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HOME TEAM JOURNAL

BY PRACTITIONERS,
FOR PRACTITIONERS

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS IN
HOMEFRONT SECURITY AND SAFETY:
ENGAGING HEARTS AND MINDS



HOME TEAM JOURNAL

ISSUE NO. 4

The Home Team Journal is a professional journal published by the Home Team Academy to highlight the work of the Home Team and its knowledge partners in Homefront Security and Safety. The Journal also functions as a forum for engagement, exchange and discussion over the broad and diverse range of issues and interests that come under the subject of Homefront security and safety.



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Foreword by Chairman

This is the fourth issue of the Home Team Journal but the first since I have taken over as the Chief Executive of the Home Team Academy (HTA). The Home Team Journal serves as a platform for the Home Team departments to share and exchange ideas and practices that each had put in place so that others can learn and benefit from it. It is primarily a publication for shared learning.

For this issue, the Home Team Journal has focused on the theme of community partnership and engagement. The Home Team has a long history of engaging and working with and through the community to achieve a more secure and safe Singapore. The Police began its community policing experiments in the 1980s and had not looked back since. CNB had also mobilised and engaged the community in their fight against drugs. Other Home Team Departments also had similar experiences.

From the articles in the Journal, it is clear that the Home Team considers the community an important partner in our mission to keep Singapore safe and secure. The various articles in the Journal share the experiences and practices of the Home Team in engaging and partnering the community. I hope that readers will be able to reflect and learn from them.

I would like to thank our Guest Editor, Mr. Tai Wei Shyong, Deputy Secretary of Operations from the Ministry of Home Affairs, for his guidance in this edition of the Home Team Journal. His insights into how the Home Team had worked with and through the community allowed us to better identify sources of articles from the departments so as to present a more holistic picture of the Home Team's efforts in this area.

I would like to thank the administrative team, editors, contributors from Ministry HQ, and the Home Team departments for their efforts, patience and assistance in this issue.

I would also like to acknowledge the contribution of Mr. Derek Pereira, former Chief Executive of HTA for his work in guiding the development of the Home Team Journal.

The Home Team Journal provides a platform to share, discuss, reflect and share insights into the work that the Home Team does. I hope that readers will enjoy this edition of the Journal and I look forward to the feedback and comments from you.

JERRY SEE

Chairman

Home Team Journal Editorial Board

Introduction by Guest Editor

Bringing the articles together for the 4th issue of the Home Team Journal is the theme of community partnerships and engagement – the cornerstone of the Home Team’s operational endeavours. The mutual trust and public-spiritedness of the Singapore community have served as a strong support to the Home Team’s work in keeping Singapore safe and secure. For instance, in 2011, 40% of all arrests made by the Singapore Police Force (SPF) were assisted by the public either through physical help or reporting of suspects through phone calls.

Moving beyond public-spiritedness, the Home Team believes in empowering the public to be resilient in the face of adversity. This is done through many platforms, but at the national level, it is co-ordinated through the Community Engagement Programme (CEP). In the cover article of this issue, Mrs Ong-Chew Peck Wan, the Director of Community Engagement in the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) headquarters examines the impetus for the establishment of the CEP. Working across government ministries and grassroots agencies, the CEP harnesses the strengths of diverse groups to build up Singapore’s resilience in the event of a crisis.

Since May 2012, SPF has been implementing the new Community Policing System (COPS) in phases. SPF’s Deputy Commissioner, Mr. T. Raja Kumar’s article outlines initiatives that leverage on community’s efforts and SPF’s future plans, including the use of technology and social media, to engage the community in crime prevention. Complementing this article is a piece by Ms Tan Gek Hsien, MHA officer, on the evolution of community policing since 1980s. It gives the historical background on the roots of Singapore’s community policing efforts.

While the community plays an important part in keeping its neighbourhood safe, it can also help in the rehabilitation and reintegration of ex-offenders, to help them unlock the second prison, which is the stigma of a criminal record. Mr. Desmond Chin, Deputy Director of the Singapore Prison Service explains the rationale behind their programmes, such as the Yellow Ribbon Project and the lessons learnt after their implementation. Mr. Teo Tze Fang, Chief Executive Officer of the Singapore Corporation Of Rehabilitative Enterprises (SCORE) also elaborates on how SCORE prepares ex-offenders for work upon their release.

Another way to involve the community in Home Team’s operational work is to empower them with the necessary knowledge to remain free of crime. Articles from the Internal Security Department (ISD), Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF), as well as the National Council Against Drug Abuse (NCADA) and Central Narcotics Bureau (CNB) demonstrate the various ways to reach out to the public innovatively. In the article by ISD’s Security Education Command, we witness how ISD actively raised awareness on counter-terrorism to people in the streets. Ms Khaisarah Mansor from SCDF shares the initiatives to achieve SCDF’s vision to develop a comprehensive emergency preparedness programme and instilling an emergency-preparedness mindset in Singapore. In the same spirit of public empowerment, the joint article by the NCADA and CNB discusses their preventive education efforts against drug abuse, especially those targeted at youths.

Under the section “Home Team Exchange”, we had the privilege of interviewing Associate Professor Ho Peng Kee, Chairman of the Home Team Volunteers Network. Our Home Team volunteers are a strong manifestation of the community working with and within the Home Team. Since his appointment as Chairman, Professor Ho has brought the volunteers closer together and had organised a leadership conference for Home Team volunteers in November 2012. He has also highlighted the work and contributions of the volunteers through publishing a book based on the volunteers’ stories in the same month.

We are proud to present a list of publications chronicling the partnerships the Home Team has established with different segments of the community. These publications not only serve as written testaments to the work of the Home Team but most importantly, acknowledge that we owe much of our success to community engagement and partnerships. I hope that they also offer a platform for understanding an important aspect of MHA’s work. The Home Team will continue to engage and partner the community to keep Singapore safe, secure and cohesive.

TAI WEI SHYONG

Guest Editor

Deputy Secretary (Operations)

Ministry of Home Affairs

The Community *Engagement Programme:* Nurturing a Living **Partnership**

ONG-CHEW PECK WAN

Partnership (noun)

1. relationship between partners
2. cooperation
3. group of people working together

A highly fashionable word in a complex, inter-connected world of black swans and rapid changes.

In the Home Team, it is alive, defining our relationship with the public, deeply rooted, tenderly nourished, and prudently sustained.

A HISTORY OF WORKING PARTNERSHIPS

Partnership with the community started early for the Home Team. Most of the early initiatives were in the arena of crime, emergency preparedness and drug control, and were specific initiatives put in place in response to specific concerns. In 1981, the National Crime Prevention Council was launched by the Singapore Police Force (SPF) as a platform to

engage public stakeholders on the importance of crime prevention and to work together to tackle specific crime concerns. That same year, the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme was set up to encourage neighbours to keep an eye out for each other's home. It grew quickly to 100,000 watch groups. In 1997, it was revamped into the Neighbourhood Watch Zone (NWZ) to give residents a bigger role in ensuring safety and security in the community. Then in 1998, the SPF, together with the Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF), developed the Community Safety and Security Programme (CSSP) to help neighbourhoods develop capabilities to address their specific safety and security concerns.

The Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF) started working with the community in 1989 when Civil Defence Coordinating Committees were formed in each of the electoral districts to promote civil defence programmes. Over the years, the committees morphed and in 1998, were integrated into the People's

Association (PA) grassroots network as Civil Defence Executive Committees¹ as part of the national effort to streamline the grassroots organisations. Under the umbrella of CSSP, the SCDF has been working with residents on safety and emergency preparedness programmes. Each constituency organises an Emergency Preparedness Day during which grassroots volunteers work with SCDF and SPF in organising activities involving grassroots leaders and residents.

Community engagement has also been a key strategy in fighting the menace of drug abuse. To combat the serious drug abuse problem that confronted Singapore in the early 1990s due to the rise of heroin addiction, a slew of measures were put in place, among them the setting up of a National Council Against Drug Abuse (NCADA) in 1994. Set up with a chairman from the private sector and comprising a large number of private sector members, NCADA was able to tap on private sector expertise in areas such as research, advertising and public education, thereby increasing the government's ability to reach out to different segments of the public.

BUILDING RESILIENCE IN THE POST-9-11 ERA: THREE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The international security agenda over the past decade has been one largely defined by the threat of terrorism,

starting with the 9-11 attacks in the United States in 2001. Despite Singapore's long history of community engagement on many fronts, the Government realised after the London bombings in 2005 (the "7/7" bombings) that there was a need to put in place a more structured programme to increase our community resilience in a world increasingly at risk of inter-racial and religious conflict. The result was the "Community Engagement Programme", or "CEP", officially launched by Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong on 9 February 2006.

At its core, the CEP is about developing networks of trust to coordinate and mobilise the support of the different segments of the community to sustain Singaporeans in the aftermath of a terrorist incident. The approach is to build up networks of trust among different stakeholder groups, through which we can train, plan and prepare for a number of different emergency scenarios.

From the start, we were conscious that the CEP should not be a single-phase showcase campaign which created a "big bang", but then fizzled out. If this idea is to work, it has to be for the long haul. We were guided from the beginning, and continue to abide by three broad principles.

First, that we should tie in existing programmes and not create new initiatives for the sake of doing something. For example, the

Emergency Preparedness (EP) Day held in every constituency was largely limited to creating awareness and competency training; we extended their ambit to cover the psycho-socio dimensions of resilience. As a general principle, we want to affirm the existing groups and measures to achieve buy-in, and then give them the resources to lift their programmes to a higher level. The aim is not to achieve homogeneity or consistency – that would have been the death of our community efforts. Rather, we want to give them space to grow in their own directions, acknowledging that each has its own strengths.

Second, the CEP has to be “ground-up”. People on the ground know their own domains best. The Government’s role is that of a coordinator, facilitator and supporter – helping with resources or expertise when called upon, and finding ways to link and connect people and groups to form the multiple stands and layers of the CEP network.

The specific ideas and activities pursued under the CEP should therefore be developed and sustained by grassroots activists. This will help create ownership of ideas and enthusiasm to implement and sustain them. The naming of the CEP web portal reflects this. We deliberately steered away from names that gave the impression of a top-down initiative. In consultation with our stakeholder groups, we eventually adopted the name “Singapore

United” with the URL of www.SingaporeUnited.SG.

“The Government’s role is that of a coordinator, facilitator and supporter – helping with resources or expertise when called upon, and finding ways to link and connect people and groups to form the multiple stands and layers of the CEP network.”

Third, we want to minimise bureaucracy. The CEP today has a lean governing structure. At the national level, the Ministerial Committee on Community

Cluster	Supporting Agency
Religious groups, ethnic-based organisations and voluntary welfare organisations	Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports
Educational institutions	Ministry of Education
Media	Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts
Businesses and unions	Ministry of Manpower
Grassroots organisations	People’s Association

Figure 1: The five clusters and its supporting agencies under the CEP.

Engagement (MCCE) gives direction on how to steer public response in the event of a crisis, and how the community's capability to do so should be built up. It is chaired by the Minister for Home Affairs and comprises the Ministers from the five clusters under the CEP, as well as the Minister overseeing National Development (and the Housing and Development Board).

Supporting the MCCE is the Community Engagement Steering Committee (CESC). The CESC, chaired by Permanent Secretary (Home Affairs) and comprising the permanent secretaries of the cluster lead agencies, provides operational leadership and coordination.

BEYOND STRUCTURES: DEVELOPING CAPABILITIES AND OPERATIONAL READINESS

As the CEP gained momentum, we recognised a need to move beyond platforms and structures and focus on developing capabilities and operational readiness. Community leaders involved in CEP told us we needed to provide more training to handling emergency situations. In particular, CEP community leaders highlighted the need for training in the necessary skills and knowledge to perform their leadership roles effectively when called upon during a major incident or crisis. We have always recognised the

importance of community leadership in a critical crisis situation, but in the past, it was taken for granted that leaders would know what to do or say. We have listened to their feedback; it was not always the case.

This led us to concentrate on developing a trained cadre of leaders across the cluster domains. Our belief is that if we are able to build such a cadre of prepared and trained leaders, embedded within each cluster domain, then they can act in a time of crisis as the primary mobilisers of community efforts, working in tandem with government.

So began the Community Engagement Executive Development (CEED) programme with support from departments of the Ministry of Home Affairs, in particular the Home Team Academy, the Civil Defence Academy and the ISD Heritage Centre. Today, the programme covers understanding of ethnicity, counter-terrorism, learning skills in mediation, psychological first aid, and learning lessons from the past in communal harmony.

Moving beyond the basic CEED Programme, we now have a programme to train the CEED alumni to be CEP Trainers. This was again a suggestion from CEED Alumni members. The CEP Secretariat started the CEP Trainer programme in February 2009 to equip the CEP community leaders with the capability to generate CEP awareness

amongst their cluster members and in their own spheres of influence.

Within the clusters, leading agencies organise specific programmes for their members. For instance, the Inter-Racial and Religious Confidence Circle (IRCC) members have undergone mediation training and workshops on speaking to the media, while the Ministry of Education has conducted mediation workshops for teachers. The People's Association² (PA) has also been active in its efforts to improve operational readiness in the grassroots community with programmes such as Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) and CSSP-COP (Train). CERT members, who are volunteers from the Residents' Committees and Neighbourhood Committee Zones, have been trained in fire fighting and first aid. Such skills are put into practice when members participate in emergency exercises which are used to "generate greater public awareness on community safety and awareness".³ Under PA's CSSP-COP (Train) programme, members of the public are encouraged to work with the Police to patrol Singapore's public trains. For example, volunteers of the South West Community Development Council have been recruited to "conduct regular patrols with the Police to keep a look-out for suspicious character and packages at MRT stations". The PA believes that

participating in patrols and exercises help to "promote vigilance and test the readiness of the volunteers", which then improves operational readiness at the community level.⁴

Strengthening the Habits of the Singapore Heart

Asad Latif*

When the terrorist grouping Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) targeted MRT stations and embassies in 2001, it took on both the hardware and the software of the Singapore story. The response to JI was calibrated accordingly. Singapore hardened its physical targets, but it also revisited the habits of the heart that had begun to flower only with independence in the 1960s.

The objective of a terrorist attack is not to cause physical damage per se (although such damage is traumatic to victims and their families) but to cause psychological dislocation by undermining the people's faith in their state's ability to protect them and its core values. In the case of a multiracial society like Singapore, the aftermath of a terrorist attack would be seen in an immediate social regression, in a loss of the racial and religious trust built painstakingly over the decades. Matters would worsen if this outcome included

physical attacks on a community deemed responsible for terrorism, particularly if that community were a minority one. A law-and-order issue would become a racial one. Even if the physical damage from the counterattack were to be contained swiftly, as would be certain in the case of a well-policed country like Singapore, the psychological damage would be unquantifiable and could be lasting.

The answer was to put in place mechanisms that would draw on the habits of the Singapore heart but that would give these habits a common space in which to live: a space comprising a network of individuals who would reflect the diversity of Singapore society but would be bound together by the common mores of multiracial living. From secular grassroots leaders and religious figures to media personalities and argumentative academics, the many faces of the CEP would reflect the composite face of a society that was diverse but was still at peace with itself. These faces would be instantly recognisable in society at large, some for themselves, others for the social constituencies that they represented. Singaporeans would look for faces that they could trust in a crisis. Hence, these known faces of the Singapore community would help to reassure disoriented members of a dispersed public – whether in housing estates, or at the

workplace, or in places of worship – that Singapore is a place whose habits of the heart are more organic and stronger than the disruptive abilities of any physical attack.

What distinguishes the CEP from many other national programmes and campaigns is that it is structured but not formal. The Ministry of Home Affairs provides the point of central coordination with other government organisations in a “cluster” system that reflects the most prominent constituencies of Singapore, namely home, work and worship. But no ministry owns the CEP. Its participants do.

I joined the programme to be a part of Singapore. In my cohort, which was only one of many cohorts, I met people from an astonishing variety of backgrounds who were united in their belief that Singapore would overcome a terrorist crisis – because there was no alternative. We would not run; we could not run. Instead, each of us would bring to bear on our work our particular engagement with the community nurtured over the peaceful years. Some of us had worked in the grassroots for decades and possessed the kind of street-credibility that would make all the difference in a crisis. Others worked with religious institutions. Some were businessmen; others knew the labour scene as only a

worker can. Some were mothers, some were fathers; others would become parents one day. All of us spoke English, but for some, it was the mother-tongue that expressed the habits of the heart. Our age profile spanned the 20s to the 70s. We were young Singapore; we were Singapore in middle-age; we were greying Singapore.

We were a moving snapshot of humanity as profoundly diverse as the garrulous pilgrims in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. Our pilgrimage was of a different sort, but we took strength from being different from one another. If one of us should fail, ten others would succeed. We were simply too many to fail together. The *Canterbury Tales* would be told.

In one of the many exercises that we undertook, my group was broken up into three. Each group was given paper plates, numbered from one to 20, and a hammer. All that we had to do was to strike the paper plates in the right order. I laughed to myself – till I saw what was written on the plates. These were not numerals but the numbers spelled out in different languages, some in English and others in Chinese, Malay and Tamil! Thus, if a group did not have a Tamil-speaking member, for example, it would not be able to complete the exercise. So it was for the other races.

The moral: Singapore is incomplete without even one of its

communities. Indeed, there are no minorities in a crisis, for every citizen is a piece of Singapore that is incomplete without every other patriot.

** Asad Latif is author of Hearts of Resilience: Singapore's Community Engagement Programme (Singapore: ISEAS, 2011).*

CONCLUSION

It is always a challenge moving the public from a state of awareness to active involvement. We need to tread a delicate balance. If everyone is intensely seized by emergency preparedness all the time, they may well over-react to incidents. A middle ground is needed, hence our approach to focus on training a core group so that they are knowledgeable and skilled, a group that will galvanise the rest (who need only have awareness) into action when called for.

How do we know we are succeeding?

An annual National Security Awareness Survey⁵ started in December 2002 to take the pulse of Singaporeans offers encouraging signs. In the aftermath of the 9-11 attacks, fear was palpable. In that first December 2002 survey, fewer than half (45%) of Singapore residents were confident that the government was capable of ensuring a swift recovery following a terrorist attack. The latest survey, conducted

in November 2010 involving 1121 Singapore residents - 80% Singaporeans, 13% PRs and 8% work permit or student permit holders -, has 77% of the respondents agreeing with the statement “I’m confident that the government is capable of ensuring a swift recovery”. The level of agreement was the highest compared to other statements such as “(c)urrent security measures put in place by the business or commercial sector in Singapore are adequate to prevent terrorist threats” (see Figure 2 for the full list of questions).

At the same time, about half of the respondents (53%) say they are prepared for terrorist incidents where “being prepared” meant:

- a. Being able to keep a lookout for suspicious items and people in public places;
- b. Knowing what one should do if a suspicious item or person is spotted;
- c. Being mentally prepared to deal with the consequences of a terrorist attack in Singapore;
- d. Being aware of practical steps one can do if a terrorist attack occurs near oneself; and
- e. Being overall prepared for a terrorist incidents.

