

**POLICE  
LIFE**

# Securing the General Election 2015

THE SINGAPORE POLICE FORCE MAGAZINE  
VOLUME 41 NO. 9

**An Experienced Hand at PEPO**

**I am Police Watchtower**



### Note from the Team

“Your work is going to fill a large part of your life, and the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work. And the only way to do great work is to love what you do.” – Steve Jobs

I simply adore how Jobs drew a balance between reality and the romanticised version of work in this quote. The obsession with our individual pursuits has made us forget the possibility of work as an end in itself. Work may inadvertently have lost its intrinsic value. If we do not want to continue feeling like cogs in a machine, it is time for us to rediscover our passion. What is it that drives us to conquer the day when we wake up each morning?

Being passionate about work, gives one the strength and energy to soldier on even when you are swamped with tasks. In this General Election (GE) focused issue of *Police Life*, our journalists went behind the scenes to understand the physically and psychologically gruelling duties of Police officers during the GE security operations. With all the wards contested during GE, preparatory work was especially intensive for officers. For deeper insights into GE deployments, be sure to read on to find out from Commander Central Division and other uniformed and civilian officers their perspectives on their roles in the GE security operations.

To *Police Life* readers out there, I hope that you will be inspired by our committed Police officers who put others before themselves.

Hope you enjoy this issue of *Police Life*.

Ms Luo Min Zhen, Denise  
Editor  
*Police Life*

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# All About the People

By Jinnie Chew and Insp (NS) Ow Guan Jie, Daniel

### Absence Makes the Heart Grow Fonder

After law school at the National University of Singapore, Deputy Assistant Commissioner of Police (DAC) Daniel Tan started out as an Investigation Officer in Central Division (A Division). In his 19-year journey in the Singapore Police Force (SPF), he has taken on a varied number of Land Division, specialist and staff postings. These included, for instance, stints in the Security Command, Operations Department and Manpower Department.

And it was during a secondment of a year and a half to a statutory board that reaffirmed DAC Tan's passion and dedication to the SPF. DAC Tan's return to the SPF was delayed by another year after his secondment. During that time, he was pursuing a Master in Public Administration at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy. He commented that the post-graduate experience was well-invested, because he got to interact and network with fellow classmates who were public servants from Southeast Asia and Singapore. DAC Tan concluded that it was a “very good experience and my friends from the region are now a phone call away.”

When *Police Life* arrived at the Police Cantonment Complex, headquarters of A Division, DAC Tan had just ended a meeting with officers newly posted to the Division.

### Engaging the Officers as Commander 'A' Division

Since he took over the helm as Commander 'A' Division, DAC Tan makes it a point to meet and introduce himself to new officers. He recalled that, in one of such sessions, an officer had asked him what his vision was for the Division. He shared that he had spontaneously replied, “I want officers to be happy about coming to work.”

“It's easy to say but very hard to do, because the measurement of happiness varies from individual to individual. So, if happiness is officers coming to work and being engaged in what they do, feeling linked to the mission, that is what I strive to achieve for the officers.”

Ultimately, what DAC Tan wishes for are happy officers, which would then translate to good officers for the SPF as a whole.

DAC Tan also advocates officers working towards their aims and ambitions. He elaborated that he supports officers who want to gain exposure in other aspects of police work and encourages them to pursue those actively. For instance, he would encourage officers to apply for a posting in the Investigation Branch so that they may hone their investigation skills for future postings to the Criminal Investigation Department, if that is their

career ambition. DAC Tan wants officers to try new experiences on their own accord. “I have never withheld postings when officers were selected by specialist units because they have earned it. They are good officers and I would not deprive them of the chance to go,” he said.

Though he admitted that it would be A Division's loss of good officers, he proudly proclaimed that all the Divisions and staff departments contribute and work together towards the mission of the Singapore Police Force (SPF). “What is the point of keeping officers if they feel trapped and resignation is their only choice... then the SPF loses,” DAC Tan explained.

