

required. In those services where reasonably meaningful statistics of workload are available, notably FSD, C & E, and Immigration, it is possible to offer estimates of changes in workload per member of staff over a period (see **Annexes 2.1-2.5**). In addition, for specific parts of the services we have seen detailed figures which show very substantial increases indeed in workload per head. Where there are increases, they have been achieved in a number of ways, including in some cases a degree of re-organisation and capital investment. Without these re-organisations and investments it would not have been possible for the staff to carry the increased workloads, and accordingly some part of the increased productivity may not necessarily reflect increased effort on the part of staff. On the other hand, given the labour-intensive work these services perform, it is evident that greater throughput must entail a greater number of cases or incidents handled per member of staff, and that a large part of any re-organisation or investment must be designed to reduce the amount of time that staff spend between units of work. That is indeed what our field observations repeatedly brought out, and we have given weight to this in our review of factors, notably in the use of the factor intensity and continuity of effort. Departments which clearly show marked increases in workload per head in recent years are C & E and Fire Services. In other departments the increases appear to have been rather less, though events in 1988 have clearly added materially to workload per head in CSD and Immigration.

2.28 In the police, much of the time of staff is necessarily and usefully spent in activities which cannot be statistically measured except in ways which equate output to input (e.g. number of hours on foot patrol in urban areas). We have included in **Annex 2.1** a selection of the available statistics that seem to us relevant to estimating changes in workload. They tend to show a continuing increase in intensity of activity reflecting continuing developments in the way the force manages its resources.

2.29 We should also comment specially on the heavy additional responsibilities and workload that have been carried by the services, particularly Immigration and Police and most of all by Correctional Services as the result of the successive influxes of Vietnamese refugees and boat people. The strains placed upon Correctional Services staff have been particularly severe, with considerably reduced manning and consequent extra working on an extensive scale at almost all institutions, including maximum security institutions.

### **Future developments**

2.30 Our examination of developments over the past decade and what is happening now indicates that in the absence of some unforeseen major change we can be confident that the future workload of all the services will continue to grow. Among the services, workload prospects are perhaps least clear for Correctional Services, though the penal population has

recently risen to record levels and the increase shows no sign of levelling out. We expect that the effect of recent and future decisions will lead to increases in the range of programmes of the Correctional Services Department and therefore to further increases in its workload and responsibilities. Generally, we expect that with the development of present policies by an increasingly responsive government; a better educated population; continuing economic growth; more advanced technologies and a more developed infrastructure; the continuing increase in border traffic; and continuing growth in international connections of all kinds the demands placed on all the services and the complexity of their work will increase.

## **Stress**

2.31 We received many representations on the subject of stress and we found and were told of particular stressful instances and conditions. We are satisfied that the information we have been given about stress in the services provides a reasonable guide to the extent of the problem. We are also aware, however, that some disciplined services staff would see acknowledgement of stress as an admission of weakness, contrary to the attitudes expected in a disciplined service. We have no doubt that stress does exist in each of the services and we have formed the impression that in general (though not necessarily in particular) more stress occurs among the lower rather than the higher ranks. We reported numerous examples and causes of stress in our Preliminary Report. Selected examples include malicious false complaints against the police; staff and command decisions and performance in FSD both in fire and ambulance that may mean the difference between life and death; in CSD, having to exercise control constantly over prisoners who have committed serious crimes and are constantly on the lookout for an opening; conflicts with the public during personal searches in C&E; accountability at Immigration Service check-points for spotting forged documents or false declarations by travellers while clearing large numbers under continuing pressure.

2.32 The amount of stress which each of these circumstances might create can be debated; but we have observed that officers in the services take their responsibilities seriously and are expected by themselves and by their superiors to achieve consistently high standards. What might seem a minor cause of stress to an outsider takes on a different dimension for the accountable officer. Danger is a cause of stress, but not all stress is related to danger and much of it arises from the constant pressure or tension which can be found in many aspects of the services' work. Many representations pressed the view that the mental and physical stress caused by the job had not been adequately taken into account in pay. We have noted that stress is not one of the factors mentioned in the Standing Commission's 1979 papers, which is perhaps not surprising since the idea of work-related stress has gained much more credence and currency in the past few years. The Commission's assessment

undoubtedly took account of some though not we think of all the causes of stress in the services, and we consider this is one of the factors to which we must give a fair amount of weight.