That almost half of Singapore residents feel they might not be able to cope with a terrorist incident might seem alarming, especially given the many years of emergency preparedness drills and public

education campaigns. But compared to preparedness levels elsewhere, such a response is fairly normal in countries that have not faced a terrorist attack in recent years. In the United States, for instance, a 2011 nation-wide survey on disaster preparedness shows that half of American families still do not have an emergency preparedness plan, even though 72% of Americans worry about the possibility of another domestic terrorist attack and only 60% are confident in the government’s ability to protect them.⁶

List of statements relating to the level of confidence in Singapore’s ability to prevent and recover from a terrorist attack:

1. I feel reasonably safe from terrorist attacks in Singapore.
2. Current security measures put in place by the **business or commercial sector** in Singapore are adequate to prevent terrorist threats.
3. Current security measures put in place by the government sector in Singapore are adequate to prevent terrorist threats.
4. Should a terrorist incident occur, I am confident that Singapore as a nation will be able to recover swiftly.
5. Should a terrorist incident occur, I am confident that the

Government is capable of ensuring a swift recovery.

6. Overall, Singapore is safe from terrorist incidents.

Citizen operational readiness is but one measure of our social resilience.

At its very core, the CEP is about managing and coordinating diversity, so that we do not repeat the trauma of our recent past, where Singaporeans fought Singaporeans over race and religious issues. The racial riots of the 1950s and 1960s teach us that communal harmony is vital to our stability and survival, and cannot be taken for granted. It would be naïve to think that the present state of good relations has immunized us to extremism and bigotry.

In fact, that we have enjoyed decades of peace and social harmony tends to work against us in inculcating the younger generation of Singaporeans with the correct values and attitudes to race and religious issues.

Our national leaders often say that the CEP is “a work in progress”. It will always be a work in progress; as our society changes and the memories

“ It would be naïve to think that the present state of good relations has immunized us to extremism and bigotry. ”

of past conflicts fade while global and regional forces open up new fissures, we will have to find new ways to nurture and sustain the networks of trust that we have created.

ENDNOTES

¹ These committee members were later “absorbed” into PA’s C2E committees.

² The People’s Association (PA) was established as a statutory board on 1 July 1960 to promote racial harmony and social cohesion in Singapore (<http://www.pa.gov.sg>).

³ Chia, Tze Yee. (2012). Towards a Safer and More Resilient Community: The Singapore Grassroots Experience, p. 124. In Sim, Susan (Ed). Building Resilient Societies, Forging Global Partnerships (pp. 122-127). Singapore: National Crime Prevention Council.

⁴ Chia, p. 126.

⁵ The National Security Awareness Survey is commissioned by what is now known as the Ministry of Communications and Information. It is used to assess the Singapore public’s awareness and perception of national security and also serves as feedback on the National Security public communication efforts undertaken by the Singapore Government.

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EDITOR'S NOTES

Mrs Ong-Chew Peck Wan is Director of the Community Engagement Division in the Ministry of Home Affairs, the coordinating ministry for the Community Engagement Programme (CEP). She leads the CEP Secretariat team that works with the CEP cluster leads and the community. Peck Wan was Director of the Corporate Communications Division and Press Secretary to the Minister for Home Affairs for eight years, before leading the CEP Secretariat in 2007. Peck Wan has a degree in English Language from the National University of Singapore and also studied at the Medill School of Journalism, Northwestern University.

Community Policing in Diverse Societies: *The Singapore Story*

T. RAJA KUMAR

The Singapore Police Force is a lean outfit, currently about 14,000 strong, consisting of slightly more than 13,000 sworn officers of all ranks, and 1,000 civilians.

With about 5.2 million people living in Singapore, this works out to about 260 police officers per 100,000 population or a lean ratio of 1 police officer for every 400 people. (In England and Wales¹, for example, the police to population ratio is 1:231 and in the United States², the ratio is 1:353.)

THE ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT OF THE COMMUNITY IS KEY TO SUCCESS

The lean police to population ratio in Singapore means that the active involvement of the community becomes central to the successful policing of Singapore. Without public confidence in the Police, and community participation in crime prevention, Singapore cannot hope to be as safe as it is.

// The Police provide information and suggestions to guide the volunteers on what measures to take, but it is the volunteers who step up to move the programmes forward. //

It is worthwhile noting that numerous community policing programmes were formed and led by citizens and volunteers determined to keep their local neighbourhoods and businesses free from crime. The Police provide information and suggestions to guide the volunteers on what measures to take, but it is the volunteers who step up to move the programmes forward.

While the programmes, in themselves, reflect how well we engage the community to fight crime, there is a need to validate and measure our effectiveness in partnering with the community to fight crime. One indicator of this is the extent of public-assisted arrests, i.e. the arrests made by the Police, directly or indirectly³, as a result of assistance from members of public.

Using this yardstick, we have good reason to herald our community's support for the Police. In 2011, around 4 in 10 of all arrests made by the Police in Singapore were, directly or indirectly, a result of such assistance – a very significant contribution! It is a fact that the Police cannot possibly be everywhere all the time. But our citizens are there on the ground and they can alert us to nefarious activities, and become 'force multipliers'. And this community participation helps to deter criminals.

We want to foster a culture where Singaporeans believe that it is every individual's responsibility to safeguard his own safety and property and, then, join his fellow citizens to keep our communities safe and secure. The Police will work with our citizens to enable this community response.

PREVENTION IS ALWAYS BETTER THAN THE CURE

The Singapore Police Force's mission is to prevent, deter and detect crime.

That simply means that we protect the people who live in Singapore from crime and all manner of criminal harm.

While the detection element (investigation, apprehension and prosecution) is the most familiar and publicly visible, the combination of prevention and deterrence is actually more effective in dealing with crime. In crime and public safety, as

in public health, prevention is always better than cure. As Police Commissioner Ng Joo Hee often says, our communities are the best vaccine against crime and partnering with the community is central to the successful policing of Singapore.

Our experiment with community policing began in 1983, when we made a radical change in our policing philosophy by moving to the neighbourhood policing model. Adapting from the koban policing system in Japan, we implemented our version in Singapore, gradually growing a network of more than 90 Neighbourhood Police Posts (NPPs) covering the entire country.

“ Our communities are the best vaccine against crime and partnering with the community is central to the successful policing of Singapore. ”

By embedding the Police within the community, literally at the foot of public housing estates, the NPP system successfully wove a fabric of trust between the community and the Police. In particular, we provided easy public access to Police services and projected Police presence within the community.

INTRODUCTION OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICE CENTRE

While the NPP system generally worked well to reduce Singapore's overall crime, there were limitations to this policing model arising from the increase in Singapore's population and the growth of new towns over the years coupled with internal resource constraints. We could not sustain further establishments of NPPs in every new community that developed. We thus reviewed our community policing strategy based on the original NPP configurations and found it to be inefficient and unsustainable in the long run.

In 1997, we ended the expansion of the NPP network and introduced the Neighbourhood Police Centre (NPC).

The first NPC was introduced in Queenstown in 1997 and was staffed with an average of 100 officers. Today, there are 33 NPCs across Singapore, and we continue to open new NPCs in tandem with population growth and movements. In fact, two additional NPCs will be established by 2015, bringing the total number to 35.

Sited at strategic locations island-wide (e.g. co-location with other community agencies such as the Community Centre), the NPCs provide a one-stop service point for a full range of police services. In short, the NPC is home to a more complete suite of crime-fighting capabilities, from fast response, beat policing, community liaison, and investigations, to targeted anti-crime operations.

The Commanding Officer of each NPC, with about 100 officers under his/her charge, has the ground responsibility for crime and public safety in the particular jurisdiction under his/her purview. All NPC officers are expected to be fully engaged with the local communities that reside within their area of control.

THE PARTNERSHIP PLATFORMS

The two main platforms that we use to join with residents and communities in the fight against crime are the Neighbourhood Watch Zones (NWZs) and Neighbourhood Watch Groups (NWGs), and the Community Safety and Security Programme (CSSP).

At present, there are more than 600 Neighbourhood Watch Zones, and within them 2600 Neighbourhood Watch Groups. In 2011, we had more than 5,000 residents participating in the NWZ programmes. These residents keep an eye on each other's premises; conduct Citizens-on-Patrol (COP) rounds on foot or on bicycle to safeguard their own immediate neighbourhoods and alert the Police should they detect that something is amiss. On our part, we support these initiatives with dissemination of timely crime information and frequently organise residents to conduct joint patrols with the Police.



THE COMMUNITY SAFETY AND SECURITY PROGRAMME

The Community Safety and Security Programme (CSSP) is an action plan jointly drawn up by the residents, grassroots leaders and Police to address a localised safety or security concern.

One success story involves our partnership with foreign workers. The Toh Guan Patriots comprises 30 dedicated foreign workers of various nationalities who have been recruited to assist in relaying crime prevention messages and advice against anti-social behaviour to the foreign workers in the vicinity of their dormitories or lodgings. The workers do this through joint patrols with the local residents during COP rounds and through participation in the local community events.

In order for them to be equipped with the necessary knowledge, training was provided by various stakeholders:

- Police – crime prevention;
- Singapore Civil Defence Force

- first aid and emergency evacuation procedures; and
- National Environmental Authority
 - Littering and dengue prevention.

These sessions helped the Patriots to have a better understanding of Singapore's laws and norms.

To date, the locality where the Patriots are active has not received any negative feedback pertaining to foreign workers. In fact, the Patriots assisted in the arrest of a suspect for attempted housebreaking in one of the dormitories in 2009.

THE SAFETY AND SECURITY WATCH GROUP

The Safety and Security Watch Group (SSWG) is the second of our two community engagement programmes to allow the Police to engage members of the business community on issues pertaining to safety and security, in particular the terrorist threat.

Presently, we have more than 100 SSWG clusters, which group together more than 800 commercial buildings. We share with these SSWGs information on crime-related issues, surface safety-security related problems for discussion and craft joint contingency plans to enhance preparedness and operational response to terrorist incidents by facilitating swift evacuation to reduce casualty rates.

Police also work with the SSWGs to implement the necessary

target-hardening measures for their respective premises, e.g. introducing a stand-off distance through bollards and low screen walls, which help mitigate the impact of a bomb blast and the resulting casualty rate.

In terms of engaging the SSWGs, Police has deepened its engagement level in recent years by organising emergency preparedness exercises, such as Ex Heartbeat in 2010 and 2011 with SSWG members in the Central Business District.

THE NATIONAL CRIME PREVENTION COUNCIL



But perhaps our most successful partnership with the community resides in the National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC), which celebrated its 30th year in 2011 with a well-attended international conference in Singapore and a book chronicling its critical role in preventing crime in Singapore.

Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong said it most aptly in a foreword to *Making Singapore Safe: 30 Years of the National Crime Prevention Council*:

“When we set up the National Crime Prevention Council 30 years ago, we hoped to change mindsets and encourage the private

and people sectors to take more responsibility for preventing crime.

Ever since, the Council has worked closely with the police, industry and grassroots organisations to equip Singaporeans with the knowledge to prevent crime, plus the skills to become crime prevention ambassadors themselves.

From the Neighbourhood Watch Zones to the Community Safety and Security Programme, we have created a movement of volunteers with the passion to help fight crime, who put their heart and soul into keeping their community safe and dream up new ideas to energise more to join their cause.

This is an excellent example of active citizens partnering the Home Team, giving Singapore many years of good security and one of the lowest crime rates in the developed world⁴.”

Established on 4 July 1981, the National Crime Prevention Council was set up as the key co-ordination body to raise public awareness of crime trends and nurture a culture of self-help in preventing crime.

The Council works hand-in-hand with the Police, the community and business associations to conceptualise and implement a range of programmes, including one of Singapore’s most successful and enduring public education campaigns – the “Low Crime Doesn’t Mean No Crime” poster series.

There are currently 26 council members consisting of community and industry leaders, Police officers (including the Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioner) as well as senior policy makers appointed by the Minister for Home Affairs.

Three of the more significant initiatives by the NCPC include:

The Crime Prevention Ambassadors (CPA): The NCPC has created a voluntary group of 120 volunteers to educate fellow senior citizens to be more aware of crimes targeting them. The programme's success – it has won local and international accolades - led to it being extended to the foreign worker community in 2009. This concept of empowering willing individuals to promote good practices among their peers pioneered by the NCPC is today adopted by many government agencies. The Health Promotion Board, for instance, appoints Health Ambassadors to mentor and inspire their peers to lead a healthy lifestyle.

Crime Watch: A public education TV programme, Crime Watch, has been running for the past 25 years and is one of the top-watched shows in terms of viewership on Channel 5. Not only does it feature the dramatic re-enactment of criminal cases and police procedures, the show also focuses on disseminating crime prevention tips and messages to the public. In an example of good synergy, the NCPC funds the

programme while the Police oversees the production of each episode, advising on case selection and scripts and even roping in police officers to act.

A survey commissioned by the Public Affairs Department of the Singapore Police Force in 2009 revealed that more than 95% of the 1,030 respondents were aware of the programme and 56% said that they tuned in to Crime Watch to learn about crime prevention tips.⁵

Cyberonia: Recognising that children are now exposed to the Internet at a young age, the NCPC introduced 'Cyberonia', an interactive and self-learning game in 2009 to help inculcate good cyber-wellness habits at a young age. Cyberonia helps young children to understand the importance of safeguarding personal information and how to deal with issues such as cyber-bullying and gaming addiction. About 40,000 students in Primary 5 will benefit from playing Cyberonia each year.

Of all the various community partnership models the Police is part of, the NCPC can be said to be unique in one aspect – its composition has historically been weighted to involve business leaders from various industries and it is thus well-placed to act as a useful bridge in helping the Police reach out to industries that tend to resist the regulatory aspects of policing. A

component part of the NCPC – the Advisory Panel on Licensing – has reviewed licensing conditions for computer gaming centres, spas and massage parlours and nightspots. The reviews include public consultations as well as dialogues with the industry players. By acting as a neutral arbiter in these consultations, the NCPC is able to persuade the industries under review to step up self-policing measures to prevent crime from being committed on their premises and thus make it possible for Police to adopt a lighter regulatory touch.

OUR VOLUNTEER SPECIAL CONSTABULARY

Another key bridge to the community is the Volunteer Special Constabulary (VSC). It was created in 1946, in the aftermath of the Second World War, when about 150 residents came forward to join the new Special Constabulary. Close to 1,000 VSC officers from all walks of life perform day-to-day policing duties together with their regular counterparts. In addition, VSC officers have also been deployed for operational duties during major events, such as the Singapore Youth Olympics Games (SYOG) in 2010 as well as the General Elections and Presidential Elections in 2011.

In short, the VSC is an integral component of the SPF and these

officers, with their dedication and commitment, epitomise the close bond between the community and the Police.

LEVERAGING ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Communities are no longer just a physical phenomenon; they also exist in cyberspace.

Correspondingly, there are also criminals and crime in the virtual world. Criminals have cheated victims of millions of dollars by exploiting the advancement of technology and financial services to their advantage.

“Communities are no longer just a physical phenomenon; they also exist in cyberspace.”

We are still at the infancy stage at replicating the success that we have enjoyed with community policing in the communities in cyberspace. To be sure, online communities are also fertile grounds for deploying many of the community-centred policing strategies that have proven to be so successful in the physical world.

With the Internet and 3G mobile technology increasingly becoming regular features in our daily lives, the Police have also expanded the use of social media as a strategic tool to reach out to more members of the public to engage them in the fight against crime.

Since April 2009, we have set up our Facebook Page to reach out to the net-savvy community, and use it as a complementary channel to traditional media for police appeals, taking advantage of the viral nature of social media. The SPF Facebook page has more than 269,000 fans, with more than 2,800 followers on Twitter.

In November 2011, we achieved an operational breakthrough with the first “Facebook arrest” when a netizen responded to Police’s appeal for information on a suspect in an unsolved crime - harassment by an unlicensed moneylender – posted on our Facebook page.

SPF videos on YouTube have also been popular, attracting over 2.4 million views while the Police@SG iPhone application has attracted more than 56,000 users. In short, we use these channels to regularly push out crime prevention messages and appeal for information to assist in police investigations. Moving forward, we are also exploring other ways to engage the public, such as “live” e-Townhall meetings with community partners and residents.

We are currently exploring how technology can be used to enhance the current NPPs and have invited tertiary institutions - the polytechnics and universities - to participate in a contest to design the NPP of the future so that we can garner creative and innovative ideas of young Singaporeans.

“... as a police force, we will have to progressively establish the trust and co-operation we currently share with real-world communities, with communities that exist online.”

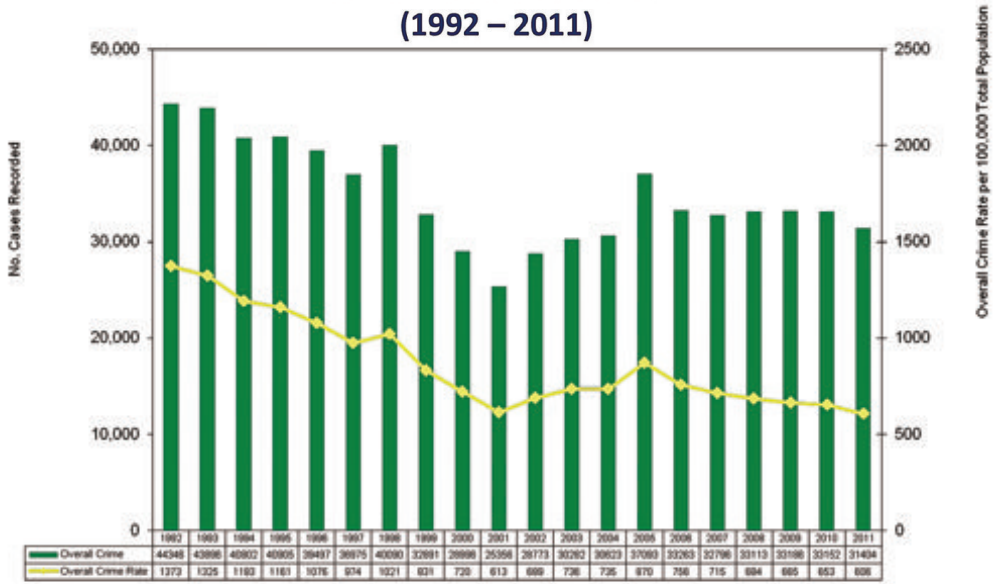
We also want the NPCs to further strengthen their rapport with the community through a more coordinated and effective engagement strategy in both real and virtual worlds. Specially selected and trained officers at each NPC will serve as liaisons with community stakeholders and play a more active role in advising, catalysing and participating in various community projects. This way, they will become familiar faces to residents and businesses in the area, thereby building trust, and deeper and lasting ties.

We believe that such public spiritedness in cyberspace augurs well for the Police’s e-partnership with the online communities and as a police force, we will have to progressively establish the trust and co-operation we currently share with real-world communities, with communities that exist online.

FUTURE OF COMMUNITY POLICING

Over the next few years, we will be implementing a series of changes to improve the

**OVERALL CRIME & CRIME RATE
(1992 – 2011)**



way in which the NPCs work in, with and through the community.

In May 2012, we launched the new Community Policing System (COPS) to keep up with Singapore’s evolving demographic trends and changing needs in the community. The Singapore population is now more diverse with new migrants and non-residents. Non-residents formed 27% of our total population in 2011, up from 20% in 2000. Coupled with the emergence of nuclear families and the growing phenomenon of more senior citizens living on their own, it is critical for the Police to engage more directly, and in a manner tailored to the needs of different segments of the community.

With the implementation of COPS, the community can expect a stronger police presence in the neighbourhood, through regular foot and bicycle patrols, as well as deeper Police involvement in community

projects. Technology will also be used to enhance the community’s security. For instance, the Police will be setting up police cameras in all 10,000 HDB blocks and multi-storey carparks to help deter crime and to assist in investigations. With closer engagement with the community and enhanced visibility on the ground, the Police hope to reduce crime, and at the same time, increase the public perception of security in their neighbourhood.

