



The Royal Hong Kong Police Association

MINUTES OF THE 83rd ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON SATURDAY 18 SEPTEMBER 2021 AT THE GEORGE HOTEL, LICHFIELD

PRESENT: Messrs K H Lomas (President), A T Hornsby (Vice President & Welfare Officer), A J D Stevenson-Hamilton (Chairman), B W Jones (Secretary), G P E Guest (Treasurer), K Braithwaite, S J Monaghan, J S Prisk, S Roberts and Miss I Kieran (Committee Members) plus seven Members physically and five via Zoom including P E Halliday the Newspaper Editor.

The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming and thanking all those present, both physically in the hall and those on Zoom, for attending the Annual General Meeting. He reminded all that only Life Members were entitled to vote. He added that this was the first time AGM was open to all by the use of Zoom.

1. Apologies

The Secretary reported that apologies/good wishes had been received from 14 Members. (List attached).

2. Minutes

The Minutes of the 82nd Annual General Meeting, held on Saturday 17 October 2020 via Zoom having been previously posted on the Association Website/circulated were taken as read. The Minutes were proposed for adoption by Mr K Braithwaite, seconded by Mr R Williams and agreed nem con. The Minutes were formally signed by the Chairman.

3. Matters Arising

The Chairman said he had no matters to raise but asked Mr Lomas the President for an update on the sale of 'The Book'. He replied that he did not have the up to date information on the number of books sold but the publisher said, after the initial print run a second was now underway. 400 copies have been sent to North America where the sales of the book are going well. Mr Lomas said that the publisher was satisfied in that sales were meeting expectations. A second edition of 'The Book' was planned and Peter Halliday would oversee its production. The Chairman asked Mr Halliday to speak about this later under AOB.

4. Chairman's Report

The Chairman's Report (copy attached) was available to all Members present. However, he decided on this occasion to read it out.

There were no questions from the floor and on the proposal of Mr S Roberts, seconded by Miss I Kieran, the Report was adopted and agreed nem con.

5. Secretary's Report

The Secretary's Report (copy attached) was available to all present. Mr Jones said he would like to mention the fact that the Newsletters were now published, printed and posted in Hong Kong by Peter Halliday. This was saving the Association quite a considerable amount. The postage alone for instance for the last issue was HK\$400 whereas it would have been around £200 in the UK! The Secretary again urged Members to update their Profiles on the website and tick the box to ensure their names appeared in the Members List. There were no questions. On the proposal of Miss I Kieran, seconded by Mr P B Dyson, the Report was adopted and agreed nem con.

6. Treasurer's Report

Copies of the audited Revenue Account for the year ended 31 March 2021 (copy attached) was available to all present. Mr Guest highlighted various items in the accounts and went on to mention that the Committee was looking for a suitable vehicle to place half the money now in a savings account accruing derisory interest. However, strictures imposed by money laundering legislation makes it impossible for the Association, as presently structured, to make such investment possible.

Mr Lomas said in addition to his earlier remarks regarding the book that although it was not produced as a commercial venture there is an agreement that the Association would received an 8% commission on the sales. At the year ending 31 March 2021 this amounted to £283.18 with a further £496 since. The President said that the £7,084 paid to the National Memorial Arboretum for the maintenance of our memorial seemed expensive but it is a one-off payment.

There were no questions from the floor and on the proposal of Mr J S Prisk, seconded by Mr J Richards, the Audited Revenue Account was adopted and agreed nem con.

7. Welfare Officer's Report

Copies of the Welfare Report (copy attached) was available to all present. Mr Hornsby said that this very comprehensive report had been produce by Mr O'Brien and there was nothing he wished to add to it. There were a couple of matters outwith the report that he needed a mention. The first being the disarray at the Hong Kong Inland Revenue Department in sending out the tax assessment forms in that they were taking an inordinate time to reach members as a result of them being sent by sea mail. The second concerned members living in Malaysia under the 'Malaysia My Second Home' (MM2H) scheme. The appropriate minister in the new government there has made a speech in which he intimated their intention to considerably raise the sums of money required by retirees to qualify for MM2H. Whether this is mere political posturing is not known but it a matter of great worry and concern to our members who retired to Malaysia.

There were no questions from the floor so on the proposal by Mr R Williams, seconded by Mr P Fraser, the Report was adopted and agreed nem con.

8. Membership Affairs

The Secretary said the only matter under this heading was the list of members reported to have died between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021. The Chairman said that he did not intend to read out the list as it was available to all present, and was as follows -

Mr C S Keeping	Life	22 May 2020
Mr D V Thain	Life	22 May 2020
Mr K J Sackett	Life	27 May 2020
Mr P A Barkley	Life	19 June 2020
Mr L J Poots	Life	3 July 2020
Mrs A Illingworth	Associate	19 July 2020
Mr M Broom	Life	23 July 2020
Mrs M O Johnston	Associate	(Dates not
Mr P Williams	Life	(known
Mr C H Fisher	Life	12 August 2020
Mr N E Humphreys	Life	30 August 2020
Mr J McDermott	Associate	16 September 2020
Mr B J Deegan	Life	17 September 2020
Mr T Thomson	Life	7 November 2020
Mrs T Cafferey	Associate	13 November 2020
Mr J P Gaffney	Life	15 November 2020
Mr J A Bredbury	Life	15 November 2020
Mr F Murphy	Life	29 November 2020
Mr R H Anning	Life	30 December 2020
Dr R Woodside	Life	12 January 2021
Mr P B Grant	Life	13 January 2021

Mr B D Carpenter	Life	8 February 2021
Mr J M Crosby	Life	20 February 2021
Mrs E Wright	Associate	8 March 2021

9. Subscriptions

The Chairman informed the the meeting that the Committee considered that the existing joining fee of £50 should remain. This was accepted.