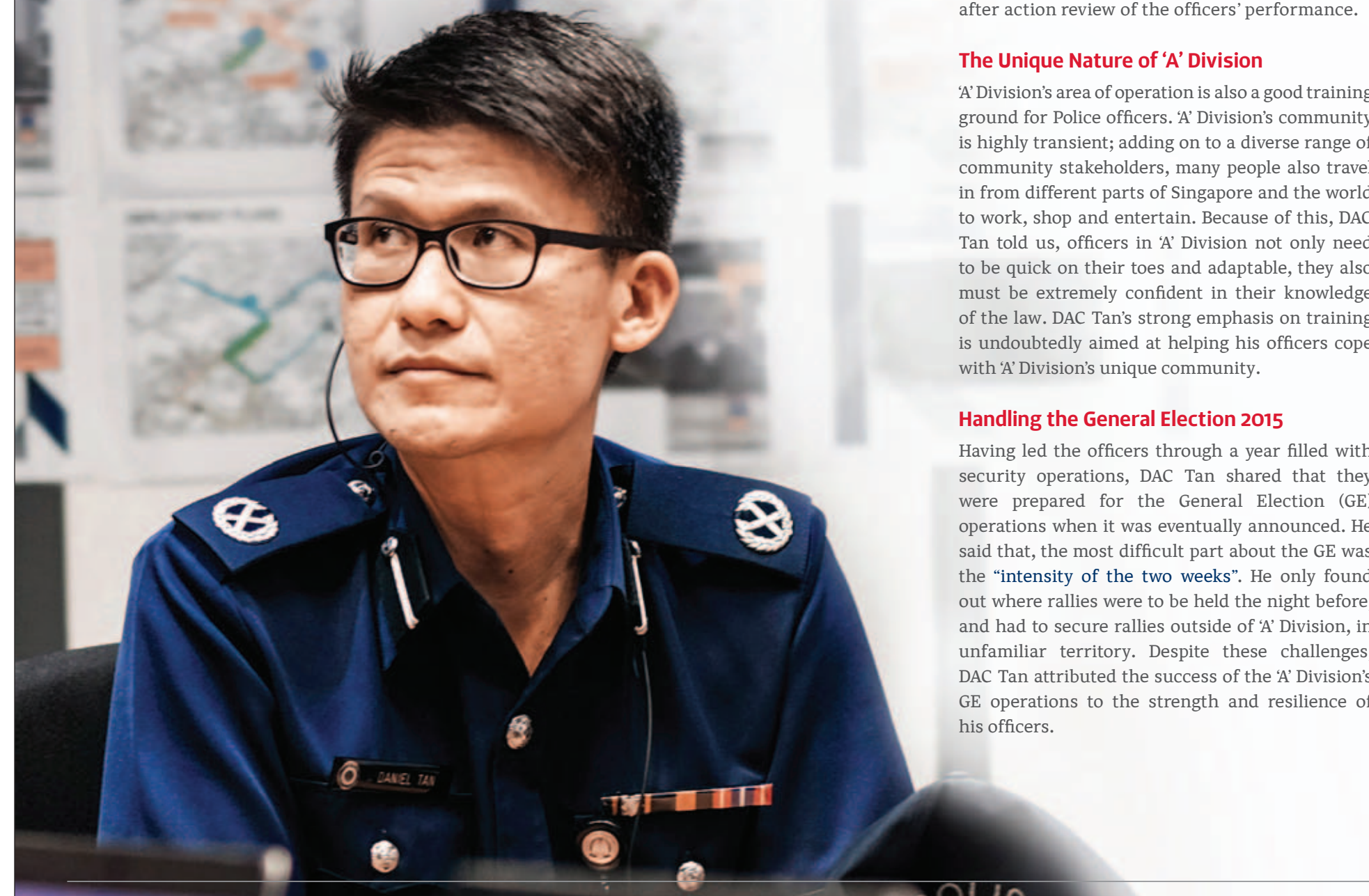
DAC Tan also supports having more on-shift training sessions so that officers can clock training hours on actual work days, and rest on their off days. He very proudly shared one of the training initiatives started by officers from Rochor Neighbourhood Police Centre called T2 Lunchbox, or the “Tactical and Terrain Lunchbox” exercise in full. During lunch, a Fast Response Car on patrol duty would be called to a location where an exercise scenario had been planned and re-enacted. The Team Leader and his officers would then assess the scenario and take the assessors through his team's response to manage the situation. This T2 Lunchbox training session is completed swiftly in 30 minutes, followed by an after action review of the officers' performance.

### The Unique Nature of 'A' Division

A Division's area of operation is also a good training ground for Police officers. A Division's community is highly transient; adding on to a diverse range of community stakeholders, many people also travel in from different parts of Singapore and the world to work, shop and entertain. Because of this, DAC Tan told us, officers in A Division not only need to be quick on their toes and adaptable, they also must be extremely confident in their knowledge of the law. DAC Tan's strong emphasis on training is undoubtedly aimed at helping his officers cope with A Division's unique community.

### Handling the General Election 2015

Having led the officers through a year filled with security operations, DAC Tan shared that they were prepared for the General Election (GE) operations when it was eventually announced. He said that, the most difficult part about the GE was the “intensity of the two weeks”. He only found out where rallies were to be held the night before, and had to secure rallies outside of A Division, in unfamiliar territory. Despite these challenges, DAC Tan attributed the success of the A Division's GE operations to the strength and resilience of his officers.



# GE 2015: Ready for the Polls

By Cpl Muhd Shahrnunizam bin Abdul Rashid



## Planning Ahead

Although it was anyone's guess when the General Election (GE) would be held, there was much talk and anticipation that it would likely be held in 2015, with Singapore celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> year of independence this year. Despite having undergone an operationally challenging year, the Singapore Police Force (SPF) did not rest on its laurels and made sure it was ready, mentally, physically and operationally, in the event an election was indeed called.

The Operations Department (Ops) started preparations early by conducting Table Top Exercises (TTE) involving a series of meetings with the Land Divisions and Special Operations Command (SOC) to brainstorm scenarios and to also review Police responses in the event of incidents during a GE. Besides going through responses to incidents that had occurred during the previous GE in 2011, through these TTX, Ops also came up with tighter and comprehensive plans for other possible scenarios.

## Exercise Gallup

To ensure that our officers were fully geared up, Exercise Gallup was held on 21<sup>st</sup> August 2015. A protest that escalate into a riot was re-enacted to give officers a feel of what they have to deal with. The exercise involved officers from the Divisional Tactical Team (DTT) of the six Land Divisions and

the SOC. They were put through the rigours of effectively handling public order scenarios that could jeopardize the safety and the security of members of the public.