SUSTAINING A SUCCESS STORY

The Singapore Police Force’s love affair with community policing has lasted almost 30 years (since 1983), and this romance grows stronger by the day.

Since opening our first neighbourhood police post (NPP) in 1983, we have witnessed a long period of sustained reduction in crime in Singapore.

The crime rate of 606 cases per 100,000 population achieved in 2011 was less than half of what we experienced 20 years ago in 1992.

Whilst our proactive policing and preventive strategies have contributed to this long-term declining crime trend, our commitment to engaging and working hand-in-hand with our communities and the community’s involvement are a primary reason why we continue to live in a low-crime and safe environment.

This is, of course, neither an accident, nor entirely due to good fortune.

We do not intend to rest on our laurels but will continue to explore new and innovative ways to bring community policing to the next level.

Most importantly, the communities we police must trust us to do a good job, and want to help us, and to join

with us, to do an even better job.

This article is adapted from a speech DCP T. Raja Kumar gave at the International Conference on Principled Policing, organised by the Asian Strategy & Leadership Institute (ASLI), in Kuala Lumpur in February 2012.

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¹ “Factsheet – The Police in England and Wales”, Civitas Institute for the Study of Civil Society 2010, <http://www.civitas.org.uk/crime/factsheet-Police.pdf>

² David T. Johnson, “Japan’s Crime Control Policy: Achievements, Lessons, and Challenges, Paper delivered at the International Symposium on Crime Reduction, Tokyo, October 5-6, 2010, [http://www.npa.go.jp/english/seisaku/International_Symposium_on_Crime_Reduction\(Police_Policy_Research_Center\).pdf](http://www.npa.go.jp/english/seisaku/International_Symposium_on_Crime_Reduction(Police_Policy_Research_Center).pdf)

³ An example of indirect assistance: suspects who were arrested by the Police after being sighted by members of public, who called in the location.

⁴ Susan Sim, Making Singapore Safe: 30 Years of the National Crime Prevention Council, Singapore: Marshall Cavendish Editions, 2011.

⁵ Susan Sim, Making Singapore Safe: Thirty Years of the National Crime Prevention Council, Marshall Cavendish Editions, 2011, pp. 130 -134

EDITOR’S NOTES



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He served previously from April 2008 – June 2011, as the first Chief Executive (CE) of the Casino Regulatory Authority (CRA), where he undertook a pioneering challenge and successfully saw through the passing of the Casino Control Act, the formation of the Casino Regulatory Authority, and the conceptualisation, development and successful implementation of the regulatory framework for the casinos.

Prior to his posting as CE CRA, Mr. Raja held several leadership positions in the Singapore Police Force, including as the Director of the Police Intelligence Department, Commander Ang Mo Kio Police Division and Deputy Commander Tanglin Police Division.

Mr. Raja holds a LLB (Hons) from the National University of Singapore, and a Masters of Philosophy (Criminology & Law) from Cambridge University. He attended the Advanced Management Program at Harvard University in 2006. He was also awarded the Public Administration Silver medal in 2007 and the Public Administration Bronze medal in 1996.

Why Community Policing Works

TANG GEK HSIEN

“ Legitimacy is not derived purely from support from the letter of the law, but rather from the acceptance and trust drawn from the community. ”

A PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY

While there are many definitions that differentiate community policing from traditional policing, the key value underpinning community policing is *trust*. In traditional policing, the crime-fighting strategy is described as reactive and legalistic, meaning that it focuses purely on incident response and sees the public it engages with either as a victim of the crime or the perpetrator of the crime.

In contrast, community policing is “a strategy for encouraging the public to become partners with the police in controlling and preventing crime” (Bayley). More simply, it “stresses policing *with and for* the community rather than *of* the community” (Tilley). Here, the key difference – partnership between the police and

the community – is what makes trust so central to the community policing strategy.

Crime is not just a legal but rather a social phenomenon. Effective community policing requires recognition of not just the dimensions of legality but also legitimacy in policing action. Legitimacy is not derived purely from support from the letter of the law, but rather from the acceptance and trust drawn from the community.

Community policing recognises this and seeks to build this trust by enabling community members to be empowered as partners of the police to inculcate a sense of shared responsibility in crime-fighting.

Assessments of the impact of community policing on crime are varied because it is difficult to derive performance indicators to measure the effectiveness of community policing due to the challenges of quantifying intangible effects of police initiatives. Furthermore, the success of measures such as crime prevention may only be evaluated

against a prediction of what would have happened had the crime prevention effort not been made, which is presently impossible.

Bayley has proposed a classification of performance indicators that includes both “hard” and “soft” measures to reflect the objective vs. the subjective perceptions of change. “Hard” measures includes crime rates, victimisation rates, real estate values and substantiated complaints about police behaviour, while “soft” measures includes public confidence in the police, the fear of crime, perceptions of safety and perceptions of disorder. However, the inherent difficulties in quantifying “soft” measures remain perennial challenges.

There is nevertheless strong evidence to argue that the perception of police legitimacy has made community policing effective in reducing public fear of crime and increasing perceptions of safety. Studies have also demonstrated that the focused police-citizen interaction in community policing, which builds on police presence while allaying public’s safety concerns, has resulted in a greater link to overall public satisfaction with the police.

Thus, the Singapore Police Force pursues community policing through an effective communications and capacity building strategy, where police officers reach out to the

community to build consensus and supportive relations – listening to and making proactive efforts to address their concerns, and sharing more about internal work processes to foster mutual understanding. Concurrently, this engagement also provides the police with opportunities to gather ground information useful in crime detection and solving and for the public to be educated on crime prevention awareness and measures.

// Studies have also demonstrated that the focused police-citizen interaction in community policing, which builds on police presence while allaying public’s safety concerns, has resulted in a greater link to overall public satisfaction with the police. //

ADAPTING TO THE EVOLVING OPERATING LANDSCAPE

The NPC System

The implementation of the Neighbourhood Police Post (NPP) system in 1983 marked SPF’s paradigm shift from a traditional policing model to a community policing system. With an eventual roll-out of 91 NPPs island-wide, SPF was enabled to achieve many of its objectives, the most important of which was the

development of the relationship of trust between the Police and the community. With the increased public confidence, the number of public-assisted arrests saw a steady increase. By 1992, it was 33.6%. It increased further to 34.8% in 1993 and to 36.1% in 1994, which accounts for more than a third of all arrests made. Singapore was also ranked as the safest city in the world by the Global Competitiveness Report in 1996.

However, as Singapore's continual development brought about contingent changes to the operational landscape, the demands on policing became not only significantly greater in volume but also in complexity. The NPP system, which comprised a police post providing limited services with the aim of attracting residents and establishing points of contact, could no longer keep up. As specialisation grew within the Police to address new demands from a more assertive and educated population, there was a need to expand the scope of NPPs beyond foot and bicycle patrols, report-lodging and deployments to 'guard' crime scenes.

In a typical '999' case where the Fast Response Car (FRC) from the Divisional HQ would constitute the first responder and the Divisional HQ Investigation Officer (IO) would conduct investigations, the role of the NPP officer would be to stand guard at crime scenes during the period between the FRC's departure

and the IO's arrival. At times, this guarding of crime scene could stretch for hours, depending on how many cases the Fast response Cars (FRCs) and Investigation Officers (IOs) were being activated to respond to at the same time.

With an increasingly better-educated population, officers joining the SPF were similarly better-educated with more 'A'-level and diploma holders, and had greater career aspirations. There was a need to broaden the job scope of NPP officers to attract and retain them. The NPP system's service delivery process was also seen as confusing to customers. Cases were passed from one NPP officer to the investigator and the scene of crime officer from the HQ. Such processes lengthened the waiting times for victims and interested parties.

The drawbacks of this system became increasingly apparent in 1997, when the Asian Financial Crisis struck. However a manpower freeze imposed across the civil service, including the SPF, meant that resources were increasingly tighter on the ground. In such a scenario, Police resources had to prioritise to address crime in a more targeted fashion. The SPF soon recognised that its operational deployment needed to be reviewed to maximise its limited resources for maximum returns against crime. The manpower crunch saw the manning levels at

NPPs reduced. To compound the problem, the workload between NPPs was always uneven, with some NPPs servicing an area with as little as 2000 households and others assuming responsibility for areas with more than 15,000 households.

In 1997, SPF made a major adjustment to right-size its operational units. It decided to create the NPC system, with Queenstown NPC launched as the “pilot project” in October. While the core community policing concept remained unchanged i.e. engagement of the community against crime, this change led to the development of a “one-stop policing centre providing the full range of policing services”. The NPC was created as an additional layer of control and support between the land divisional headquarters and the decentralised NPPs. NPP-level resources would now be pooled at the NPC level, with each NPC comprising an average of about 100 officers with up to four NPPs reporting to it. In addition to covering a bigger geographical area with a larger population size, NPCs would be also allocated by population size, with one NPC per every 100,000 residents to ensure a more balanced workload.

This pooling of resources at NPC-level allowed for greater flexibility to customise police response to the local community’s needs, as well as develop greater range of capability

and capacity through centralised manpower and better technological and logistical support. The NPC could integrate incident response and counter services with investigations and pro-active crime prevention work including patrols and house visits. The NPPs in this arrangement were confined to provide only counter services.

In addition, NPC officers could be rotated among the various functions, and thus be trained and equipped to handle a wider and more challenging range of duties, including case management from the point of response to follow-up investigation (i.e. interviewing of victims/defendants and simple crime scene photography). While more complex cases would continue to be handled by Divisional IOs or CID, simple crime cases now came under the NPC officer. This new arrangement was welcomed by the ground officers, and also streamlined the service delivery process to eliminate the confusion and unnecessary waiting times for victims and relevant parties.

With a greater assumption of responsibility came a greater imperative for individual NPCs to meet specific Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for crime reduction and prevention. Recognising that the effective management of crime required adaptive responses, even proactive duties had to be streamlined. Hence, proactive

patrols became more targeted, with areas for patrolling identified based on intelligence from crime trends. In addition, NPCs would also conduct proactive ambush and arrest operations for recurrent crimes within their jurisdiction. Crime rates went down over the years through the more focused use and development of Police resources as well as the continued engagement of the community in crime prevention and detection. However, the focus on targeted crime deterrence meant a resulting decline in the general public visibility of police presence, as now, only areas with higher occurrence of crime would warrant police patrols.

Furthermore, to ensure that response to a larger area of responsibility remained swift, bicycle and foot patrols were replaced by more vehicular patrols. With finite resources managing much larger areas, it was inevitable that the trade-off was in terms of police presence.

// Crime rates went down over the years through the more focused use and development of Police resources as well as the continued engagement of the community in crime prevention and detection. However, the focus on targeted crime deterrence meant a resulting decline in the general public visibility of

police presence, as now, only areas with higher occurrence of crime would warrant police patrols. //

To address this issue, SPF mobilised the community to take more ownership and responsibility for their own safety and security concerns. Dedicated Community Focus Plan (CFP) teams (the predecessor to the newly established Community Policing Unit) were thus set up within every NPC to engage prominent grassroots leaders at all levels on the concerns affecting their neighbourhoods' safety and security, and to disseminate important crime prevention information to the ground. Officers from the NPC were invited to attend these grassroots meetings and events, and joint initiatives including the Neighbourhood Watch Zone (NWZ) and youth development programmes to steer youths away from crime were introduced. In 2001, the Community Involvement Division was also set up within SPF's Operations Department to drive the management of community involvement and crime prevention systems among the NPCs, as part of SPF's core operational strategy.

The Terrorism-Crime Nexus

September 11 2001 marked another watershed for the Force

as the global threat of terrorism changed the operating landscape. With the exposure of the regional Al-Qaeda linked Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) network and its cells in Singapore, the threat of terrorism for Singapore became more immediate and direct. Hitherto Singapore was not typically a target for its own sake. The JI plot changed this. Terrorism made the Police's community engagement of ordinary citizens and residents an even more vital resource, as the best target hardening measure any country can have is the vigilance and preparedness of its people.

// The "community" could no longer be restricted to just the residential population. The business sector owning the commercial establishments making up the "soft targets" had to be roped in. //

The appeal of "soft targets" to JI terrorist elements as demonstrated in major attacks in neighbouring Indonesia, led to an expansion of the Police outreach and engagement programme. The "community" could no longer be restricted to just the residential population. The business sector owning the commercial establishments making up the "soft targets" had to be roped in.

In 2003, the Security and Safety Watch Group (SSWG) was formed

as a networking platform between SPF and members of the business sector to enable mutual dialogue and discussion, sharing vital security-related information and best practices. This included consultation on infrastructure hardening of businesses' operating premises, the training of personnel to detect potential security threats, and even the development of contingency plans (e.g. evacuation plans) in times of crisis. Specific collaborative working groups were even formed for high profile areas posing heightened security risks, like Sentosa and Jurong Island.

CHALLENGES AHEAD

SPF's commitment to its community policing strategy has paid off. Even with Singapore's changing landscape, she continues to enjoy one of the lowest crime rates in the world¹. Data from Police records demonstrate that crime has consistently fallen since 2005, from 870 cases of reported crime per 100,000 population to 606 cases per 100,000 population in 2011.

SPF also continues to enjoy much public trust and legitimacy, with residents in a 2008 HDB survey² ranking the Police as the government institution that they had the highest confidence in³.

The Singapore demographic landscape has changed significantly

in the past ten years, with our population increasing from 3.4 million to 5.8 million, including an influx of about 1.2 million foreigners. While population density is increasing island wide; new townships like Sengkang and Punggol are seeing greater growth, while residential developments on Sentosa contribute to the change in the island’s demographic. New integrated resorts and casinos now stand in Sentosa and where a formerly vacant piece of reclaimed land in Marina Bay once was.

“ SPF also continues to enjoy much public trust and legitimacy, with residents in a 2008 HDB survey² ranking the Police as the government institution that they had the highest confidence in³. ”

To keep pace with change, the NPC system must itself evolve. More NPCs are being built: Marina Bay NPC was opened on 6 February 2010 to serve the resident and business population at the Marina Bay area including the integrated resort. There are still plans to construct more NPCs around the island by 2015 to deal with the increasing population and expected rise in incident response.

While SPF has also stepped up recruitment to deal with the additional numbers, resources

are ultimately finite and must be optimised.⁴ The NPC will be the principal localised Police structure on the ground and more will be done to augment its capabilities and service delivery for deeper community penetration and coverage. Even now, individual NPCs roll out CSSP projects to reach out to the new segments of the community, such as the foreign worker population to dispense crime prevention advice and to assist in integrating them into mainstream society.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ENDNOTES

¹ Singapore’s crime rate per 100,000 population in 2009 was 661, which was lower than the other major cities of Hong Kong (1125), New York (2378), London (11300) and Sydney (17904).
² This refers to the HDB Sample Household Survey of 2008, which is conducted every 5 years and involves 7900 respondents over 23 HDB towns and 3 housing estates.
³ SPF was given a rating of 7.6 out of 10. It was followed closely by the judiciary and Singapore’s religious institutions which scored 7.5 points and 7.4 points respectively.

⁴ The structure of the SPF is noted to be one of the leanest compared to other major cities; with approximately 260 police staff per every 100, 000 population, in contrast to London and Hong Kong, which have approximately 445 and 394 police staff per every 100, 000 population respectively.

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EDITOR'S NOTES



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COMMUNITY

OUTREACH & PARTNERSHIP:

THE ISD STORY

ISD SECURITY EDUCATION COMMAND

When it became apparent soon after the 9/11 attacks that a regional terrorist network (Jemaah Islamiyah – JI) was operating in Singapore and that it had planned terrorist attacks here, the Internal Security Department (known to all Singaporeans as ISD) not only mounted security operations but also intensified its community engagement efforts. Indeed, terrorism and riots are not new in Singapore. In the decade before and after independence, there were the Maria Hertogh riots, the CUF riots, the 1964 and 1969 racial riots, Konfrontasi and communist bombings. In almost all of these incidents, the mayhem bore communal hues.

This new terrorism brought on by al-Qaeda was a global threat, something our open society was vulnerable to. There was every possibility that the adverse publicity against Muslims and the inter-communal tensions following the 9/11 attacks would reverberate here. After all, Singapore is a plural society, and

still a young nation. Any attacks here could unravel our social fabric.



Terrorism and riots are not new in Singapore. In the decade before and after independence, there were the Maria Hertogh riots, the CUF riots, the 1964 and 1969 racial riots, Konfrontasi and communist bombings.

In almost all of these incidents, the mayhem bore communal hues. //

ISD responded by embarking on efforts beyond just traditional intelligence gathering and investigations, intensifying its outreach efforts and forging new partnerships on multiple fronts. There was a need to immediately enhance security awareness, augment ground coverage for the detection of the suspicious, and provide reassurance that Singapore remained a safe environment. Thus there were targeted security

outreach programmes to reach out to multi-national companies, foreign educational institutions, financial institutions, hotels, major commercial buildings and taxi-drivers. There was also a need to strengthen Singapore's social fabric through the nurturing of partnerships with community groups and reassure the various communities here that calls for violence by the al-Qaeda and JI terrorists did not resonate with the local Muslim community.

“ ISD had been engaging various community sectors on Singapore's security history and emerging threats since the 1990s. It was mainly a question then of leveraging on the competencies built and lessons learnt from these earlier engagements and bringing them to bear. ”

Indeed the 9/11 aftermath and the unearthing of the JI created a new security environment that required we give equal priority to such partnership and outreach efforts. There was a need for a greater premium to be placed on skill sets, know-how and expertise that were more diversified. These were obviously new challenges but they were not difficult to counter, as ISD had been engaging various community sectors on Singapore's

security history and emerging threats since the 1990s. It was mainly a question then of leveraging on the competencies built and lessons learnt from these earlier engagements and bringing them to bear.

This article sets out our partnership and outreach roles, the philosophy that underlies them, and the challenges that we face in implementing them as well as their outcomes.

OUTREACH IN THE 1990S

Our initial outreach in the 1990s formed part of the National Education Seminars. ISD's audience then were civil servants and educators as well as grassroots leaders, journalists and media executives. These seminars were aimed at educating and sensitising this select group to Singapore's key security challenges and constraints. Our briefings essentially sought to drive home the point that racial and religious harmony had to be actively fostered, and not left to chance. Furthermore, beyond just presenting the security context against which public servants have to carry out their professional duties, the sessions also offered a forum for the participants to share their concerns and experiences. The aim was to convince the participants not to take for granted our many years of peace.

The Question & Answer (Q&A) discussions were often the high point of the seminars. Participants appreciated in particular the candid exchanges with ISD panellists who found it useful at times to share privileged information with the audience. Many were unaware of various developments that have had impact on racial and religious harmony and stability in Singapore. Our presentations and revelations offered the audience a better understanding of not only Singapore’s security context, but also an appreciation of ISD’s mission and roles, and the complementary roles that all play.

We did not just share at these sessions but learnt as well. ISD officers had to be widely read, and be familiar with the broader policies of the Government. This was necessary as the audience would often touch on the larger issues that had implications on our security and stability such as the impact of political security and developments in the region and elsewhere on our internal security.

SECURITY OUTREACH AFTER 9/11

The counter-terrorism security outreach programme for the private and public sectors was initiated in January 2002, immediately after the first arrests of the JI in December 2001. The aims of the outreach programme then, as now, are:

- a. To reassure the public and

the expatriate/business communities that the Singapore Government and security/enforcement agencies are pro-active and taking all necessary measures to counter the terrorist threat to ensure that Singapore remains a safe place to do business, work and live in; and

- b. To sensitise the people to the terrorism threat to Singapore, and that every individual’s cooperation and assistance is necessary to keep Singapore safe.

