

FIRST PAGE FOR ALL WRITTEN TESTIMONY MATERIALS

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Below is are excerpts from an academic paper co-authored by Adrian Zenz and James Leibold, submitted for publication, titled "Securitizing Xinjiang: Police Recruitment, Informal Policing and Ethnic Minority Co-optation".

The Scaffolding of Xinjiang's Police State

In this section, we combine our analysis of advertised security-related recruitment with a discussion of the wider securitization infrastructure in Xinjiang. Over the last decade there has been a steady and strategic growth of the police force in Xinjiang that is in our view best understood through five distinct stages of development: a) before the 2009 riots (2003-2008); b) response to the 2009 riots (2009-2011); c) expanded policing in the rural south (2012-2013); d) grid-style community policing and big data surveillance (2014-2015); and e) the massive expansion of surveillance manpower in tandem with the establishment of a dense convenience police station system under the XUAR's new Party Secretary Chen Quanguo (2016-2017).

Estimating the Base Level (2003-2008)

Despite claims that Wang Lequan ruled Xinjiang with an iron-fist during his fifteen-year tenure as Xinjiang Party Secretary (1994-2010),¹ advertised police recruitment was relatively small prior to 2009. This reflected China's overall security strategy, which at the time was more focused on large coastal cities.²

Xinjiang does not publish past or present numbers of active police officers. In order to establish a base level estimate we need to take recourse of total national staffing figures from the Ministry of Public Security, which rose from 1.6 million in 2002 to 2 million in 2011.³ If we estimate MPS staffing levels in 2007 at 1.75 million, an equivalent per capita count would yield a stock level of 28,600 police for Xinjiang. However, following Shichor's assessment, it

¹ Shan and Weng, 2011, 61.

² Greitens 2017.

³ Chen, 2015, 62.

is more likely that Xinjiang's per capita police count amounted to perhaps only 60-80 percent of the national average.⁴

Table 1 shows XUAR advertised police officer positions prior to 2009. The very low annual figures between 2003 and 2005 support a below-average stock level estimate compared to the rest of the country. Advertised positions increased rapidly in 2006 and 2007, even prior to the 2008 Tibetan uprising. The advertised 2008 intake nearly doubled compared to 2007, evidently a clear response to the emerging situation in the Tibetan regions and increased securitization across China in the lead up to the Beijing Olympic games.

Table 1: XUAR Police Officer (*renmin jingcha*) Recruitment (civil service system)

Year	2003 to 2005	2006	2007	2008
Advertised police officer positions	1,354 (451 annually)	1,099	1,547	2,919
Increase over previous year(s) (percent)	-	143.7	40.8	88.7

Responding to the 2009 Riots (2009–2011)

The 5 July 2009 riots in Urumqi surprised the nation. Top Party officials were shocked by the scale of the violence and their inability to quickly quell the unrest with the locally available security forces. The situation only stabilized after Beijing airlifted nearly 30,000 PAP and SPU units with a range of heavy equipment to Xinjiang from 31 cities across China.⁵

In response, Zhou Yongkang, the head of the CCP's Political and Legal Committee and a Politburo Standing Committee Member at the time, was dispatched to the region to coordinate the government's response,⁶ which included the first-ever local recruitment of SPU officers in Xinjiang. While SPUs existed in Xinjiang prior to 2009, their numbers were insufficient to deal with large-scale security threats. SPU forces are a highly effective but also relatively expensive strike force. Party officials also sought to expand the region's undermanned police force after Zhang Chunxian succeeded Wang Lequan as Party Secretary in April 2010. As a result, total security-related recruitment doubled from 8,647 advertised positions in 2006–2008 to 17,352 positions in 2009–2011, with most of these posts designated for major urban centers like Urumqi.

Expanded Policing and Surveillance in the Rural South (2012-13)

In January 2012, the region announced the recruitment of 8,000 new police officers in order to beef-up security ahead of the 18th CPC National Congress.⁷ The 2012 intake marked a

⁴ Shichor, 2004.

⁵ No author, 'Map of People's Armed Police Troops Dispatched to Xinjiang', China Digital Times, (2017), available at: <https://chinadigitaltimes.net/2009/07/map-of-peoples-armed-police-troops-dispatched-to-xinjiang> (accessed 15 December 2017); Dennis Blasko, *The Chinese Army Today*. New York: Routledge, 2012, p. 111.