## Providing Manpower Support to Units

For GE 2015, the Manpower Department (MPD) had to ensure that there was enough manpower to support the SPF's operations. By analysing the demand and supply of the officers across the SPF, MPD was able to prioritise and re-deploy officers to units where they were needed the most prior to

the commencement of the operations and as the operations progressed, MPD also worked closely with the Police National Service Department (PNSD) to secure the strong support of PNSmen.

In anticipation of the large number of officers to be deployed for multiple events, such as those for the Polling Day, MPD acted decisively to work with units to re-deploy manpower resources where operationally feasible. For instance, the Training Command suspended its training activities temporarily so that its trainers and trainees could be deployed to support the GE 2015.



Apart from ensuring adequate manpower resources at the frontline of the operations and giving advice on human resource related issues, MPD also deployed morale sensing teams from the Police Psychological Services Division (PPSD) to identify areas of concern for deployed officers, so that officers can continue to perform at their best throughout GE.

## A Smooth Operation

As *Police Life* walked the grounds of the nomination centres to the rally sites and polling stations and counting centres, we saw Singaporeans from all walks of life participating in the GE proceedings and activities with much ease. The SPF executed its operational plans to uphold law and maintain public order seamlessly. The safety and security of GE 2015 was ultimately due to the readiness, dedication and professionalism of all SPF officers and the co-operation from the members of public.

# Shout-Outs from Members of Public

Our officers have been working tirelessly round-the-clock to ensure that the General Election 2015 smoothly. We are delighted to share that the efforts of our officers have not gone unnoticed. Netizens have expressed their gratitude to our officers through various platforms.



**jbhavan** FOLLOW  
 anthtan, stefanusian, fightsulfight, papereexploits, mat\_simpson, tengkiat9, aravindkay\_ and charmalneyyap like this  
 jbhavan #GE2015: Big, big shout out to the Singapore Police Force for pulling the long hours and overtime to ensure safety and orderliness at all election rallies (especially the mammoth opposition ones). We just need to look just beyond our borders to see that even-handed, non partisan crowd control by the police is not a given. Hornot Polit!

**Jerichó Kunze Tan** Dear Singapore Police force! Thank you to each of you Singaporean sons and daughters for tolerating the heat, haze, crowd and going home late or back on duty afterwards.  
 Your service to this nation and to your fellow Singaporeans will not be forgotten in any way. If we have ever taken you for granted or frustrated, sorry about that.  
 But trust me, when i see you guys there at the rallies i know you are there to keep us all safe. Thank you guys and gals at the SPF.  
 Keep up the good work!  
 Like Reply 3 8 hrs

**Adelta** @adelta · 23h  
 Many thanks to the team from Singapore Police Force, pulling all the extra hours for #SGElections2015 #rallyrallyrally #picnicopportunity

## Janagi Somu

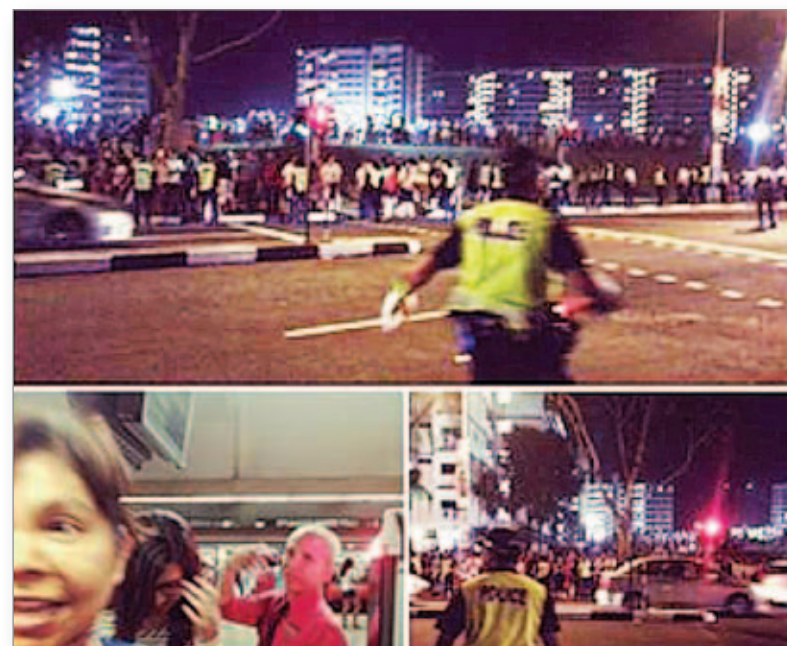
I attended a WP rally on 9 September at Bedok Stadium at about 8.15pm.

There were more than 30 officers on duty taking care of traffic flow, directing the public to the right entrance etc.

I was quite impressed with the attitude of the officers given it was a quite a tense situation. The officers were very courteous and patient, Members of the public were dashing across the traffic light before the red man comes on at the traffic light, the officers were patient and allowed the public to proceed first while holding the traffic,

They were courteous in guiding the public to right entrance, exit and the proper pathway. Most of the officers looked young but they did a good job.

I would like to pass my sincere compliments on their job well done.