We began by reaching out to the multi-national companies (MNCs), foreign educational institutions, local and foreign financial institutions, chambers of commerce and clubs, major commercial outfits/buildings, diplomatic missions as well as hotel security personnel, grassroots leaders and taxi-drivers. The contents of the briefings included the JI arrests, the White Paper on JI, the security threat posed by JI in Singapore, the terrorism threat to Singapore and the South East Asia region. The briefings were also supplemented by hand-outs with practical instructions on how to counter the terrorist threat. These included the pamphlet, “*Guarding against Terrorism - What You Can Do*”, which was distributed to all participants, the handout “*Bombs Threat Checklist*” for the organisations for whom we did a security walkthrough of their premises, and pamphlets entitled “*Keeping Singapore Safe from*

Terrorism” in the four national languages, which were distributed to taxi-drivers in 2003 and 2004.

The approach to elicit public cooperation, especially among security personnel was updated in 2004 with the introduction of brochures on “*Guidelines & Advice for Security Personnel - Spotting Terrorists & Terrorist Activities*”. The new initiative provided specific indicators of terrorist suspects who were “casing” buildings and sensitive installations. The 7-page write-up essentially outlined up-to-date indicators of terrorist activities obtained from fresh intelligence, debriefing of suspects and detainees and analyses of terrorists’ *modus operandi*. These included indicators of terrorist surveillance and plans, suspicious activities and suicide bombers. In 2005, we produced a booklet “*Keeping Singapore Safe – How You Can Help*” in the four languages; it provided pointers on how terrorists and suicide bombers operate, possible indicators of terrorist activities/behaviours and how the various constituents can help alert the authorities to prevent a terrorist attack. The booklets were issued to senior executives of various organisations as well as taxi-drivers; a 15-minute video clip on the same title was also screened at the taxi-operators’ service centres. ISD encouraged taxi-drivers to be alert and observant of their passengers,

especially with regard to their destinations, the questions they asked and their behaviour. The effort proved to be useful as we received many reports from taxi drivers on passengers whom they believed were acting suspiciously.

“ A special feature of the Centre is that the educational tours of the exhibits are conducted by veteran ISD officers who had participated in the security operations in various capacities - as research analysts, field intelligence officers and interrogators. ”

SECURITY EDUCATION

These security outreach efforts were complemented by a security education programme centred around the ISD Heritage Centre. The Heritage Centre was an in-house project set up primarily as a training centre for ISD officers. Opened in March 2002, it features cases of our past battles against communism, religious and racial extremism, and espionage. These are not just old cases that bear no relevance to our current fight against terrorists. There is much that we can learn from these cases in say, the manner in which groups bent on political violence propagandise their militant ideas. A special feature of the Centre is that the educational tours of the exhibits are conducted by veteran

ISD officers who had participated in the security operations in various capacities - as research analysts, field intelligence officers and interrogators.

The majority of the visitors to the Centre have been from the Ministry of Education, MHA/Home Team Departments, MINDEF and the community/grassroots organisations. In particular, the Centre has been assisting Home Team officers in their programmes to sensitise their officers to security threats facing Singapore. Engagement on this front drives home the fact that the security problems we faced in our formative years as a young state still make us vulnerable despite our many good years of nation-building.

**COMMUNITY
COUNTER-IDEOLOGY**

Terrorist groups such as al-Qaeda and the JI do not just kill and maim haphazardly. They engage in violence systematically, propagandising their cause expansively across the media channels – books, the Internet, social media – to win over converts and sympathisers. This is as much a battle of ideas too and there remains an urgent need to impress upon communities here that terrorism has been fast developing into a long-term problem globally, and that all have a part to play in stemming the flow of extremist ideas and preventing violence. Our community engagement efforts are premised on the need

to nurture mutual trust and forge partnerships with community groups. Soon after the discovery of the JI network in Singapore, we engaged Muslim religious and community leaders early, and brought them into our confidence by briefing them on our findings of the JI and the threat that it posed. The briefings took place even while investigation and intelligence operations were on-going. Several responded by offering to counsel the detainees, and they brought together a larger group of clerics into a voluntary network of religious counsellors, which is now known worldwide as the Religious Rehabilitation Group (RRG)¹.

“ Soon after the discovery of the JI network in Singapore, we engaged Muslim religious and community leaders early, and brought them into our confidence by briefing them on our findings of the JI and the threat that it posed. The briefings took place even while investigation and intelligence operations were on-going. Several responded by offering to counsel the detainees. ”

It was obvious in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks that the ideology espoused by al-Qaeda and JI terrorist groups would remain a problem in the foreseeable future. Terrorist ideologues continue to churn out

spurious theological justifications for violence in order to win over converts to their cause. There is the real possibility that young minds will fall for the militant ideas, allowing them to gain a foothold in the psyche of the mainstream. Countering the ideas thus requires more than just rehabilitating the terrorists. The battle has to be fought upstream, through a structured engagement programme to raise community awareness of the threat the militant ideas pose. The efforts are aimed at ensuring that militant ideas are marginalised, that they do not gain a foothold in the psyche of the mainstream and a consensus is forged with the community to counter terrorism. The specific objectives of the programme are:

- a. To raise awareness that terrorists misuse religion and spread their ideas of hate and violence through various channels;
- b. To encourage the community to play a part in countering terrorist ideology and promote zero tolerance against its spread; and
- c. To marginalise radical rhetoric.

In the early days, the Director of ISD would helm the community engagement briefings to stress to participants the importance of such partnerships. Community groups were briefed on the terrorism situation around the world and the region. They were told about the recruitment methods of terrorist groups and their brainwashing

techniques that ISD had learnt through interrogations and psychological analyses of detained terrorists. They were briefed for instance, that in JI's recruitment sessions, which were commonly held under the cover of religious classes, terrorist groups would brainwash potential recruits into believing that the mainstream understanding of Islam was wrong, and that the group alone was in possession of the correct understanding of the religion. The psychological make-up of the recruits was normally that of a person in search of religious truth. At such JI sessions, the recruits were shown videos that purportedly depicted the oppression and ill-treatment of Muslims in conflict zones like Bosnia, and which appealed to their emotions and sense of justice. These

// The idea of a terrorist group operating in Singapore was so alien that many of the people we briefed experienced cognitive dissonance. Most thought that the ideas and methods of the JI were foreign and found it difficult to come to terms with the fact that they were living in co-existence with such evil.

// videos were meant to convince recruits that they had to act in defence of their religion by taking up the cause of armed jihad. ISD briefers

would also explain the psychological impact of the ideas i.e. how normal people become terrorists bent on killing innocents.

ISD had to be both prudent and judicious in the way it approached the community. The idea of a terrorist group operating in Singapore was so alien that many of the people we briefed experienced cognitive dissonance. Most thought that the ideas and methods of the JI were foreign and found it difficult to come to terms with the fact that they were living in co-existence with such evil.

There had to be a lot of reassurance on the part of ISD. In the briefings and in dealing with the community, ISD had to take into account religious and cultural sensitivities and guard against falling into the narratives of al-Qaeda and the JI, as well as those on the extreme Right of the political spectrum in the West, both of which like to depict an unfolding war between Muslims and the West and its allies.

We had to be careful for instance, with the use of concepts and words like “jihad”, although the term had entered the lexicon of the international media. Thus we thought that it was wrong to use the word “Islamic terrorists”, because to Muslims, this was a contradiction in terms – Islam is synonymous with peace and abhors violence. We did not even take for granted the use of the term “jihad”, for to Muslims

“jihad” actually means to “work hard and strive”, and not “war or violence”.

Indeed, ISD invested heavily in the process of forging partnership with the community. While it was urgent that there be a partnership and a community element in the fight against terrorism and terrorist ideology, that process could not be forced by the imposition of views and perspectives upon community groups.



Once the community groups understood the problem that the threat of terrorist ideology would pose to the social fabric of Singapore and the role they could play to neutralise it, they acted earnestly to build a firewall to protect the community.



A partnership that can withstand the uncertainties that terrorism poses, has to be one that is carefully nurtured, and not artificially forged. So even as we had our sights trained on the broader operating environment marked by extreme urgency, ISD strove to ensure that each and every interface with community groups was guided by the spirit of dialogue in empathising and sincerely seeking to understand the perspectives of the community and their fears of possible backlash from the 9/11 and the JI attacks in the region once the community groups understood the problem that the threat of terrorist

ideology would pose to the social fabric of Singapore and the role they could play to neutralise it, they acted earnestly to build a firewall to protect the community.

Thus in early 2002, about 130 Muslim organisations representing a cross-section of Muslims in Singapore, came together to issue a statement to condemn terrorism, and dissociate themselves from the likes of the al-Qaeda and JI, and reaffirm their solidarity with other fellow Singaporeans. This was mainly a diverse group that had not worked together previously but felt responsible enough to come together to reassure other Singaporeans. The Religious Rehabilitation Group (RRG) was born at this time, when a group of religious clerics came together to volunteer their services to counsel the detainees and address their misconceived religious ideas.

A group of Malay-Muslim social service organisations and mosques also came together to provide social service and counselling services to children and spouses of JI members – these programmes aimed to ensure that the families continue to remain engaged in mainstream society. Malay-Muslim organisations on their own started organising talks on counter-ideology to combat militant ideas. In many of these talks, RRG members were present to share with the audience how terrorist ideologies had misappropriated the religion,

and offered them the correct interpretation, in bid to delegitimise terrorist ideas. Community activists also wrote articles in newspapers, books and set up websites and blogs, all aimed at driving militant ideas to the fringes. Some examples are Ustaz Muhammad Haniff Hassan’s blog and his book entitled “Unlicensed to Kill”, in which he debunked terrorist ideas espoused by the late JI operative Imam Samudra. Ustaz Muhammad Haniff’s website provided youths with a platform to ask questions on Islam, particularly in the context of terrorist ideology. These actions of the community created in effect, a censoring environment so that youths are not lulled into thinking that the aims, grievances and ambitions of terrorist groups have the endorsement of mainstream community.

PARTNERSHIP WITH EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

SD also worked with educational institutions to organise seminars and dialogue sessions for educators and students to raise their awareness of the terrorism threat. Counter-terrorism messages have now been incorporated into the mainstream academic curriculum. We are of course cognisant of the fact that this is a sensitive endeavour; after all, the terrorist ideas of the

PARTNERSHIP FEATURES

al-Qaeda and JI are often erroneously couched in religious terms, and it is easy for the undiscerning to conflate religiosity with extremism and militancy.

Our outreach to schools similarly had a multiplier effect. The Malay Language, Drama and Debating Society of National Junior College took the initiative to organise dialogue sessions on counter-terrorism for youth from various educational institutions. A group of three undergraduates launched a project to reach out to youth and raise their awareness on the terrorist threat on the Internet. The project involved launching a website and organising a youth forum.

CONCLUSION

ISD'S COMMUNITY OUTREACH and partnership efforts have evolved to become an important part of its mission. Ensuring the integrity of Singapore's social fabric, and continued security and stability does not just involve intelligence and enforcement. It is about

winning hearts and minds and upholding shared values, and for this, forging a strong partnership with the community is crucial. This collaboration requires more than just apprising the community of security threats. It demands constant nurturing and special empathy for the needs of the different communities here. Leveraging on its past experiences to forge strong and durable relations with all stakeholders, ISD is ready for this challenge.

ENDNOTES

¹ Religious Rehabilitation Group. www.rrg.sg

EDITOR'S NOTES

The article was contributed by ISD's Security Education (SE) Command. The main objective of the SE Command is to facilitate the learning of Singapore's security history through the security incidents and cases that ISD had managed. It does so through the ISD Heritage Centre, which was originally conceived as a training facility for ISD officers, and which ISD now shares with its stakeholders.

MEETING THE CHALLENGE OF PREPARING THE NATION *FOR EMERGENCIES*

KHAISARAH MANSOR

The Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF) takes a holistic and long-term view in preparing the nation for emergencies and makes all efforts to promote and institutionalise emergency preparedness among the civilian population. Our community engagement efforts are primarily focused on developing a national public education strategy, which includes the provision of resources – manpower and infrastructure – to educate the civilian population in civil defence knowledge; and to organise and provide training for them in basic civil defence skills. This way, everyone in Singapore should be able to look after himself /herself, their family, friends and people around them during an emergency.

In a well-developed city like Singapore, which has been safe from natural disasters thus far, SCDF faces challenges in instilling the importance of emergency preparedness as not many people

feel that this is a vital aspect they need to incorporate as part of their lives. Coupled with a busy lifestyle and a general dependence on the government and emergency responders to cope with crisis situations, SCDF is constantly challenged in attracting participants for its Emergency Preparedness programmes. Recognising these challenges, SCDF tailors its community engagement programmes to better pitch its public awareness programmes to Singaporeans.

THREE STRATEGIC THRUSTS

The SCDF has therefore identified three strategic thrusts to increase the individual level of emergency preparedness of the population. They are namely, enhancing community self help, forging partnerships with stakeholders, and leveraging on emerging technologies and innovations.

ENHANCING COMMUNITY SELF HELP

The SCDF's Public Education strategy is driven by the vision to develop a comprehensive emergency preparedness programme, known as the CD (Civil Defence) Ready Programme, that engages and reaches out to all segments of the society. Hence, the SCDF has adopted a multi-pronged approach by reaching out to the different target groups with programmes customised to suit their needs. These target groups are:

- a. Students
- b. Residential Community
- c. Workplace employees
- d. Volunteers; and
- e. Residents

A range of programmes are in place to meet the needs of these target groups and they are described below.

COMMUNITY SAFETY AND SECURITY PROGRAMME

It is imperative that SCDF is able to interest the community in taking care of its own safety and security. In this respect, SCDF together with the other agencies within the Ministry of Home Affairs has been actively engaging the community in the conduct of the Community Safety and Security Programme (CSSP). The CSSP serves as a framework that encourages the community to look

after its own safety and security matters through self-help and mutual support. It serves to foster community cohesion and harmony among local grassroots leaders and residents, students and workers, and create opportunities for people to solve community problems as a group. SCDF actively facilitates the conduct of CSSPs that focus on fire safety, emergency preparedness, community vigilance and readiness. Examples of CSSPs are Fire Safety for Market programme, Community Patrols and Emergency Preparedness for Domestic Maids.

COMMUNITY EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PROGRAMME

Another programme that we provide members of the public is the Community Emergency Preparedness Programme (CEPP). The CEPP is a modular-based emergency preparedness training programme pegged at raising peacetime awareness of community emergency preparedness and to ensure the community's survivability during wartime. Taking this as the basic premise for the programme, five modules are incorporated into the training scheme. First-Aid, one-man Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and Automated External Defibrillator (AED)¹, fire safety and casualty evacuation, emergency

procedures and unconventional threats are covered during CEPP. These skills aim to equip participants with self-help knowhow which they can carry out before the arrival of SCDF emergency forces during a crisis. Conducted at the Public Education Centre of the four Civil Defence Division HQs, participants have the flexibility to choose any of the five modules or to attend all the modules at their own pace, and at no cost. Since its launch in 2003, more than 721,000 participants have attended the CEPP.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS DAY PROGRAMME

Each year, 48 Emergency Preparedness (EP) Days are organised by the Community Emergency and Engagement Committees (C2Es) of the People's Association (PA) in close consultation with the SCDF. EP Days are also highly supported by the grassroots organisations as part of the effort to create a more self-reliant and resilient community in handling emergencies. Residents can learn first aid, CPR and basic fire fighting at the validation booths. EP Days serve as a good platform for the C2E within each constituency to heighten the level of community emergency preparedness within the respective heartlands especially for their

Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT). CERT is an organised group of volunteers who will respond to an emergency and assist the community in the recovery process. The CERTs play a crucial role in an emergency or major disaster as the CERT members are literally the first responders within the constituency to mitigate the situation at ground zero prior to the arrival of the SCDF.

“ One of the aims of the SCDF is to educate the public on fire safety and emergency preparedness know-how by equipping them with the necessary skills so that they can help themselves in any crisis. ”

SCDF-PA CIVIL DEFENCE READY HOMES PROGRAMME

One of the aims of the SCDF is to educate the public on fire safety and emergency preparedness know-how by equipping them with the necessary skills so that they can help themselves in any crisis.

In partnership with the PA, we initiated the SCDF-PA Civil Defence (CD) Ready Homes Programme, providing residents in residential estates with a self-validation checklist to encourage them to develop Civil Defence skills. This was launched in



SCDF Personnel guiding a member of public on the correct use of fire extinguisher.

April 2011 and since then, more than 32,000 homes are “CD Ready”.

SCDF-MOE CD READY SCHOOLS PROGRAMME

SCDF and Ministry of Education jointly initiated the SCDF-MOE CD Ready Schools Programme in 2012 to strengthen the level of emergency preparedness of Singapore schools. Under the programme, schools are encouraged to take ownership and gauge their level of emergency preparedness through a self-validation checklist. The checklist will also help the schools discover the steps they have to take to increase the emergency preparedness level of their school staff and students.

CIVIL DEFENCE LIONHEARTERS CLUB

Recognising that the mode of engagement for tertiary institutions, namely ITEs and

Polytechnics, needs to be uniquely positioned to entice their participation in our programmes, SCDF embarked on a new and exciting initiative to establish the CD Lionhearters Club in tertiary institutions. The programme was first piloted in Singapore Polytechnic in October 2009. Subsequently, students from ITE College East, West and Central and Temasek Polytechnic also formed the CD Lionhearters Club, which now has more than 400 student members.

Lionhearters are encouraged to participate in the Community Emergency Preparedness Programme (CEPP), awareness programme on cultural sensitivities and traditions of different countries, Community Engagement Programme and mediation training workshop. With these skills, the Lionhearters will be able to perform the following roles:

- a. Training the community in Life Saving Skills



ITE-CD Lionhearters (College Central Chapter) with SCDF Personnel, ITE Management and Associate Professor Ho Peng Kee, Chairman of Home Team Volunteers Network, at the club launch on 20 July 2012.

- b. Mediating incidents involving communal tensions on campus grounds
- c. Providing assistance for on-campus incidents
- d. Providing humanitarian assistance during overseas missions

in our CD Ready Homes Programme. While the C2Es actively recruit and manage the volunteers in the area of community emergency preparedness under the CERT scheme, SCDF provides the necessary training in the form of CEPP. SCDF is also represented at C2E meetings to disseminate information and gather feedback on CD and EP matters. Professional advice and guidance is offered to C2E on matters pertaining to Civil Defence and related programmes and activities. The members are also briefed on incident trends, fire safety threat analyses and challenges faced in their communities. Such forums have become the feedback channel, thus promoting good communication and ownership among the C2Es. With this collaboration, SCDF aims to see an increased participation rate for CEPP and increased number of households participating in the CD Ready Homes Programme.

FORGING PARTNERSHIPS WITH STAKEHOLDERS

A key partner of SCDF's community engagement is the **People's Association (PA) Emergency Preparedness Division**. SCDF leverages on its grassroots networks, especially the C2Es, to enhance our Public Education outreach efforts to residents in heartlands and promote awareness of Emergency Preparedness. PA is the champion of two of SCDF's strategic engagements in the promotion of community emergency preparedness, namely EP Days and CERT. PA is also an intrinsic and critical partner

Another strategic partner of the SCDF is the **National Fire and Civil Emergency Preparedness Council**. SCDF collaborates closely with the Council in promoting fire safety and emergency preparedness among the community, focusing on niche groups such as the residents, students and employees of industrial and commercial premises. The Council's programmes include regular Fire Safety Seminars and Workshops organised for workers in the industrial and commercial premises.

