

**POLICE
LIFE**

THE SINGAPORE POLICE FORCE MAGAZINE
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NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICE POST

POLICE RADIO DIVISION

1820 - 2020

200 YEARS OF POLICING

SALUTING THE PAST, SAFEGUARDING THE FUTURE

CONTENT SPOTLIGHT



A Revealing Conversation with the Commissioner of Police

To 200 and beyond. Since its humble beginnings in 1820, the Singapore Police Force (SPF) has come a long way and progressed to become a modern, professional Force of more than 15,000 officers. To kick-start the first issue of *Police Life* this year, we spoke to Commissioner of Police Hoong Wee Teck, who shared with us his perspectives on policing and his hopes for the SPF as it progresses beyond 2020.

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Community Policing Through the Years

From feared enforcers to trusted partners – the SPF's community policing model is now one of its hallmarks. How did this come about? Learn more about the transition, and the country that helped inspire it.

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Intergenerational Bonds in the Force

We delved deep into the lives of two families of police officers. Read on to find out how our police-parents became inspirations for their children to eventually follow in their folks' footsteps.

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ON THE COVER: Photograph of Neighbourhood Police Post © SPH

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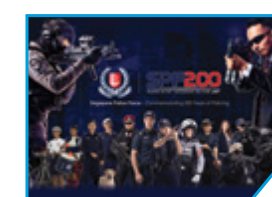
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A Revealing Conversation with Commissioner of Police

By Denise Luo
(Photo: Public Affairs Department)

Citing his officers as his source of motivation, Commissioner of Police (CP) Hoong Wee Teck is one who leads by example and has no qualms about making personal sacrifices or being in the thick of the action with his men.

As a leader, CP Hoong believes in seeking continuous improvement to strengthen the capabilities of the Singapore Police Force (SPF) and enhance the well-being of his officers. Building on the successes of his predecessors, he has put in place a renewed focus on transforming the Force to be future-ready. With a myriad of new capabilities in analytics and autonomous technologies that are rolled out progressively, CP Hoong ensures that the police force remains relevant and effective in an unpredictable and challenging security environment.

Throughout our conversation, CP Hoong projects a commanding presence but it is in no way intimidating. CP Hoong is a man of refreshing candour. Rarely profiled, we are glad to sit down with Commissioner for an honest, get-to-know-him chat.

You grew up in the early years of post-independence Singapore. How would you describe your impression of policing during those years?

I grew up witnessing a side of Singapore that was a far cry from what it is today – a city-state known for its safety and security standards. Back in the 60s and 70s, Singapore was plagued by lawlessness. Secret society activities and crimes were rampant. Kidnapping and extortion cases were frequently reported in the papers.

The approach to policing then was largely based on reactive strategies with minimal community involvement in tackling crime. The Police were mostly alienated from the community. The community feared the Police more than they respected us. This is a stark contrast from the strong police-community partnership that we now share.

What inspired you to join the Force?

The lack of social order in post-independence Singapore made me wonder if our society could be a safer and better place to live in. I was very much curious about policing as a teen and eventually joined the National Police Cadet Corps in school. It was there that I understood more about the law and the uniformed culture, and that made me more interested in police work.

As a rookie cop, what were some of the challenges that you faced?

Back in those days, we did not have strong logistical support. The older officers might recall how challenging it was to even ask for basic office supplies. I still remember that I had to bring my used pen to the store, to prove that the pen had run out of ink before I could exchange it for a new one.

We were provided with bulky typewriters that weighed almost four kilogrammes, which were also common-pool items. Many of us resorted to buying our personal portable typewriter to facilitate taking of

statements at the scene of the incident. Unlike today, we also did not have the comfort of working in an air-conditioned environment. We mostly started out working in old run-down buildings that were cramped and stuffy. The police vehicles that we drove were also non air-conditioned.

In addition, manpower was very tight and we did not have dedicated officers performing specific functional areas like today. Then, there were no specialist teams like the Property and Violent Offences Squad (PVOS) or Special Victim Unit (SVU). As investigators, we were expected to handle all types of investigation cases. On top of that, we were frequently rotated to attend Residents' Committee meetings and deployed for routine security deployments like soccer matches. It was also not uncommon for us to take a 24-hour duty tour every three days.

Training methods were also not as sophisticated as today. By leveraging technology, trainees are now able to get a more realistic experience of what to expect in the real world. Back then, on-the-job training and learning from mentors were some of the best ways to learn and get up to speed. I am grateful to have had experienced mentors who were helpful in showing me the ropes.

You have spent a fair bit of your career doing investigation and intelligence work. Were there any cases that stood out and what were some of your key learning points?

It is very hard to single out one or two most memorable cases. I have spent more than half of my career in investigation and intelligence departments. Because of these specialised postings, I have been able to see through a number of major cases, such as kidnappings, goldsmith robberies, firearm offences and even a plane crash incident.

Each of these cases has its own learning points, and helps sharpen my operational instincts and broaden my perspectives on policing. There are standard procedures and directives to guide investigation approaches but in reality, there are no standard guidelines on how to solve a crime. Each case is unique, and it is important and useful to think out of the

box as you are dealing with people who have different psyches and motivations. Also, you must have the courage and be prepared to make judgment calls and decisions according to the situation.

Fighting crime is a team effort. Support from your teammates and synergies between units are crucial to solving a case.

Any words of advice for young officers in the Force?

You must first get the basics right. It is important to get strong grounding in your foundation postings. The experiences that you gain are essential building blocks that will help you progress in your career. Even as CP now, I tap into my past experiences and lessons learnt more than 30 years ago to help me in my decision-making and daily work.

Police work is also very diverse in nature. You may not always get your preferred posting but you should accept the job assigned to you with an open mind and a keen attitude. You will gain valuable experiences with each posting, so do learn as much as you can.

Importantly, one must uphold strong values and professional conduct early in your career. Your reputation starts from the day you join the Force, and others are watching you as you progress in your career. You cannot impose on others standards which you cannot live up to. So, walk the talk, be consistent.

I reckon that as Commissioner, you would need to keep your ears close to the ground. How do you go about doing so?

I maintain open and diverse communication channels. The SPF is a huge organisation, and you cannot assume that just by visiting one or two Neighbourhood Police Centres (NPCs), you will understand all other NPCs. Each NPC, Land Division, and department has its unique challenges and profile of officers. This is why I make regular ground visits and engage officers in dialogue sessions. I also make it a point to try out the equipment that the officers are using to better assess what works and what does not. In my engagement with officers, I believe in being open and candid so that officers will share genuine feedback.

How do you motivate your people?

We need people who have a passion for police work, who look beyond salary and are willing to make personal sacrifices to help others. When you have such officers on board, look after their welfare and their psychological well-being, and support officers with enhancements to the service schemes and better career development opportunities. As leaders, we also need to listen to officers' feedback, be open and flexible. It speaks volumes when officers' suggestions are implemented.

You are more than 5 years into your appointment as Commissioner since January 2015, when you commented that you would work towards realising the vision of Singapore becoming the “safest city in the world” and you planned to “leverage technology and innovation to bring the SPF's crime-fighting capabilities to a new level.” What are the standout developments that you are most proud of?

One of the developments includes raising frontline policing tactical capabilities to deal with terrorism. With the establishment of the Emergency Response Teams, In-situ Reaction Teams and Rapid Deployment Troops, the SPF is now better equipped to handle security incidents. I am also glad that we have constantly been pushing technological boundaries to improve our operational processes and capabilities. For instance, the Police Operations Command Centre today is not only capable of taking '999' calls and deploying resources, it also serves as the nerve centre for sense-making, analytics, and command and control that enables enhanced incident response.