**aconite1895** FOLLOW  
 bubblevicious and kissjulia.moulton like this  
 aconite1895 This #GE2015, remember to thank those who made it possible. #smrt #police #singaporepoliceforce #singapore

**Jem Tay**  
 Just wanted to share my experience too. I was trying to cross the road after the rally ended just now and another police officer politely and apologetically said "sorry, please wait a while before you cross as it is crowded at the pedestrian waiting area".  
 I really appreciated his politeness, but I was quite taken aback by him apologising. He didn't have to say sorry. He was just doing his job. I'm thankful that the police officers were there to manage the huge dispersing crowd in an orderly manner.  
 Yesterday at 11:37 pm · Edited · Like · 26 Reply



# Looking After the Police's Needs During the General Election 2015

By Cpl Muhd Shahrunnizam Bin Abdul Rashid

While Operations Department (Ops) was in the driver's seat for the overall security operations during the General Election (GE) 2015, logistics, technology and welfare support were equally crucial in equipping and sustaining our officers during the 11-day operations from Nomination Day on 1 September to 11 September on Polling Day. Although the Singapore Police Force (SPF) had been planning for the GE security operations, the execution phase of each operation brings its own set of challenges and considerations. Officers from Police Logistics Department (PLD), Police Technology Department (PTD) and Manpower Department (MPD) worked at double speed to sort through and process the requests for support in terms of equipment, technology and welfare (in addition to the Divisions' respective preparations) within a week from when the writ of elections was issued on 25 August 2015.

PLD's Logistics Readiness Division acted as the intermediary between Ops and the contracted vendor, ST Logistics for the setting up of Police infrastructure at rally sites. They discussed, planned and closely oversaw the construction of the watchtowers, Police command posts and setting up of barricades to facilitate smooth human traffic at the rally sites. This task was especially challenging as the location of the rally sites were only made known a day before the actual rally.

The baton was then passed to PLD's Infrastructure Development and Management Division (IDMD) which inspected and enforced safety regulations and procedures to ensure a safe working environment for the SPF officers working at the command posts and watchtowers. The IDMD spent many hours removing debris, nails and ensured that lightning rods were placed at the peaks of these structures to deflect potential lightning strikes.

### No Equipment and Weapon Shortages

The Force Armament Branch (FAB) and the Police Logistics Base were responsible for making sure that our officers were adequately equipped for operations. They analysed the requests from units, tallied what they had on hand, centrally pooled additional equipment from various SPF units and redistributed items to the units that required them quickly. In this way equipment such as handcuffs, batons, bullet-resistant vests, and flashlights, etc were supplied to where they were needed the most, without incurring additional time and cost for procurement.

The FAB ensured that there were adequate weapons and ammunitions to be issued to every officer. To do so, they had to check regularly with the Land Divisions to ascertain that every additional officer loaned to their Division would be sufficiently equipped.

### Ensuring a Smooth Journey

Officers from PLD's Automotive Engineering Management Division on the other hand were in charge of transportation. Buses and vans were chartered both for SPF officers and transporting operational equipment respectively to arrive punctually at the various security deployment sites.



I am honoured to be part of the GE deployment. The hazy weather might have clouded the day but it certainly did not cloud our judgement. We tried our very best to cater to the needs of our officers, ensuring that their equipment were prepared before deployments. PLD also prepared other necessities such as N95 masks, bottled water and eye drops to combat the haze.

Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) Rimyazad bin Abdul Hamid, Head Operational Logistics, Police Logistics Base, Police Logistics Department

It's one of the most interesting moments I've experienced during the course of my National Service life. I met many other regular officers from other departments who never failed to assist me when I needed their help. They were very understanding and approachable, making my GE experience a fruitful one.

Special Constable Corporal (SC/Cpl) Saifudin Adam, Assistant System Management Officer, Police Technology Department, Police Coast Guard



We were very concerned about the officers deployed during the GE period. It's been a tough year for them with several long-drawn deployments for the State Funeral for Mr Lee Kuan Yew, the Jubilee Celebrations and the South East Asian Games. That is why we do our best to boost their energy and morale by making sure that there was a variety of food for them throughout the course of GE security operations.

Mr Pang Sab, Welfare Officer (Operations & Benefits), Police Welfare Division, Manpower Department

### Stellar Tech Support

The Police Technology Department was primarily involved in handling the technical support needed by SPF units for the operations. They were in charge of installing computers and surveillance cameras at the rally sites so as to provide our officers with a bird's eye view of the proceedings at each site. The PTD worked very closely with the PLD prior to any installation to ensure that the poles that held the surveillance cameras were stable and able to withstand their weight.

Apart from that, PTD officers also assisted in setting up the X-ray screening machines and walkthrough metal detectors at entry points of nomination centres so as to detect prohibited and dangerous items. This was done to ensure the safety of the people attending the rallies. Furthermore, PTD

officers ensured that officers on the ground had smooth and uninterrupted communication during the deployment. In the event that officers were unable to communicate via their Matra digital radio sets due to the 3G network's downtime, PTD officers had to troubleshoot and help to restore efficient and clear communications.

### Not Forgetting Welfare

The MPD's Police Welfare Division (PWD) was tasked to ensure that officers were psychologically and physically equipped for the operations. Welfare officers from the division coordinated and procured the distribution of welfare supplies in addition to the meals that the respective units catered for their own officers throughout the duration of the operations. PWD had the mammoth task of

distributing the additional food supplies to various units accordingly. Some of the food supplies distributed included isotonic drinks, coffee, milo, chocolate wafers, assorted biscuits, sweets and instant noodles. Furthermore, PWD coordinated staggered timings for the different units to collect and transport the supplies so as to avoid congestion and more importantly ensure that SPF officers received their share on time. These supplies went a long way towards boosting the morale and sustaining officers' resilience during the intensive operations.

