through the Open University to enrich my knowledge.”



*Prisoners are producing high quality shoes for government departments.*

Mr Hui said that as prisoners were gainfully occupied, they could build up their self-esteem and the risk of unrest in institutions was also greatly reduced. Ah Kei and Ah Keung are just two of more than 7,600 prisoners in Hong Kong working in the 140 workshops run by CSI.

The employment of prisoners also brings the incidental benefit of saving public money by providing quality, cost-effective products and services within the public sector. For example, the total value of products and services provided by CSI in commercial value reached \$505 million in 2002. It proves that useful employment of prisoners is rewarding both for themselves and the society.