In addition to community partnerships, SCDF has forged firm partnerships with the business community. The SCDF has been in close collaboration with the **Singapore Chemical Industry Council (SCIC)** since 2002 to actively and continuously engage the chemical industry on risk management and safe practices at the workplace. Dialogues and meetings have been held with SCIC to gather feedback on new initiatives, such as the Petroleum and Flammable Materials Regulations, the HazMat Transport Vehicle Tracking System, and the formation of the Company Emergency Response Team. In 2009, SCDF formalised the engagement and collaboration with SCIC on various projects, programmes and initiatives that will benefit both organisations in achieving their

common goal of enhancing safety awareness amongst the chemical industry. There are four main areas of engagement and collaboration:

- a Responsible Care Programme;
- b Training and Education;
- c Leveraging on industry expertise; and
- d SCIC as a communication platform for the industry.

The close collaboration between SCDF and SCIC has proven to benefit both organisations in achieving the common objective of enhancing safety within the chemical industry. As a testimonial of this close partnership, SCIC was presented with the SCDF Strategic Partner Award at the Civil Defence Day Parade 2011. This Award was introduced by SCDF to recognise organisations for their substantial support and participation with SCDF in the mutual exchange of knowledge and expertise.

Beyond the local context, SCDF also collaborates with its international partners in bringing humanitarian assistance to regional countries stricken by emergencies. Codenamed Operation (Ops) Lionheart, SCDF has a 55-member strong rescue contingent on 24hr standby that can be mobilised for overseas deployment within 2 hours. A key part of this contingent are the elite rescuers from the Disaster Assistance and

Rescue Team (DART). Since 1990, DART has been deployed to 13 Ops Lionheart missions, including the 2004 Asian Tsunami Disaster, the 2008 Sichuan Earthquake and most recently, the 2011 Tōhoku Earthquake and Tsunami disaster. In 2008, DART was successfully classified under the United Nations International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (UN INSARAG) as a Heavy Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) Team². Since then, SCDF has been extensively sharing its experiences and lending assistance to USAR teams across Asia and the Middle East, to build up their search and rescue capabilities according to UN INSARAG guidelines.

LEVERAGING EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES AND INNOVATIONS

Technology has played an important role in recent years, especially in the SCDF's public outreach efforts. Advancements in technology have seen a growing pool of smartphone users. There is a greater need to engage the increasingly mobile younger generation and motivate them to develop a stronger interest in improving their Emergency Preparedness (EP) skills. Today, SCDF has four iPhone applications for download, namely Fire Safety,

First-Aid, CPR, and Peacetime Emergencies and Terrorism. The dynamic features of technology, especially in the areas of media, have also allowed SCDF to explore public engagement through the use of new media tools such as Blogs, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.

Another example of an innovative use of technology in the SCDF is the upcoming launch of the Emergency Preparedness Centre (EPC) that will be co-located within the Civil Defence Heritage Gallery, at the Central Fire Station. The EPC is scheduled to be open to the public in the third quarter of 2013. The aim of the EPC is to enhance public education on Emergency Preparedness to a higher level by letting them experience a variety of sensory learning experiences. Through these experiences, members of the public will be immersed in emergency scenarios and be able to learn through environments simulating real-life.



Encouraging citizens to take personal ownership in times of emergencies is the way forward for the SCDF in readying the nation to be CD ready.



CONCLUSION

SCDF believes that involving the community, and most importantly, ensuring individuals are adequately prepared for emergency is crucial in dealing with crises when they occur. Encouraging citizens to take personal ownership in times of emergencies is the way forward for the SCDF in readying the nation to be CD ready.

By adopting the approach of an involved community, SCDF will be able to channel its efforts towards strengthening the nation's resilience. The advancements in technology and new media have also proved to be very effective tools in reaching out and engaging the population. Moving forward, the SCDF will continue in its efforts to explore and leverage on new technologies and new media to continuously enhance our content and reach out to more members of the public. We believe that these publicity tools will enable us to effectively reach out to more individuals and spread the message on the importance of emergency preparedness skills and knowledge.

ENDNOTES

¹ Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) is a life-saving technique used to rescue casualties who have collapsed from cardiac arrest to restore heart function and increase chances of survival. Automated External Defibrillator (AED) is a computerised medical device that is capable of analysing the casualty's heart rhythm and directs the user to deliver an electric shock to the casualty. Defibrillation increases a casualty's chances of survival in the recovery process.

² In 2008, DART was the first rescue contingent in Asia, and seventh in the world, to earn distinction as an INSARAG External Classification Heavy USAR Team. This is the highest level of recognition accorded to USAR Teams by the UN, and it certifies DART as being proficient in performing difficult technical search and rescue operations in structural collapse incidents in an urban city environment.

EDITOR'S NOTES



Captain (CPT) Khaisarah Mansor is a Senior Staff Officer Public Education from the Community Preparedness Branch (CPB) of the Public Affairs Department, SCDF. CPB is responsible for the planning, conceptualisation and development of appropriate Emergency Preparedness, Fire Safety and Anti-terrorism programmes as well as activities to enhance awareness and equip civilian population with basic Civil Defence knowledge and skills for survival. CPB also coordinates with various stakeholders in the conduct of Public Education activities on Fire Safety & Emergency Preparedness Programmes. For more information on community preparedness and publications, please visit the SCDF website: http://www.scdf.gov.sg/content/scdf_internet/en/community-and-volunteers.html

Community Involvement in Rehabilitation of Offenders *in Singapore*

DESMOND CHIN KIM THAM

“As a key partner in criminal justice, we protect society through the safe custody and rehabilitation of offenders, cooperating in prevention and aftercare.”

- The Singapore Prison Service Mission Statement

REDUCING RECIDIVISM

The traditional view of prison is that it exists to punish offenders and deter them from breaking society’s laws again. The incarceration of offenders is a priority of the Singapore Prison Service (SPS) but we also believe that society’s goals are better achieved through humane treatment and rehabilitation of prisoners, of giving them hope and a second chance at life upon release, so they do not go back to crime. In balancing the needs of secure custody and discipline of inmates while securing opportunities for rehabilitation for those capable and willing to restart their lives, Singapore Prison officers are Captains of Lives, offering a helping

hand of steel in a velvet glove.

Working with SCORE, the Prison Service started the Yellow Ribbon Project in 2004 to help the 11,000 prisoners released annually reintegrate into society. Singapore’s campaign to involve the community in the rehabilitation of ex-offenders was recognised by the United Nations in 2007 for its ground-breaking work. But beyond compassion, the ultimate goal of such re-entry management of former inmates is crime prevention, to keep Singapore a safer place by helping those who might commit crimes again rethink their options.

Our comprehensive crime reduction strategy has three dimensions:

Secure Custody | Modern Prison, Better Management

The redeveloped Changi Prison Complex is modelled after several high security prisons overseas. It has not just the most technologically sophisticated security systems to make prison supervision a safer job, but also allows greater focus on rehabilitation and create more

employment opportunities for inmates. Southeast Asia's largest laundry is based here, open 24 hours a day to handle wash from all Singapore hospitals. But make no mistake, prison life remains highly regimented and conditions are spartan to deter inmates from ever wanting to come back.

// **Every offender is different, so each gets a customised treatment plan called Personal Route Maps (PRM), that allows his progress to be monitored throughout his stay in prison, giving him a better chance at a smooth re-entry to society.** //

Rehabilitation | Foundation for a Better Life

Every offender is different, so each gets a customised treatment plan called Personal Route Maps (PRM), that allows his progress to be monitored throughout his stay in prison, giving him a better chance at a smooth re-entry to society.

To give offenders a stronger foundation on which to build a crime-free life, the Prison Service set up a Prison School to provide formal education leading up to the GCE A' Levels. Inmates are also given time and opportunity to expand their interests in sports and recreation. Some have discovered new talents in art workshops conducted by renowned artists. Others have

acquired cooking skills in the Dining Behind Bars programme and yet many more have learnt basic baking in the prison bakery.

Community Engagement | Saving our Youths

Working with other members of the Home Team, the Prison Service facilitates visits to prisons by youths at risk to create awareness of the consequences of criminal behaviour. Under the Preventive Drug Education Programme, visits to Drug Rehabilitation Centres are arranged for school students, so they can see and experience for themselves the tough regime that drug addicts have to undergo and the spartan living conditions. Talks are also given by Central Narcotics Bureau (CNB) officers. Under the Streetwise Programme, the Secret Societies Branch of the Police Criminal Investigation Department (CID) arranges for wayward youths to visit Changi Prison. The voluntary programme gives these youths a glimpse of life behind bars and encourages them to change and disassociate from their gang member friends.

How have we been doing? The usual measure of impact is the recidivism rate, i.e. the proportion of prisoners who re-offend and are returned to prison after two years. Singapore's recidivism rates are among the lowest in the world, consistently lower than most jurisdictions.

2-year			
Recidivism Rate (%)	2006	2007	2008
Singapore	25.1	26.5	27.3
New Zealand	36.8	37.9	39.2
Scotland	44.9	44.1	42.4
New South Wales	42.9	42.4	43.1
Western Australia	39.5	39.8	45.3

Figure 1: Recidivism rates in Singapore, New Zealand, Scotland, New South Wales and Western Australia. Source: Singapore Prison Service Annual Reports 2008 – 2010; Department of Corrections (New Zealand) Annual Reports 2007/2008, 2008/2009 & 2009/2010; Scottish Executive Statistical Bulletin: Criminal Justice Series (August 2011); New South Wales Annual Report 2010/2011; Western Australia Annual Report 2010/2011

The prison service does not, however, do rehabilitation and reintegration on its own; our multi-faceted approach involves not just prison officers and the offenders themselves, but other governmental agencies, Voluntary Welfare Organisations (VWOs), the offenders’ families and the community at large. Our joint efforts are described in this paper.

THE COMMUNITY’S INVOLVEMENT IN REHABILITATION

The goal of rehabilitation is the successful reintegration of the offender back into the community as a contributing

member. The establishment and maintenance of positive social bonds will assist offenders to reintegrate as law-abiding citizens. Strong family ties can provide moral support and meaning to life. Support and acceptance from the community is also important in helping an ex-offender as he journeys through the path of recovery.

Ex-offender Mazlan Mahat, who was jailed for helping loan sharks, remembers the willingness of the public to overlook his past. When he began working at the Manhattan Fish Market in Yishun, many of his colleagues and customers told him he was lucky to have been given a second chance. Mr. Mazlan is now an assistant manager at the restaurant and is being groomed to be a restaurant manager and his prospects for the future are bright.

What ultimately determines successful rehabilitation is an offender’s own desire to change. Not every criminal or drug abuser may be willing to reform but the right kind of rehabilitative strategy can motivate prisoners to rebuild their lives. Currently, community partners are extensively involved in the SPS’ rehabilitation programmes in the following areas - education, religion, family-focused services and programmes, and the halfway house scheme.

WORK

It is imperative that offenders are taught marketable skills to help them secure steady employment when they return to society. The Singapore Corporation of Rehabilitative Enterprises (SCORE), established as a statutory board in 1976, provides rehabilitative and aftercare services to offenders while in prison and following their release. SCORE is entrusted with establishing and managing industrial

workshops, as well as providing vocational training in prison. Its Employment Assistance Unit (EAU) helps to secure employment for ex-offenders and those undergoing the Work Release Scheme, through its databank of suitable jobs from more than 1500 private companies in the manufacturing, engineering, building and transportation and service sectors. (*See SCORE: Supporting Community Reintegration for more details.*)

SCORE: Supporting Community Reintegration

By Teo Tze Fang*

SCORE plays an important role in the Singapore correctional system by providing rehabilitation and reintegration services to offenders and ex-offenders. SCORE utilises four main thrusts to accomplish this. They are:

- Training and preparing offenders to be “Ready for Work”
- Engaging employers to ensure that “Work is Ready” for offenders
- Helping offenders “Secure and Sustain” in their employment
- “Strengthening Partnerships” with the community to provide aftercare support

Ready for Work

In order to enhance offenders’ employability and facilitate work reintegration, SCORE offers training programmes that cover two broad areas of vocational and employability skills. The emphasis on vocational and employability skills give offenders a chance at employment upon release as it provides them with marketable skills. In 2011, we offered 14,754 training places that benefited 5,094 offenders.

As part of our efforts to rehabilitate offenders, we expose them to realistic work environment while they are in prison in order to instill them with positive work ethics and values. The core business operations under

SCORE 's work programmes are divided into business operations owned and managed by SCORE (such as food services, laundry and linen services) and business operations set up by private sector companies (such as food manufacturing, electronic and electric manufacturing).

Work is Ready

To secure employment for offenders, SCORE is active in approaching employers to offer job placements to those about to be released. In 2011, more than 1500 offenders found jobs prior to their release, which was a 35% increase from 2010. This can be directly attributed to the increase in the number of employers registered with SCORE.

Secure & Sustain

Securing employment is merely the first step in assisting offenders to reintegrate and we recognise the importance of helping offenders sustain their employment. SCORE's Case Managers work closely with both employers and ex-offenders to resolve any work-related problems. With this close collaboration, the 3 and 6 months job retention rate achieved in 2011 were 78% and 54% respectively.

Strengthening Partnerships

It is essential for community partnerships to grow with us in the journey of rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders. In 2011, with Singapore Prison Service (SPS), we implemented the Yellow Ribbon Project (YRP) with the theme "Little Gestures, Big Difference". Through this campaign, we recruited 562 volunteers and engaged 189 community partners to make small yet significant contributions in helping ex-offenders to reintegrate into society.

SCORE works hand in hand with SPS in helping offenders and ex-offenders on the path of rehabilitation and reintegration. By drawing on the strengths of the community, we will be able to move forward in the journey towards the reintegration of offenders and ex-offenders into society.

*Mr. Teo Tze Fang was appointed Chief Executive Officer of SCORE on 1 July 2010. Mr. Teo's former position in the Singapore Prisons Service was Deputy Director of Prisons and Chief of Staff, a position he held for three years.

EDUCATION

Another priority is the provision of education (academic or vocational) for the purpose of raising the offenders' education level and employment skills. Academic education is provided through teachers seconded from the Ministry of Education, while SCORE provides vocational and skills training.

RELIGION

Religion is a source of moral support and guidance for many who are in prison. Recognising that faith-based programmes can be powerful tools in the rehabilitation process as it gives offenders a strong sense of purpose, direction and meaning in life, the Prison Service promotes equal representation of religious activities while adhering to being a secular state. Offenders are encouraged to develop their spiritual well-being by turning to their faith. Those who wish to embrace any of the main religions in Singapore, namely Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Catholicism and Christianity, are encouraged to do so. Volunteers from the respective faiths conduct religious services and counselling sessions for them.

FAMILY-FOCUSED SERVICES & PROGRAMMES

Incarceration usually has a negative effect on the families and children of offenders. Offenders'

families are often in disarray when they are imprisoned. Therefore, seeing families through this difficult period can help foster stronger familial bonds and networks upon the offenders' release. Since 2006, Family Resource Centres (FRCs) have been set up in SPS to provide social assistance and support to help families cope during their loved ones' incarceration (e.g., in the areas of financial difficulties, accommodation issues and emotional counselling). The FRCs provide information and referral or case management services to families in need, and engage service providers from the community to deliver family-focused programmes to the offenders to help prepare them for their roles as spouses and parents, and to encourage reconciliation of broken familial relationships upon their release.

HALFWAY HOUSE SCHEME

The Prisons Halfway House (HWH) Scheme, started in April 1995, allows amenable offenders from prisons and drug rehabilitation centres (DRCs) without strong family support to spend the last stage of their incarceration in a halfway house. There are currently 10 halfway houses participating in the scheme and their programme comprises counselling, work therapy and moral/religious education. In October 2010, a new HWH Service

Model was developed to enable HWHs to offer more structured and standardised programmes to better meet offenders' reintegration needs.

ENGAGING VOLUNTEERS AND PARTNERS IN IN-CARE

Our volunteers are at the forefront in meeting the reintegration needs of our inmates. From a base of 124 volunteers in 1999, we have more than 1,200 volunteers today.

Volunteers come from many different fields, each with their own unique set of skills. The Gigatt/Quanta Yellow Ribbon Tattoo Removal Project is one such example, staffed by volunteer doctors who use their specialised knowledge and laser machines to remove or lighten the tattoos of inmates. This initiative, which complements the rehabilitation programmes in prison, helps inmates who have publicly renounced their gang membership to better reintegrate into society and aids them in gaining employment after their release¹.

Volunteer training programmes are offered to all prison volunteers. The objective of the programmes is to orientate and equip the volunteers with the necessary knowledge and skills to engage the offenders purposefully, while appreciating the rules and regulations of SPS. Volunteers are also trained to

professional standards, and are certified by recognised and accredited training institutes.

SPS also works closely with the Industrial and Services Cooperative Society Limited (ISCOS), a cooperative that seeks to enhance employment and provide entrepreneurial opportunities for ex-offenders. ISCOS engages them right from their in-care phase, where the offenders are briefed on the various resources and schemes available. Upon their release, ISCOS offers the ex-offenders job training and meaningful employment to help them regain their self-esteem. This is achieved through providing on-the-job training and cooperating with private companies on a joint venture or consultancy basis. Besides job opportunities, ex-offenders also benefit from the association with ISCOS through positive peer mentoring and participation in pro-social activities such as group sports.

ENGAGING STRATEGIC COMMUNITY PARTNERS IN THE AFTERCARE SECTOR

For many offenders, the transition back to society remains a struggle. Sustaining the motivation to not re-offend requires strong community support, as well as encouragement from the offenders' families. Upon their release from prison, ex-offenders

often live with the stigma of having served time behind bars and this can often be more difficult than the prison sentence itself.

As a result, many ex-offenders often find themselves stepping into a “second prison” of suspicion because of their past records. An absence of community support increases the chance of re-offending. Therefore, the importance of community involvement and the critical role it plays in the reintegration of ex-offenders who are motivated and desirous of change cannot be over-emphasised.

// Upon their release from prison, ex-offenders often live with the stigma of having served time behind bars and this can often be more difficult than the prison sentence itself. //

The CARE (Community Action for the Rehabilitation of Ex-Offenders) Network was formed in May 2000 to bring together key strategic partners from both the government and non-governmental sectors that are responsible for offender reintegration in Singapore. The Network engages the community, co-ordinates member agencies’ activities and develops innovative rehabilitation initiatives for reforming offenders.

One of the first initiatives of the CARE Network was the Case Management Framework for offenders in the aftercare phase. This service is delivered by full-time Aftercare Case Managers from the Singapore Aftercare Association (SACA) and the Singapore Anti-Narcotics Association (SANA), who facilitate the reintegration of ex-offenders with their families and the society. Under the Framework, the case managers work with their clients to identify their specific aftercare needs that are essential for successful reintegration. The managers make referrals to other agencies for services that they do not provide and ensure that adequate services are provided to their clients.

YELLOW RIBBON PROJECT

In 2004, the CARE Network launched the Yellow Ribbon Project (YRP), an annual campaign aimed at changing the way society views ex-offenders and instead help give them a second chance to succeed in life. As the YRP is focused on community acceptance, many community and corporate organisations have taken the initiative to volunteer their services. Community and grassroots leaders, politicians, corporate partners and celebrities have given time and effort to grace events, often bringing with them a passion to spread the

message of acceptance for ex-offenders. Community involvement and partnerships also come in the form of donations and sponsorships, or showing support by donning the Yellow Ribbon, fund-raising or simply participating in the YR events.