Just like these three departments, there were many other SPF units that pulled together in a very short time to support the Ops and the frontline units as best as they could, in securing the General Election 2015.

# Behind the Scenes of GE 2015

Officers from the Land Divisions, Traffic Police (TP), Public Transport Security Command (TransCom) and Special Operations Command (SOC) supplemented by officers from Police staff departments, Volunteer Special Constabulary (VSC) and operationally ready Police National Servicemen (PNSmen) were deployed at the various nomination centres, rally sites, polling stations, counting centres and the Supreme Court to ensure public orderliness and smooth traffic flow at all times. Here's a glimpse of the wide range of activities carried out by the Police for the General Election (GE) 2015 security operations.

## All Systems Go from Nomination Day

Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs Mr Leo Yip and Commissioner of Police Hoong Wee Teck overseeing the Police officers managing the crowds from the Police Operations Command Centre (POCC).



## Facilitating Crowd Arrival and Departure

TransCom officers patrolling at bus interchanges and MRT stations to protect commuters against any public disorder, and helping to ensure a smooth flow of commuters heading to the rallies.



## Preparing for the Operations

Police Logistics Department (PLD) officers conducting equipment checks before distribution.



The Police Technology Department officers setting up the camera equipment to record the proceedings after the PLD set up the watch towers at rally sites.



## Working through Lunchtime

Officers from the Divisional Tactical Teams and the Ground Response Force setting up barricades and preparing for the afternoon rally while TP officers are ensuring a smooth flow of traffic along the roads.



## Eagle-watch

Officers overseeing the crowd that turned up during the rallies from the watch tower, ready to maintain order upon spotting any signs of trouble.



## Police Elections Permits Office (PEPO)

The Police Elections Permits Office (PEPO) busy at work processing applications from political parties to hold rallies throughout the campaigning period.



## Lending a Hand

Our Police officers going the extra mile to assist those in need.



## Full Steam Ahead on Cooling-Off Day

Deputy Commissioner of Police (Policy) Lim Kok Thai, visiting the Training Command on cooling-off day, and discussing the plans for Polling Day with the team.



## The Final Lap

Police officers escorting the elections officials carrying the ballot boxes and making sure that they get transported safely to the Supreme Court.

Later at night, officers were seen patrolling inside stadiums and other assembly areas to maintain public order where crowds had gathered to await the announcement of the GE results.





# My View By SC/Cpl Harsha Ramachandran

When the Election rally sites get crowded, I stand tall, like a knight in shining tarpaulin, ready to assist officers. I am the iconic Police watchtower used during the General Election (GE).

*Preventing, detecting and deterring crime in crowds is never easy. Being in a crowd may make people more susceptible to crime. At the same time, crime detection is more challenging for Police officers too. This is where I come in. My impressive height projects a strong Police presence to keep any potential criminals in check and it gives officers the vision they need to spot criminals.*

*I don't work alone in my quest to enhance Police officers capabilities. My partner, Spotlight, has a bright personality and his 100 watts helps to illuminate night rallies and give officers superior vision. I may provide a vantage point for officers, but my efforts will all go to waste at night if not for Spotlight.*

*My fellow watchtowers and I can hold up to four Police officers at any given time. There are a total of 32 of us deployed throughout the entire General Election period. With our help, officers are able to carry out their duties effectively.*



# General Election Spotlight – Brothers in Arms By SC Tan Yick Wei, Jonas

During deployments, it is uncommon to see siblings being deployed together in the same Land Division. However, during the General Election (GE) 2015, two brothers not only worked together in the same Land Division, but led their men side by side. Deputy Assistant Commissioner of Police (NS) [DAC (NS)] Lionel Chai Yee Yuen, 48 years old, and Superintendent (V) [Supt (V)] Chai Yee Hoi, 51 years old, each holding different leadership positions in Central Division ('A' Division) shared with the *Police Life* on their experience on working together during the GE security operations.

### On the General Election 2015

**T**his is one of the most successful deployments I have seen as a serviceman in 30 years." DAC (NS) Lionel had to assess the readiness and competencies of NSmen and plan the execution of the deployment for NSmen, while Supt (V) Yee Hoi did the same for the VSCs. One of the key problems they faced was that they "were given only a day's notice to garner manpower support for the following night's rally", making their job especially challenging.

Fortunately, the National Service (NS) men and Volunteer Special Constabulary (VSC) officers rose to the occasion, and did their best to ensure the smooth operations. The siblings attributed the success of this year's GE security operations to their men, saying that their preparedness and willingness to serve ensured the smooth running of the operations at the frontline, allowing them to tackle any issue that came up, swiftly and effectively.

### On the "Sibling Team"

It remains noteworthy that this is not the first time that DAC (NS) Lionel and Supt (V) Yee Hoi have been deployed together. They worked together during many deployments throughout the years and even during the latest prolonged South-East Asian Games 2015 security operations.