### **Danger**

2.33 Danger and risks of various kinds exist in different degrees in each of the services, and this is a factor to which the Standing Commission clearly gave a good deal of consideration in 1979. They gave particular recognition to the special dangers to which firemen and policemen are exposed, recognising that their duties require them on occasion to place themselves deliberately in situations of very serious risk. We noted that in addition to the risk of traumatic physical injury firemen were peculiarly exposed to injury from the long-term effects of inhaling smoke at the fire ground. We think the Commission may not have given adequate weight to the risks run by ambulancemen, and in Correctional Services and Customs and Excise, which are brought out in the statistics for injuries on duty which we have reviewed. We also accept that there exist today, as compared to 1979, some additional elements of danger and risk, e.g. violence in closed camps, and exposure to some infectious diseases of great virulence, a matter of serious concern particularly to ambulancemen but also to others, including those in contact with refugees. We have taken account of these points in our review of the factors, but in general we consider the Commission gave due weight to this factor in the scales they set.

### **Restrictions**

2.34 We received many representations on the restrictions imposed on the disciplined services. We have discussed at length in our Preliminary Report the statutory constraints imposed upon members of the disciplined services, in particular the prohibitions on police joining trade unions and taking organised industrial action. Other services told us that despite the differences between the police and themselves in what was said in principal ordinances in this respect, their staff too were effectively prohibited by rules and regulations from taking industrial action. We have looked at the implications of this argument and our views on it are expressed in our recommendations on pay scales and pay determination machinery. The rules and regulations in this area clearly constitute an important restriction on the staff of the disciplined services.

2.35 We have also examined other requirements that might be construed as restrictions on disciplined services staff - the discipline code itself, requiring obedience to orders both in operational matters and in the alteration and extension of hours of work, often at short or no notice; the detailed departmental orders which have the same force as the discipline code; the principle (enshrined in ordinances or rules) of being deemed to be on duty when circumstances

require; social segregation and status of services staff; the effect of irregular hours and unpredictable calls on time which disrupt social arrangements and family relationships, e.g. being called back to work at any time or being given time-off in lieu on a day which one has not chosen; the controls on personal behaviour, appearance and movements; and the frequently mentioned difficulty of being unable to enrol for part-time study courses because of the need to work shifts or irregular hours.

2.36 We also appreciate the disruption caused to family life by virtue of some jobs in the services. Officers on duties of a special nature may be required to live away from families for periods of time; some shift duties take men and women away from spouses and children in the evenings, at weekends and on public holidays; postings to remote stations can cause upheavals in family ties, schooling, and so on.

2.37 We conclude that their work necessarily places considerable restrictions on disciplined services staff and that being a member of a disciplined service regularly entails a great deal of interference with personal life and family arrangements.

#### **Recruitment and wastage**

2.38 The summary tables at **Annexes 2.6 and 2.7** show recruitment and wastage in relation to establishment and strength for the basic ranks (those to which staff are appointed on recruitment) in each service for selected years from 1979 onwards including part of 1988. In addition to this basic information, we obtained a good deal of detailed information about both recruitment and wastage, including information about trends in 1988, for most of the ranks in all of the services. Taking recruitment and wastage together, it is clear the worst problems are occurring at both Officer and Assistant Officer II levels in Correctional Services, where losses from premature wastage have materially exceeded recruitment figures in the last three years, and in Immigration at both Assistant Immigration Officer and Immigration Assistant levels, though more detailed and recent figures show problems in other areas also.

#### **Recruitment**

2.39 We looked closely at recruitment trends over the past few years and to compare with the situation in 1979. We called for detailed statistics from each of the services to examine trends in and the actual numbers of applications received; applicants invited for interview; applicants turning up at interviews; number of appointments offered; and actual numbers joining each service. We also kept in view establishment and strength sizes for each rank in the services. We found target figures varied, even within the course of a year, according to different factors such as vacancies due to wastage, number of posts allowed for the financial year and the department's training capacity. We

also noted that some recruitment exercises were run as continuous programmes rather than as annual exercises, as with some other civil service grades.