⁶ No author, 'Protecting ethnic unity requires that action begins with every household *weihu minzu tuanjie yao cong meige jiating zuoqi*', People's Daily Overseas Edition, (2009), available at: http://paper.people.com.cn/rmrhbwb/html/2009-07/11/content_293148.htm (accessed 18 December 2017).

⁷ No author, 'In 2012, Xinjiang plans to recruit over 8,000 new police officers, laying a solid grassroots police force foundation, *2012nian Xinjiang jihua xinzhao 8000 duoming minjing hangshi jiceng jingli*', Tianshanwang news, (2012), available at: http://news.ts.cn/content/2012-02/01/content_6533128.htm (accessed 18 December 2017).

significant turn in Xinjiang's policing strategy. It advertised a total of 12,030 security-related positions, a 56 percent increase in adverts compared to 2009. About 7,700 of the 9,800 advertised police force positions were for so-called “police sub-station workers” (*jingwushi jingwu renyuán*), who were to man small, community-based police sub-stations (*jingwushi*) across the region. XUAR officials committed themselves to fully implementing the “one village, one policeman” (*yicun yijing*) scheme, which had been rolled out in various Eastern provinces during the early 2000s.⁸ Under this policy, a single sub-station police officer leads up to three assistant police staff in each rural village.⁹ The 2012 intake therefore initiated the establishment of a multi-tiered police force. Police sub-station officers are part of the formal police force, except that their employment occurs through the public instead of the civil service. Additionally, this intake marked the first time that Xinjiang advertised informally-employed assistant police officers, albeit at a fairly low number (955 positions).

Overall, 71 percent of the XUAR's 2012 police sub-station recruitment targeted regions with a Uyghur population share of 40 percent or higher; far more than in 2009, when only 40 percent of all security-related recruitment was aimed at such regions.

Grid-Style Community Policing and Big Data Surveillance (2014-2015)

In the wake of high-profile terror attacks in Xinjiang and elsewhere across China, which triggered Zhang Chunxian's “war on terror” declaration, the 2014 intake marked a decisive shift in Xinjiang's security strategy that is not reflected in numbers alone. On the one hand, it reinforced the trend toward large-scale, flexible police force expansion by advertising nearly 6,000 lower-tier assistant police positions. On the other, it introduced numerous new security-related recruitment categories in line with massive investments in high-tech surveillance and community-based policing.

One important aim of the 2014 intake was consequently an expansion of so-called “grid-style social management” (*shehui wanggehua guanli*). Grid management harnesses new surveillance technologies and big data analytics to comprehensively monitor activities within a discrete geometric zone.¹⁰ It was first trailed in Beijing and Shanghai during the early 2000s and gradually rolled out in frontier regions like Xinjiang and Tibet after the 2008-2009 unrest.¹¹ In Urumqi, for example, the city's 875 communities have been divided into 6,281 grids, each patrolled by a range of security personnel, including uniform police officers, assistant police and red-ribbon volunteers, with an estimated 86,000 staff involved in grid management work.¹²

In order to provide the necessary manpower, XUAR officials began advertising for “patrol and prevention” (*xunluo fangkang*) and “grid patrol and prevention” (*wanggehua xunkang*)

⁸ Zi Yang, 'Rural China's Public Security Vacuum', *China Brief*, (2015), available at:

<https://jamestown.org/program/rural-chinas-public-security-vacuum> (accessed 18 December 2017).

⁹ No author, 'In 2012, Xinjiang plans to recruit over 8,000 new police officers, laying a solid grassroots police force foundation, *2012nian Xinjiang jihua xinzhaos 8000 duoming minjing hangshi jiceng jingli*', Tianshanwang news, (2012), available at: http://news.ts.cn/content/2012-02/01/content_6533128.htm (accessed 18 December 2017).

¹⁰ Xie Yue, “The political logic of *weiwén* in contemporary China,” *Issues & Studies*, 48.3 (2012), p. 3.

