

9. If our recommendation is accepted, we propose that it should be implemented from a current date.

We have the honour to be
Your Excellency's obedient servants,

(Sidney Gordon)
Chairman

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Tang Kwai-nang

APPENDIX IX (5)

21 December 1988

His Excellency Sir David Wilson, K.C.M.G.,
Governor of Hong Kong.

Your Excellency,

Amalgamation of the Ranks of
Assistant Superintendent of Posts and
Superintendent of Posts

We were recently invited by the Administration to advise, under item I(b) of our Terms of Reference, whether the ranks of Assistant Superintendent of Posts and Superintendent of Posts in the Postal Officer Grade should be amalgamated to form a new rank of Superintendent of Posts.

2. The Postal Officer grade is classified under Group I of the school certificate grades. The Group comprises grades which generally require a minimum of 5'E's in the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination. The present structure and pay scales of the Postal Officer grade are as follows :-

	<u>as at 31.10.88</u>	<u>No. of Posts Pay Scale</u>
Postal Officer	1128	MPS 7 - MPS 20 (\$3,570 - \$7,735)
Senior Postal Officer	365	MPS 21 - MPS 24 (\$8,105 - \$9,365)
Assistant Superintendent of Posts	77	MPS 25 - MPS 28 (\$9,850 - \$11,305)
Superintendent of Posts	28	MPS 29 - MPS 31 (\$11,790 - \$12,940)

3. Assistant Superintendents of Posts and Superintendents of Posts are mainly deployed as postmasters in major branch offices and as supervisors of large counters of the General Post Office and the International Mail Centre. They are also deployed as supervisors of large operational sections in the mail sorting centres of the General Post Office, International Mail Centre and Air Mail Centre. In various special function units in the Post Office Headquarters, Assistant Superintendents of Posts and Superintendents of Posts separately work to the Controller of Posts grade.

4. The proposal to merge the ranks of Assistant Superintendent of Posts and Superintendent of Posts was first raised by the Union of Hong Kong Post Office Employees with the Standing Commission in May 1979 and then again in 1980 after the publication of Standing Commission's Report No. 2. At the request of the Standing Commission in December 1980, the Civil Service Branch conducted a feasibility study of the proposal and considered that there was a prima facie case for the merger of the two ranks. However, the Postmaster General had reservations about the merger at that time and the proposal was subsequently shelved.

5. We are informed that the Postmaster General has recently conducted a comprehensive review of the Postal Officer grade in response to a request from the Administration. In his review, the Postmaster General has found that the difference between the duties and responsibilities of these two ranks is only marginal. In job situations such as being postmasters in branch offices or supervisors of large counters in the General Post Office and International Mail Centre, Assistant Superintendents of Posts and Superintendents of Posts perform similar duties in different offices and they report directly to Assistant Controller of Posts I. It is also noted that Superintendents of Posts who perform postmaster duties are normally assisted by Senior Postal Officers instead of Assistant Superintendents of Posts.

6. In large operational sections in the General Post Office and the International Mail Centre, a three-tier supervisory structure, i.e. Superintendent of Posts - Assistant Superintendent of Posts - Senior Postal Officer, exists in a few sections. In these offices, the Superintendents of Posts take up only a co-ordinating role while the Assistant Superintendents of Posts are in charge of discrete operational units. In all such cases the need

for co-ordination at the Superintendent of Posts level is found to be marginal and can be removed without adversely affecting operational efficiency. It is also noted that in most sections of the General Post Office and the International Mail Centre, the majority of Assistant Superintendents of Posts, assisted by Senior Postal Officers, are supervisors of individual sections and report directly to the respective resident controlling officer of the rank of Assistant Controller of Posts I.

7. In special function units in the Headquarters, such as auditing, stores keeping, marketing, training, planning of post offices, methods and works study, Assistant Superintendents of Posts and Superintendents of Posts work separately to senior members of the Controller of Posts grade. The only exception is in the Accounts and Finance Division where two Assistant Superintendents of Posts are supervised by one Superintendent of Posts.

8. Statistically, of the 77 Assistant Superintendents of Posts, 42 work independently being in charge of a section and reporting directly to Assistant Controllers of Posts I or Controllers of Posts; 17 are in charge of discrete operational units with their work being co-ordinated by Superintendents of Posts in the same office; two work under a Superintendent of Posts in the Main Accounts Section while the remaining 16 are operational reserves.

9. The Postmaster General concludes that, with some minor re-organization of duties, the merger of the two ranks is feasible and should be pursued as this would facilitate better communication between supervisor and staff by reducing the levels of supervision. The Postmaster General therefore proposes that the ranks of Assistant Superintendent of Posts and Superintendent of Posts should be amalgamated to form a single rank of Superintendent of Posts. If the proposal is implemented, the pay and structure of the Postal Officer grade will be as follows :-

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Pay Scale</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
Postal Officer	MPS 7 - 20 (\$3,570 - \$7,735)	existing rank (no change)
Senior Postal Officer	MPS 21 - 24 (\$8,105 - \$9,365)	existing rank (no change)
Superintendent of Posts	MPS 25 - 31 (\$9,850 - \$12,940)	new rank

10. The Administration supports the Postmaster General's proposal on the grounds that the difference in duties and responsibilities between the ranks of Assistant Superintendent of Posts and Superintendent of Posts is marginal and that it would be desirable to merge these two ranks to streamline the structure of the Postal Officer grade and bring it in line with the structure of comparable grades in the school certificate group. Merging of the two ranks would also remove an unnecessary step in the career structure of the Postal Officer grade and enhance staff morale.

11. We have examined the proposal and we endorse it. We are satisfied that both ranks of Assistant Superintendent of Posts and Superintendent of Posts are similarly deployed in overseeing the operation of large offices where the role is largely one of staff supervision and progress monitoring and that the functional difference between the two ranks is only marginal. We also note that few Assistant Superintendents of Posts are supervised by Superintendents of Posts and that the need for this third level of supervision within the Postal Officer grade no longer exists and can therefore be removed without affecting operational efficiency. We also support the view that it is desirable to amalgamate these two ranks to streamline the career structure of the grade and bring it in line with other comparable grades within the same educational group.

12. If our recommendation is accepted, we propose that it should be implemented from a current date.

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