2.40 We have not tried to compare our findings on recruitment statistics with other areas of the civil service. We think the entry requirements of the disciplined services regarding physique, and the need to choose candidates who are likely to fit into a disciplined way of life are too distinctive to make such comparisons useful. We are also aware that a substantial proportion of school leavers and graduates submit applications for a wide spectrum of posts before deciding which one they will actually pursue to a conclusion and there is most likely an element of this in the figures for initial applications, to which we have therefore attached only limited weight.

2.41 At the Officer levels, we have found a decline in the numbers of applicants coming forward at various stages of the recruitment process for posts of Station Officers in FSD, Officers in CSD, and Assistant Immigration Officers in Immigration Department. In the case of CSD Officers and Assistant Immigration Officers, the actual number of applications received for recruitment targets of around the same size in 1986-87 and 1987-88 has fallen substantially, and while there has been an increase in the numbers of applications received in the last few months, we have no reason to expect any major reversal in the present trend. Similarly in these two ranks, the number of appointments has decreased indicating a decline in the number of suitably qualified candidates coming forward.

2.42 At the rank and file level, we have found a significant decline in numbers at various stages of the recruitment process for the ranks of Ambulanceman in FSD, and Immigration Assistant in Immigration Department. The figures for the Ambulanceman rank show that while the recruitment target has been increasing over the past two years, the numbers of applicants attending interviews, being offered appointment and actually joining, have fallen considerably. We found a similar pattern in the case of Immigration Assistants. We also note cause for concern at the ranks of Assistant Officer II in CSD and Customs Officer in C&E.

### **Wastage**

2.43 As with recruitment, we obtained the best figures we could for the past three years, for 1979-80, and particularly, up to date figures (to end-August, early September 1988). We paid particular attention to premature wastage, i.e. resignations, transfers, and early retirements, and were also provided with length of service profiles for these groups. We looked at all ranks in each service and narrowed our focus down to those ranks where appreciable losses had taken place.

2.44 Our study of premature wastage shows that the situation is worst in the Officer and Assistant Officer II ranks in CSD; Customs Officer in C&E; and at Assistant Immigration Officer and Immigration Assistant ranks in Immigration Department. In CSD there has been a noticeable increase in the number of experienced Officers leaving in 1987 and 1988, and the trend appears to be continuing. Similarly, there appear to be problems in retaining experienced AOIIs and the numbers of AOIIs leaving from April to September this year shows a proportionately higher number than for last year. In C&E, the number of Customs Officers leaving has steadily increased and in particular, this has included a significantly greater number of experienced officers. Latest figures show a sharp rise, viz. the total number of Customs Officers leaving prematurely in 1987-88 was 58 while the period 1 April to 1 September 1988 has already shown a premature wastage of 67. A similar situation exists with Immigration Assistant; while a total of 63 left prematurely in 1987-88 (already well up on previous years), the figure recorded for 1 April to 1 September 1988 shows a premature wastage of 73 already. We consider that there is also reason for concern at the Police Constable (PC) rank because latest statistics show a significant increase in the number of PCs with 5-10 years experience leaving. From 1985 to 1987, the numbers of PCs in this category who left prematurely were respectively 50, 77 and 78. However between January and August 1988, 119 such PCs had already left prematurely.

2.45 We also believe that there is cause for concern at the Inspector/Senior Inspector of Police level where latest figures show an increase in officers who have between 5 and 10 years experience leaving; at the Senior Station Officer level in FSD where although the numbers involved at present are small, there are signs of increasing resignations; and at Senior Immigration Officer and Immigration Officer ranks, where this is cause for special concern, with 20 Immigration Officers leaving prematurely between 1 April and 1 September 1988.

2.46 We also took a broad view of total wastage (i.e. premature, natural, and involuntary wastage) and looked at the trends in the disciplined services compared with the civil service as a whole. The figures should be treated with caution but they did support in a general way our main observations on wastage which are that the situation is worst in CSD and Immigration with C&E following behind. Total percentages on wastage show that CSD and Immigration have had consistently the highest percentage of total wastage, with CSD always well above the civil service total. Immigration's total wastage percentage since 1985-86 has also been significantly above the whole civil service.

