

CHAPTER ONE

THE WORK OF THE REVIEW COMMITTEE

Committee meetings

1.1 Our review began in April 1988 since when we have met 17 times in committee to consider 156 papers on the many and diverse issues raised by our terms of reference.

Written submissions

1.2 As described in our Preliminary Report, at an early stage we expressly invited submissions from a variety of bodies including managements and staff associations and unions of the disciplined services. We received a total of 122 submissions of varying complexity and length, including a number from individual staff members and groups.

Preliminary Report

1.3 We submitted our Preliminary Report to the Governor via the Standing Commission on Civil Service Salaries and Conditions of Service on 7 July 1988. With the preparation of the Chinese translation and printing, we were able to issue the report on 19 July 1988 with appropriate publicity, seeking comments on it from interested parties by 9 August 1988. Our Preliminary Report provided a progress report on our work and an account of our methods; set out the facts we had collected and summarised the main arguments put to us up to that stage; indicated the questions we intended to pursue in this Final Report; and formed a consultative document for interested parties.

1.4 We distributed a total of 1,966 copies of the report. The bulk of these were sent to policy branches, disciplined services departments (for distribution to headquarters, formations and commands for convenient access by staff), Government Information Services (for distribution to the media), staff associations and unions, individuals who had made submissions to us, public bodies and private sector organisations. Other copies were distributed in response to requests from a variety of sources.

1.5 We thought it important to use the Report to give an account of the material on which we proposed to base our recommendations, even though it could not be quite complete at that stage, and to give interested parties, especially members of the disciplined services, the opportunity to correct this basis if necessary. We invited comments on the Preliminary Report to help in correcting factual mistakes, material omissions or wrong emphases in our summaries of representations received. A list of the organisations and

individuals invited to respond is at **Annex 1.1**. In total, we received 64 responses as follows :-

<u>Sources</u>	<u>Number</u>
Departmental managements and policy branches	8
Staff associations	14
Individuals	35
Public bodies	1
Private sector organisations	6
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Total	64

The corrections which we have made to the Preliminary Report as the result of considering these responses are set out in **Annex 1.2**. One feature noticeable by its absence was any major correction to the summary of submissions detailed in Chapter 8 of the Preliminary Report. That chapter may therefore be taken to present a broadly accurate picture of the major issues in our review as these are seen by the services themselves. We have kept their representations very carefully in mind in reaching our conclusions.

1.6 A number of responses raised issues which fell outside our terms of reference; but where we have seen fit to do so, we have offered a comment on such issues (for example, ranking and structure) as a marker for those responsible to take up if they think it appropriate. We also could not pursue representations made to us by some officers on the Master Pay Scale (MPS) employed in the disciplined services since the MPS was not within our purview. However, with the staff's consent, we drew their points to the attention of their department heads for further consideration.

1.7 It was also our intention to include in our Preliminary Report a factual section describing the hours of work in each of the five disciplined services, including details on their conditioned hours, actual hours worked, and the different shift systems practised. Unfortunately the constraints of time and the amount of detail to be considered and summarised prevented the inclusion of this important record of our findings. Each service provided both narrative and statistical accounts of their hours of work which we have now collated and summarised at **Annex 1.3**.

Oral evidence

1.8 We met all heads of department accompanied by senior staff as appropriate, and representatives of all staff associations and unions from each of the five disciplined services in evidence-taking sessions. A full list of those attending these sessions is given in **Annex 1.4**.

1.9 The purpose of each evidence-taking session was to give departmental managements and staff representatives the opportunity to emphasise, clarify and supplement their written submissions, and for us to pursue further questions and issues where we thought it necessary. Our timetable did not permit us to complete all evidence-taking sessions before the issue of our Preliminary Report. Since the bulk of these sessions actually took place after its publication we had the opportunity in several sessions to have useful discussions of responses to the report.

Familiarisation visits

1.10 An important part of our work was the series of familiarisation visits we paid to each disciplined service department. This programme had not been completed by the time that we issued our Preliminary Report. These visits have been an important element in forming our understanding of the work and duties of each department.

1.11 The visits (which took up in all the equivalent of 36 working days) enabled us to observe the work of each service; and whenever possible we took the opportunity to have informal talks with staff on the ground to ascertain their views on review issues and received a large number of informative and helpful comments. The visits took us to a large number of different locations and environments throughout the territory - control points along the border, headquarters at different levels, stations in the densest urban areas, the airport, the MTR, and container terminals, institutions and camps in the outlying islands, streets and housing estates, centres of night-life, and rural areas. We travelled in patrol cars, other service vehicles, and helicopters, and on a variety of vessels in the harbour and around the waters of Hong Kong. We saw both planned and emergency action as well as exercises by various services, and made visits in the early morning and late at night as well as during daylight hours. We believe the visits gave us a valuable practical understanding of the services' operations.

Disciplined Services Liaison Officers

1.12 As we mentioned in our Preliminary Report, we are grateful to the heads of each disciplined service for the assistance given to us by their designated liaison officers. Much of our fact gathering would have been impossible without them and they provided invaluable help in the form of much background information, statistics, rules and regulations, etc., as well as arranging our familiarisation visits and ad

hoc discussions with staff. The liaison officers have helped to ensure that we had quick access to essential information and did not operate in a vacuum secluded from the realities of each service. They were seconded to the Review Committee Secretariat for the main period of the review. The secondments ended in early September 1988.