¹¹ No author, 'Xizang shixian wanggehua guanli quan fugai', China Tibet News, (2014), available at: <http://www.chinatibetnews.com/2014/1103/1364780.shtml> (accessed 8 February 2018); [Yaxinwang](#), January 24, 2013

¹² No author, 'Hangye shendu baogao: changzhi jiu'an wei zhong, xinjiang anfang shichang zheng baofa', Sohu Stocks, (2017), available at: <http://q.stock.sohu.com/news/cn/098/300098/4930919.shtml> (accessed 18 December 2017). Wang Yajuan, “Weirao zongmubiao, wanshan wulumuqishi litihua shehui zhi'an fangkong tixi de sixiang,” *Zhonggong wulumuqi shiwei dangxiao xuebao*, 2 (June 2017): 21.

staff. Most of these positions were poorly paid and hired on an informal (contract) basis, much like the category of assistant police, with clear overlaps in employment terms. At the same time, the XUAR also began to employ dedicated police technicians in an effort to beef-up smart surveillance capabilities. In 2014, security recruitment included, for the first time, video surveillance (*shipin jiankan*) staff, employed on a "public-service-like" basis as explained above. The evolution toward new surveillance-oriented, technology-focused security jobs continued in 2015 with the introduction of internet surveillance and prevention (*wangluo jiankan*) positions on top of the existing internet security (*wangluo anquan*) job category first introduced in 2009. In Urumqi alone, over 160,000 security cameras were installed by 2016, with 1,000 video surveillance staff to monitor them on a 24-hour basis.¹³ The massive financial investments associated with these new forms of digital surveillance are reflected in the region's fixed asset investment in "information transmission, software and information technology,"¹⁴ which doubled from 5.1 to 10.1 billion RMB between 2013 and 2014.¹⁵ In 2016, the figure reached 13.6 billion RMB and is scheduled (according to government plans) to reach a stunning 24 billion RMB in 2017. If achieved, this would represent 2.4 times the national average (on a per capita basis), more than double that of Guangdong province and 1.4 times that of Fujian province (2015 figures), catapulting Xinjiang to the very forefront of information technology development in China.

"Convenience Police Stations" and the Massive Expansion of Surveillance Manpower (2016-2017)

After Chen Quanguo became regional Party Secretary in August 2016, police recruitment increased exponentially, reaching levels that have never been seen before, either in Xinjiang or in China as a whole. In outlining his policy agenda in September 2016, Chen stressed the importance of "placing stability above all else,"¹⁶ and called on security officials to adopt a more proactive, systematic, and fine-grained approach in combatting the "three evil forces" of terrorism, extremism, and splittism.

During Chen's first 12 months in office, the XUAR advertised 100,680 security-related positions, representing a 13-fold increase over the average advert number of the years 2009 to 2015. Nearly all of these positions (97,629) were advertised for formal as well as assistant police forces. This compares to only 64,505 adverts (45,056 for police forces) during the decade between 2006 and the summer of 2016. Chen's unprecedented recruitment drive seeks to boost the Party-state's surveillance capabilities across all parts of Xinjiang, without a particular focus on potentially restive Uyghur regions. Between 2016 and 2017, only 35.5 percent of advertised positions were designated for regions with a Uyghur population of 40 percent or higher - below the XUAR's overall Uyghur population share of 47.9 percent (2015).

Notably, 86 percent of the new hires were assistant police positions, and most of them were directly associated with the construction of so-called "convenience police stations" (*bianmin jingwuzhan*) across the XUAR. In dense urban centers like Kashgar and Urumqi, these

¹³ Sun Yongge, 'Qianxi Wulumuqi shi shequ "sihua" guanli moshi', Journal of the CPC Urumqi committee, 2016, 9(3):15-18.

¹⁴ I.e. any investment in communication and communication technology.