As an organisation that values people development, we have also enhanced the career and development schemes of our officers. The unification of police rank structure and the implementation of the expert career track allow more room for progression, helping officers to better achieve their aspirations.

In spite of these developments, we must remember that change is the only constant. The SPF must continue to evolve and adapt to the demands from the world and society. Stay flexible and nimble.

What should the next generation of officers do to ensure the continued success of the Force?

First, we must ensure that the Police continue to have the ability to uphold the rule of law and protect the people. As crime continues to evolve, we have to always stay ahead and remain effective so as to maintain law and order. No one can be above the law, and there must be trust from the public that anyone who breaks the law will be dealt with firmly, but fairly.

Second, the active involvement of the community is essential in our policing strategy; we cannot be overly transactional in our interactions with the public, and must continue to solicit public support in the work we do.

Third, we must always recruit people who are passionate about police work. Nurture and train them to realise their potential as our officers form the backbone of the Force.

As the nature of policing is 24/7, I can imagine that your job would be highly stressful. How do you manage the intensity of your work?

Stress is an inevitable part of work. What matters is that you believe in what you are doing and continue to be passionate about your job. You will then naturally find meaning behind the sacrifices you make in your work.

All these years, I feel honoured to be part of this organisation, one in which we are a Force for the Nation. When I come to work every day, I can feel the strong esprit de corps and our officers' commitment in realising the mission and vision of the Force. That gives me motivation, and drives me to do even better each day.

That said, at times, you need to learn to prioritise and give up certain things. Some things may not always be as important or as urgent as you think they are. Take control of the situation; if that means striking out a task or two for the day, do so and you will realise that you have gained better control of your work.

Outside of work, I enjoy playing badminton. It has been my favourite sport since young and I would opt to play a game of badminton over every other sport. This is how fixated I can get when it comes to my personal life, but at work, I am always open and receptive to new ideas!

What is the one thing that you would like to achieve before you call time on your stint?

We have a highly competitive police scheme of service, but I hope officers would continue to see further enhancements to the scheme. In particular, it would be good if we can raise the retirement age for police officers to better support officers who wish to continue working longer.

2020 marks the SPF's bicentenary. Any wishes for the Force as it progresses past SPF200?

Our existence is to serve our people and the nation. I wish for the Singapore Police Force to maintain its stature as one of the finest police organisations in the world and to continue to be a Force for the Nation.

200 Years of Policing in Singapore

By Rachel Ng & Syam Roslan
(Photos: Public Affairs Department/ National Archives Singapore)

Early 1820 - Our Origins

Policing in Singapore can trace its origins to soon after Sir Stamford Raffles established a trading post in Singapore. Recognising the need for law and order in the booming immigrant town, Major-General William Farquhar, the first British Resident of colonial Singapore, established the police department in 1820. He appointed his son-in-law, Francis James Bernard as the Police Assistant, to lead a 12-man team comprising a writer, jailor, *jemadar* (sergeant), and eight *peada* (constables) to enforce law and order in the fledgling settlement. The first police office was built near the Singapore River in December 1820.

1826-1871 - Policing a Flourishing Town



Thomas Dunman, the first Commissioner of Police. Source: Donald Davies, "More Old Singapore", 1956

In 1826, Singapore was incorporated into the Straits Settlements. The police force in Singapore came under the command of the Resident Councillor, John Prince. Singapore, with its largely poverty-stricken immigrant population and pirate ships threatening maritime trade, faced high crime rates in its early years. As the development of the legal institutions could not keep up with the growing population, many crimes went unreported. The lack of proper supervision in the Force and poor morale of the rank-and-file officers exacerbated the problem.

Following an urgent public meeting in February 1843 to discuss measures to fight rampant crime, Mr Thomas Dunman was assigned the twin portfolio of Deputy Magistrate and Deputy Superintendent of Police. Working tirelessly to improve the Force, he raised the calibre of policemen by stressing discipline amongst officers. By 1846, he had established rules and regulations for officers to adhere to, drawn patrol sector boundaries and introduced a standard uniform for use. He also fought for better working conditions and wages, shorter hours and a pension scheme. When the Police Act of 1856 came into effect on 1 January 1857, Dunman became the first full-time Commissioner of Police. He served with distinction until 1871.

During this period, the Force also introduced its first specialist units to combat specific crimes. In 1866, a small Detective Department was set up to investigate secret societies. In the same year, a floating police station was built, marking the establishment of a Marine Police to combat piracy and protect Singapore's vulnerable shipping routes.

1872-1942 - The Straits Settlements Police Force

Shortly after the Straits Settlements became a crown colony in 1867, the Police underwent a reorganisation with the enactment of the Police Force Ordinance in 1872. This gave rise to the Straits Settlements Police Force. An Inspector-General of Police, headquartered in Singapore, took charge of all the police forces in the Straits Settlements.

The Straits Settlements Police Force faced many challenges in this new era. With the growth of trade due to events like the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, Singapore grew rapidly. As the port flourished, large numbers of Chinese coolies flocked to Singapore looking for work. The new waves of mostly poor and uneducated male migrant workers brought



Detective Department in 1906.

about law and order problems. Prostitution, gambling, drug abuse, secret society activities and riots were widespread. Secret societies, in particular, proved to be a major source of crime resulting in incessant rioting, thuggery and abuse of new immigrants. To combat this, the Chinese Protectorate was established in 1877 and new laws were passed to control secret societies. Following the 1879 Commission of Inquiry into the state of the police force, a new Sikh Police Contingent (SPC) was formed in the local police force in 1881. The SPC was deployed to form the nucleus of an elite armed police, and together with measures to rein in the influence of secret societies, proved an immediate success in maintaining law and order.



Early khaki uniform worn from 1890 to before the Second World War

The turn of the century saw an ever-increasing population. The Police had to expand to cope with increasing crime, particularly internal security threats linked to overseas events in China, India and Japan. The Police responded by expanding its policing and investigative capabilities. It also instituted proper training by establishing the Police Training School in 1929, and improved working conditions with new police stations. The actions of the Straits Settlements Police against communists and secret societies helped make Singapore safer and more prosperous, but bred some resentment among sympathetic Chinese who saw the Police as a tool of the colonial government.



Sikh Policemen

1942-1945 - World War II

On 15 February 1942, Singapore fell to the Japanese and remained under occupation until their surrender in September 1945. This occupation dealt a heavy blow to the Police as many of its leaders, including Inspector-General A. H. Dickinson, were interned. The Force also came under the control of the Japanese.

1946-1959 - Restoring Order

The British Military Administration took charge of Singapore until 1 April 1946, when the Straits Settlements were dissolved and Singapore became a crown colony. Under this new administration, the Police in Singapore was renamed the Singapore Police Force (SPF) in 1945 and headed by Colonel R. E. Foulger. But the Police now faced a new state of mayhem. After years of being clamped down on by the Japanese, secret societies flourished with a vengeance, extending their influence into politics and government circles. Meanwhile, in their bid for political dominance, communists instigated strikes to sabotage the British government and undermine confidence in public order. This led to the declaration of the Malayan Emergency in 1948 – a guerrilla war that would last 12 years. Unions and Chinese schools also launched a series of protests in the 1950s and 1960s. To augment police staff strength depleted by the Japanese occupation, the Volunteer Special Constabulary, Gurkha Contingent, and Riot Squad were established in 1946, 1949, and 1952 respectively. The first Women Police Unit within the Special Constabulary was also formed in 1949. The new units provided assistance during the unrest. The post-war Police made a further breakthrough in 1945 when it established the Gangs and Radio Sub-branch, later known as the Radio Branch, with scavenged radio equipment left behind from World War II. The Police were able to launch the emergency hotline "999" in 1947, which helped officers respond more quickly to incidents and drastically reduced crimes like armed robberies. The Radio Branch was subsequently expanded and re-organised as the Radio Division in 1948.