2.47 Our study has helped identify ranks where retention of staff is a problem for whatever reasons, and we have borne this in mind in our pay recommendations. Clearly however it would be wrong to consider improvements in pay and conditions of service as the solution to all wastage problems from

whatever cause. It is noticeable that substantial wastage in the services occurs principally at the basic entry rank of the rank and file where staff are generally young and may still be undecided about their chosen careers, and where the attractions of other jobs may be stronger. In a situation of full employment and under-supply of labour, there will always be a measure of job mobility.

### **Motivation**

2.48 While recruitment and wastage are quantifiable motivation has required an essentially judgmental approach. Our impression is that staff in the services are generally well-motivated by a combination of a number of factors - personal professional pride, pride in the service, challenge of the job, variety of work, serving the community. These views came out in a number of submissions. Perhaps it is understandable, given the nature of our review, that pay and conditions of service were noticeably not mentioned as motivating factors. We observed in a number of interviews however, that pay levels had been a significant factor in recruitment. In some quarters we observed a degree of cynicism about the Government as employer, coupled with a strong professional loyalty to the particular service and to colleagues, a situation which seemed to us to contain the seeds of difficulty. The general view we have formed on motivation is that there is scope for further development that would be encouraged by appropriate improvements in pay and conditions of service, and that this may be of particular importance to long-serving officers. This may merely be stating the obvious, but even the obvious should not be lost from sight.

### **Efficiency and effectiveness**

2.49 We invited each service to provide us with information on existing arrangements for monitoring and measuring efficiency and effectiveness, the results that had been achieved and how they thought the review could assist in this area. Each service responded with material explaining, typically, that the performance of units, formations and the department as a whole was measured against departmental policies, objectives, functions and work procedures while relevant statistics and trends were also used to test performance. We were told of regular reviews of organisational structures and procedures that were carried out to promote the efficient use of manpower and other resources, and to streamline work steps and routines. The services drew our attention to the performance appraisal system for individual officers, which they considered contributed to raising levels of performance. Public opinion and the mass media were important factors in the monitoring process and an aid in identifying deficiencies in each department's services and performance. The main proposals from the services as to ways in which pay adjustments might contribute to raising efficiency and effectiveness concerned the use of incremental jumps to encourage officers to pass promotion examinations,

and the use of long-service increments to maintain motivation in long-serving officers with little or no prospect of promotion. More generally, it was urged upon us that better pay and conditions of service would help in the recruitment and retention of better staff which would mean greater effectiveness and efficiency.

2.50 - We were grateful for all the services' efforts and material, but we made little headway in this area. We were unable to measure in any useful way how far the services have grown in efficiency, though our information about workload and staff increases leaves us in no doubt that there have been material increases in workload in many cases much in excess of the increases in staff. We recognise that in the fields of work covered by the five services it is not easy to measure effectiveness, but we are in no doubt at all that by world standards the Hong Kong services that we have reviewed stand very high indeed. There are few cities in the world, whether of comparable size and sophistication or at an earlier stage of development, where the citizen is safer from violence and theft, and a great many where such risks are very many times greater. Despite the great growth both in population and in volume of buildings, fire losses have actually been reduced materially over the years since 1979, thanks no doubt in part to higher standards in new buildings, but also thanks to the effectiveness of fire protection and fire-fighting work. The standards of order and of activity in the institutions of the Correctional Services are exceptionally high, and the services' positive programmes have considerable successes to their credit. The economic success of Hong Kong depends critically upon its international connections and its international standing, and upon the very rapid but carefully monitored and controlled flow of goods and people across its borders. The intensive efforts of the Immigration and Customs Services have been highly effective in their contribution to that economic success, and to protecting Hong Kong's safety and reputation.

2.51 We appreciate that the more precise measurement of effectiveness and efficiency is a concept that has not been deeply explored in the Hong Kong administration and may not have commanded priority among other tasks, particularly those concerned with operational matters. We think this is an important area for further work, and **we recommend** that the proposed Standing Committee on Disciplined Services Salaries and Conditions of Service should pursue this matter further with each of the disciplined services with a view to formulating better ways of assessing efficiency and effectiveness, and considering whether there is some way in which such assessments can be linked to pay determination.