10. Election of Committee Members

At this point, Mr K H Lomas (President) assumed the Chair, saying that the following had agreed to serve on the Committee for the 2021/22 year and as there were no other nominations he proposed they be elected en bloc. This was seconded by Mr M Hurd and agree nem con. The Committee elected for 2021/22 is as follows -

Chairman	Mr A J D Stevenson-Hamilton
Secretary	Mr B W Jones
Treasurer	Mr G P E Guest
Welfare Officer	Mr A T Hornsby
Newsletter Editor	Mr P E Halliday
Archivist	Mr J P Cartwright
England and Wales	Mr K Braithwaite
	Mr J W Hazelden
	Mr S J Monaghan
	Mr J S Prisk
	Mr S Roberts
	Mr M J C Waters
Ireland	Mr B Griffin
Scotland	Miss Isobel Kieran
Hong Kong	Mr M B Dowie
Australasia (Less New Zealand)	Mr B W Munford
Malaysia & Singapore	Mr S J Clements
New Zealand	Mr K Edlin
North America	Mr R I Tyzzer

The Chairman resumed the Chair, commenting that the Committee would strive to be more socially active in the coming months.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(a) Social Functions

The Chairman said the plan is to hold a Chinese Lunch in London on Saturday 13 November at the Imperial China Restaurant. On the evening before it is intended to

hold a drinks session in the Army and Navy Club which tends to attract younger members. Hopefully some will stay over and attend the lunch.

(b) Investments

The Chairman said that he hoped to get to Hong Kong before the end of the year and whilst there would look to see what investments could be made there.

(c) National Memorial Arboretum

The Chairman said the wearing of medals whilst attending the service was optional. As it is a requirement to book a parking space in advance at the NMA, Mr J C S McDouall explained the procedure.

(d) Hong Kong Beat

Mr Stevenson-Hamilton called upon Mr S Roberts to speak about his forthcoming opus. Mr Roberts said had written a book about the Royal Hong Kong Police which was about to be published. It is called 'Hong Kong Beat' and will cost £13.99 and can be bought at most outlets in UK and overseas. He added that all profits from his book would be donated to the Hong Kong Police Welfare Fund.

(e) Second edition of 'The Book'

Mr Halliday explained his hope of being able to put together a second edition of 'The Book' He said he had produced a comprehensive 'flyer' explaining the project. He suggested that the end of the year should be the deadline for all contributions. (Post Meeting Note: The document has been circulated to the membership.)

(f) Requirement to return to HK within 3 years

Mr Roberts said he had asked the Hong Kong Immigration Department whether there was any leeway in the requirement to return to Hong Kong within 3 years and complying with the timetable for replacing HKID Cards, considering the problems caused by Covid-19. He was awaiting a reply.

13. IN MEMORIAM

THE CHAIRMAN CALLED ON ALL PRESENT TO BE UPSTANDING AND MAINTAIN ONE MINUTES SILENCE IN MEMORY OF ALL THOSE WHO LOST THEIR LIVES IN THE TWO WORLD WARS AND IN THE COURSE OF THEIR DUTY, AND OF ALL PAST ASSOCIATION MEMBERS.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 1045.

A J D Stevenson-Hamilton
Chairman

Chairman's Annual Report 2020 - 2021

Mr President, Vice Presidents, members,

This report is somewhat briefer than those in previous years due to the restrictions on activities due to the coronavirus epidemic. At the time of reporting we here in the U.K. have had to endure lockdowns for nearly 18 months in which time we have seen three outbreaks of the coronavirus, the second far worse than the first. It does seem that there is light at the end of the tunnel, most fortuitously, because the vaccination programme has been largely successful and infection rates have fallen. Though having said that with summer holidays in full swing they appear to be on rise again.

Members resident in other countries now appear to be facing the consequences of slow vaccination rates. Residual economic fallout will be next on the agenda and I am not sure that people at large have any concept of hardships their children are going to face in future years given the liberal doses of welfare benefits dished out especially here in the U.K. Travel between the U.K. and Hong Kong remains a frustrating problem with few flights going East compounded by onerous quarantine restrictions.

Hong Kong and China appear to have ridden out the storm more successfully than the West if the social and economic indicators are anything to go by. Hong Kong is at last relatively peaceful with the new National Security Law being implemented. However the economy will take time to recover so long as the lockdown remains in place. As Beijing tightens its grip major changes to the electoral process have been announced and Legco elections deferred to next year.

Two interesting aspects in relation to the Hong Kong Police. The first is that the retirement age for all ranks has been raised to 60. The other is recent promotions announced to the posts of Chief Secretary and Secretary for Security.

A development members may find of interest; one of our former colleagues in the R.H.K.P. was last year elevated to the House of Lords and is an active member of his party as Chairman of the National Conservative Convention. He is Lord Andrew Sharpe of Epsom. Contact has been established with him as we previously did with Lord Wilson and he has expressed a willingness to assist with any issues of concern we have. Through Lord Sharpe I have also re-established contact with a former Exco member and senior partner in the Jardines Group, Martin Barrow who may be able to help where our interests coincide.