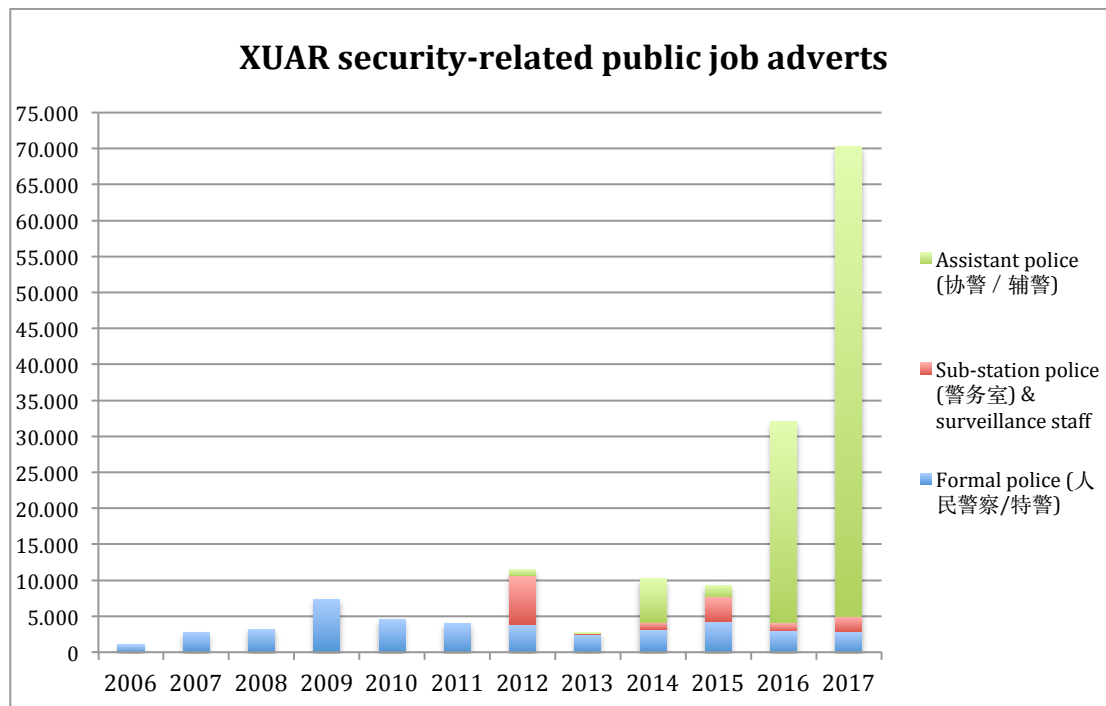
¹⁵ Xinjiang Statistical Yearbook, 2016 table 4-12 and 2014, table 4-5, entry "信息传输、计算机服务和软件业固定资产投资". And <http://www.chyxx.com/industry/201708/546056.html> (accessed 18 December 2017).

¹⁶ No author, 'We must firmly carry out the governance strategy for Xinjiang of comrade Xi Jinping, the Party's general secretary *Jinjue guanche yi Xi Jinping tongzhi wei zong shuji de dang zhongyang zhijiang fanglue*', (2016), available at: http://news.ts.cn/content/2016-09/17/content_12285188.htm (accessed 18 December 2017).

stations can now be found every 300-500 meters, with Chen first pioneering this approach in the Tibetan Autonomous Region in 2011. As a key part of grid management infrastructure, each station is responsible for monitoring a dedicated zone.¹⁷ From job advert texts, it is clear that the primary duties of assistant police forces are extensive patrols (often 24-hour shifts) and manning the numerous new checkpoints that have been established across the region. *An academic who visited Xinjiang in April 2018 noted that "in Uyghur neighbourhoods in Urumqi, Turpan and Kashgar there was an exponential increase in the presence of Uyghur police officers (without firearms) patrolling the streets, working at convenience police stations and checking phones and IDs of Uyghur pedestrians and drivers."*¹⁸

While precise numbers are unclear, some have estimated that the XUAR government has built or renovated an estimated 7,300 of these stations across Xinjiang by March 2017, with hundreds more being commissioned in the subsequent months.¹⁹ Depending on their size, convenience police stations have a staffing quota of six to thirty security personnel, while current advertised recruitments stand at around 12-13 assistant police per station.²⁰ This suggests that Xinjiang's police recruitment drive will probably continue.

Figure 1: Total police recruitment by type of police force XUAR wide, 2006-2017



This latest wave of security-related recruitment completes what we can tentatively call a three-tier policing strategy in Xinjiang (Figure 1). The top tier consists of regular (PSB)

¹⁷ Wang, 2016, 68.

¹⁸ Email exchange with Darren Byler in September 2018.

