

#### **4) Changes to the Policing Model and the Return of Hong Kong to China 1994-1999**

During the early 1990s, with the increased overall education level and living standard of the general public, there were rising public expectations of quality service from the public sector. As the nature of Hong Kong society changed, the Force also changed with it, moving away from a para-military policing model to become a more service orientated modern police force, determined to engage the public in crime prevention, to remain open and to hold itself accountable for its actions. This change did not happen overnight and took time to adjust. A number of strategies were adopted to facilitate the transformation of the Force.

In 1994, the Service Quality Wing was set up to explore and implement new management models with a view to improving efficiency, ensuring effective use of resources, and providing quality services to the community.

In 1996, the Force Vision, Common Purpose and Values were promulgated, providing guidance for the implementation of the Force's ongoing service quality enhancement programmes. The Living-the-Values campaign was mounted to enhance officers' commitment to the Force values, with training workshops held to encourage officers to serve the public better and bring about a successful transformation from a paramilitary policing model to a modern service-oriented police force.

The professionalism of the serving officers, coupled with continued recruitment of motivated officers with higher academic qualifications, and the introduction of information technology, enabled the Force to move forward to meet rising expectations of the public. This impetus has been constantly maintained, and the Force remains committed to seeking continuous improvement to meet the challenges of an ever-changing future.

Without a doubt, a major change of the 1990s was the return to the Motherland in 1997. As one of the largest, and most visible, government departments of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, the Force played a vital role in ensuring the smooth continuity of the rule of law under the "One Country, Two Systems" principle. The Force also played a prominent role in the Handover celebrations and continues to perform the solemn flag raising ceremonial

duties to this day. Proud of its past, and confident about its future, the Force changed its title on 1 July 1997 to the 'Hong Kong Police Force' and adopted a new crest, replacing the royal crown with a bauhinia emblem. Though the Force changed its formal title, its mission and confidence to ensure Hong Kong continues to be one of the safest and most stable societies in the world have not wavered.