The siblings shared that they had not discovered their passion for the Singapore Police Force (SPF) at the same time. While DAC (NS) Lionel became inspired during his Full-time NS, Supt (V) Yee Hoi stumbled upon the VSC a few years after his NS. The realisation that expending a small bit of effort serving every year would "translate into a safer, more secure home for everyone living on this island" had hit both of them, albeit at different times. This is a blessing for the SPF as they represent one of the best in their respective departments and are looked upon as role models by fellow officers of the Force.



## WORD HUNT

E	L	E	Z	V	R	E	V	E	C	B	F	K	A	U
C	I	N	T	E	R	M	I	T	T	E	N	T	X	F
F	U	D	R	A	O	B	G	N	O	L	T	C	C	K
A	F	G	O	X	N	U	M	I	J	C	G	T	Y	N
Y	G	X	T	S	T	I	M	R	E	P	K	U	S	E
R	N	D	O	E	D	S	M	R	G	F	H	A	H	J
D	T	J	O	T	P	P	I	U	M	M	C	L	A	Z
R	P	C	J	O	B	D	D	O	L	V	F	N	D	F
Z	O	M	F	V	B	K	A	L	E	L	E	R	X	P
J	X	C	V	W	D	N	M	C	E	M	I	O	I	H
D	X	J	Z	Q	X	N	Q	V	I	O	U	S	S	H
E	Z	R	B	T	R	T	U	Y	E	F	Y	J	P	G
B	M	F	Q	H	V	H	G	J	H	A	Z	S	R	U
E	W	N	V	U	A	D	U	J	A	D	Y	U	M	T
G	P	E	V	B	J	O	V	T	L	X	E	W	Z	F
S	E	C	U	R	I	T	Y	O	M	U	O	G	R	A

Find the missing words from the articles and circle the words in the word search puzzle above.

- 1) Buses and vans were chartered both for SPF officers and transporting operational equipment respectively to arrive punctually at the various \_\_\_\_\_ deployment sites. (PAGE 6)
- 2) My partner, Spotlight, has a bright personality and his 100 watts help to \_\_\_\_\_ night rallies and give officers superior vision. (PAGE 10)
- 3) At the polling stations, the officer's task was to \_\_\_\_\_ the people and assist the elderly and handicapped. (PAGE 12)
- 4) In GE 2015, a deployment plan was drawn up to ensure that every officer is scheduled with \_\_\_\_\_ breaks. (PAGE 13)
- 5) He shared that it was heart-warming to know that they all did not hesitate to take over duties of the tasks of other POs, especially the task of going through the voters' register and reading aloud the voters' names and serial numbers when citizens arrived to cast their \_\_\_\_\_. (PAGE 14)
- 6) This meant that PEPO would need to process a record number of \_\_\_\_\_ for Election Meetings, Perambulating Vehicles and Assembly Centres. (PAGE 15)
- 7) We would usually head to the Skate Park for our \_\_\_\_\_ session or just chill and plan for our next holiday trip. (PAGE 16)

### Terms and Conditions for PLM Contest

- 1) This contest is open to all Singaporeans and Permanent residents.
- 2) Each contestant may only submit one entry for the contest.
- 3) Each submission (i.e. word search puzzle) must be completed with the correct answer, name as in NRIC, NRIC, email address and contact number.
- 4) Send a photo of the completed word search puzzle to [spf\\_plm@spf.gov.sg](mailto:spf_plm@spf.gov.sg) by 28<sup>th</sup> December 2015.
- 5) No other forms of submissions will be considered.
- 6) Prize winners will be informed via email or phone call.
- 7) Prize winners are to collect their prize, a *Police Life* passholder with a C.L.I.F. lanyard, in person.
- 8) Any prizes not claimed within a period of three months shall be forfeited without any liability on the part of *Police Life*.
- 9) *Police Life* reserves the right to amend the terms and conditions stated without prior notice.

# Republic of Singapore Police (RSP) on the Frontline of the General Elections

By  Reproduction from *Police Life* October 1991



August was certainly an exciting month for Singapore. First came the National Day celebrations followed by Swing Singapore and then the announcement of the General Election which caught almost everyone by surprise with its swiftness.

It is during times such as this that the Republic of Singapore Police (RSP) must be thankful for its state of readiness. When called to assist in the elections, the Force quickly swung into action. Nomination Day was on 21 August. The RSP's Liaison Office was responsible for issuing permits for rallies and perambulating vehicles during the hustings from 21 to 30 August. Police were deployed for crowd and traffic control as well as security coverage throughout the campaigning by all political parties.

The whole RSP was mobilised on Polling Day, 31 August. This included non-operational personnel from Police Headquarters and from other divisions and units. They were attached to the seven Land Divisions to perform various duties such as crowd and traffic control, static duty, supervisory rounds and other functions.

Police officers worked round the clock to ensure that polling would go on smoothly. Even the night before polling, police officers were deployed to secure all the polling stations.



Those at the various polling stations had to report to their respective Divisions at the crack of dawn. They were then briefed on their roles and duties before setting off to their designated locations. At the polling stations, the officer's task was to direct the people and assist the elderly and handicapped. They were especially vigilant in preventing people from creating trouble and soliciting for votes. They had to be strictly impartial in carrying out their duties.

Other officers had to ensure that no vehicles were parked in and near the polling stations to prevent traffic obstruction. Drivers who did so would run the risk of having their vehicles towed away.