¹⁹ No author, '7300ge Xinjiang bianmin fuwuzhan jizhong caigou nuan tong shebei Xinjiang, Energy News, (2017), available at: <http://www.energynews.com.cn/show-55-6480-1.html> (accessed 18 December 2017).

²⁰ Fu Qiang, 'Hetian 119 yituo bianmin jingwuzhan jianli 1130ge gudingshi xuanchuanzhan', Zhongguo xiaofang zaixian, (2017), available at: http://119.china.com.cn/shyxf/txt/2017-01/16/content_9290098.htm (accessed 18 December 2017). No author, 'Akesu diqu ge xian (shi) zipin renyuan zhaopin modi biao', Zhonggong jiaoyu, (2017), available at: <http://xj.offcn.com/html/2017/05/33305.html> (accessed 18 December 2017). The second source cited lists convenience police station staffing quotas in Aksu Prefecture as 20–30 staff, depending on whether the station has one, two or three floors. The first source reports six officers in each of the 1,130 convenience police stations in Hotan Prefecture.

police officers and the SPU police force. The middle tier is composed of sub-station police officers who form localized hubs of policing, often in rural and remote regions with low levels of previous securitization. Finally, the third and lowest tier consists of various types of assistant police staff, who provide a large amount of additional manpower at the local community level.

Measuring the Scale of Xinjiang's Police Force

To get an impression of the significance of these recruitment volumes, we attempt to compare police force figures for China as a whole and the XUAR on a per capita basis. As noted above, China's uniform police numbers were estimated at 2 million in 2011. Our estimate for a national stock figure in 2017 assumes that growth rates in recent years have been faster than during the period of 2002 to 2011, as regions other than the XUAR also recruited assistant police positions, although not nearly as many as the latter. We conservatively estimate the national 2017 stock figure at 2.625 million, or 212 per 100,000 of the population.²¹

For the XUAR, the total per capita figure is based on an estimated 2007 stock level of 21,480 or 75 percent of the national per capita average at that time. The XUAR 2017 stock level is assessed based on a conservative 75 percent recruitment rate estimate for all policing-related adverts between 2008 and August 2017, as well as an annual attrition rate of 3 percent due to retirement, death and other causes. This yields a total police stock figure of 112,886.²² The resulting per capita count is 478, 2.3 times that of the estimated national per capita figure (see Figure 2). In 2017, Xinjiang's per capita police figure is an estimated 17 percent higher than that of Hong Kong.²³ In addition, Xinjiang has very likely exceeded the per capita police count of the former German Democratic Republic (GDR), which stood at about 453 in 1989.²⁴ Since police officers only represent one component of the security state, such comparisons cannot be used to compare either the surveillance capabilities or the overall coercive capacity of each region's security state. They simply show the magnitude of Xinjiang's most recent police intakes.²⁵

Figure 2: All types of police forces except the People's Armed Police.

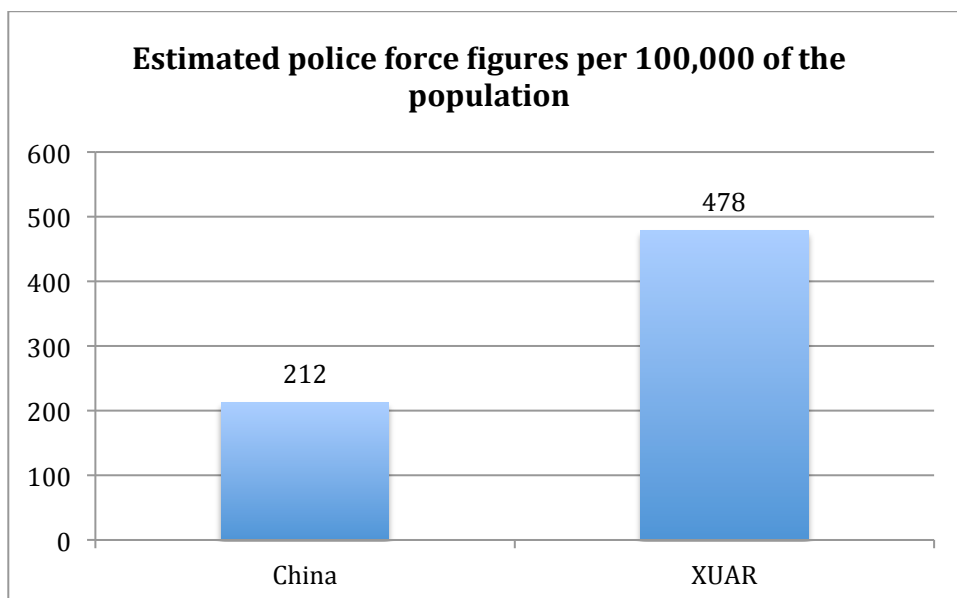
²¹ The XUAR population figure is from 2015 (source: Xinjiang Statistical Yearbook).