Now to your committee. We all welcome Keith Lomas on board as President having been voted in at the last A.G.M. The three key members of the committee Dave O'Brien, Barry Jones and Paul Guest have continued to give sterling service through the year despite the vagaries of being in perpetual lockdown. However, it is with deep regret that I have to report that our Welfare Officer, Dave, has stepped down after 8 years of outstanding service to the Association. To replace him is an extremely difficult if not impossible task and a volunteer would be very much appreciated. In the meantime we may well have to partially devolve some responsibilities to regional representatives and Al Hornsby has very kindly agreed to

step into the breach until a suitable replacement is found.

On the pension side Crown Agents have at last reactivated themselves and annual declaration forms were issued late May with a less onerous criteria for attestation. They have also indicated that they are looking at the digitisation of their services on line with biometric authentication. I am not sure our elder members will relish the prospect!!!

The committee has endeavoured to keep functioning despite the lockdown and Zoom meetings have been held on a regular basis with the added bonus of overseas participants. Expenditure on the budget side has been relatively low as a consequence excepting the newsletter which I have made mention of in my quarterly reports. The cost of printing and postage swallows up the majority of annual allocation from the Hong Kong Police. Your secretary and news editor have been looking at ways of reducing costs with some positive results in the offing. Arising out of the last Zoom meeting one committee member did suggest that an annual remembrance gathering be organised at the National Memorial Arboretum (N.M.A.) out with Remembrance Sunday. The committee were strongly in favour and so your Chairman took the opportunity of booking The George Hotel in Lichfield for 17th/18th September in order that we could combine a ceremony at the N.M.A. with the A.G.M. This is the earliest date available that could be obtained after the U.K. came out of lockdown.

Your committee will look to arranging a Chinese lunch either in London or Manchester later this autumn as well as a networking evening for younger members. Regional lunches planned by Australia and Northern Ireland were held in June and again for the latter in July and I am aware of members organising lunches in their own locale.

Mention must be made of the "The Book" as many members have experienced frustrations in purchasing a copy especially outside Hong Kong. The major problem is related to postal issues due to the coronavirus with mail being sent by ship rather than air. There was also an issue with the number of copies despatched overseas. To cut a long story short books do appear to be available in bookshops in U.K. as of March. Finally, the arrangements for the maintenance of the R.H.K.P. Memorial, including financial, have now been completed and the agreement between the Association and the N.M.A., has been signed by interested parties. This project has taken 6 years since inception and all thanks must go to Keith Lomas, Keith Braithwaite and Paul Guest for the considerable time and effort in bringing this project to a most successful conclusion.

I can only hope that my next missive will be on a more cheerful note. We certainly live in turbulent times if debacle in Afghanistan is anything to go by.

Angus Stevenson-Hamilton
Chairman

SECRETARY'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2021

Mr President, Vice Presidents and Members

In accordance with Rule 10 (iii) it is my pleasure to report on the workings of the Association during the 2020/21.

This has been quite a year and not one we would like to see again. As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic all the social functions normally held during the year have had to be cancelled and committee meetings held only by Zoom. While not ideal at least the business of the Association has continued using Zoom. One fairly successful outcome has been to use Zoom to hold the 'Last Saturday of the Month' get togethers. Unfortunately, because of the spread of our members around the world the get togethers have not taken in those who live in the Americas. Thus far these events have been held at 1000 UK time so in addition to those in the UK we have had members joining from Australia, New Zealand and Hong Kong. The average number of participants has been around 15.

Following the committee meeting on 16 January this year when the cost of printing and postage of the Newsletters was discussed. The annual cost virtually swallowed up the whole of the Annual Subvention provided by the HKP Welfare Branch. This was something which could not continue as this money was our only source of income apart from joining fees. The committee decided that a letter with a proforma should be sent out to all 118 members who were receiving 'hard' copies of the Newsletter and other correspondence. The letter set out the financial implications of continuing to print the Newsletters and asked those members to complete the pro forma and indicate whether or not they wished to continue the status quo. There was a return date by which replies had to be received by the Secretary and warning that failure to reply would result in their receiving no further Newsletters and correspondence. Only 40 replies were received and of these five opted to go the electronic route. Sadly, 78 did not reply. This means that the number of Newsletters required to be printed and sent by snail mail has been reduced to 37 as three respondents have since died. I have since not got round to speaking to the printers I use to see if they are willing to continue to carry out work for such a small number of copies at a reasonable cost. The Newsletter Editor, Peter Halliday has offered to explore having the Newsletters printed in Hong Kong and posted from there where printing and postage costs are cheaper than UK. Other correspondence such as flyers for lunches, notices of AGM etc can be printed in house by the Secretary.

A similar exercise was carried out in 2014 and on that occasion 215 did not reply!

Despite my constantly exhorting members in my Newsletter column to log on to the website and update their Profile and tick the box regarding how they wish to be listed on the Member List, many have still not complied. This fact is evident from the fact that the Member List available on the website is far from complete.