Colonel Foulger addressing members of the Straits Settlements Police Force in 1945.



First batch of female graduates from the Police Training Schools in 1949.

1959-1965 - Birth of a New Nation

Singapore attained self-governance in 1959, and in 1963, merged with Malaysia. The young nation faced many threats to its security, and had to work to build up its defences, institutions and people in order to safeguard its future. Factions against the merger stirred up racial and communal violence, with the worst riots occurring in July and September 1964. Singapore was also subject to a spate of bombings carried out by Indonesian saboteurs during the Indonesian Confrontation against Malaysia between 1963 and 1966. The Vigilante Corps was formed in May 1964 amidst the precarious situation. Over 10,000 people from all walks of life registered to help the Police in street patrols against saboteurs.



The former Combined Operations Room where '999' calls were received, circa 1950s

1965-1970 - Policing in a Post-independent Singapore



The Police Radio Division at Eu Tong Sen Road in 1973.

On 9 August 1965, Singapore separated from Malaysia and became an independent republic. In 1968, the Police crest adopted the name Polis Republik Singapura, or Republic of Singapore Police. With Singapore now in charge of its own defence, the Police took on a bigger role in securing the nation. Within five years of independence, recruitment numbers expanded and Police National Service was introduced in 1967. The Force was also inducted into the Interpol, and the Police Training School was elevated to Police Academy. In 1969, the Force was reorganised, and the blue flannel shirt and khaki shorts were replaced with blue uniforms

consistent with those worn by overseas police forces. By 1970, Singapore was heralding a period of peace and prosperity. Crime rates fell, secret societies were kept under control because of the passing of the Criminal Law (Temporary Provisions) Act in 1955, and rapid economic growth rendered communist ideals irrelevant.

1970s - Charting New Waters

Singapore had defied the odds and its economy had taken off. Improved living standards, combined with tough and effective law enforcement – with the enactment of the Arm Offences Act and Misuse of Drugs Act in 1973 – led to a decline in crime. In 1976, the crime rate was not only the lowest in two decades, but also the lowest in the world for a city of comparable size. These results gained the SPF a good public image. In 1979, a survey found that the public perceived the SPF to be efficient, yet rather aloof and official. Steps were hence taken to make the police more involved in the community it was serving. It adopted a reliable and friendly image to win the confidence and trust of the public, the very people it depended on for information and cooperation.



Officers from the first batch of Police National Service (Full-Time) pose for a photo in 1975.

1980s - Fighting Crime Together



Kim Keat NPP in the 1980s

© SPH



Close Police-public partnership symbolised by the NPP and NPC logo

By the 1980s, the booming economy had transformed the country and this was reflected in the new urbanised landscape. By then, three-quarters of the population were living in Housing and Development Board (HDB) flats. Initiatives like the National Crime Prevention Council and Neighbourhood Watch Scheme were launched to actively involve the public in crime prevention. These initiatives paved the way in fostering civic-mindedness and social responsibility to create safer neighbourhoods. They were instrumental to the SPF's future community projects. On 1 June 1983, the Force launched the Neighbourhood Police Post (NPP) system, an example of how it was transitioning its policing methods to a proactive, community-based approach. Police officers were also given an image makeover. No longer were they seen as feared enforcers of the law. Instead, they were trusted members of the community. In 1997, the policing model was further developed into the Neighbourhood Police Centre (NPC) system, which was designed to be a one-stop policing centre for the community. This system was widely successful and crime rates dropped from 1,642 per 100,000 population to 613 per 100,000 in 2001.

2000s - Policing in the New Millennium

The September 11 attacks in 2001 in New York and Washington DC, and the subsequent war on terror, changed the entire operating landscape for the SPF. It forced the organisation to rethink the way it worked. New capabilities such as bomb blast management, counter assault measures and other counter-terrorism initiatives were developed to operate in this new security environment. More recently, the SPF geared up its counter-terrorism operational capabilities with the introduction of Emergency Response Teams (ERTs) and In-Situ Reaction Teams (IRTs) to handle incidents more quickly. The SPF continues to engage the community through SGSecure to sensitise, train and mobilise the community to prevent and deal with terror attacks.



ERT Officers on ground deployment.

In response to evolving demographics, technological advancements, rising affluence and education, as well as a changing operating environment, the NPC system was further enhanced in 2012, resulting in the current Community Policing System. The SPF also made full use of modern technology to better manage change. Technology adoption is being strengthened with more video analytics-enabled police cameras installed at public areas. Frontline officers are also equipped with the necessary tools for better sense-making to fight crime.

A Force for the Nation

Singapore was again ranked first in the annual Gallup Global Law and Order Report, with 94% of residents feeling safe walking alone in their neighbourhood at night. The strong police-community partnership remains an important pillar of successful policing in Singapore. The SPF will continue to partner the community and stakeholders to safeguard public safety, and ensure that Singapore remains one of the safest cities in the world.

History of the Police Crest

By Irwan Shah
(Photos: Public Affairs Department)

The Singapore Police Force (SPF) has served different governments throughout its history, from the British colonial era to the present day. Let us take a journey back in time as Police Life uncovers the meaning and rationale behind each crest used over the past two centuries.



Singapore Police Force
2015 - Current

The current SPF Crest was unveiled in 2015, marking 50 years of Singapore's independence. The more stylised and modern look represents the SPF's commitment to being forward-looking while preserving its heritage. The SPF Crest carries a deep legacy, and is an official symbol linking our role with that of the Singapore government. At the centre of the crest is a red shield with five white stars and a white crescent moon, similar to the Singapore flag. The paddy wreath symbolises substance and humility, crowning the shield to represent our commitment to the mission in safeguarding the nation and her people. The blue ribbon connected to the paddy wreath has the Malay words *Polis Republik Singapura* inscribed on it, which means Republic of Singapore Police (a former name of the SPF) in English.



The Straits Settlements
Police Force
1800s - 1942

The SPF has its roots in the Straits Settlements Police Force. Within the crest, a lozenge badge of the Straits Settlements was placed in the centre, surrounded by a wreath. Three Tudor Crowns within the white pall reversed in the crest represented the Straits Settlements' three territories: Singapore, Malacca and Penang. This crest was officially used for over a hundred years leading up to 1942, before the Japanese Occupation of Singapore during World War II.

The Straits Settlements were dissolved after the reorganisation of British positions in 1946. Singapore became a Crown Colony, while Malacca and Penang became a part of the Malayan Union, resulting in another modification of the Police crest. The scroll on the crest was changed to bear the words 'Singapore Police Force' and the red lozenge was replaced with a white disc. The three Tudor Crowns on the crest were replaced by a big St Edward's crown in the centre of the red pall reversed. The new crown marked the era of Queen Elizabeth II's reign with the death of King George VI and her coronation in 1952.



Singapore Police Force
1946 - 1959



Polis Negara Singapura
1959 - 1963

Singapore attained self-governance in 1959, and its state flag was introduced, prompting a change to the crest in December that year. This was the first time that the red shield was used, as seen on the present national arms, replacing the white disc. The crown and the red pall reversed were replaced with a crescent moon and five stars while the scroll bore the words, *Polis Negara Singapura* (State of Singapore Police).

