



Honours and Awards Credibility of Hong Kong's System

Mixed responses to this survey include the weak connection between the system and the general public, and unfamiliarity with its workings.

The underlying principle of any honours system is recognition of those who have given dedicated service or have made outstanding contributions or sustained achievements. There is widespread belief that a good system can help establish role models, encourage participation in public service and increase sense of belonging. Naturally, the fairness and credibility of such a system comes under scrutiny.

The HKSAR honours system was established about 20 years ago and offers General Awards, Bravery Awards and Disciplined Services/ ICAC Awards. Anyone can make a nomination and recipients can be from any sector and all walks of life. Most nominations are made by government bureaux and departments. The Honours and Non-official Justices of the Peace Selection Committee then makes recommendations for the approval of the Chief Executive. As of 2018, more than 6,000 honours had been bestowed.

Sources

protocol.gov.hk/eng/honours/hon_type.html
protocol.gov.hk/eng/honours/doc/Honours_Statistics.pdf

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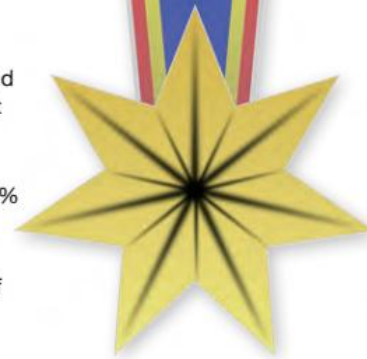
Respondents 522 people aged 18+, four academics or experts and one public award recipient

More details [in Chinese] yrc.hkfyg.org.hk/2019/04/29/yi041

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Key points from respondents

- Over 95% say acknowledging contributions to society is important.
- Almost 80% say a credible honours and awards system could enhance support for the government.
- About 60% say they have not considered nominating anyone and 30% of those in this group say they know nobody who is worthy.
- While 58% of those who have heard of the HKSAR's honours and awards system say the honours were well-deserved, 37% say recipients have not lived up to them.
- 39% say the poor reputation of some recipients has damaged the system's credibility and 35% say the reason for its vulnerability is the chance of corruption.



Comments from Youth I.D.E.A.S. think tank members

Ray Poon, convener "The findings show that there is appreciation for a valid honours and awards system among the general public. However, since some respondents are not clear about the criteria for receiving honours or how to nominate a person, we looked to overseas experience for guidance and found that a nomination form with guidelines could make the process easier and more convenient."

Ansel Lam, deputy convener "There is lack of transparency in the system and the general public is unclear about its operation and selection criteria. Publicly available aggregated data about the system, better promotion of its procedures could help improve its credibility."

Read more about honours and awards

Hong Kong: protocol.gov.hk/eng/honours/hon_type.html
Britain: royal.uk/queen-and-honours