Despite the pandemic this has been our best year so far with 49 new members joining, virtually all having used the facility to join and pay the joining fee online. There were 26 deaths, nine of which were widows/widowers whose spouse had predeceased them. There was one resignation. The names of those who have died appear in the committee minutes, Newsletters and emails sent out shortly after the event. The names of new members appear in Newsletters. At year's end the total membership stood at 1,040, comprising of 912 Life and 128 Associate Members.

The 82nd Annual General Meeting was held late because of Covid-19 on 27 October 2020 on Zoom.

During the year your Committee met on Zoom on three occasions 23 July 2020 and 16 January and 27 March 2021. The Finance and General Purpose Sub-Committee did not meet.

Finally, I would like to thank the President, Chairman, Treasurer, Welfare Officer and the rest of the Committee for their support and assistance of er the year.

B W Jones
Secretary



The Royal Hong Kong Police Association

Income & Expenditure Account - Year Ended 31 March 2021

<u>GENERAL ACCOUNT</u>	<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	<u>INCOME</u>	
Life Membership Subscriptions		£ 2,438.80	[footnote 1]
Donations		£ 330.00	
HKP Annual Subvention		£ 4,795.36	[footnote 2]
HKP Supplementary Grant		£ 2,851.49	[footnote 3]
Bank Account Interest		£ 689.95	[footnote 4]
Raffle Proceeds		£ -	
Members' Contributions Towards Postage		£ 460.00	
Sales of Association Memorabilia		£ 22.00	
Functions		£ -	
Blacksmith Publishers		£ 283.18	[footnote 5]
Miscellaneous		£ 1,000.00	[footnote 6]
		<u>£ 12,870.78</u>	
Printing, Stationery & Office Supplies	£ 4,420.15][footnote 7]
Postage/Telecomms	£ 640.08][footnote 7]
Committee Travel & Expenses	£ -		
Wreaths & Welfare Donations	£ 463.55		
Purchases of Association Memorabilia	£ -		
HMRC - Tax	£ -		
Functions	£ -		
Website Upgrade, Licences & Servicing	£ 1,437.47		
National Memorial Arboretum	£ 7,864.00		[footnote 8]
Accountancy	£ 600.00		
Miscellaneous	£ 139.35		[footnote 9]
Total	<u>£ 15,564.60</u>		
Surplus/Deficit	-£ 2,693.82		
<u>HKP WELFARE RELIEF FUND</u>	<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	<u>INCOME</u>	
Balance b/f (31/03/2020)		£ 2,242.65	
Bank Interest		£ 1.57	
		<u>£ 2,244.22</u>	
Disbursements	<u>£ -</u>		
Total	<u>£ -</u>		
Balance c/f to 2021/22	£ 2,244.22		
<u>BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2021</u>			
<u>GENERAL ACCOUNT</u>			
Balance b/f (01/04/20)	£ 79,141.66		
Deficit for 2020/21	-£ 2,693.82		
Balance c/f to 2021/22	<u>£ 76,447.84</u>		
<u>BANK ACCOUNT DEPOSITS</u>			
<u>RHKPA</u>			
Lloyds Bank Treasurer's a/c	£ 3,880.14		
Lloyds Bank Savings (General) a/c	£ 72,258.55		
Lloyds Bank Savings (Memorial) a/c	£ -		
Lloyds Bank Current a/c (No. 2)	£ 309.15		
Total	<u>£ 76,447.84</u>		
<u>HKP WELFARE RELIEF FUND</u>			
Lloyds Bank Savings a/c	Total £ 2,244.22		
Total Value of Cash Assets on 31 March 2021	£ 78,692.06		
HMRC Tax Credit	£ 242.92		

G.P.E. Guest

(G.P.E. Guest)
Hon Treasurer

08.04.2021

(Date)

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Income & Expenditure Account - Year Ended 31 March 2021 (cont.)Accountant's Certificate

The accounts of Income and Expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2021 on Pages 1 of this report are in accordance with the books and records as presented to me. I confirm that the bank balances shown above agree with the bank statements provided.



Basit Ahmad, FCCA,
1 Stanyards Court,
Stanyards Farm,
Chertsey Road,
Chobham,
Surrey, GU24 8JE.
email: basit@ahmadyork.co.uk

4/6/2021
.....
(Date)

Notes on RHKPA 2020/21 Income & Expenditure Accounts

- Note 1 Subscriptions from 49 new members, plus one double payment (later refunded)
- Note 2 The GBP equivalent of HK \$50,451
- Note 3 The GBP equivalent of HK \$30,000
- Note 4 Mostly made up of Fixed Deposit interest - £686.24
- Note 5 HK\$3,000.00 advance payment on sales of book
- Note 6 Legacy from Mr. J.D. Hirst, MBE, QPM, CPM
- Note 7 Both figures include the respective costs of printing and mailing two Newsletters
- Note 8 Final payment to the National Memorial Arboretum for the maintenance and upkeep of the RHKP Monument
- Note 9 Bank charge for re-issuing the Draft relating to the HKP Appeal donation (£20.00); Refund of double payment of joining fee (£50.00); Retirement lunch for Mr M.Y. TO of HKP Welfare Services (£67.70); and "Stripe" charge for cancelled payment (£1.65)

WELFARE OFFICER'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR YEAR ENDING 31ST March 2021

Mr President, Vice Presidents and Members.

In accordance with Rule 12(ii) I submit the Welfare Report for the past year and due to the Covid Virus it is a draft report as the AGM proper will not be held until later in the year at the earliest. It is essentially an update to the Annual Report last year which was held late for obvious reasons.