Singapore gained independence from the United Kingdom as one of the states of Malaysia in 1963. During this period, the SPF was integrated into the *Polis Di-Raja Malaysia* (Royal Malaysia Police) along with the police forces of Malaya, Sabah and Sarawak. The SPF adopted another entity's crest for the second time. A lion's head, representing Singapore, was at the centre of the crest. A traditional Malay dagger *keris*, representing Malaya, and a traditional Borneo machete *parang elang*, representing Sabah and Sarawak, were placed behind the lion's head in a criss-cross formation. They were surrounded by a wreath of garlanded paddy stalks, and accompanied by a Malaysian crown at the top.

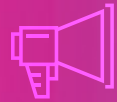


Polis Di-rajia Malaysia
1963 - 1965



Polis Republik Singapura
1965 - 2015

With Singapore's independence in August 1965, the police crest reverted to the one before the merger and was subsequently updated. The red shield, with the crescent moon and five stars, returned as the emblem in the centre of the crest. Two blue and white garlands of paddy sheaves, which are bound together, surrounded it. The words on the scroll were changed to '*Polis Republik Singapura*' (Republic of Singapore Police). Singapore's independence marked the beginning of the SPF that we know today.



SPF200 Calendar of Events and Activities

By Syam Roslan

In 2020, the Singapore Police Force (SPF) will mark 200 years of policing in Singapore (SPF200) with a series of commemorative events throughout the year. The events will highlight SPF's rich heritage, showcase the evolution of policing and recognise the contributions of our officers and the community in making Singapore one of the safest countries in the world.

Here is the list of events that you do not want to miss!

Visit <http://www.police.gov.sg/spf200> or scan the QR code to find out more.



Launch of Police Bicentennial and SPF200 Run

Date: 10 – 11 January 2020
Venue: Marina Barrage (Flag off for last 4km at 9.15am)
Singapore Sports Hub OCBC Square (Ending point)



The Police Bicentennial commemorative events will kick off with the SPF200 Run, where our officers will complete a distance of 200km in 24 hours, passing through the sites of 30 past and present SPF establishments across the island. The run signifies the SPF's role and contributions in nation-building over two centuries, and our commitment towards safeguarding Singapore every day.

The President of the Republic of Singapore, Madam Halimah Yacob, will flag off the final leg of the run at Marina Barrage. The run will end at Police Family Day Carnival at OCBC Square where she will officially launch Police Bicentennial (SPF200).

A set of six stamps will be introduced to commemorate the SPF's bicentenary. The six stamps will feature various police vocations and the strong police-community partnership that keeps Singapore safe and secure every day, as well as pay tribute to SPF pioneering officers, who laid a strong foundation for future generations of officers to build on.

SPF200 Exhibition

Date: 6 February – 17 May 2020, 10am – 7pm
Venue: National Museum of Singapore

In 1820, the first police force was formed with only 12 men. The SPF200 Exhibition tells the stories of our 200-year policing journey - bravery in the face of danger, of bringing criminals to justice, of duty above self. This is the story of how Singapore transformed from a lawless frontier town to one of the safest cities in the world.



Police Heritage Trail

Date: 28 May 2020 (Official Launch)

The SPF will launch a 3.5km Police Heritage Trail on 28 May 2020 to highlight iconic landmarks that were built as the Force developed in tandem with the growing city-state. Covering seven points, including the first police office, Old Hill Street Police Station, and the former Central Police Station, the trail commemorates the SPF's rich 200-year history through its built heritage.



Police Day Parade and Show

Date: 30 May, 31 May, 2 June 2020 (Preview), 3 June 2020 (Actual)
Venue: Singapore Indoor Stadium

The SPF will hold a parade and show on Police Day on 3 June 2020 at the Singapore Indoor Stadium. Police Day is a significant event for all SPF officers as we celebrate our achievements and recognise the contributions of retired and serving officers. It also marks the day Singapore obtained self-government in 1959 and when the Police became accountable to the people as the law enforcement agency of an elected Government. SPF officers will renew our commitment and pledge to continue to serve our nation and carry out our duties with courage, loyalty, integrity and fairness. The SPF200 commemorative book titled "Safeguarding Every Day, 200 Years of the Singapore Police Force" will also be launched on that day.



Police Community Roadshows

The Police Community Roadshow 2020 will be held at different locations across the island in June, November and December 2020. The series of roadshows is aimed at building stronger ties with the public, allowing the public to gain a better understanding of police work, and inspiring future generations of police officers.



Date

Venue

13 and 14 Jun 2020 (Saturday & Sunday)	Open field beside Bishan Junction 8
20 and 21 Jun 2020 (Saturday & Sunday)	Hardcourt beside Yishun MRT station
27 and 28 Jun 2020 (Saturday & Sunday)	Ngee Ann City
21 and 22 Nov 2020 (Saturday & Sunday)	VivoCity
28 and 29 Nov 2020 (Saturday & Sunday)	Open field beside Tampines MRT station and Tampines Mall
5 and 6 Dec 2020 (Saturday & Sunday)	Open field beside Punggol MRT

SPF200 Musical

Date: 29 August 2020
Venue: The Theatre at Mediacorp

The SPF Band will be presenting its first original musical on 29 August 2020 at The Theatre at Mediacorp Campus. Through theatrical music, dance, display and drama, the musical will showcase the journey in the making of a police officer through highlighting the challenges officers face from training to deployment on the frontline, and how in doing so they exemplify the SPF's four core values – Courage, Loyalty, Integrity and Fairness.



AT A GLANCE: THE POLICE MISSION, VISION, CORE VALUES AND PLEDGE

By Irwan Shah

The Singapore Police Force (SPF) Mission, Vision, Core Values and Police Pledge lie at the heart of every police officer. They guide officers' actions and serve as their moral compass as they discharge their duties. Police Life uncovers the history behind these components and how they became integral to the Force.

MISSION

In 1993, then-Commissioner of Police (CP) Tee Tua Ba believed that police officers should have a mission statement to help define what is expected of them, and guide them towards fulfilling those expectations. He called for the various SPF departments to come up with a formal statement of mission and values.

After many refinements, the SPF Mission Statement was finally unveiled in 1995, spelling out the SPF's priorities, but it was by no means the finished article. It was revised in 2002 during CP Khoo Boon Hui's term to pave the SPF's direction for the new millennium and to inspire its officers to work towards making the SPF a world-class organisation. The Mission was tweaked further in 2011 under CP Ng Joo Hee's watch, to reflect the changes in Singapore's policing environment. Hence, the SPF Mission stands as it is today – To Prevent, Deter and Detect Crime.

To Prevent, Deter and Detect Crime

VISION

Having a common mission was not enough. In 1997, the SPF's top leadership, believed that having a shared purpose would inspire officers to scale greater heights. The first iteration of the SPF's Shared Vision was crafted later that year, before it was revised in 2002 to more accurately reflect the aspirations of police officers of that period. The Shared Vision was further distilled during CP Ng Joo Hee's term in 2011 to more accurately depict the essence of the Force's policing goals in an evolving security environment. This version culminated in today's SPF Vision:

A Force for the Nation – To make Singapore the safest place in the world



CORE VALUES

Originally published together with the SPF Mission in 1995, the SPF Core Values were meant to serve as guidelines for officers as they performed their duties. In 1997, the Core Values were tightened further and incorporated into the SPF's Vision. Since 2002, the Core Values have stood apart from the Shared Vision as a result of focus groups and dialogues with officers throughout the Force.



POLICE PLEDGE

To cement the pact between police officers, the SPF and the nation, a decision was made in 1993 to merge the code of ethics with the Police Pledge at the time. This was part of an effort to update the Pledge to reflect the streamlined mission and values. Today's pledge has its roots in 1995, when SPF leaders thought to align it better with the organisation's updated Mission and Core Values. The Pledge, as we know it, has been recited at police parades and ceremonies ever since.