Rendering first-aid was another part of an officer's job on Polling Day. Some voters literally wilted from the heat and humidity while waiting for their turn to cast their vote. So it was officers to the rescue until the ambulance arrived.

The end of polling at 8 p.m. did not mean the officers could go home. They had to standby at their respective divisions and units in case of any emergency during the announcement of the election results.

Security was especially tight at the counting centres in order to keep unauthorised people from entering the compounds. Mobile squads and other police officers were stationed outside the counting centres for preventive purposes. Supporters of the various political parties lined up behind barricades while police officers stood guard to check against any disorderliness.

It was about 4 a.m. by the time the last results were announced. Some divisions and Units did not stand down until about 5 a.m. For some this marked the end of a 12-hour-shift.

Once again, the RSP had fulfilled an important role in helping to ensure such an important day passed without major incidents. Maintaining law

and order is especially vital in a multi-cultural country like Singapore. No matter which political party leads Singapore into the next century, the RSP will continue to play its part in ensuring peace and security for the nation.



# General Elections Then and Now

By  SC/Sgt Gabriel Chan Duen Yue

Having been dutifully involved in several General Elections (GE) since 1980, Senior Station Inspector (2) [SSI(2)] Tan Poh Hin shares his work experience and how the GEs have transformed over the years in terms of policing.

## Recollections

"Things were different in the past GEs," said SSI(2) Tan. His first policing experience for the GE was in 1980, back when he was still a Police trainee. He assisted with the escorting of ballot box on Polling Day. He recalled that in those days, very few wards were contested. Debates and rallies were far and few between. As such, a maximum of ten officers were deployed at the rally or polling station.

As society became more industrialised in 1988, SSI(2) Tan observed a substantial increase in the number of people who were interested in government policies that concerned them. For the first time in GE history, Hougang stadium witnessed an unprecedented surge of attendees. More than 20,000 people attended the rally. "It was overwhelming. We didn't expect a massive crowd in a single rally," SSI(2) Tan said.

The unexpected crowd meant that more supervision was needed from the Police Force. SSI(2) Tan was in charge of the entrance of the rally. He made sure that the people entered the stadium in an orderly manner. Safety was his utmost concern. When he noticed that his colleagues had barred a group of rally attendees from entering the premise through the entry point and the situation was becoming tense, SSI(2) Tan immediately stepped in to help resolve the situation. He patiently explained to them the rationale behind his colleague's decision and went on to usher the group in through an alternative entrance. "The choice of words and pro-activeness will always be the link to build a good rapport with members of the public".

## His GE 2015 Experience

SSI(2) Tan also shared with *Police Life* his feelings about the recent General Election.

"Today, much emphasis is placed on the welfare of officers. In GE 2015, a deployment plan was drawn up to ensure that every officer is scheduled with intermittent breaks". He compared this to his past deployments earlier in his career where he had to wait 48 hours without break till the election results were announced. He is glad that this has changed and officers' well-being as they are constantly being taken care of till now.



SSI(2) Tan was also deeply moved by the heartfelt messages posted on social media sites after the GE ended. "This is very encouraging for the officers on the ground - It makes their job really meaningful," he said.

## Day-to-Day Policing

SSI(2) Tan is currently the Deputy Officer-in-Charge (DOC) of Community Policing Unit (CPU) at Serangoon Neighbourhood Police Centre (NPC). He gives talks in schools on trending crimes and advises children to steer away from crime and avoid becoming victims of such. He also works with the residents and community centres in his neighbourhood to organise crime prevention and awareness events.

What motivates him to continue to serve as a Police officer is the 'multitude of ever-changing challenges' that he encounters throughout his work. Although there are times when he is unable to spend time with his family due to the irregular work hours, he would bring them on overseas trips whenever possible.



## Perspectives of A Presiding Officer

By SC/Sgt Gabriel Chan Duen Yue

Both uniformed and civilian officers were involved in the Police security operations for the General Election (GE) 2015. It is common knowledge that civil servants from various ministries are trained and assigned various roles to support the Elections Department (ELD) in the lead up to Polling Day for the GE. *Police Life* caught up with a civilian officer who was deployed for both the Police operations and for Election duties by the ELD.

in office beyond normal working hours for urgent web publishing support for the Police Elections Permits Office (PEPO) and the Public Communications Division. He helped PEPO set up and update the PEPO website almost daily. Police news releases on the location of rally sites, and traffic and crowd control matters also had to be published as and when they were ready.

While Mr Oh he attended training for his role as PO conducted by the ELD several months before, the actual work for him started three days before polling day where he was called back for a refresher course. At the refresher course, the ARO reminded them of the various polling procedures.

On polling day itself, the duty roster was split into four shifts with each shift lasting about three hours. Each PO was assigned a duty from stationing themselves at entrance to registration points and exits points. Apart from that, they also guided and assisted the elderly who needed their help. The duties were rotated to ensure that the POs would not be too tired out from doing the same duty throughout the 12 hour-shift on polling day.

Overcoming fatigue was the greatest challenge that POs faced during the deployment. They had to report to the station on polling day at 6am and only ended their shift at about 9pm. Although it was tedious to work for such long hours, it was

certainly a worthwhile experience that united civil servants from various ministries. For Mr Oh, the most rewarding part of this experience was getting to know and work with other civil servants from various departments.

**"I am very lucky to have experienced the General Election in many different ways, as a Presiding Officer, Web & Design officer and as a voter,"** shared Mr Oh.