This sense of forgiveness and acceptance by the community can be empowering. Nicodemus Lee was 18 when he was sentenced to the Reformative Training Centre for housebreaking. Upon his release, he was able to secure a job at a public relations firm where he was able to win over his employer with his work ethic. Nicodemus is now lead singer and guitarist of the band *MiLuBing*, which won the Chinese language Channel U's first Superband Contest.

LESSONS LEARNT FROM COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

SPS has learned some pertinent lessons from its engagement strategy with community partners. These include the need for a central body for coordination, preparing the community to receive ex-offenders, selecting a core team for effective planning and implementation, a strong volunteer core, strong branding of the Yellow Ribbon Project, and the ability to touch the heart of the community.

1. Creating a Central Body for Coordination

A central coordinating body is the most effective way to effectively coordinate community involvement in the aftercare sector. In SPS' case, we leveraged on the CARE Network to forge strategic community partnerships for the delivery of both in-care and aftercare programmes and services.

2. Preparing the Community to Receive Ex-offenders

As government agencies seek to collaborate under the umbrella of the CARE Network, support from the community at large can be brought on board through national campaigns such as the YRP, where strong community messages are reinforced and events targeting various social networks are conducted.

3. Selecting a Core Team for Effective Planning & Implementation

In the preliminary planning phase, it is essential to have a committed team of core personnel who will work with the identified stakeholders on the 'Branding', 'Engagement' and 'Execution' of community projects. In Singapore's context, the CARE Network Secretariat has this responsibility.

4. A Strong Volunteer Core

The strength and capabilities of community volunteers cannot be underestimated. Volunteers come

from both religious and non-religious organisations and are matched with prisoners in terms of the expertise and ability to assist in rehabilitation needs. Besides tapping into this valuable community resource, there is a conscious need to build on the capabilities of volunteers from the VWOs and religious organisations for more effective outreach of rehabilitation programmes within prison.

5. Strong Branding – Yellow Ribbon Project

A consistent branding strategy helps to send clear messages to the community so that everyone can easily relate to helping ex-offenders and their families reintegrate into society. The strong brand of the YRP has enabled its reach to extend far and wide in the community.

6. Touching the Heart of the Community

Through the sharing of ex-offenders' testimonies (successes and failures) and stories of the plight families face, especially the impact of incarceration on children, the community can better appreciate the reality of incarceration. This in turn goes a long way towards helping them to understand reintegration issues faced by our inmates.

CONCLUSION

SPS should never function in a vacuum. It needs to tap into the expertise of its strategic partners and the community at large. The success of its various initiatives is attributed to a very supportive pool of community partners who are passionate in working towards the common cause of successful reintegration.

With the continued engagement of our community partners, it is hoped that the recidivism rates will continue to remain low, or become even lower in the future.

The work of rehabilitating ex-offenders is an ongoing effort. What it takes to make it work is passion and a collective effort, as well as developing one initiative at a time.

This article is adapted from a paper presented by the author at the 147th International Senior Seminar organised by the United Nations Far East Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFEI) in January 2011.

ENDNOTES

¹ As the Tattoo Removal Project is meant for inmates who are serious about leaving their gangs, only inmates who have publicly renounced their gang membership in prison will be considered for tattoo removal.

EDITOR'S NOTES



Desmond Chin joined the Singapore Prison Service in 1990 after graduating from the Department of Social Work and Psychology of the National University of Singapore. He served as the Superintendent of several prisons, the Director of Operations, and as the Chief Executive Officer of the Singapore Corporation of Rehabilitative Enterprises (SCORE). He was appointed as the Deputy Director of Prisons and Chief-of-Staff on 1 July 2010.

A Symbiotic Edge

in The Fight against Drug Abuse:

The Alliance between National Council against Drug Abuse and Central Narcotics Bureau

NCADA AND CNB

For the past 16 years, the alliance between the Central Narcotics Bureau (CNB) and the National Council Against Drug Abuse (NCADA) has proven to be crucial in Singapore's fight against drugs. Both agencies possess unique capabilities and use them jointly and separately to stamp out the drug threat. The grit of CNB officers and the innovation provided by NCADA complement each other whilst creating synergy between the two agencies. The partnership between CNB and NCADA is a tale of two erstwhile unlikely acquaintances that met 16 years ago and forged a strong partnership.

EARLY YEARS OF CNB AND NCADA

The Central Narcotics Bureau (CNB) was formed in November 1971 during the height of Singapore's confrontation with drugs. Its prime role then was to arrest the growing demand for and supply of drugs through enforcement efforts. The fledgling bureau faced

an uphill task due to the burgeoning number of heroin abusers and traffickers who were not deterred by the anti-drug laws. A number of bold and pioneering initiatives were enacted to combat this, ranging from the new Misuse of Drugs Act (MDA) passed in 1973, to the introduction of the death penalty two years later. Concurrently, enforcement was stepped up to purge the streets of drugs, reaching a peak in 1977 when Police, Customs and CNB conducted a successful massive joint operation codenamed 'Ops Ferret' to flush out drug abusers. In 1977 alone, more than 7,000 drug offenders were arrested.

The drug situation has since improved from the high numbers of more than 6,000 abusers arrested in the 1990s to 3,326 abusers arrested in 2011. This means the drug arrest rate has overall decreased from a high of 208 per 100,000 in 1994 to 88 per 100,000 in 2011.

In August 1993, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) set up the Committee to Improve the Drug

Situation in Singapore, chaired by then Parliamentary Secretary Associate Professor Ho Peng Kee. The review committee came up with four key strategies that would integrate the work of different government agencies for greater efficiency. These four strategies were enforcement and tough legislation, preventive drug education, treatment and rehabilitation, and aftercare.

These strategies constituted the anti-drug master-plan which represented Singapore's overarching strategy to effectively target the entire spectrum of drug offences from both angles of demand and supply reduction. This was also the committee that first introduced Prevention Drug Education (PDE) into Singapore's drug control framework, recognising that upstream intervention is just as important as downstream enforcement intervention where drug abuse has already taken place.

“ These four strategies were enforcement and tough legislation, preventive drug education, treatment and rehabilitation, and aftercare. ”

CNB was tasked to lead the country's PDE efforts in 1994, to coordinate efforts across various agencies and set clear directions for implementing effective PDE.

Initiatives were emplaced to spread the message on two levels that drug abuse is dangerous. The first was to ensure that the general population, especially the young, was aware of the ills of drug abuse and the consequences faced by drug offenders. The second was specifically tailored to target “high-risk” groups, to reinforce the dangers and consequences of drug abuse, and the role loved ones play in helping potential drug abusers stay away from drugs.¹

For those who fall outside the net of PDE, enforcement efforts were beefed up, with key threats such as the supply lines of drug syndicates and traffickers being the top priority for CNB. Drug offenders who were arrested also had to be placed on a proper treatment and rehabilitation program to ensure that they did not stray back onto the path of drug abuse. Lastly, aftercare and continued rehabilitation was given a boost by putting in place community structures that could positively influence and reintegrate ex-drug offenders back into society.

This comprehensive and multi-pronged approach to tackling the drug problem continues to this day.

NCADA'S THREE ROLES

The idea of a National Council to garner public support for the fight against drug abuse was first initiated at The National

Seminar on Community Action against Drug Abuse, organised by MHA in October 1994. It was hoped that the formation of NCADA would help the Government tap the views and feedback from the private sector and the community in general on how to tackle the drug problem more effectively.

Led by its first Chairman, Mr. Lim Hock San, the National Council against Drug Abuse (NCADA) was formed in January 1995, holding its first meeting on 16 January. Made up of community leaders, NCADA serves as a conduit between the community and the Government. Council members use their diverse networks to help the Government gather feedback and ideas from different segments of the community to enhance and strengthen the national anti-drug strategy.

The Council has three roles. First, it functions as an advisory body for the government on measures and strategies to curb drug abuse vis-à-vis CNB's role in providing trends and drug statistics on the current drug situation, knowledge on drug abusers as well as information on the latest drugs. This relationship is important as it ensures that NCADA is kept abreast of any significant changes that may affect its decisions pertaining to policy recommendations and its other functions. NCADA provides the views of community leaders on CNB's anti-drug strategies

and efforts, as well as opportunities for CNB to collaborate with a wide network of business contacts for PDE. In addition, to complement the government's efforts, NCADA commissions research, such as the inaugural Youth Drug Perception Survey in 2009, to ensure that the national PDE efforts are targeted and effective.

“Made up of community leaders, NCADA serves as a conduit between the community and the Government. Council members use their diverse networks to help the Government gather feedback and ideas from different segments of the community to enhance and strengthen the national anti-drug strategy.”

As Council Chairman Dr. N Varaprasad says: *“Although NCADA is set up independently of CNB, in reality the two work very closely together as their objectives of a drug-free Singapore are closely aligned. Particularly in the area of preventive drug education, our efforts are complementary and supportive of each other. Even in enforcement and rehabilitation, the two other legs of Singapore’s anti-drug strategy, NCADA provides its inputs and feedback to CNB as well as Prisons.”*

The Council's second role is to

PARTNERSHIP FEATURES

actively recruit community partners to collaborate on key anti-drug programmes. One of the most popular initiatives is the Club Against Drugs Campaign. The campaign was first launched in 2000 to address the issue of drug abuse in night entertainment outlets. Over the years, NCADA has partnered numerous club operators to promote the anti-drug message among their patrons, highlighting the dangers of drugs and the penalties for abusing drugs and trafficking. In 2011, the Clubs against Drugs Campaign “Party Clean, Party Again. Are you in?” once again rallied Singapore’s entertainment outlets to educate their patrons to have good clean fun on their premises. Some 200 pubs, clubs and karaoke operators, an increase of 33% from 2010, have inked their support for the islandwide campaign. These 200 supporters come from all corners of Singapore, including Azzura and Café del Mar in Sentosa, as well as the latest clubs in town, including Avalon and Avatar.

This campaign follows on the Partnership for a Drug Free Singapore that NCADA launched in 1997 to work with the media and communications industry to use innovative advertising to reach out to the masses. This campaign received wide publicity in the media and support from the public, evident from the media materials generated, including TV and radio commercials,



Students hard at work, building the binder clip sculpture.



Representatives from the Singapore Book of Records taking a look at the completed binder clip sculpture.



DanceWorks! 2010 Category II Grand Finals Champion.

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posters and booklets, which received numerous local and international accolades as well positive feedback from the public.



Crowd supporters showing support for the participating teams during DanceWorks! 2010.



DanceWorks! 2011 Category I Grand Finals Champion.

Third, NCADA is tasked to promote preventive drug education programmes. The dictum “Prevention is better than cure” is central to both NCADA and CNB’s efforts against drug abuse. Each year, the Council works closely with CNB to develop a holistic approach to propagate the anti-drug message. The PDE programmes are targeted towards the masses with special attention given to the young as they are more likely to be susceptible to negative influences and peer pressure. As part of the programmes, CNB holds assembly talks and exhibitions to increase awareness on the harmful effects of drugs. In addition, joint talks are held by the Police and CNB



Teams that made it into the DanceWorks! 2011 Grand Finals.

to reach out to ‘high-risk’ students in secondary schools and Institutes of Technical Education (ITEs). Besides these ongoing efforts, both NCADA and CNB encourage schools to commemorate the Anti-Drug Abuse Day annually on 26th June, which also marks the start of the month-long Anti-Drug Abuse Campaign. In 2011, the theme for the Anti-Drug Abuse Campaign was ‘Life Does Not Rewind. Make The Right Choice’. To commemorate the Anti-Drug Abuse Day, students from six secondary schools and Singapore Polytechnic joined hands in a record-breaking attempt to build Singapore’s largest binder clip sculpture at Toa Payoh HDB Hub Mall.

The highlight of NCADA’s and CNB’s collaborative preventive drug education efforts is the annual nationwide anti-drug dance competition, DanceWorks! The competition aims to encourage youths to lead a healthy and drug-free lifestyle. Performances are recorded and aired on television in order to widen outreach and increase publicity. An episode

of DanceWorks! was shown on Okto channel² in 2010 and was subsequently increased to four in 2011. Students who are non-dancers can also take part in pre-event competitions such as the “Anti-Drug Stick-On Tattoo Design” (2009) and “Anti-Drug T-Shirt Design Competition” (2011). These fringe activities allow a larger group of youths to be exposed to the PDE message.

Through the flagship media campaign under the Partnership for a Drug Free Singapore programme, NCADA has been able to harness the creative genius of top advertising agencies in Singapore on a pro-bono basis to create anti-drug messages that leave a lasting impression on youths. The media campaign aims to educate Singaporeans on the dangers and consequences of drug abuse through various platforms of the mass media. NCADA’s media campaign plays a vital role in helping

to build broad awareness of the anti-drug message and encourage societal attitudes that will help bring Singapore closer to the goal of a drug-free society.

From 1997 to 2009, NCADA’s media campaigns used different themes. This ranged from approaches that evoked a person’s fear by means of harrowing images of how a drug abuser suffers, to softer approaches that appeal to a person’s emotions, such as showing family members suffering as a result of a drug abuser’s actions.

PREVENTIVE EDUCATION IS A LONG TERM INVESTMENT

The overall local drug situation today is a vast improvement from the peak seen in the 1990s. While tough enforcement against drug abusers will continue, it alone will not be sufficient in tackling the drug problem. PDE

Source of posters: “In Retrospect” (NCADA, 2006)





Source of posters: "In Retrospect" (NCADA, 2006)

represents the long-term strategy to safeguard Singapore's philosophy of zero tolerance against drug abuse vis-à-vis continual enforcement and prosecutorial measures. In fact, the effectiveness of PDE is clear from the success of the various joint PDE projects like DanceWorks! and Anti-Drug Abuse Campaign. Feedback from the participants of these events show that they understand and have internalised the dangers of drug abuse in a manner resonating with the youth of today.

The findings of the 2009 Youth Perception Survey³, which 1,688 students from 18 secondary schools in Singapore participated in, reveal support for Singapore's stance against drug abuse. Almost 89% of the respondents felt that it was unacceptable for drug addicts to continue taking drugs, as drug-taking is not simply their personal decision

and that the government should punish them. When asked their views on how drug traffickers are treated in Singapore, more than half of these youth respondents felt that they have been appropriately treated.

85% of the youths whose parents have spoken with them on drugs and drug abuse said that their parents have significant bearing on their views of drugs and drug abuse. This illustrates the importance of the role of parents in shaping teenage perceptions of drug and drug-abuse.

The Challenges

Despite the successes over the last two decades, CNB is facing various challenges ranging from macro externalities such as an increasingly worsening regional drug situation, to increasingly liberal attitudes towards drug abuse amongst the younger population.

These challenges are also more daunting with the release of repeat drug abusers from the long-term imprisonment⁴, which a group that traditionally has a higher relapse and contamination rate.

The shifting of attitudes towards drug abuse has in many ways led to an increasing number of young drug abusers. While the number of new drug abusers arrested registered a drop of 17 per cent from 1,327 in 2010 to 1,104 in 2011, the number of new young abusers in 2011 that are below the age of 20 have increased from 155 in 2010 to 225 in 2011.⁵

Worsening global drug situation

Regionally, Singapore's proximity to opium-producing areas such as the Golden Triangle continues to represent a constant threat of heroin spillovers. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Southeast Asia Opium Survey 2011, opium cultivation in the region has increased from 27,700 hectares in 2007 to 43,600 hectares in 2011.

Besides heroin, the supply of methamphetamine in the region is also increasing. The UNODC report on Patterns and Trends of Amphetamine-Type Stimulants and other drugs: Asia and the Pacific 2011 indicates that the East and Southeast Asian region has grown into a major production and trafficking hub for

methamphetamine in the last three years. In 2010, some 442 ATS-related laboratories were seized in the East and Southeast Asian region, which is more than five times the 83 manufacturing facilities seized in 2006. According to the UNODC World Drug Report 2011, seizures of methamphetamine in this region increased by more than one-third from 11.6 tons in 2008 to 15.8 tons in 2009; this accounted for about half of global methamphetamine seizures.

These regional developments may have indirectly led to an increase in the supply of methamphetamine and heroin trafficked into Singapore. In fact, there has been an increase in the number of combined seizures both inland and at the entry points. In 2011, the total seizures for heroin and methamphetamine was 72.6kg and 14.01kg respectively compared to 49.02kg and 5.59kg respectively in 2010. The total value for drugs seized in 2011 was estimated at \$16 million.

These developments may also have led to the increase in the number of heroin and methamphetamine abusers in Singapore, from 1,787 and 702 respectively in 2010 to 1,899 and 1,124 respectively in 2011.

Shifting attitude towards drug abuse

There are also challenges posed by the increasingly liberal perceptions and attitudes of society, perpetuated by the prevalence and outreach of

today's mass media. Such a shift in perceptions may create a situation where societal acceptance of drug abuse becomes more prevalent; the implications involved will be enormous considering the growing number of young abusers that may be influenced by such liberal attitudes. In the 2009 Youth Drug Perception Survey, an encouraging 87% of respondents said they would refuse drugs even if it resulted in the loss of some friends. Yet, in the last few years, we have seen a rising trend of young drug abusers.

We therefore place great importance on successful community outreach initiatives to retain public acceptance of our zero-tolerance stance against drugs. One way the partnership is gearing up for this is by being aware of the arguments presented by these groups and countering them with hard facts about drug abuse, destroying myths and showing in our Preventive Drug Education efforts the stark reality about drug abuse as evidenced by the lives of those who have been destroyed by drugs.

This approach of highlighting the misery brought about by drug abuse has the greatest deterrent effect as it is something everyone from any walk of life can identify with. Even the most ardent critic would have a hard time refuting such experiential 'facts'.

// One way the partnership is gearing up for this is by being aware of the arguments presented by these groups and countering them with hard facts about drug abuse, destroying myths and showing in our Preventive Drug Education efforts the stark reality about drug abuse as evidenced by the lives of those who have been destroyed by drugs. //

Finally, we need to keep in mind that there will always be differing views and groups who lobby for their respective causes. What is more pertinent is the need to question if these arguments are supported by substance and facts. Despite all these arguments, it is very hard to refute the reality that drug abuse leads to misery and destruction of not just the individual but ultimately his or her entire family in the process. We have seen this happen often enough and this constantly reminds us of the critical need to protect our society from such a scourge.

MOVING FORWARD

Synergistic relationships are crucial when it comes to the fight against drugs in Singapore. CNB and NCADA each

have their own areas of expertise. The ongoing relationship for the past 16 years is predicated on the belief that both agencies have a role to play in the fight against drugs. While CNB is efficient in its enforcement efforts and possess a plethora of knowledge on drugs, there still remains a need for a group consisting of key members from the community to coordinate and devise anti-drug strategies. The diverse backgrounds of Council members ensure that alternative ideas are always taken into consideration. In addition, the inclusion of NCADA in the formulation of policies ensures that both the Ministry and CNB are able to tap on the experiences of its Council members. This is crucial to the rapid turnaround that Singapore has seen in its ongoing effort against drugs.

Today, drug abuse remains a challenge for Singapore. The situation in other countries has evolved and is rapidly changing. Countries such as Afghanistan and Myanmar have seen ramped up production of heroin in the past few years. The increasing supplies of heroin does not augur well for Singapore as our efforts may become undone if these are trafficked past our borders. In addition, the voices of harm reduction advocates – who

want polices to reduce drug-related harm without necessarily requiring abstinence - are gaining traction in liberal democracies as they press for the legalisation of ‘soft drugs’ and controversial programmes such as supervised injection sites. But despite this pall hanging over the international drug scene, the symbiotic relationship between CNB and NCADA has given Singapore’s war on drugs an enduring edge. Both agencies have emerged from 16 years at the forefront of the fight against drug abuse with hard knocks and battle-scars. The experience gained will be pivotal for CNB and NCADA in maneuvering through new, uncharted territories.