We pledge to be loyal and true to the Police service and the Republic of Singapore.

We pledge to uphold the law, to protect life and property, to prevent and detect crime.

We pledge to discharge our responsibilities without fear or favour, regardless of race, language or religion.

We pledge to strive for excellence, to be proactive and to exercise initiative in our duties.

We pledge to serve our community and our country and to be courteous and humane in our dealings with every fellow man.



SPF200
SALUTING THE PAST • SAFEGUARDING THE FUTURE

Singapore Police Force – Commemorating 200 Years of Policing

Police Nerve Centre

By Yong Wen Wei, Edwin & Syam Roslan
(Photos: Public Affairs Department and Police Operations Command Centre)

The emergency number “999” is synonymous with the Singapore Police Force (SPF) today. It serves as the hotline for members of the public to dial when they require emergency assistance. Police radio communications have indeed come a long way since its early days of using scavenged equipment left behind from World War II. Today, the SPF constantly looks to integrate new technologies and processes to develop its response and incident management capabilities to support our frontline operations. Police Life provides readers with an overview of how our command and control coordination and capabilities have evolved, and what lies beyond 2020.

1940s - Radio Division

The Radio Division can be traced back to 1945, when the SPF began trialling the use of radio equipment found after the end of World War II. It was originally known as the “Gangs and Radio Sub-branch” within the Criminal Investigation Department (CID), and was started to help combat armed gangsters. Colloquially, officers referred to it as the “Radio Branch”. The use of radio communication quickly proved its effectiveness beyond the ambit of CID as crime evolved and took different shapes. In 1946, police reinforcements summoned to tackle the illegal labour union procession arrived in just eight minutes. This unprecedented milestone then allowed the police to bring the escalating situation swiftly under control. Having proven its effectiveness, the use of radio was implemented force-wide, and the Radio Branch soon grew to become the Radio Division in 1948.



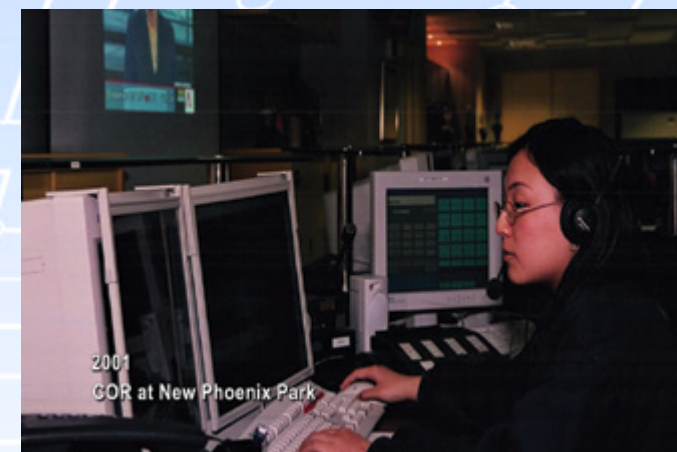
1950s - Combined Operations Room

During the Malayan Emergency in 1951, there was a dire need for joint operations between the Police and military forces to fight communist insurgents, which led to the formation of the Combined Operations Room (COR). Housed in a bomb-proof structure at Pearl's Hill, COR was equipped with then state-of-the-art radio communications systems. To better coordinate Police and military joint operations during the period of social unrest, Chief Minister David Marshall officially launched COR in 1956. It quickly became the nerve centre for central oversight of policing operations across the island. “999” calls were connected via a manual telephone switchboard, and officers used paper forms and tele-printer machines that looked like typewriters to dispatch resources. COR played a critical role in managing events that rocked Singapore, such as the 1956 Chinese middle school riots and the race riots of 1969.



2000s - COR @ New Phoenix Park

In 2001, COR moved to the Police Headquarters (PHQ) at New Phoenix Park. Officers were equipped with better communication devices and computer systems. Command structures also improved, with COR providing oversight and coordination with Divisional Operations Rooms (DORs).



2015 - Formation of the POCC

In 2015, COR migrated to a new building and was renamed the Police Operations Command Centre (POCC). Officially launched by Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, this marked a major milestone in the development of SPF's operational capabilities. POCC, which falls under the purview of the Operations Department, enables real-time incident management and sense-making, integrating people, technology and processes of operations, investigation and intelligence in managing live incidents.

In July 2018, the co-location of all six DORs onto a single watch floor in POCC was completed. Liaison officers from Central Narcotics Bureau, Immigration & Checkpoints Authority and Singapore Civil Defence Force were also deployed to the watch floor 24/7, with future plans to include specialist units such as Traffic Police and Public Transport Security Command in the pipeline.

On 5 July 2019, the first Commander of POCC was appointed by the Commissioner of Police. The POCC, now an independent Command, serves as the nerve centre for all police operations today. In addition to responding to “999” emergency calls, officers in POCC also triage information received through other public platforms (e.g. Police SMS 71999 and 70999 or i-Witness reports), monitor more than 70,000 CCTV cameras and dispatch ground resources where necessary.



Looking Ahead

A new journey has just begun, with POCC playing a major role within the overall concept of the Home Team Operations Centre (HTOC). The HTOC will bring together the operations centres of the SPF, Singapore Civil Defence Force, Immigration and Checkpoint Authority and Central Narcotics Bureau under one roof, where all will share a common situation picture, enabling closer inter-agency coordination when managing both routine and major incidents.



Paving the Way for the Present

By Hadi Hafidz
(Photos: Public Affairs Department)

Ever wondered when some of our police units, including our Police National Service Department, came to the fore? Let us take a walk down memory lane and look back at our history for some interesting facts.

Traffic Police with 'Wings' (1930s)



Traffic Police (Today)



**DID YOU
KNOW!**

- The Traffic Police (TP) was first established as the Traffic Office in 1914 after traffic regulations were implemented earlier that year.
- From 1926 to the Second World War, TP officers strapped rattan wings onto their bodies to assist them in directing traffic. Those duties are today carried out by computerised traffic lights, allowing TP to focus their resources on patrolling the roads and keeping road users safe.
- Officers from the Traffic Mobile Squad in the 1930s earned around \$28 per month, during the times when a cup of 'kopi' cost one cent!

Marine Police (Pre-1945)



Police Coast Guard (Today)



**DID YOU
KNOW!**

- 1855 saw the first group of six boatmen on three boats tasked to patrol the sea at night.
- The Marine Police was officially formed in 1866 with the establishment of a floating police station.
- Today, the Police Coast Guard (PCG) has significantly expanded, boasting about 1,200 PCG officers and more than 100 boats.

Riot Squad (1951)



Special Operations Command (Today)



**DID YOU
KNOW!**

- The first Riot Squad was formed in 1951 in the aftermath of the Maria Hertogh Riots.
- In 1952, it expanded to three troops of 50 officers each and was renamed the Reserve Unit. It was eventually established as the Special Operations Command in 1992.
- Khaki uniforms of the past were changed to fire-retardant uniforms of the present, while rattan shields were swapped for fire-resistant polycarbonate shields, providing officers with better protection during riot situations.

Police National Service (1967)



Police National Service (Today)



**DID YOU
KNOW!**

- Police National Service (PNS) began as a part-time scheme in 1946. To distinguish themselves from regular officers, these Part-time Police National Servicemen wore a whistle with a red lanyard. The part-time scheme was eventually phased out in 1981.
- While Part-time PNS was ongoing, Full-time PNS was introduced on 22 February 1975 and the first intake of 200 Singaporean males enlisted on 24 July 1975. The inception of Full-time PNS was prompted by the Laju terrorist incident of 1974, an incident which showed the importance of strengthening the Force's manpower to secure Singapore's security-sensitive installations.
- PNS manpower significantly expanded over the years, and in 2018, there were around 4,800 Full-time Police National Servicemen and 28,000 Operationally-ready Police National Servicemen.
- Today, the roles of Police National Servicemen have evolved from protecting key installations and taking on general policing duties. Police National Servicemen are deployed alongside regular officers, across 11 vocations in various units including the Public Transport Security Command and the Protective Security Command. To maximise their potential, these officers are also deployed in more leadership, specialist and frontline positions.