**"The camaraderie forged during the entire deployment was the most rewarding factor."** He shared that it was heart-warming to know that they all did not hesitate to take over duties of the tasks of other POs, especially the task of going through the voters' register and reading aloud the voters' names and serial

numbers when citizens arrived to cast their votes. This tedious task had to be meticulously done so that the proceedings are open and transparent to all the stakeholders.

**I like the idea that as civil servants, we get to serve the public in multiple ways. Apart from carrying out my daily duties at work, I get to serve the nation by ensuring the polling process is transparent and fair.**

Mr Oh Gao Ning



Mr Oh Gao Ning, a Web & Design Officer from the Public Affairs Department (PAD), was assigned the role of a Presiding Officer (PO) at polling station in Nee Soon. The role of a PO is to assist the Assistant Returning Officer (ARO) and Senior Presiding Officer at the polling station to ensure the smooth proceedings of polls. Mr Oh was also the Team Leader in one of the two teams and was involved in the supervision of the other POs' movements and lunch breaks.

When the writ of elections was issued, Mr Oh was tasked together with his small web team to stay on

## An Experienced Hand at the Police Elections Permits Office

By SC/Cpl Harsha Ramachandran

A specially selected group of officers was tasked with the processing and issuing of applications for permits to hold election meetings (indoors and outdoors), and perambulating vehicles during the General Election (GE) 2015. They came from different units across the Singapore Police Force (SPF) and formed the Police Elections Permits Office (PEPO). PEPO was led by Police Liaison Officer (Elections) Senior Assistant Commissioner of Police (SAC) Hsu Sin Yun who was assisted by Deputy Police Liaison Officers (Elections) Assistant Commissioner of Police (AC) Lee Chin Ek, and AC Cheong Chee Ming. The office was at the frontline of election operations and acted as an interface between the Police, candidates and election agents. *Police Life* spoke to Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Christopher Reuben, Head Operations Planning for PEPO, to find out more about his experience at PEPO.

DSP Reuben had also been involved in the election permits office setup for the 2006 and 2011 GEs, the 2005 and 2011 Presidential Elections, and the 2012 and 2013 Hougang and Punggol By-Elections. These experiences gave him confidence going into the election operations this year.

In the lead-up to the operations, he planned how the PEPO would function and created various roles to suit these functions. He then worked closely with the Manpower Department to fill the roles with suitable officers, comprising both civilians and



uniformed officers. Together with Superintendent of Police (Supt) Sam Tan Hong Ti, Head Operations Management for PEPO, he trained the chosen officers and conducted full simulations to ensure smooth functioning during the actual GE operations.

However, he told us he was acutely aware of the new challenges he and his team were facing this GE. For the first time ever, all the constituencies were being contested. This meant that the PEPO had to process a record number of permits for election rallies and perambulating vehicles.

Working at the PEPO during the election period was demanding. Officers had to prepare for many difficult scenarios while handling numerous election agents and officials. These scenarios saw officers deal with various situations like rally site cancellations, ensuring the eligibility of perambulating vehicles and the speakers list, and the management of calls to the PEPO hotline. The officers' work was closely scrutinised by election agents and the public, leaving no room for error. Officers had to process permit applications accurately and interact with various stakeholders. They needed to work cohesively and quickly as a team as each officer's role was crucial to the entire permits approval and information dissemination process. Thanks to their unwavering commitment to their work, there were no major incidents arising from the PEPO operations.

Despite the difficulties that came with being Head Operations Planning, DSP Reuben never backed down from challenges. When asked about how he would feel about being involved in the next election, he enthusiastically told us that he would not hesitate to step up to the task.

**If there is anything I can do for the betterment of the SPF, I will do it. I am very glad that I have been able to contribute towards a national event and put my experience to good use.**







# ONE OF US

## Hi, I am...

Staff Sergeant (SSgt) Nur Rafeda Bte Abdul Khalid. I have been in service for the past 6 years and am attached to the Changi Neighbourhood Police Centre (NPC) as a NPC officer in Team Delta. I am also privileged to be part of the Special Women Task Team (SWTT).

## Where do you go to take a break during work?

Official Ease, as our breaks are called, is not always fixed. If there are no cases to attend to, during those free times, my colleagues and I would return to Changi NPC and discuss where to head to after our shift ends. We would usually head to the Skate Park for our longboard sessions or simply chill and plan for our next holiday trip.

## What is the most memorable/ interesting incident that you have encountered while at work?

I was deployed during the General Election (GE) period as a SWTT officer. Normally we would be on standby at our holding areas during deployments. For this particular operation, however, I was tasked to control the flow of human traffic at the rally sites. It was really encouraging to see officers from various departments such as the Traffic Police, Land Divisions and the Public Transport Security Command working together to ensure the public's safety. I treat people the same way as how I want my family to be treated. It made me appreciate my work even more because I know that my family is also safe from harm's way when they attend such rallies.

## The weirdest misconception you have heard about Police officers is...

That all offences are arrestable. There are times when Police officers attend to cases such as mischief and voluntarily causing hurt where the victims demand for the perpetrators to be arrested. Depending on the circumstances of the case, Police may ask the victim to lodge a magistrate's complaint, instead. Through that avenue, victims can also seek legal redress against perpetrators.

## "I believe in..."

If you want to go far, go together as a team.