Welfare Generally

The Covid pandemic has continued to affect us all in many ways no matter where we are. There are continued lockdowns, bans on travel, and family separations. There have been issues gathering basic supplies missed medical appointments and treatments and the introduction of widespread work from home. The economies of all countries have been affected and borrowing and spending by governments unprecedented in peacetime. The good news is that now the vaccines against the disease have started to roll out and for once the UK got its act together and has made huge inroads in inoculating nearly half of the adult population. Hopefully supplies will increase worldwide over the next year and we should see a light at the end of the tunnel for all. However, it is possible that the present situation and steps taken against the disease will continue for the most part of this year. The situation in Hong Kong has stabilized to a degree due to Covid the new Security Law and other measures introduced in Hong Kong. The attitude of the US and UK governments to China has hardened and it appears that Diplomacy and Pragmatism have been tossed out the window. This has resulted in reactions from the other side in relation for example BN(O) passports which are now not recognised as travel documents. It is a bit concerning that if this hostile approach continues what further measures are in the pipeline which may affect our situation, particularly those living in HK.

In view of the adverse effect the pandemic is having on us all I would encourage Regional Reps and all members to keep in touch by phone, email, Video calls and visits where legal and possible. This is especially so for those living alone with health and other issues. A simple straightforward chat for a few minutes does help a great deal and is always welcomed.

My hope expressed in the report last year that we had escaped the pandemic was unfortunately based on a lack of information. We have had in fact three individuals who have caught covid but recovered two in the UK and one in the States. There is also a belief that one individual, who had major medical problems, caught Covid and may have succumbed to it. It is not confirmed.

NEW ISSUES

Hong Kong

Recently we have had occasion to try and help a non-member with advice on the possibility of travelling to HK at this time due to a medical situation involving a son. Consequently I would like to update members on the situation regarding travel to HK. The information given to us is reproduced below and is dated 15th March

“ The Government announced today (March 15) that in view of the continued severe global epidemic situation of COVID-19, it will maintain the measure under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Regulation of Cross-boundary Conveyances and Travellers) Regulation

(Cap. 599H) to restrict persons who have stayed in the extremely high-risk Group A specified places from boarding flights for Hong Kong, as well as the 21-day compulsory quarantine requirement under the Compulsory Quarantine of Certain Persons Arriving at Hong Kong Regulation (Cap. 599C), the Compulsory Quarantine of Persons Arriving at Hong Kong from Foreign Places Regulation (Cap. 599E) and Cap. 599H for persons arriving at Hong Kong who have stayed in places outside China.

A Government spokesman said, "It is necessary for the Government to protect the health of the overall community in Hong Kong by firmly guarding against the importation of the new virus variants. That said, the Government recognises that the measures in relation to Group A specified places are very stringent, and would inevitably affect the return journey of a number of Hong Kong residents there (mostly in the United Kingdom). Since late December last year, the number of newly confirmed cases in the UK, where the majority of the affected Hong Kong residents are situated, has fallen from the high of over 400 000 in a week to about 40 000 in the first week of March. **We also noted that over 24 million people in the UK, or over one-third of the population, have received at least the first dose of vaccine. In view of this, the Government is exploring arrangements that could facilitate these residents' direct return to Hong Kong without compromising the public health of the local community. Details of the arrangements will be announced separately at an appropriate juncture."**

The spokesman said, "The Government will continue to monitor closely the situation, including the developments of the epidemic situation both globally and locally and changes in the volume of cross-boundary passenger traffic, and will adjust the boarding and compulsory quarantine requirements for persons arriving at Hong Kong from other high-risk places when necessary."

For better understanding by the public of the boarding and compulsory quarantine requirements under the relevant regulations for persons that have stayed in different places outside China, the Government has categorised the relevant risk-based boarding and compulsory quarantine requirements for the relevant specified places into three groups.

Any person who has stayed in the extremely high-risk Group A specified places (i.e. Brazil, Ireland, South Africa and the United Kingdom) for more than two hours on the day of boarding or during the 21 days before that day are not allowed to board for Hong Kong.

For the very high-risk Group B specified places and the medium to high-risk Group C specified places, all persons arriving at Hong Kong (either via the airport or land boundary control points) who have stayed in places outside China on the day of arrival in Hong Kong or during the 21 days before that day have to undergo compulsory quarantine for 21 days in designated quarantine hotels. For persons arriving at Hong Kong who have stayed in Group B specified places, they also have to present prior to boarding proof of a negative result of a nucleic acid test for COVID-19 conducted within 72 hours before the scheduled time of departure of the aircraft.

Details on the grouping of specified places and their respective boarding and compulsory quarantine requirements can be found at www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/high-risk-places.html.

<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202103/15/P2021031500735.htm> “

The measures are indeed very stringent but there is a possibility of HK residents being permitted to return in the near future due to the success of the inoculation programme. Nevertheless, the situation changes rapidly and those wanting or thinking of travel have to check the measures in place in both jurisdiction before making a decision. At the present time I believe that the only routes available to get to Hk are through Dubai or Russia. There are no direct flights and in any case you could be refused entry.

INFORMATION FROM HK IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT RE THE 36 MONTH RULE RE RIGHT OF ABODE AND THE EFFECT OF COVID RESTRICTIONS.