Volunteer Special Constabulary (1950s)



Volunteer Special Constabulary (Today)



**DID YOU
KNOW!**

- The Volunteer Special Constabulary (VSC) has its origins in the Volunteer Police Reserve, which was formed in 1938 to cope with the political and labour unrest during that period.
- After the Volunteer Police Reserve was disbanded in 1942 during the World War, it was reassembled in 1946 as the VSC, to support regular officers in their patrolling duties.
- During the Maria Hertogh Riots in 1950, the entire VSC was mobilised, and their commitment to the Force amounted to 11,577 hours of duty.
- The number of VSC officers increased significantly over the years, from 60 officers in 1947, to around 1,250 officers in 2018.

FROM SPEARS AND WHISTLES, TO PISTOLS AND TASERS

By Hadi Hafidz (Photos: Public Affairs Department)

Since the days of swords and spears two centuries ago, police equipment has evolved to keep up with the operational needs of an increasingly modern Force. Here is a look at the array of equipment that have helped our Ground Response Force officers carry out their duties effectively through the years.

1800s - 1920s



Snider Carbine rifles

When the police force was first established in the 1800s shortly after Sir Stamford Raffles established a trading post in Singapore, police officers were equipped with Snider Carbines, before they were replaced with Lee-Enfield Rifles. However, these rifles were not uniformly distributed within the Force due to the lack of resources. Interestingly, between 1820 and 1850, some officers were instead given swords and spears for their patrols! In the 1870s, wooden batons were incorporated as part of the patrol equipment, and by the early 1900s, handcuffs were also introduced.

Tubular-shaped metal whistles were introduced in 1884 to draw attention to crimes and to call for backup in the early days of policing. However, these whistles were phased out in 2002 as communications technology improved.



Whistle

1920s - 1970s



Webley & Scott Mark VI pistol

As rifles were heavy and created too much recoil, they were not optimal for use against armed criminals, who often had pistols and were able to move faster and take faster shots. In response, the police force began equipping its officers with various types of pistols from the 1920s. By 1953, officers were officially armed with Webley & Scott Mark VI pistols.

In 1945, the first High Frequency walkie-talkie system was introduced with the establishment of the Radio Branch. This was replaced in 1949 with an enhanced Very High Frequency (VHF) walkie-talkie system, as part of a drive to introduce more secure radio equipment in order to reduce infiltration into the communication frequency. This security upgrade reduced the chances of eavesdroppers, which could compromise police operations.



Very High Frequency Walkie Talkie



Metallic baton



The 1950s also saw the evolution of the baton. Metal batons replaced wooden batons as they were more effective in dealing with violent yet unarmed persons with non-lethal force.

1970s - 2002

In the 1970s, the lighter and smaller Smith & Wesson revolver was introduced. This enabled officers to react more swiftly against armed criminals. The newer weapon also complemented the switch from the 'cross draw' to the 'quick draw' style of shooting – which allowed officers to draw their revolvers more quickly.



Smith & Wesson revolver



Personal Radio Service

The Personal Radio Service (PRS) was introduced in the early 1970s to replace the VHF walkie-talkie system. However, the PRS was not fully secure and radio messages sent over the air could easily be monitored and extracted by those with ill intent. So, in the late 1990s, a secure and more robust digital-based encrypted radio network known as the Cubicon Trunked Radio System (CTRS) was introduced.

In 2001, the metallic T-baton was introduced to replace the previous metal baton. It featured a side handle, and the retractable body made it less bulky and more versatile than its predecessor.



T-baton

2002 - 2017

To keep up to date with modern policing needs, in 2002, officers were equipped with the Taurus M85 revolver, which featured a five-chambered cylinder as well as an accompanying speed loader to help reduce the time and effort needed to reload the weapon.



Taurus M85 revolver



Taser X26

In 2005, the taser, an electroshock weapon that discharges a 50,000 volt charge, was brought in to help officers subdue non-compliant persons in a non-lethal manner.



Ministry of Home Affairs Communications Network 2

In 2015, the ageing CTRS was replaced with the Ministry of Home Affairs Communications Network 2 (MCN2), a walkie-talkie system superior to its predecessor. The MCN2 is equipped with improved network connection capabilities that function well even in crowded areas and allow the streaming of data and videos.

2017 - PRESENT



Pistol

Due to today's heightened security climate, officers have been progressively trained with service pistols since 2017. The pistol has an increased ammunition capacity, can be used with different grip methods and features a safety mechanism that prevents it from being triggered by accident.

Two years later, in 2019, the Straight Extendable Baton (SEB) was introduced to replace the T-baton. Unlike the T-baton, the SEB does not have a horizontal handle. This makes it easier for officers to execute handling techniques, as the horizontal handle of the T-baton can be disruptive to an officer's movement. Along with its increased retractability compared to the T-baton, the SEB is even more compact, making it less cumbersome to carry on patrol.



Straight extendable baton

Evolution of the Police Uniform

By Hadi Hafidz (Photos: Public Affairs Department)

Across 200 years, the uniform of Singapore Police Force (SPF) officers has seen plenty of transformations. Check out how our uniform has evolved since it was first officially introduced in 1863!

1863-1893



- The first official police uniform made its appearance in 1863 when local policemen were fitted with dark blue serge coats, trousers, caps and black shoes.
- However, the 1879 Commission of Inquiry, which was formed to look into the improvement of the Force, found that the heavily-woven fabric was impractical and uncomfortable in humid weather.
- Hence, the blue serge uniform was phased out in 1893.

1893-1942



- In 1890, the heavily-woven fabric was swapped for the khaki shirt and shorts, black puttees and black boots.
- It proved to be a great success and the Force officially adopted it in 1893 until the Japanese Occupation in 1942.

1945 - 1969



- After World War II, the khaki police uniform underwent yet another transformation.
- The khaki shirt was replaced with a grey flannel shirt, khaki shorts or skirt, dark blue hose tops, black boots, a black leather belt and navy blue whistle lanyard.
- The beret was worn by officers until 1964, when it was replaced by the peak cap.

1969-2018



- In 1969, dacron polyester material was used to replace the flannel shirt and khaki pants.
- The uniform comprised a peak cap, dark blue shirt and trousers, black belt, blue-and-white corded whistle lanyard, black socks and black boots.
- The new uniform was comfortable and smart, and also adopted the colour blue, which was internationally associated with police forces.
- In a series of reviews and changes to the uniform in the 2000s, the whistle chain was removed, the jockey cap was introduced as the operational headgear for patrol officers and the shoes were changed to tactical boots.

2018 Onwards



- Since 16 April 2018, uniforms have been made of a fabric comprising 98 per cent polyester and two per cent spandex to help them dry faster and absorb perspiration better.
- Concealed plastic buttons have also replaced the metallic buttons on the uniform for increased comfort.
- The word 'POLICE' is embroidered in the position above the name tag for enhanced identity.