ENDNOTES

¹ Tan, Ooi Boon (2006). *Slaying the Dragon: Singapore’s Fight Against Drugs*. Singapore: SNP Editions

² Okto is a free-to-view television channel in Singapore targeted at children and teenagers.

³ The 2009 Youth Perception Survey was commissioned by NCADA to learn about youths’ perceptions of and attitudes towards drugs, drug taking and our drug laws.

⁴ The policy was introduced as a form of deterrence and to keep hardcore abusers away from the general population.

⁵ See Home Team News, http://m.hometeam.sg/article.aspx?news_sid=20120203TdSlcPlMchT9, 3 Feb 2012.

EDITOR’S NOTES

The article was jointly contributed by the National Council against Drug Abuse (NCADA) and the Central Narcotics Bureau (CNB).

Home Team's

Mr. Volunteer lays out his Plans for the HT Volunteer Network

INTERVIEW BY HOME TEAM JOURNAL



Associate Professor Ho Peng Kee, former Senior Minister of State for Home Affairs and Law, takes us on a journey from his childhood as the eldest son of an itinerant watch salesman at North Bridge Road, through his school days, his entry into politics and his new role as Chairman of the Home Team Volunteers Network. The journey has a common theme: Volunteerism.

In his own words: “Volunteerism is just one way of expressing what life has been to me. I must be thankful; I came from a family which has provided well for me.” He remembers those growing-up years in a family of 10 people cramped

together in a three-room coffee shop-type house with misty-eyed happiness.

His school days also played a major part in shaping his views on helping others. He went to top schools, from Anglo-Chinese School to National Junior College and onto the law school at the National University of Singapore, but the youthful Ho Peng Kee was not always a top student. Some would say that this was to his detriment, but Prof Ho prefers to consider it his strength -- and attributes this to helping to develop in him the spirit to reach out to others and to help, to volunteer.

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It's not just about studies, you know. Life is there for you to live fully and in order to be fair to yourself. You just don't want to have a legacy where you are known as a person who is just for yourself.

You are also there for others.

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He was an active student and was class monitor, school prefect, student counsellor, stage actor, debater and university law club member at various stages of his academic life. He was an active sportsman too, something that he has carried on today as well. "You know, I used to play basketball, badminton, soccer, rugby, do the sprint and hurdles and throw the shot putt as well. I studied hard, but I also did a lot of extracurricular activities. From primary school and secondary school to university and to the Army and to life thereafter, this has been consistent in my life." He is pensive and philosophical about his experiences growing up. It's not just about studies, you know. Life is there for you to live fully and in order to be fair to yourself. You just don't want to have a legacy where you are known as a person who is just for yourself. You are also there for others.

This preamble to the bigger story of his new role is necessary because it provides a context to not just the man, but his philosophy and the work he has embarked on after his retirement from politics in May 2011. Here are excerpts from his interview with the Home Team Journal in November 2011:

Home Team Journal: Professor, how did you get involved in volunteerism?

A/P Ho: It all started with my two years at the National Junior College, whose motto was Service With Honour. Those two years were catalytic in shaping me. The junior college concept was in its infancy. I belonged to the third batch and the spirit of service to country was high on the agenda.

This carried on to the law faculty, especially when I became sub-dean and later vice-dean. One of my key responsibilities was looking after the law students. Because I was also Master of a hall of residence at the University, I interacted a lot with the law students as well as hostelites. I encouraged them to be involved in community service.

Some thought I was mad. I was looking after a bunch of very active law students in the day. Then, when I went home in the evening, I was interacting with another bunch of very active young men and women in a very close setting, because as a resident fellow, my flat was right at the bottom of a block of flats filled with hyper active students. You are on call: they knock on your door, and you have to go and talk to them, find out their problems and try and solve them.

HTJ: In your view, do you think this kind of volunteerism is evident now?

A/P Ho: I think we are making progress. Yes, we are not quite there yet. We can do more, definitely. We also need to take into consideration informal volunteerism. That means work being done by a lot of good people. Simple acts of kindness such as helping your neighbours, friends, colleagues.

HTJ: You are referring to daily acts of volunteering that do not have to be orchestrated or organised by volunteer groups nor receive media coverage?

A/P Ho: Correct.

HTJ: Do you see that happening in a big way?

A/P Ho: I think that is happening. To promote that or to foster that, a few things need to happen.

First, the cause. Second, the awareness. The cause has to be publicised. Third, there must be active cajoling or encouragement. People are like that. Nothing like having two or three people say: Hey, let's just give it a try. Let's do reading, for maybe, the educationally challenged. We can do it once a month. Fourth, the practical issues of timing, of your own responsibilities, your work, your family. But we can

work round those. The first two are important, the third is catalytic. There are lots of causes. These need to be highlighted so that people know about them. This is also what I am doing in MinLaw [Ministry of Law] where I am involved in promoting the *pro bono* spirit amongst lawyers and law students.

HTJ: With Singapore being such a “pressure-cooker” society, and with people, especially young people, working very long hours, how do you think they can find the time for volunteerism, or even think about volunteering?

A/P Ho: Yes, you are right. But, it's the spirit of volunteerism that I would like to see in Singaporeans. They may not be volunteering at this point of time, but once they are a little more settled in their lives, they can put aside some time to help. What is very critical is to imbue in them the spirit of volunteerism when they are young, in schools, polytechnics and universities.

Let me give you an example. When I was the Master at NUS [NUS' Kent Ridge Hall of Residence], I got the student leaders to agree to hold a residential camp for children with cancer (Camp Rainbow) in the Hall. There was some apprehension at first, but to their credit, they agreed. After leaving the university, the student

leaders from several NUS Halls of Residence, inspired by the children and how fully they lived their lives, started Working In Aid of Leukaemia Kids (WALK) in 1992, which then became the Children's Cancer Foundation. In 2005, they approached me - by that time I was already in politics - and asked me: "Prof, can you be our patron?" I remember telling them: "Fantastic! You guys have continued to grow your volunteerism spirit! Yes, I will become your patron." I had no second thoughts about it. That is what I mean. Get them young, and somehow, somewhere they will continue that journey. It is not impossible to achieve this kind of result.

HTJ: Can you tell us more about your new role as the Chairman of the Home Team Volunteers Network (HTVN)? How did that come about?

A/P Ho: During my time at the Home Team, I was fortunate to interact with many of the volunteer groups in Police, Civil Defence, CNB, both formally and informally, but very consistently. I met them at many functions and got to know many of them.

When I stepped down from politics, MHA wanted to continue tapping my interest, passion and networking. I said: Why not? I'll be happy to do so. Let's start a network.

I can head the steering committee and we can actually try to do more. We can try and give everybody a sense of greater focus and identity. That not only are you a crime ambassador doing good work for the police but you are also part of the Home Team. That means to infuse in the volunteers what we have been doing with the regulars in the last 10 years - Home Team pride and identity.

I held several dialogue sessions with the Home Team volunteers where many good suggestions were thrown up. These include having greater use of our volunteers' portal to create awareness of opportunities to volunteer throughout the Home Team, holding a Volunteers' Day and giving updates on Singapore's security situation at the dialogue sessions. All these suggestions have been implemented. For example, at my last dialogue session, I got an officer from Homefront Security to give a talk on the security situation. The volunteers present appreciated that. The key is to foster a keen sense of belonging, ownership and trust in all our volunteers, whichever group or scheme they belong to.

Another useful suggestion that came out of the dialogues was an award for Home Team volunteers. That suggestion grew eventually into a Minister's award for volunteers. DPM Teo Chee Hean accepted the idea and the first awards were given out this year.

HTJ: That sounds like significant recognition for our Home Team volunteers. What are the future plans and ideas to grow volunteerism within the Home Team?

A/P Ho: We have just held a Volunteers Day. It is essentially an occasion to thank the volunteers and their families. Next year, we are planning a national seminar for all of us to share best practices and refine them for adoption. Hopefully, the HTVN will be a movement to promote volunteerism in Singapore. HTVN will also promote good causes. Hence, as part of Volunteers Day, we invited a speaker from the “Dads for Life” movement, to talk about parenting because this has links to youth crime. This can help equip them with information, tips, ideas that they can impart to their contacts, neighbours and friends. It can have a positive spill-over effect. We are also planning to publish a book to highlight the men and women who passionately sacrifice their leisure time to advance the cause of the Home Team. We hope their stories will inspire others to volunteer. (Editor: The book was launched in November 2012. See page 93.)

HTJ: Are you able to share some statistics with us on the number of volunteers, and their profile?

A/P Ho: All in, there are 15,000 to 16,000 people who are doing voluntary work to keep Singapore safe and secure. They come from all walks of life. Many of them are busy people. Some are on Councils and Committees such as the National Crime Prevention Council and National Council Against Drug Abuse etc. There are also those who volunteer their time and expertise in the criminal law committees. Others do important ground work as Volunteer Special Constabulary, Civil Defence Auxiliary Unit officers, crime ambassadors or prison counsellors. Bringing them all under one umbrella group helps to secure greater unity of purpose and cohesion, and it gives them a better idea of the big picture, which is to keep Singapore safe and secure.

HTJ: As Chairman of the Home Team Volunteers Network, what do you think your biggest challenge will be?

A/P Ho: I must say the mindset part. The Network is a good start, but we need to get more people to come in and understand that keeping Singapore safe and secure cannot be just done by the government and some volunteers. It has to be a collective effort.

HTJ: On that point, do you think Singaporeans have been lulled into a false sense of belief that the Government is solely responsible for security? We have not had a terrorist attack. Potential attacks have been stopped because of good intelligence work. The recent case of the Home Team trying to test the alertness of Singaporeans with smoke in cars in the Shenton Way area showed how unresponsive Singaporeans are to a perceived threat.

A/P Ho: I would say that people do see the different roles that the government and the public can play. That is the overall setting. Beyond that, there are examples where people can play a bigger role. Let me give you two examples. The Community Safety and Security Programme (CSSP) is one area where people can work in tandem with the government. We had this problem with arsonists who would set fire to bicycles in some housing estates. We formed a CSSP group with the help of the community to stop the menace.

The CSSP premise was simple – vigilance. Essentially, you get the cooperation of households within the estates who take different times to patrol and keep watch. And this initiative succeeded. So it can be done. That is why I am fairly confident that this is a message Singaporeans can embrace. The

Government cannot solve everything. The public is on the ground and they know what is happening. They can do something about it; that is where volunteerism comes in.

Then there was the case of the Yishun slasher. It was quite scary. He first hit Chong Pang, then Yishun East, Admiralty and finally Sembawang. I was Member of Parliament of Nee Soon East, so I remember the episode quite well. We mobilised the community. In fact, the community itself wanted to do something about it because a state of helplessness is not good at all. We worked with the police and activated our Citizens-on-Patrol teams. These efforts helped steady the ground. And we finally caught him. There are many other examples.

For counter terrorism, our message is that you must realise the police cannot be everywhere. In many of the past incidents, whether in Mumbai, Bali or Jakarta... there were points when ordinary citizens could have done something to mitigate or even prevent the attacks. The taxi driver or the person in the hotel lobby could have done something.

HTJ: So you are saying that the community has a pivotal role to play should an attack occur here?

A/P Ho: Yes. And a lot of work has been done in this area. You have the Community Engagement Programme (CEP). The five clusters, the opinion makers, the grassroots and religious leaders, media personalities, leaders in the unions and schools, they are all part of the CEP.

What we should also be concerned about is long drawn-out tension. That is when Singapore will be tested as a society and it is not just about race. It is about whether Singapore can pull together as a society. It is about the fabric of society.

HTJ: Professor, one final question – how would you measure the success of your efforts say, in 5 to 10 years’ time?

A/P Ho: First, fostering a strong spirit of volunteerism in more people would be a good indicator. Second,

we want to identify the best practices of volunteerism and get everybody to accept and practise them. Third, we want to make volunteerism a national effort, not just a Home Team one. I want to repeat what I said earlier: Volunteerism should be a part of our lives; it should be a way of thanksgiving, an expression of the talents in our volunteers. If we can achieve these goals, then I will be a happy man.

EDITOR’S NOTES

Since the Home Team Journal’s interview with A/P Ho Peng Kee in November 2011, he has spearheaded several initiatives within the Home Team Volunteers Network (HTVN) that highlighted the work of the Home Team (HT) and its volunteers. This includes organising several visits to HT establishments such as Prisons Cluster A, Tuas Checkpoint and SPF’s K-9 unit. Such visits provide HT volunteers opportunities to see the other work of Home Team and to foster pride as a HT volunteer contributing in a bigger mission. On 3 November 2012, HTVN also organised its first leadership conference for Senior HT officers and volunteer leaders, attended by more than 200 participants, to discuss the issues facing volunteer leaders. During the conference, A/P Ho launched a book chronicling stories of volunteers in the Home Team, entitled “Many Hearts for Home – Stories of Home Team Volunteers”. The book serves to strengthen the volunteers’ identification within the HT while helping to foster a greater appreciation for HT volunteers amongst HT officers and the general public.

I Love a Cop, *Revised Edition*: What Police Families Need to Know

BOOK REVIEW BY KOH YAK LENG

In a stimulating and thought-provoking book, *I Love a Cop, What Police Families Need to Know* (2006), Dr. Ellen Kirschman cautions us that while a Police job may be a noble calling, we must never underestimate the toll it can take on our loved ones and our personal well-being, as our job is inherently not family-friendly. Our long working hours, unpredictable schedule and crisis-driven mission, along with the immense public scrutiny and propensity for injury, can have adverse spill over effect on our family. There is also substantial mental strain on our loved ones, who have to endure the worry, loneliness, and the need to contest for time and attention with our all-consuming Police occupation.

A Police career may be so self-absorbing that even off the beat, an officer's mind would still be at work. As a result, our family may feel that they have to play second fiddle to our never ending job. Not only do family issues that crop up not get the attention they deserve, they can quickly become sources of irritation

and dispute. So unpredictable, too, is our mood that it can be exhilarating one moment (with a successful arrest) and depressing the next (having to manage a tragic death).

In gist, the book provides readers with an insight into the impact our job can have on our personalities and behaviour. In examining these changes, the author shows that the qualities that make us good cops – such as hyper-vigilance, emotional control, command presence, and a sceptical attitude - can all conspire to distort our world view by encouraging suspicion, the reflexive stereotyping of people into good or bad, and the blunting of our emotions.

The book highlights how excessive personality traits such as cynicism about human goodness can result in our being over-protective of our loved ones, impeding their healthy growth and limiting their socialisation. Trained to see risk factors in all situations, we find fault, anticipate problems, and often fail to enjoy the moment. Acclimatised to issuing and receiving orders, we

find this precept disrupted by others schooled in appreciative inquiry and empowerment.

These are fairly universal occupational hazards that many policemen will recognise in themselves. Dr. Kirschman's pioneering work – "I love a Cop" first came out in 1997 – is used in many police forces across the United States. Many now have psychological counselling units to work with their officers and their families. (Editor's Note: The Singapore Police started a counselling programme for officers in 1993. See Information Box at the end of the review.)

But sometimes, organisational culture, which is really a sub-set of our societal norms, can aggravate these latent personal issues brought on by the job. In the Singapore context, the stresses can be amplified by:

Call of Duty

Absolute dedication to work and team is paramount and reinforced by our culture of giving priority to the "call of duty" (now renamed "always the mission"). This results in the paradox of alienating the very people we are working so hard to provide for. This is exceptionally pronounced during prolonged deployment, and spouses have it worst holding down the fort and being seldom recognised for their contributions.
Frontline vulnerabilities

The contradictions of feeling powerful and powerless simultaneously is daunting - powerful because of the powers vested upon us and powerless because of intense scrutiny, absolute compliance to Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), and the need for transparency. Officers can get overwhelmed by a sense of betrayal when simply doing their job results in being investigated by Internal Affairs because certain criminal elements have learnt to exploit the organisation's need to be transparent.

Organisational Politics

While politicking is everywhere, it can hit officers more because of our heightened sense of fairness and justice.

Promotions

Due to the transparency of our promotion system, non-promoted officers not only have to contend with the perceived failure, their families, too, sometimes share the humiliation.

Taken together, work stresses can potentially manifest themselves into serious domestic violence and alcohol abuse.

For example, use of necessary force and verbal command are endorsed tools in our Use of Force Doctrine. Sometimes officers may become so accustomed to applying these skill sets that they forget it is inappropriate to intimidate or shout

at their loved ones. Physical abuse is, of course, completely unacceptable. Unless in self-defence, there is never any justification to hit anyone, including suspects; officers may only use force necessary to subdue violent behaviour.

Officers may sometimes also seek to compensate their professional failings with dictator styles of relationships at home, in an unconscious attempt to reinstate their control and self-worth. And victims often resist reporting out of fear of retaliation and economic deprivation should their spouses lose their jobs.

While the Singapore Police as a whole does not have an alcohol problem, it is understandable that hyper vigilance may lead officers to drink to relax, and the need to maintain an invincible image may further encourage officers to hide their problems and seek respite in alcohol.

In her book, Dr. Ellen Kirschman proposes some tested and proven tips:

- Take periodic vacations with your loved ones, so as to bond with them and to give undivided attention to each other;
- Communicate openly and honestly;
- Allow space and time to decompress after work, including playing sports or retreating into our personal sanctuary;
- Discuss with children police work and our expectations of their

behaviour and performance, so they become less susceptible to other opinions and scrutiny;



This is not a book espousing the negatives of a policing career. Instead, it is a road map to help us recognise and understand the pitfalls of a Police career, enriched with survival tips to help us navigate every bend in our careers and family life, and hopefully help us reap the handsome rewards and satisfaction that can come with a distinguished career as a police officer. //

- Don't over-associate with police work. Instead, pursue well-being as life goals, and understand that our worth as a human being is not contingent on our success as a police officer; and
- Understand that our police culture, which values the stereotypes of masculinity and youth, and being tough and non-complaining, may make seeking help prohibitive. So help to look out for each other and seek help promptly.
- Police families have to be tough, flexible and independent, and the better their support systems, including support from the policing community, the more successful they will be;

Do not get me wrong.

This is not a book espousing the negatives of a policing career. Instead, it is a road map to help us recognise and understand the pitfalls of a Police career, enriched with survival tips to help us navigate every bend in our careers and family life, and hopefully help us reap the handsome rewards and satisfaction that can come with a distinguished career as a police officer.

Counselling & Paracounselling Programmes for Singapore Police Officers

The Singapore Police Force (SPF) Counselling Programme was first introduced in 1993 to help distressed officers cope with crises and difficulties and consequently maintain and enhance their operational capabilities.

The programme's philosophy is that police work is stressful and everyone needs some kind of help one time or another. Officers who receive counselling are therefore not less capable than their peers. As the counselling programme develops, the scope has widened to include building lifeskills and enhancing resilience in officers to make them more operationally effective.

To further enhance the resilience and support system in the organisation, the SPF Paracounselling Programme was officially launched on 1 March 2001. This is part of the staff well-being initiative to create a caring and supportive work environment by making counselling more accessible to ground officers. Both police officers as well as civilian staff (mainly volunteers) are trained in peer counselling and other relevant helping skills so that they are able to provide support to fellow colleagues in times of need. The programme now manages a pool of about 300 Paracounsellors and trains 50 – 60 officers each year.