I repeat here a circulation in respect of Permanent Residency and the effect of Covid and inability to return to HK within the 36 month period. Whilst you will be able to land there is no discretion to allow for any leeway beyond 36 months. Under the Immigration Ordinance, a permanent resident of the HKSAR **who is not of Chinese nationality** will lose the status of a permanent resident if he/she has been absent from Hong Kong for a continuous period of not less than 36 months since he/she ceased to have ordinarily resided in Hong Kong.

According to Section 2(6) of the Immigration Ordinance, a person does not cease to be ordinarily resident in Hong Kong if he/she is temporarily absent from Hong Kong. The circumstances of the person and the absence are relevant in determining whether a person has ceased to be ordinarily resident in Hong Kong. The circumstances may include—

- (a) the reason, duration and frequency of any absence from Hong Kong;
- (b) whether he has habitual residence in Hong Kong;
- (c) employment by a Hong Kong based company; and
- (d) the whereabouts of the principal members of his family (spouse and minor children).

The required period of absence from Hong Kong, i.e. a continuous period of not less than 36 months, following which a permanent resident in the HKSAR will lose his/her permanent resident status in the HKSAR is prescribed by law, namely the Immigration Ordinance. **There is no provision in the Ordinance empowering the Director of Immigration to extend or enlarge the period of absence or empowering him to waive compliance with these statutory provisions on grounds of exceptional hardship or unforeseen circumstances.**

A person who ceases to have the status of a permanent resident of the HKSAR will automatically acquire the right to land in Hong Kong in accordance with the law. He/She will be able to enter Hong Kong freely to live, study or work without any restriction.

A person may ascertain whether he/she has lost the status of a permanent resident of the HKSAR by applying for verification of eligibility for permanent identity card with the Right of Abode Section of the Immigration Department for assessment of whether he/she has lost the permanent resident status and has the right to land in the HKSAR. The person must be present in Hong Kong when he/she submits this application. Details on the application is at <https://www.gov.hk/en/residents/immigration/idcard/roa/verifyeligible.htm>

Travel to Europe

Whilst probably a bit premature there has been agreement following Brexit in relation to the EHIC which many members (UK residents) who travel to Europe on a regular basis will have. It is being replaced by the Global Health Insurance card (GHIC). Existing EHIC cards remain valid until their expiry date. To get more information and details on how to apply please see the following NHS website-

<https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/apply-for-a-free-uk-global-health-insurance-card-ghic/>

Holiday from UK further Banned from the 29th March until the end of June (initially)

Members should be aware of the restriction on travel from the UK and the new offence coming into being on the 29th March for travelling abroad without a valid reason. There is a fine of up to £5,000 and £200 for failing to complete a form justifying travel. It could also apply to a person not traveling but going to the point of embarkation.

ONGOING MATTERS.

CONTACT DETAILS AND DATABASE

Members are again encouraged to update their contact details as it makes it so much easier to get in touch when needed especially at this unprecedented time.

Crown Agents Bank (CAB) AND DECLARATIONITIS

(THIS ONLY APPLIES IF YOUR PENSION IS PAID BY CAB)

Issues relating to Declarationitis remained for some time especially in relation to receipt of the required hard copies in addition to the scanned copies. Unfortunately, a move that was hoped for full electronic email system did not materialise. Additionally, due to intransigence by HK Treasury, it is clear from my conversations and dealing this will not happen. A hard copy of the declaration is required full stop.

In the main though the difficulties encountered with delays in the postal service and missed emails etc were actually dealt with promptly and with a degree of flexibility which was most welcome. Whilst some of the CAB staff were officious and bureaucratic one new member was extremely sympathetic and helpful and in fact went out of her way to assist with issues in the States, South Africa, UK, NZ and downunder. I have seen this before but sadly also a reversion to the norm after a period of time and presumably assimilation. Hopefully this will not be the case this time around.

This is especially so, as we are fast approaching the Annual Declarationitis exercise again. Whilst the mail situation has improved and recently airmail from HK took one month instead of 3 with a strange round trip through eastern Europe or by sea. Nevertheless, I think we should be prepared for similar problems and delays and changes to deadlines and returns. It remains to be seen in April when the forms are sent out by CAB what changes will occur initially this year. As far as I am aware, they are all still working from home at the moment

and probably will for some time. Some firms are already making work from home permanent or semi-permanent with a day or two per week in the office and this I feel will be the case for the rest of this year.

We will inform members promptly of changes or developments as they arise throughout the year. Additionally due to the failure of the mail system do consider using a courier service.

One word of advice if you are unsure or need information do email CAB and give reminders as well. Also, those without internet or computers should get friends or relatives to assist them. Also do inform Treasury of problems or complaints regarding CAB and their action/response. The previous notes circulated are at Annex I for information.

The relevant addresses and emails are: -

Treasury (HK) (Pensions Dept.)

Room 107, 1/F

Immigration Tower

7 Gloucester Road

Tel +852 2829 5113

Email pension@try.gov.hk

Crown Agents Bank

Crown Agents Bank

The Quadrant House

SM2 5AS

Tel 44 (0) 203 903 2990

PensionsServices@crowagentsbank.com

HONG KONG TREASURY - TAX RETURN

Quite frankly this was a disaster throughout the year and in fact continued into January 2021 when the last batch of tax demands was sent out in December 2020. There were delays to Assessment forms, Tax returns Tax demands and payment. This was mainly due to the collapse of the mailing system. However, this was fortunately recognised by IRD who adopted a flexible and sensible approach to the multitude of issues.