Community Policing Through the Years

By Irwan Shah
(Photos: Public Affairs Department)

Community policing is one of the key thrusts of the Singapore Police Force's (SPF) policing strategy. It helps to build the public's trust and confidence in the Police and to actively involve the community in combating crime and terrorism. From the inception of the Neighbourhood Police Post (NPP) to the Neighbourhood Police Centre (NPC) and to the current Community Policing System (COPS), these community policing models have changed over the decades to adapt to an ever-changing security environment. Police Life delves into the history of community policing in Singapore and uncovers its pivotal moments.

Post-World War II until the 1970s

The local police force was revived after World War II in response to common crimes like looting and robbery. The frontline policing model, otherwise known as traditional policing, was seen to be the most effective way of combating crime in post-war Singapore. Based on the concept of traditional policing, the roles of police officers were limited to the provision of incident response, paying negligible attention towards the role of the community in tackling crime.



Police Strategy Review

Given the rapid urbanisation and economic development in Singapore during the 1970s, the SPF saw that a change in policing strategy was necessary for the Force to adapt to a new environment and fight crime more effectively. Expectations of the functions of the police rose due to an increasingly better-educated population as well as the proliferation of high-rise public estates. While mass rioting saw its end during this period, crimes that were related to petty theft and housebreaking continued to thrive.

As a result of the worsening crime situation, the SPF saw a need for a transition to the community policing model, which focussed on developing a strategic partnership with the public, and instilling in them a responsibility to take social ownership of their residential space. This also geared the community to play a pivotal role in crime prevention while building a positive public perception of the SPF as a reliable and friendly Force.

In the late 1970s, then-Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew tasked the Deputy Prime Minister at the time, Dr Goh Keng Swee, and his



team of engineers at the Management Services Department (MSD), to holistically review police operations and recommend changes for the way forward for the Force as a whole. In their report, the team recommended setting up police substations, similar to Japan's Koban system of police boxes, in every public housing estate. The direction was for the SPF to be more involved with the community that it was serving. Presenting officers with a friendly and reliable image was important for the Police to earn the trust and confidence of the public on whom it could depend on for information and cooperation. This was also in line with the SPF's change from being a reactive to a proactive Force in deterring crime.

Following the recommendations from the report, then-Minister for Home Affairs Chua Sian Chin and a team of senior police officers visited Japan to further study its civil system in October 1981. Regular visits to Japan were also conducted thereafter to study in more detail the Koban system, a policing model set up in Japan in 1874.

The Koban system, or Kobanjo, refers to a Japanese policing concept in which police officers take turns standing at a fixed spot to project police presence as well as observe the people and their activities at major intersections or important locations within the vicinity. In 1881, police boxes were built at Kobanjo locations and manned by police officers 24 hours a day. Officers would act as first responders to crimes or incidents and were also required to conduct foot or bicycle patrols. They would also build good relationships with the community by conducting door-to-door visits and were regarded as friends, helpers and protectors in their respective areas.

Neighbourhood Police Posts

Inspired by the effectiveness of the Koban model after some thorough study, the SPF, eventually piloted the formation of the Neighbourhood Police Posts. With guidance from a team of Japanese experts, the first Neighbourhood Police Post (NPP) Khe Bong NPP was opened on 1 June 1983. It set the tone for the SPF's policing strategy of being a more proactive and community-based Force. This was done by decentralising police operations from divisional headquarters and focussing on serving at the heart of the community. A total of 91 NPPs in other housing estates were set up in phases between 1983 and 1995.

In the earlier phases, police officers had to undergo a three-day course aimed at changing their image – from cold enforcer to friend and trusted member of the community. This was done by introducing them to the NPP system, and inculcating in them the necessary people skills to manage the public's expectations while applying a community-oriented approach. The aim was to get the community more involved in safety and security matters through such enhanced engagements between them and the police officers. This also further strengthened the public's trust and confidence in the SPF. Surveys conducted in 1987 and 1991 revealed that the NPPs had created more meaningful interactions with the public.



Neighbourhood Police Centres

The Neighbourhood Police Centre (NPC) system was introduced in 1997 to address various challenges such as changing demographic, an evolving operational landscape and advances in technology.

The NPC system consisted of six regional headquarters and 32 NPCs. Each NPC served as a one-stop policing centre that aimed to integrate community policing and frontline policing, and brought a wider range of police services close to the community, compared to the NPP. As new towns were built, NPCs were strategically located at places with high human traffic, such as near MRT stations or bus interchanges, positioning themselves in the heart of the community.

Community Policing System

The current Community Policing System (COPS) was introduced in 2012 after a review of the NPC system initiated by then-Commissioner of Police Ng Joo Hee. He established a project team to review the operational functions of NPCs, which included



interviews and discussions with stakeholders and overseas study visits to other police forces.

COPS was piloted in May 2012 and rolled out to all NPCs by April 2015. Under COPS, the NPC was restructured to better optimise resource distribution among reactive, proactive and community policing, as well as leveraging technology to support policing. The Community Policing Unit (CPU) was formed as a full-fledged unit responsible for engaging the community and conducting interactive proactive patrols to build closer relations. To augment its frontline policing efforts, Police cameras have since been installed at public places to deter crime and to assist officers in post-incident investigations.

Community-based approach policing has co-opted the community in the fight against crime and strengthened the public's trust in the Police. From the creation of Neighbourhood Watch Groups to the introduction of the Citizens on Patrols programme and even Safety and Security Watch Groups involving business stakeholders, the SPF has been working ever closely with the community, who has become additional eyes and ears of the Police, playing an active role in fighting crime alongside the Police.

Fighting Crime as One

In 2016, the Community Partnership Department (CPD) was formed to further oversee and strengthen the partnership between the SPF and the community by focussing on the development of community engagement programmes and strategies. Initiatives such as the SGSecure movement and Police Community Roadshow have increased the community's interactions with police officers as they learn how to play their part in SPF's crime prevention and counter-terrorism efforts.

The launch of the Volunteer Special Constabulary (VSC) (Community), a volunteer vocation, in 2018 further strengthened the relationship between the SPF and the community. It provides an opportunity for like-minded individuals to join the SPF, and take ownership of Singapore's safety and security by conducting patrols in high human traffic areas.

The various amendments and initiatives brought by the community policing model reinforces the SPF's commitment in building trust and strengthening partnerships with the public. By engaging and enabling the community, we all can play our part in keeping Singapore safe and secure!

Intergenerational Bonds in the Force

By John Leong and Hadi Hafidz
(Photos: Wong Yew Kit & Mohamad Siddiq)

The apple does not fall far from the tree. This is especially true in this feature article as our officers share with Police Life how their police-parents inspired them to join the Singapore Police Force (SPF).



Station Inspector (SI) Mohamad Kamal and family

SI Kamal is currently serving in the SPF band, and has been with the SPF for the past 41 years. He serves as an inspiration for his son, Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) Mohamad Fazlin, who is currently a Ground Response Force (GRF) Team Leader in Geylang Neighbourhood Police Centre (NPC). ASP Fazlin is happily married to a fellow police officer, Sergeant (Sgt) Nur Quraisyah, a Crime Strike Force officer from Marine Parade NPC.

Police Life (PL): What was your most striking impression of your father, the police officer, when you were growing up?

Fazlin (F): My dad was often away for long periods of time as he was a frequent volunteer with the United Nations Peacekeeping Force. I recall, on one particular peacekeeping mission in East Timor, he called my mom in the middle of the night. Speaking in low whispers, he assured my mother that he was safe even though a fight had broken out amongst the villagers in the vicinity of his residence, which was left in chaos as stones were being thrown and accidentally hit his residence. I could sense that my mum was getting increasingly worried for his safety as the fight escalated.

Thankfully, the local police managed to defuse the situation soon after and none of the peacekeepers were harmed. In hindsight, I was impressed that my dad was able to remain composed under such tense and potentially dangerous conditions. This was a quality that is probably intuitive to police officers that I knew I had to learn from him.