Paracounsellors not only play an important role in supporting their fellow colleagues through counselling, but also render assistance during crises or critical incidents where they provide both practical and psychological support to officers and their families who are affected by the incidents. In recent years, their role has also expanded to include morale management during major police deployments.

EDITOR'S NOTES



Assistant Commissioner (AC) Koh Yak Leng is presently Director (Logistics) with the Singapore Police Force. He joined the Force in 1991 and was posted to Central Police Division as an Investigator, after his training at the Police Academy. In his 20-year service, he has covered positions such as the Commanding Officer of Coastal Patrol Craft and Commanding Officer of the Technical Maintenance Squadron of Police Coast Guard; Head Logistics Business Process Re-engineering Implementation Task Force; Deputy Director of Technology Plans in MHA; Deputy Commander of Clementi Police Division; and Deputy Director of Manpower Department (Special Duties) concurrent Deputy Director of Police Technology Department (Special Duties). His last posting was as Commander of Tanglin Police Division in 2009.

AC Koh holds a Masters of Business Administration (Nanyang Fellows, Nanyang Technological University); Masters of Science in Industrial and Systems Engineering (National University of Singapore); a Bachelor Degree in Mechanical Engineering (NUS) and a Graduate Certificate in Applied Management (University of New South Wales). He is married with 2 children.

I Love A Fire Fighter: What The Family Needs To Know

BOOK REVIEW BY YAZID ABDULLAH

Dr. Ellen Kirschman's book, *I Love a Fire Fighter: What the Family Needs to Know* (2004), provides good insights into the life of a fire fighter and bridges the information gap between the fire fighter and his or her family. From her vantage point as a trained clinical psychologist and consultant who has worked with numerous public safety personnel within the United States, Dr. Kirschman's book is well-positioned to raise awareness of the psychological challenges in our line of work. The book serves to encourage Fire Departments to reach out to families. From a personal perspective, *I Love a Fire Fighter: What the Family Needs to Know* has certainly addressed the many questions and concerns faced by families with loved ones serving in the fire fighting profession.

Dr. Kirschman bases her book against the backdrop of the fire fighting profession in the United States, and while there are similarities in the challenges that fire fighters from opposite sides of the Pacific Ocean (i.e. the United States and

Singapore) face, there are also stark differences. One key difference is the rich culture of the United States Fire Departments and their respective unions, which have been established much longer than the Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF). Another significant difference is that the majority of the United States Fire Departments are staffed by volunteers, who see their job as more a calling than just a career.

One key observation by Dr. Kirschman is that fire fighters are "married to the job". She aptly notes that families need to be accustomed "to the fact that fire fighters consider the fire service their second family but sometimes behave as though it is their first". She quotes several cases where real families play second fiddle to the fire fighters' devotion towards their work and work mates to substantiate her case. She further points out that families need to manage this experience, and that "every family has to figure out how best to live with this profession." This observation resonates with me on a personal level. I have spent many years in the frontline – first

as a Rota Commander in a fire station, then subsequently as Station Commander of two separate stations and finally as a Division Commander taking charge of several stations. I recall my wife's anxiety each time I received a summons requiring my response to fire and rescue incidents. I had to hastily leave many family dinners and outings behind, including once when I was just about to clear the Woodlands Checkpoint for a family trip to Malaysia, to respond to a major fire incident. Hence, the observation that some fire fighters are never off duty is a particularly real and pertinent issue and is something that the fire fighter and his family have to deal with. It is thus best that fire fighters sit down and manage their families' expectations on the divide between work and family.

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... the observation that some fire fighters are never off duty is a particularly real and pertinent issue and is something that the fire fighter and his family have to deal with. It is thus best that fire fighters sit down and manage their families' expectations on the divide between work and family. //

It is only natural that families fear for the safety of their loved ones when responding to a fire incident.

Movies almost always depict the relentless danger and endless acts of superhuman heroism, and the death of over 300 fire fighters and paramedics during the September 11th attack would doubtless further reinforce such fears. In the US, such fears are probably more troubling due to the higher incidence of injuries and fatalities suffered by fire fighters. For the fire fighting fraternity, Dr. Kirschman notes that fire fighters are able to deal with anxieties over their safety through support and a sense of belonging from fellow fire fighters in the fire house (fire station). However, families of fire fighters often have no one to offer them such encouragement and reassurance. Being told not to worry does not help. What is needed is accurate information placed in proper perspective. Therefore, more needs to be done by fire departments to engage families and form support networks where families can best deal with worries and anxieties.

A key approach to help families better understand and alleviate their worries is to explain to them the training received by fire fighters to prepare them to overcome the risky nature of fire operations. Fire fighters do undergo rigorous training that simulate real situations to condition and prepare them to deal with fires, and families should be assured that such training is both holistic

and rigorous. There has also been increased attention to safety over the years through acquisition of better equipment, protective clothing and breathing apparatus and personal alert safety system. At home, the SCDF has also introduced mandatory medical and fitness tests to ensure fire fighters remain in peak condition to carry out their duties.

As Dr. Kirshman aptly states, *“Fire fighting is not just a job. For many... it’s a calling and an identity.”* In her review of the fire fighter profile, she finds that there is no specific fire fighter personality; they are all distinct and unique. Nonetheless, many fire fighters share common attributes and characteristics. Understanding these attributes may help us understand what makes a fire fighter choose such a challenging career. Dr. Kirschman notes that fire fighters are generally extroverted and friendly, value teamwork with a strong need for fraternity. Fire fighters need strong interpersonal and social skills and are able to manage anger and frustrations in order to work as a team in their stations. Interestingly, Dr. Kirschman also notes that *“fire fighting attracts people who like to live at the border between order and chaos, who thrive on excitement and exhilaration, who enjoy being in control or restoring control, who gain satisfaction from knowing survival skills.”* This

description is indeed insightful in providing families with a better understanding of the personality of their partners and how to better deal with living with a fire fighter.

The book has been well received by the fire fighting fraternity in the United States since its publication as it is a pioneering work in providing in-depth analysis on the fire service culture and how it affects personal relationships. Apart from addressing the many issues faced by fire fighters in their profession, the book also delves into how these issues can cause domestic concerns and anxieties. Crucially, Dr. Kirschman has shed some light on how fire fighters and their partners can help themselves to handle pressures, resolve conflicts and navigate the highs and lows of a career in the fire fighting profession.

EDITOR'S NOTES



Yazid Abdullah is currently the Chief Executive Officer at the Cooperative of SCDF Employees (COSEM). He has served in the Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF) for 25 years in various staff and frontline appointments. His last post in SCDF was as Director of Public Affairs where his main responsibilities involve the education of the population in emergency preparedness, media management and internal communications. Prior to the appointment, he was managing both the Training Department and Service Excellence Department.

Yazid also spent five years as the Commander of 4th Civil Defence Division, handling the management of emergencies (fire, rescue, hazmat and medical) and the readiness of responders in four fire stations and nine fire posts as well as engaging the community in emergency preparedness.

Yazid led SCDF's Overseas Rescue Contingent for the search and rescue operations in Aceh during the Tsunami disaster in December 2004. In August 2005, he led another SCDF Overseas Rescue Contingent for a forest fire fighting operation in Riau, Sumatra as part of ASEAN's regional response to deal with the trans-boundary haze problem.

Publications on Home Team's Community Partnerships

The following books were published to highlight the Home Team's partnerships with various segments of the community. The books are available in the Singapore National Library, the Home Team Library and major bookstores. The National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) and Home Team Volunteer Network publications can also be downloaded from the organisation websites.

MAKING SINGAPORE SAFE: THIRTY YEARS OF THE NATIONAL CRIME PREVENTION COUNCIL



*Susan Sim (2011),
Marshall Cavendish Editions*

On 4 July 1981, several of Singapore's leading industrialists, bankers, architects, journalists and women's advocates were charged with the task of helping the Police reverse a rising tide of crime. Known collectively as the National Crime Prevention Council, these men and women, and their successors, set about fostering a culture of self-help, community policing and close co-operation with the Police.

Today, Singapore is one of the safest countries in the world, where 4 in 10 arrests are with the assistance of public-spirited individuals, "instant" volunteers who will drop everything to go to the rescue of those in distress or to stop a crime in progress.

This is the story of how the NCPC has quietly worked with grassroots organisations, industry and the Government to transform an apathetic public into a proud movement of community activists. It explains how this bold experiment in harnessing the community complemented the Singapore Police's "radical" move to neighbourhood policing, allowing

a zero-tolerance approach to crime that is governed by public consensus, not fear.

The NCPC story is also about how vulnerable groups – the old, the young, the guest worker – are being empowered to fight against crime, whether it be molestation, snatch thefts, phone scams, robberies or cyber predation.

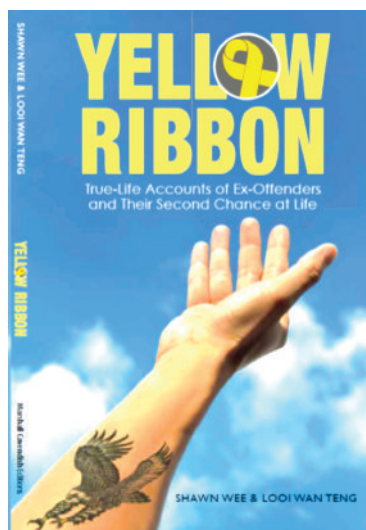
It is the story of how the Council caused the ban on bar-top dancing to be lifted, and why every fifth-grader will soon be playing computer games in school.

This book also tells the NCPC story in images familiar to all Singaporeans. Almost three decades worth of posters are reproduced in the book, explaining the evolution of one of Singapore’s most successful and enduring public education campaigns. Fans of Crime Watch will get a behind the scenes peek at how the No.1 show on Channel 5 is made.

YELLOW RIBBON: TRUE-LIFE ACCOUNTS OF EX-OFFENDERS AND THEIR SECOND CHANCE AT LIFE

Drug abuse, peddling, smuggling, and even murder: what happens after those convicted of these crimes are released? They have done the time and paid the price, but can they really change? Upon release, many ex-offenders struggle with the

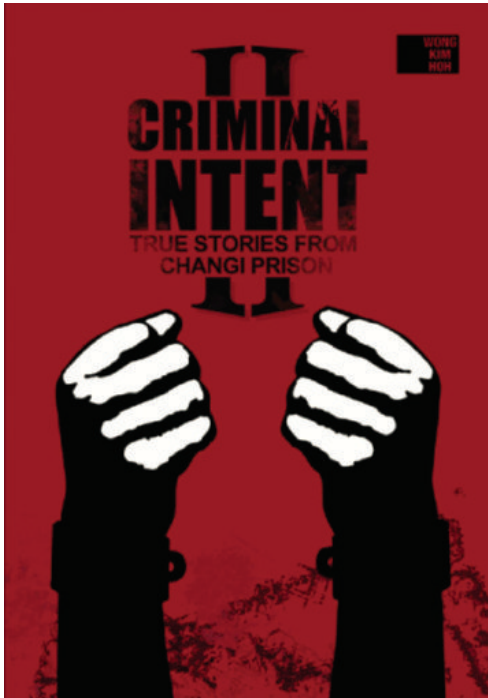
stigma of having done time. They are released from prison or drug rehabilitation centres, only to find themselves imprisoned by something far more intimidating than steel bars, barbed wires and towering walls — prejudice. Viewed with suspicion, they face difficulties in securing jobs and reconciling with their loved ones. But all they need is a chance to prove themselves.



*Shawn Wee, Looi Wan Teng and
Sylvy Soh (2011), Marshall
Cavendish Editions*

Yellow Ribbon is a book that chronicles the lives of eleven ex-offenders in Singapore who have managed to break free of the “second prison”. Through their own determination, the support of those around them, and initiatives like the Yellow Ribbon Project, they have managed to overcome the odds and secure for themselves, and their families, a better, brighter future.

CRIMINAL INTENT II: TRUE STORIES FROM CHANGI PRISON



*Wong Kim Hoh (2011),
Limpress Funghoi
Group (Pte) Limited*

Commissioned by Singapore Prison Service in partnership with the National Crime Prevention Council and written by Straits Times senior writer, Wong Kim Hoh, *Criminal Intent II* is a second collection of another 14 riveting interviews with offenders who are serving time in prison and ex-offenders who are re-building their lives after their release.

What drove a man to fake his own death? Why would a woman smother her own flesh and blood? How did a

promising young boy end up slashing someone with a samurai sword?

The offenders' and ex-offenders' frank accounts of what went wrong and how their lives – and those of their loved ones – have been affected make compelling reading and offer life lessons for all.

HEARTS OF RESILIENCE – SINGAPORE'S COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMME



*Asad-ul Iqbal Latif (2011),
ISEAS Publishing*

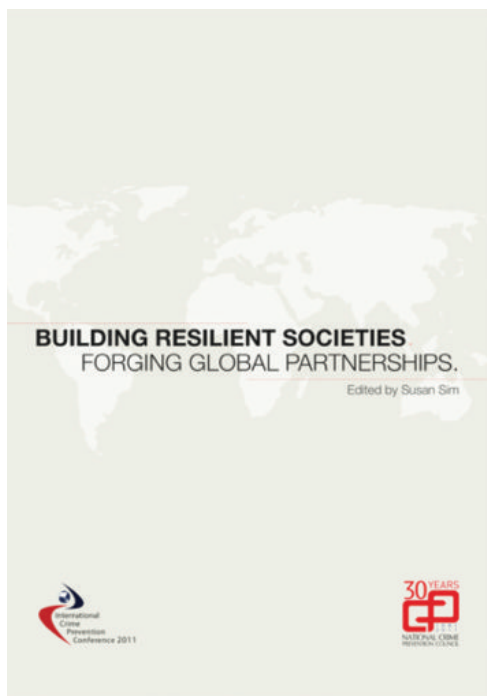
A bomb attack on a hotel. A bomb in a taxi. Or a bus. Like the London 7 July 2005 bomb attacks. Or if a plot to bomb an MRT station succeeds.

How would we react? Would Singaporeans stay calm? And united? Or would ethnic fault lines crack?

Building networks of trust in good times is crucial. Building social resilience is important in keeping Singapore united in a crisis. That is what the Community Engagement Programme, or CEP, sets out to do.

This book describes the Singapore experience in reaching out to hearts and minds. As we fortify our hearts of resilience, the CEP is a book that continues to be written.

BUILDING RESILIENT SOCIETIES. FORGING GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS



Susan Sim, ed. (2012). National Crime Prevention Council

To commemorate its 30th anniversary, the National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) organised an International Crime Prevention Conference in November 2011 with the theme of “Building Resilient Societies. Forging Global Partnerships”. The theme was chosen to celebrate the spirit of community involvement that has enabled societies to stay resilient, and importantly, keep crime rates low. At the same time, it reflects the importance of international collaboration

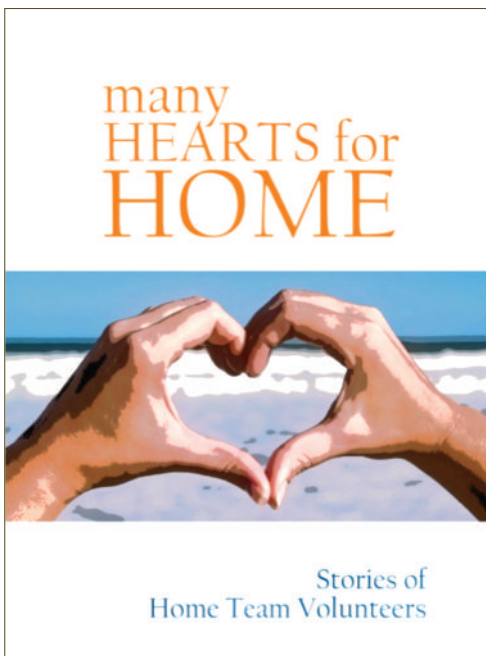
Speakers included Second Minister for Home Affairs S Iswaran, Interpol President Khoo Boon Hui and his Secretary-General Ronald Noble, as well as several serving and retired Police Chiefs from Singapore (Ng Joo Hee), the United Kingdom (Ian Blair and Stephen White) and Australia (Mick Keelty), leading experts in international terrorism (Ali Soufan), organised crime (Paul Evans), cybercrime (Adam Palmer), corporate risk (Toby Bishop) and community policing (Taisuke Kanayama), as well as academics and practitioners specialising in resilience studies, cyber exploitation of children, and youth crime.

Their presentations are collected in this volume of 20 essays covering five topics: Policing Global Threats, Building Resilient Communities, The Singapore Story, Using “Old”

and New Media, and Tackling Youth Crime.

Published as an ebook, *Building Resilience Societies. Forging Global Partnerships* can be freely downloaded from the NCPC website: http://www.ncpc.gov.sg/pdf/ICPC_ebook_3_aug.pdf

MANY HEARTS FOR HOME: STORIES OF HOME TEAM VOLUNTEERS

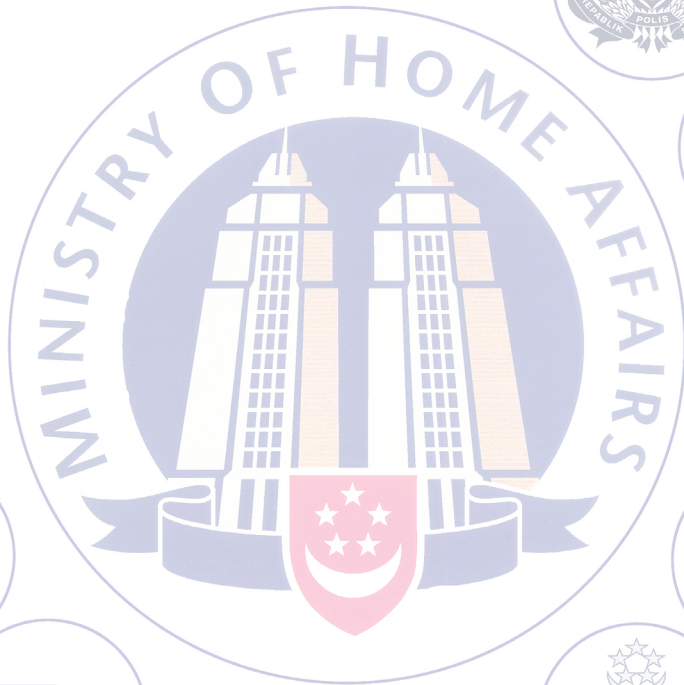


*Augustine Low, Connie Ong and Lisa Ann Lee (2012),
Chung Printing Pte Ltd*

“ We can’t light up an entire room but you can light up the space around you”. Walking through the darkness alone is never easy. Read about how one volunteer extended her hand. Want to deepen your perspective of life? One

volunteer did just that.... from the life lessons prisoners taught her.

This book shines the spotlight on men and women who work tirelessly and, in no small way, contribute to the safety and security of Singapore. Our Home Team volunteers come from all walks of life but they share one common trait – dedication and passion about their vocations. The collection of stories in this book takes a peek into their volunteer journeys, some exciting, some trying, some uplifting and enriching. Whether you are a volunteer now or had never thought of volunteering, we hope that you will draw insight and inspiration from the stories.



SCORE



A publication of the
Home Team Academy

About the Home Team Academy

The Home Team Academy (HTA) is a Department under the Ministry of Home Affairs that is committed to the training of Home Team officers in Homefront Security and Safety. The Academy aims to spearhead training in Counter-Terrorism, Law Enforcement, Crisis Management and Emergency Preparedness. It also conducts a wide range of programmes, including Behavioural Sciences and Leadership Development.