

CHAPTER TWELVE

CONCLUSION

12.1 Over the past twenty months, we have conducted a comprehensive review of the salary structure of the grades under our purview. All the grades have been examined individually to take account of their particular circumstances as well as collectively on the basis of their qualification grouping to ensure appropriate internal relativities. Our recommendations have taken into account changes since the last overall review in 1979 as well as anticipated future developments. In determining salary levels, we have had regard also to the pay practice in the private sector through information collected in the Pay Comparison Surveys.

12.2 Throughout the exercise, we have borne in mind the ultimate objective, as stated in paragraph 2.1 of our First Report, of maintaining a stable and motivated civil service to render effective and efficient service to the public. This has been made all the more important by the change of sovereignty in 1997 which imposes an even greater need to maintain the stability and continuity of the civil service to facilitate a smooth transition.

12.3 In our deliberations, we have taken full account of the views of staff and management and have, as required by our terms of reference, also given due weight to wider community interests. We would like to reiterate that all the representations received by us have been carefully considered, although it is not possible to record in our reports each and every point raised.

12.4 The revised salary structures that we have proposed are the result of very thorough research and examination over a twenty-month period, and have been arrived at after extensive consultation with the parties concerned. With the conclusion of this exercise, we hope that we have set a new order which would be able to meet

the needs of the civil service for some time into the future. Reviews of such a scale should not be conducted frequently. They are not only time-consuming but will also in the protracted process put the civil service under considerable stress, as we have observed during this review. It is hardly conducive to the continuity and stability of the civil service if its pay structure is frequently changed. Having said this, it does not mean that the pay of civil servants would be frozen. The annual pay adjustment which has regard to indicators derived from the annual pay trend survey ensures that the civil service will continue to receive salary improvements broadly in line with the private sector. In situations where particular grades are affected by new circumstances to an extent that give rise to particular problems, we shall conduct individual reviews as and when necessary.

Acknowledgments

12.5 We wish to express our sincere appreciation of the continued support from both staff and management in providing us with information and views which have greatly facilitated our study. We also record our thanks to staff representatives, heads of department and other senior government officials for meeting us to discuss issues relating to the review.

12.6 We thank the Secretary for the Civil Service and his staff for their valuable assistance in supplying the necessary information on particular subjects and in answering our many enquiries.

12.7 The translation of the English text into Chinese and the printing of both versions of the Report have again been completed within a short period of time. We are indebted to the Commissioner for Chinese Language and the Government Printer for their support.

12.8 Last but not least, we wish to extend to the Secretary-General and the staff of the Commission Secretariat our deep gratitude for their hard work and sterling support throughout the entire review.