For similar reasons as per CAB coupled with the fact that HK lockdown continues, few planes are flying to HK, and their inoculation programme has only really just started, there will again be problems this year. HK will probably need up to another year to make serious headway against the pandemic.

The best advice if you are concerned or have problems with any aspect in relation to tax is to inform them by phone or email. Do make a note of your tax reference no and the name of the tax assessor and use that information in any correspondence emails etc. It is also recommended that members consider using a courier service for important documents due to the unreliability of the mail system.

The contact emails for IRD are:

taxctr1@ird.gov.hk

taxctr2@ird.gov.hk

Please ensure you give your name and tax reference number. The previous notes circulated are at Annex I for information.

Probate - IRD- Refund of Overpaid Tax and Tax Reserve Certificates

Probate has paused for the time being. One case requiring FULL Probate has been processed but delayed for the time being as the Applicant has to present herself at the Probate Court to make the application. Due to the Covid Virus the majority of the cases have been delayed or put on hold for the time being. This is mainly because the process requires confidential documents to be sent to and from HK and at present, the mail is totally unreliable. One new case commenced in March 21.

Emergency Relief Fund

There was no necessity to access the Fund during the year fortunately, but Members are reminded of its existence and its purpose to help those in real need.

ACCESS TO FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS AND ACCOUNTS AND PASSWORDS IN GENERAL

Due to the importance and significance of this issue for relatives and family I am leaving my previous comments in full as a reminder to all. It is essential to regularly review and ensure that all of us have our financial affairs in order for the inevitable. I would strongly advise all to review their arrangements particularly in the light of any changes to the law or procedures. It is vitally important for those left behind.

I encourage all members to make sure that your immediate loved ones and family have full knowledge of the financial situation. They also need a clear instructions on how to access the associated funds and access the associated passwords. This includes all means of access through phone apps, messages etc as well as the various bank cards. Those who are left behind MUST be able to readily access this information as if not, the stress and problems they face can be so much they can cause untold stress, depression and adversely affect their health.

We have always been told not to write down passwords etc. This advice is totally impractical and useless. Passwords now are becoming complicated as simple ones are just not accepted, and the vast number of passwords are just too many to remember. Myself I have in excess of 300. My strategy is to maintain one master key computer security program to hold all these passwords. I then group the passwords into three categories Confidential Passwords requiring complex passwords such as Bank Accounts and other Financial Instruments. General passwords involving financial information requiring only some degree of complexity such as Retailers, Stores, Websites etc. Easy passwords for subscribing to

general websites such as newspapers, hobbies and the like where finance is not an issue.

Your next of kin must not only know where to find these passwords, but they must also know and be familiar with how to access the accounts and financial instruments on the internet, particularly if they are online. This is particularly, as a result of the virus, becoming essential as we approach a cashless society in an accelerated manner. At the moment you can only order and buy a pint with an App.

I implore all to ensure that their next of kin has all the information and knowledge to access bank accounts etc particularly the use of any associated computer apps and telephone apps.

Matters to be KIV

JO MITCHELL and ELIZABETH REAL

Facebook Page

Spousal Visas

There have been no further developments.

HKID Replacement Exercise

No further developments. No issues raised.

Force Accommodation at The Police College

No further developments.

NHS Visitors to UK

Nothing further

HONG KONG Specific Welfare Arrangements

No new recent items

Finance bill 2017 Tax and Expats living abroad

Nothing further on Domicile.

EXPENSES

Expenditure for Welfare due to the current situation remains muted.

Welfare Overall

We continue to be active around the world with a number of issues including one in the States regarding tax problems which is still outstanding. We have also been assisting indirectly with a sad case in UK in respect of a non-member who has a serious illness.

For the foreseeable future Covid will continue to dominate and adversely affect our lives, but there is light at the end of this rather long tunnel and the sooner we get back to some semblance of normality the better. One of the saddest things of this chaos has been the inability to be able to say farewell in person or properly to those we have recently lost. Hopefully there will be a suitable occasion later this year to do so. In the meantime do stay focused, stay in touch and STAY SAFE.

D W F O'Brien
Welfare Officer

ANNEX I

DECLARATION ITUS SAGA CONTINUES/ TAX RETURNS

I apologise for yet another missive but please bear with me.

ANNUAL DECLARATION (Applies only to those paid through Crown Agents Bank (CAB))

A member living in Portugal brought to my attention a line in a reply sent to her by CAB which caused me some concern.

“Thank you for taking the time to update us, as we have received a scanned copy of your Declaration of Entitlement your pension payment will not be suspended in July, however if we do not receive the original by August your pension payment will be suspended.” Fingers crossed !!!.....”

A fairly categorical statement which seems to go against the current flexibility being shown. It presents two difficulties. Firstly, back to square one - pensioners never know if their signed hard copy reaches CAB at all never mind on time unless they phone or email to check. Those without email will be unaware of this new deadline!!!!

Without going into detail it begs the question who has stipulated this Treasury or CAB - Not as simple as that but Treasury it seems need hard copies and are looking to have them by August.