PL: With what your son has shared, what inspired you to pursue a career with the SPF 41 years ago?

Kamal (K): When I was living in Toa Payoh back in the 1970s, street fights and domestic violence were prevalent. My friends and I were once randomly targeted by an unknown group of people who attacked us while we were

chitchatting in the neighbourhood. This incident spurred me to join the Force to keep my community safe.

PL: What about you Fazlin, what inspired you to pursue a policing career?

F: I was attracted to the wide range of career choices and opportunities offered by the SPF. Moreover, the stories shared by my dad and the camaraderie and bond that he shared with his colleagues as I was growing up further spurred my interest in the SPF. Most importantly, joining the Force gave me an immediate sense of purpose in society, where I could do my part. It also helped that I had a best friend, who was doing his foundation posting in the SPF at that time, whom I could find out more about the job from.

PL: Let us talk a little about you and your wife and how you met. You eventually married a police officer. Did you always know you wanted to marry someone of the same profession?

F: I did not set out to marry someone from my line of work. To me, it was more important for my potential partner to have compatible qualities, characteristics and values.

Quraisyah (Q): We first met as trainees at the Home Team Academy in 2014. However, we did not speak to each other much back then, except for the occasional 'hello' if we happened to see each other. We reconnected when we were posted to Bedok Division in 2015. At that time, Fazlin was on a six-month attachment at Bedok Division Investigation Branch prior to his posting to Ang Mo Kio Division as an Investigation Officer and I was serving in Marine Parade Neighbourhood Police Centre's Ground Response Force.

What first attracted me to Fazlin then was his cheerful personality. Even if he has had a bad day, he is still able to crack jokes. His positive attitude really rubbed off on me, and he always makes me feel better when I have bad days.

Thinking back, being in the same division, in some ways, did help to facilitate and strengthen our relationship.

PL: Could you share with us how it is like, marrying a fellow police officer?

F: From the get-go, due to our conflicting work schedules, we knew we had to put in effort into making time for each other. It was especially tough during my Investigation Officer days, as my wife was working shifts while I was working irregular hours. To mitigate that, I would make time to pick her up from work on my days off. Doing that so

that we could spend some time together, despite having only a couple of hours of sleep, was well worth it.

Our roles have reversed now, with me being on shift work while she is on office hours, so it was quite fortunate that we did not have to make major adjustments.

However, with a two-year-old boy and a two-month-old daughter who are now a major part of our lives, it has definitely been a challenge, and it takes a lot of family support, communication and coordination to make it work.

PL: When the whole family gets together, do the three of you end up talking about your police work?

Q: We try our best to keep work out of family discussions. Instead, we focus on our children and how our family members are doing. The few times that we have, in fact, spoken about work during family time was due to a chance encounter I had with a friend of my father-in-law, who coincidentally, was also a police officer. All I did was pass the message to send his regards to my father-in-law.

PL: A career with the SPF seems to run in your family's blood. Would you want your children to follow in your footsteps?

F: Personally, I do not believe in pushing my children to pursue policing or imposing any expectations regarding their career choices on them. More importantly, I hope that they get to pursue their interests, and if that interest is in the Force, we would surely share with them our personal tips and experiences.





Senior Staff Sergeant (SSSgt) Mah Yuen Yoke and family

SSSgt Mah is currently serving with the Traffic Police, and has been with the SPF for the past 36 years. Her older son is SI Jonathan Kang, who is currently undergoing training at the Home Team Academy to be an Inspector with the SPF. Her younger son is Sgt Jameson Kang. He currently serves as a GRF officer with Sengkang NPC.

PL: Could you share with us what your relationship with your mother is like?

Jonathan (JO): Growing up, my mother was a typical, strict Asian mum. However, as we grew older and matured, my mum mellowed and became more of a friend to us, dishing out candid advice and guidance of all sorts, which I value thoroughly whenever I share my thoughts with her. Our relationship has indeed evolved to one of equal footing.

Jameson (JA): Our relationship with our mum has indeed changed a lot. Now that we are adults, we are able to truly appreciate our mother's unconditional love and care for

us. She regularly checks in on us and how we are coping in the Force, and sometimes, even waits for me to get home after a late shift.

PL: What kind of boys were Jameson and Jonathan growing up? Would you have guessed that they would become police officers too?

Mah (M): Jonathan and Jameson were mischievous as kids and were a tough duo to handle. I did not expect either of them to join the SPF, as they had plenty of career opportunities. When both of them shared with me that they wished to join the Force, they were in the midst of completing their tertiary education.

PL: What was it about policing or your mum that pushed you to sign on?

JO: My brother and I grew up listening to my mum's stories about her experiences in the SPF, and her dedication as a law enforcer inspired us to pursue careers in the SPF.

When I was about five years old, my mum brought me to the police station. I was afraid that I had gotten in trouble! But she picked me up and pointed at the old Traffic Police Headquarters at Maxwell Road and said proudly, "This is where mummy works." I recall that she had gone back to complete some work even though it was her day off. From that experience, and various other policing stories that my mum would share with us, I knew, without a doubt, that my mum was a responsible and hard worker who took immense pride in her job. Her work ethic is exemplary and is something that I hope to emulate.



JA: I saw policing through the lenses of my mum and my brother and wanted to play a part in keeping Singapore safe. Both of them inspired me to sign on and follow in their footsteps.

PL: What was it like having a police officer for a mum?

JO: I was always proud to share with my friends that my mum is a police officer. In fact, it was always my childhood ambition to join the Police Force, to be just like my mum, as I look up to her.

As my mum was working shifts when we were younger, we did not get to spend time with her as often as we hoped. However, we now know that being a police officer involves plenty of sacrifices. In fact, she missed my birthday several times due to work and that mattered a lot to me as a young boy. However, she always made it up to me by getting me a cake and celebrating with me after the end of a long shift. On hindsight, her ability to balance work and family without a complaint, as most mums do, deserves commendation.

PL: What was your reaction when you found out your sons wanted to join the Force?

M: I was elated when my sons told me that they wished to follow in my footsteps and join the Force. A law enforcement career is a noble and rewarding one and, I strongly believe, is one that instils good qualities and strengthens character.

PL: The three of you have conflicting schedules. How do you spend time together?

JO: I usually take the lead in organising family gatherings as Jameson works shifts. My daughter, Ellie, was born this year and my mum loves her to bits! I try to bring Ellie to see her uncle and grandmother as often as possible. Our schedules may be conflicting but it is manageable with some careful planning. Last year, we went on a holiday to Europe together and I am trying to plan another trip soon if our schedules can match.

PL: As a mother of two police officers, and being an officer yourself, what is your greatest wish for your children in their careers?

M: My greatest wish for my children is for them to have good prospects in their careers and to do their utmost best to support the Force's mission to keep Singapore safe and secure. If my granddaughter, Ellie, decides to join the Force in the future, I would be extremely happy and proud.



**SINGAPORE
POLICE FORCE**
SAFEGUARDING EVERY DAY

SPF200

SALUTING THE PAST • SAFEGUARDING THE FUTURE

“Saluting the Past” is about commemorating the SPF’s legacy, and paying homage to our history, heritage and achievements. We also reflect on the journey of how we have grown and evolved from strength to strength. We thank and appreciate the community for partnering us in our efforts to prevent, deter and detect crime over the last 200 years.

“Safeguarding the Future” reaffirms our enduring commitment to be a Force for the Nation, to safeguard our nation every day and make Singapore the safest place in the world. It expresses our confidence in a strong police-community partnership, and in future generations of police officers to bring our legacy into the next 200 years and beyond.