²² Calculated as 21,480 plus 105,029.

²³ Hong Kong police force ("disciplined officers") figure from August 31, 2017, resulting in a per capita police force figure of 409 (based on 2015 population data). Source: no author, 'Organisation structure', (2018), available at: http://www.police.gov.hk/ppp_en/01_about_us/os_chart.html (accessed 18 December 2017).

²⁴ Based on a count of 73,000 for the regular police force (*Volkspolizei*). Source: Glaessner, 1989, 158. When taking into account domestic security troops besides regular police forces, the GDR boasted an additional 22,500 personnel, or 140 per capita. Approx. 18,000 domestic police units (*Volkspolizei-Bereitschaften*) and 4,500 troops of the interior ministry (Glaessner, *ibid.*). Unfortunately, there is no reliable PAP troop size figure for Xinjiang. A BBC article put the figure at 70,000 in 2013, which would be 297 per capita, although anecdotal accounts cite troop figures of 200,000. Source: No author, 'Zhongguo junfang yaoqiu Xinjiang junren wujing jiaqiang jiebei', BBC Chinese, (2013), available at: http://www.bbc.com/zhongwen/simp/china/2013/07/130707_xinjiang_military (accessed 9 February 2018). It is likely that the actual current PAP head count in Xinjiang is higher, but in either case, Xinjiang's per capita police count would considerably exceed that of the GDR.

²⁵ Much of the surveillance of the GDR population was done through the Stasi, the GDR's secret service. A comparison to Xinjiang is not possible given that Chinese MSS head count figures are kept secret. In addition, state surveillance levels or capabilities comparisons cannot be adequately done across time. Today's China possesses advanced surveillance technologies that did not exist in 1989.



Even though assistant police recruitment has become a new trend throughout China, Xinjiang's recent recruitment drive is unprecedented in scale. Assistant police recruitment figures are difficult to assess with high accuracy due to highly scattered nature of these adverts. Even so, our compilation of assistant policing related adverts for January to September 2017 shows that on a per capita basis, Xinjiang advertised 40 times more positions than Fujian or Guangdong provinces, and nearly 90 times more than Zhejiang province (Table 2).

Table 2: Regional Comparison of Informal Police Recruitment

Region	Advertised assistant policing positions (Jan. - Sept. 2017)	Advertised positions per 100,000 of the population ²⁶
Xinjiang	69,667	300.8
Guangdong	8,005	7.4
Fujian	2,705	7.5
Zhejiang	1,732	3.5

The combination of low-skilled foot-soldiers stationed in and around convenience police stations together with high-tech surveillance equipment connected to an expanding information processing system has created “complete coverage,” according to the XUAR 2018 work report, “without any chinks, blind spots, or blank spaces.”²⁷ *Over the past decade, the focus of Xinjiang’s security apparatus has shifted from responding to outbreaks of violence to preventing and even predicting where unrest might occur. During a 2017 inspection tour of Xinjiang, the Party’s top security official Meng Jianzhu praised the rapid advancement of digital policing, calling for the “organic merger of modern technologies with counter-terrorism work, in order to push forward and deepen the use of big-data, AI and other technologies... [in] weiwen work.”*²⁸

²⁶ Population data from the 2015 Xinjiang Statistical Yearbook.

²⁷ No author, ‘Zhengfu gongzuo baogao,’ Xinhua, (2018), available at http://news.ifeng.com/a/20180128/55540816_0.shtml (accessed 16 February 2018)

²⁸ No author, ‘Meng Jianzhu: With full strength creating a new direction in social stability and lasting rule Meng Jianzhu: *quanli kaichuang shehui wending he changzhi jiu'an xin jumian*’, Xinhua, (2017), available at: http://news.xinhuanet.com/politics/2017-08/28/c_1121557912.htm (accessed 19 December 2017).