I have raised this again with Treasury and emphasised the present difficulties with postal services in various parts of the world such as South Africa and Australia and also Hong Kong and the real difficulties pensioners have in trying to ascertain if their form has been received or not. Additionally, the very fact that postal services are in disarray means that there must be a huge backlog to clear and mail will be lost and or delayed. Note it now seems that although Treasury IRD and Pensions were of the view that mail services were improving, a member, who contacted her assessor direct, was told a few days ago they are becoming aware that airmail is going by sea due to lack of planes flying!!

NEVERTHELESS THE DEADLINE FOR AUGUST REMAINS - (For the moment!)

For the majority particularly those in the UK, HK and Europe this will not be a problem as mail is getting through. The advice I have been given I now pass on to all.

IF YOU HAVE ANY DOUBT THAT YOUR DECLARATION HAS NOT BEEN OR MAY NOT BE RECEIVED BY CAB BY THE 10TH AUGUST EMAIL OR PHONE CAB

(Email is easier especially if they are still in lockdown at that time) Please copy to me any emails sent.

In this regard please give them time to clear the current exercise and check closer to the 10th August in view of the postal delays.

I have been informed that if there are still difficulties at that time action and other options will be put in place - rest assured I will remain on their backs!!

Tel +44 (0) 203 903 2990

PensionsServices@crowngentsbank.com

TAX RETURNS (This applies to all who receive a pension)

The situation here is fluid and as I pointed out in my last message these went out starting June 1st. A number of people have contacted me regarding the fact that they

have not received the forms to date. This could well be because they are at sea!!! I queried IRD some 10 days ago regarding the process, pointing out the fact that postal services are delayed or non-existent, many members do not have email or computer knowledge and asked whether they could give a blanket extension till October. I got a reply this am which is reproduced in full herewith:-

“I refer to your previous enquiry.

The bulk issue of tax returns for individuals for the year of assessment 2019/20 was on 1 June 2020. If taxpayer cannot receive the tax return/ need extra time for completing and returning the tax return, he/she can submit a duly signed written notice to the department to request for a copy of the tax return/ apply an extension for filing the tax return. Please remember to include taxpayer's signature and file number/ HKID number in the written notice. The notice can be sent by mail (G.P.O. Box 132 General Post Office Hong Kong) or you can scan your letter and email taxctr1@ird.gov.hk) the scanned document to the Department for processing.

Different taxpayers belong to different Assessing Groups and the file number of the taxpayer will usually indicate which Group the taxpayer belong to. But so far if the taxpayer can provide his/her HKID number in his/her application, the Department can redirect his/her enquiries to the relevant Groups for further handling.

For further enquiries, please provide us via email the file number/ HKID card number of the taxpayer, day-time contact number and your previous email correspondence(s) with the Department to taxctr1@ird.gov.hk. Alternatively, you may call us at 187 8088 during office hours to enquire you tax status.

Yours faithfully,
TSEUNG Lai-ying
For Assessor
Inland Revenue Department “

My advice is to email IRD at either if the following 2 addresses with your ID card or file reference number and state that you have not received the Tax Return and request an extension. The emails are :-

taxctr1@ird.gov.hk Group A to F

taxinfo@ird.gov.hk Group G to N

The essential information that is required is :-

1. Your name
2. Your file number / ID card no
3. Reason for requesting extension of time for filing Tax return
4. Year of assessment of the Tax Return (e.g. 2019/20)
5. Signature (the signature must be the same as that in your tax return previously submitted)

The signed letter can be submitted to IRD by the following ways : -

- post to mailing address: G.P.O. Box 132, Hong Kong, or (I have pointed out to IRD problems as stated)
- send fax to fax no.: 2824 0791, or (Note I have pointed out to IRD this is fairly obsolete technology but it exists)
- scan the letter with a scanner or take a photo of the letter and send by email.

I have pointed out that some people do not have access to computers or the internet, consequently please spread this as far and as wide as you can. Additionally, if anyone has difficulty or has no access to a scanner get a younger relative to do it for you or contact the undersigned. In the absence of a scanner, the letter can be copied using a mobile phone.

The Telephone no for General Enquiries at IRD is below but you should have on your past forms a number for your particular assessment officer/ team :-

IRD General Tel no +852 187 8088

FINALLY

In respect of both forms Annual Declaration and Tax Return you may want to consider using a courier service but do not use Post Box numbers only full addresses.

ATTENDEES

Christine Braithwaite	Keith Braithwaite
Elizabeth Clarke	Peter Dyson
Phillip Fraser	Betty Guest
Paul Guest	Brenda Hornsby
Alan Hornsby	Mark Hurd
Connie Hurd	Glenys Jones
Barry Jones	Ruth Lomas
Isobel Kieran	Susanna McDoual
Keith Lomas	Sheridan Prisk
Stuart McDouall	Simon Roberts
Jim Prisk	Gerard Tannam
Jeff Richards	Liz Williams
Angus Stevenson-Hamilton	Richard Williams

MEMBERS WHO PARTICIPATED VIA ZOOM

Tony & Ann Gregan	Bob Steele	Ewan Mackay	Ross Hill-Brown
Peter Halliday			

APOLOGIES AND BEST WISHES

Mike Dowie	Ben Munford	Steve Clements	Kevin Edlin
Dave O'Brien	Mike Harris	Ted Stevenson	Mike Waters
Christine Orsler	John Hazelden	John Macdonald	Dick Younge
Ian Tyzzer	Bob & Janet Steele		