

2003

Annual Report of the Commission Against Corruption of Macao



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The Commissioner Against Corruption , Mr. Cheong U, submits to the Chief Executive, Mr. Ho Hau Wah, the Annual Report of the CCAC 2003 (Photo of GCS)



CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

Working on the solid foundation built up over the years, the anti-corruption institution continued to make vigorous progress in 2003. And thanks to the joint efforts and cooperation of various circles of the Macao society, citizens, the government and public servants, the year has witnessed further weakening of and restraints on corrupt activities, and enhanced awareness of creating a just and fair society. In addition, government services have improved, public administration has become more transparent, the legal system more consolidated and supervision from residents further strengthened, thus effectively preventing corruption. Generally speaking, a clean and corruption-free environment is prevailing every day.

In 2003, the Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) recorded a total of 1,077 complaints, a slight decrease of 3% over the 1,116 complaints recorded in the previous year, as well as a decrease recorded for two consecutive years. There were 744 cases meeting the criteria for handling, out of which there were 90 cases commenced for investigation, far below the number of 2002, which stood at 131. There were 8 cases referred to the Public Prosecutions Office, a big fall by two thirds over the previous year.

There were 85 criminal cases commenced for investigation, a drop of 26% over the previous year, when 115 criminal cases were commenced for investigation. This decrease is ascribed partly to the generally improved environment of the society and partly to the preliminary screening prior to the commencement of investigation. This preliminary procedure turned some of the complaints that had previously been treated as cases for commencement into preliminary cases, most of which were either ones failing to meet the criteria for being officially commenced for investigation or complaints failing to be substantiated by facts.

In 2003, the number of cross-regional cases that the CCAC assisted in investigating increased to 38, as compared with 28 in 2002. 19 cases have been completed while the others are still under investigation. Figures indicate that

cross-regional corrupt activities are on the increase, hence making it imperative to strengthen inter-regional and international cooperation.

In 2003, the CCAC handled a total of 256 cases of administrative complaints, including the 232 cases commenced for investigation in the year and a backlog of recorded cases from the past. This was a slight increase of 2.8% over the previous year. 162 cases were concluded, most of which involved public functions. In addition, the CCAC handled 347 cases of requests from the public for help and consultation, 10.5% more than the number recorded in 2002, mostly relating to the system of public functions and administrative regulations.

In order to prevent corruption and frauds, it is of foremost importance to further improve the system. In 2003, in view of the problems existing in the juridical system of the public service, the CCAC completed two research reports. One was on the question "The Conflicts of Interests that Public Servants of Macao Need to Avoid in their Performance of Public Functions and Duties", and the other on "Some Questions Concerning the Disciplinary Process". On the basis of experiences summarized over the previous years, the CCAC formulated "Guidelines for the Procurement and Acquisition of Public Goods and Services", which had been distributed to all public organs and institutions by the end of 2003. In addition, friendly cooperation with various government departments was stepped up. The CCAC continued to follow up the projects of researches and examinations with the Legal Affairs Bureau and the Health Bureau. The CCAC also joined hands with the Macao Trade and Investment Promotion Institute in processing and approving "Applications for Investment Residency", and with the Civic and Municipal Affairs Bureau in inspecting "Food & Beverages Venues and Leakage from Air-conditioners". These efforts were made to ensure implementation of the various policies of the Macao SAR, to strengthen supervision, to optimize efficiency and to provide the public with the best possible service in accordance with the law.

In July 2003, the Legislative Assembly of the Macao SAR approved Law No. 11/2003 concerning "Declaration of Incomes and Properties" by public servants

and public functionaries. Being the supervisory and depositary entity of the declarations, the CCAC made special preparations and adopted a whole set of measures for smooth implementation, including open sessions clarifying new points, publication of guidelines for completing the declaration forms, and arrangements for convenient submission and collection. The work was successfully concluded, with the CCAC receiving more than ten thousand declarations in the year, as well as the renewal of declarations, which is done every five years as regulated by law.

In order to get closer to the residents, and better listen to their views and suggestions, the CCAC set up its branch office, which was officially open to the public in December 2003. Since then the branch office has been in smooth operation, playing an important and promising role in receiving the public.

In order to further educate youngsters on anti-corruption, the CCAC published a textbook entitled "Honesty and Integrity" for primary school students in February 2003. The texts are accompanied by board games on the same topics, which help to bring home the message. The textbook has won widespread support from educators and about 90% of the primary schools in Macao have adopted it as supplementary. In the meantime, a project, targeting secondary school students and named "Education Programme on Honesty for Teenagers", was also carried out in 2003.

Since 2000, the CCAC has been contributing uninterruptedly a column called "Clean Administration Forum" in local Chinese newspapers. Using stories adapted from real cases, the fortnightly features focus on fighting corruption, administrative complaints, and ethics of public servants, and other legal matters concerned. In order to help the public to better understand the work of the CCAC and further instill in public servants the concept of "Integrity in Performing Public Duties and Administration by Law", the CCAC made a collection of 30 articles selected from those published in this column over the years. The book, published under the title "Love for Integrity" and accompanied by colour pictures, is a product of a good and long cooperation between the CCAC and the press

in promoting a clean society.

The CCAC had 19 vacancies to be filled through open recruitment in 2003. The largest batch of applicants, numbering more than 4,500 with senior high school education qualifications or above, came when the fourth recruitment campaign was launched in autumn. After assessment by portfolio, written examinations, interviews, home visits and a 17-week intensive training in professional knowledge, physical fitness and team work and evaluation, finally 12 candidates were officially recruited, most of them being university graduates or with higher qualifications. The 12 new recruits officially began working in the various departments of the CCAC in February 2004.

The Deputy Commissioner and Director of the Anti-Corruption Bureau, Mr. Chan Seak Hou, was awarded Medal of Merit-Professions for his outstanding performance in anti-corruption, which is both a personal honour and a manifestation of the Macao SAR's encouragement, support and appreciation for the work of the CCAC.

According to a questionnaire survey carried out by an academic institution on behalf of the CCAC last year, 86.5% Macao residents support or strongly support the work of the CCAC, and those maintaining corruption was serious in the region has come down to 9.4%. Overall, the social atmosphere has been improving gradually and public awareness of being honest, self-disciplined and law-abiding has been further enhanced. However, this enhancement of awareness has been matched by more cunning and hidden techniques in corrupt acts, making it obvious that the task of fighting corruption is still quite arduous.

With new situations and conditions emerging from economic developments of the Macao SAR, the CCAC will continue to unite all forces and persevere in its efforts to combat corruption, promote education and, together with all residents of Macao, work relentlessly towards the goal of building up a corruption-free city.