Yet these official assessments overstate the capabilities of digital policing in Xinjiang at present. Despite massive investments in new technologies, surveillance work is still in many ways reliant on large-scale human resource recruitment. As visitors to the region have noted, the Party-state currently relies on a large number of unarmed informal police staff (not to mention private and volunteer security officials) to perform daily security tasks, such as monitoring CCTV feeds, conducting patrols, ID checks and scanning mobile phones for suspicious contents.²⁹

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Minority Police Employment and Self-Policing

Average informal police wages in Uyghur majority regions are similar to those across the XUAR (Table 5). This is remarkable in light of the fact that there is a large disposable income gap between the Han-dominated, industrial north and the rural south. In 2016, for example, Kashgar prefecture's annual per capita disposable income amounted to 11,273 RMB,³⁰ 39 percent below the XUAR average. By comparison, the oil city of Karamay in the north had an annual per capita disposable income of 35,770 RMB.³¹

High-wage informal police positions that do not require a tertiary education represent a new career option for lesser-privileged minority populations. While outcome documents that list recruits by ethnicity are relatively rare, a non-representative sample of three assistant police recruitment drives in Kashgar prefecture in 2015 and 2016 shows that 83.2 percent of those hired were Uyghurs. Informant and visitor³² reports confirm that many new police positions in the South are being filled by ethnic minorities, many of whom appear to originate from the countryside.

According to several sources, many Uyghurs and other disenfranchised minorities have been entering the security forces since at least 2015/16 due to a lack of viable employment alternatives, but also because they thought it would protect from future persecutions.³³ Under Chen Quanguo, Uyghurs living in southern villages are facing far more stringent residential restrictions. For example, they cannot easily get a permit to live or work in urban centers. Accepting a police position is one way to escape this confinement, while securing stable, yet not unproblematic, employment.

Consequently, massive informal police recruitment kills two birds with a single stone for the Party-state: Not only does it flexibly enlarge the state's surveillance apparatus; it also provides

²⁹ Personal communication with Ben Dooley (AFP reporter) and other visitors to the region during 2017 and early 2018, along with corroborating statements from local informants.

³⁰ Computed as a weighted average of urban and rural disposable per capita incomes based on respective population shares.

³¹ No author, 'Kelamayishi 2016nian guomin jingji he shehui fazhan tongji gongbao', Karamay City Statistics Bureau, (2017), available at: http://www.kelamayi.com.cn/tzgg/content_1266024.htm (accessed 9 February 2018).

³² Visitors include visiting researchers, journalists and others on informal visits. Informants are Chinese citizens who reside in Xinjiang or who are in close contact with local residents from Xinjiang.

³³ Personal conversations with Darren Byler and Rune Steenberg Ryhe, who were citing examples from their local informant networks. Further confirmation comes from other sources, including other Western visitors.

well-paying jobs for impoverished minority populations, while getting ethnic groups to police their own people. Ethnic minorities have long served the CCP in China. However, the number of Uyghurs and other minorities recruited into the police force in Xinjiang far exceeds previous recruitment, and forms a key part of the current regime's security strategy. Moreover, Uyghur recruitment into the police force represents a large-scale employment creation strategy in a context where extreme securitization measures have negatively impacted other employment sectors and prompted those with better skills and educational levels to leave the region.

However, Uyghurs and other minorities who join the police forces have reportedly had to put up with an extremely demanding and stressful environment. Informants and visitors have noted that the police in Xinjiang suffer from health and social problems due to high pressure and frequent overtime. A substantial share of assistant police wages consists of performance-dependent bonuses, which are cut if performance goals are not met. Even worse, however, is the fact that minorities are reportedly unable to freely resign from police positions. According to several sources, those who seek to do so are threatened with detainment in re-education camps.³⁴ An assistant policeman from Kizilsu, a Kyrgyz minority region with a significant Uyghur population share, posted on a legal advice website that he wants to resign, but that his superior is threatening him with being sent to a re-education camp should he do so.³⁵

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³⁴ Zenz, 2018c.

³⁵ Source: china.findlaw.cn, February 3, 2018. The original link is no longer operational.

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