

## I. Royal Hong Kong Police Force

### Pay

8.5 The majority of police submissions considered that policemen are insufficiently remunerated for the type of work they do and the hours they work. While most of the submissions we received were from Officers, the view was also taken by Rank and File that fair and realistic levels of pay and conditions of service should be based upon an examination of factors specific to police work. A number of submissions emphasized that the request for more pay was not a question of being mercenary, but a matter of proper recognition and adequate pay for the job. It was also represented that if the efficiency and high standards of the Royal Hong Kong Police Force are to be maintained, then Hong Kong must be prepared to bear the costs.

8.6 A number of suggestions were made as to how a proper level of remuneration might be determined, and what that level should be. In the main, the approach adopted by the Edmund-Davies Committee, which reviewed police pay in the UK in 1987-88, was favoured. A number of submissions criticised the Standing Commission on Civil Service Salaries and Conditions of Service for applying the Edmund-Davies approach to all the disciplined services instead of only the police, for whom it was originally devised.

8.7 Suggestions for pay increases to recruit and retain officers of high calibre generally took an across-the-board view, ranging from an 18% general increase boosted by some incremental jumps, to increases of the order of 40%.

8.8 Some submissions cited other civil service grades to place police pay scales in perspective. It would not be correct to describe these as strict job for job comparisons since many of the same submissions were emphatic on the unique and special nature of the police. Many such references to other grades were intended to show unfair differentials between policemen and the officers in other departments with whom they work or have contact. A number of submissions referred to ICAC officers who, it was put to us, earn more salary for the same level of responsibilities by being placed at a higher rank as well as receiving a "special allowance". Only a few comparisons were made with the private sector and these concentrated in general terms on bonus payments, and better passage and housing arrangements paid for by large companies.

8.9 It was also suggested to us that after training, the police inspectorate should be regarded as professionally qualified (see para. 8.42 below) and should receive a level of pay commensurate with that accorded to their professional and general grades equivalents on the Master Pay Scale, specifically in terms of having similar, longer incremental scales in each rank.

8.10 There were numerous representations for overlapping and extended incremental scales. For the Rank and File, we received proposals to extend the present pay scale for Station Sergeants (DPS(R) 30 to 37) by a number of incremental points to allow for a certain degree of overlapping with the first few points of the Inspectorate. We have been told that the average length of time required for those Police Constables (PCs) who become Station Sergeants to reach that rank is 15 years. such a PC joining at 18 years of age would reach the top of the Station Sergeant's incremental scale at about the age of 41 years, or 14 years before the standard retirement age of 55 years. We have been told on more than one occasion, and by officers of different ranks, that an experienced Station Sergeant can be more valuable to the Force, in functional and operational terms, than an inexperienced inspector and that the contribution made possible by experience should not go unrewarded. It has also been put to us as an example of greater burdens borne without recompense that Station Sergeants are required to take charge of units when their commanding Inspectors are away (but not often for the 30 days period mandatory for the payment of acting allowance to all civil servants other than the directorate).

8.11 For Officer ranks, we also received representations that some lengthening and a degree of overlapping of scales should be introduced for Chief Inspector (CIP) (DPS(O) 24-29) and Superintendent (SP) (DPS(O) 30-33) in view of their small number of incremental points. It was argued that such an arrangement would recognise the experience, service and worth of such officers who find themselves at the top of their incremental scale within a relatively short time after promotion. A period of standstill (often more than one) at the top of an incremental scale would be experienced by most officers. Promotion in the police force is competitive and dependent on vacancies at the higher rank. It was suggested also as a complementary measure that an "efficiency bar" should be introduced at stages where the incremental scales overlapped.

8.12 A number of submissions expressed concern over the depreciation of the Hong Kong dollar in relation to sterling, as a result of the Hong Kong-US dollar link and the fall in the value of the US dollar. A number of overseas officers pointed out that at current exchange rates, becoming an Inspector in the Royal Hong Kong Police Force is less financially attractive than joining a United Kingdom Force as a Constable. Some officers also pointed out that when converted into sterling, the salaries they earned now were, despite pay increases and advancement, not much more - in some cases actually less - than the salaries they earned five years ago because of the change in exchange rates. Comparing their current earnings in terms of sterling with salaries

offered in the United Kingdom, on the basis that pay increases had been absorbed by the movement of the exchange, a number of these officers said they were considering whether or not they should continue with their present employment. It was also pointed out that with rising costs in the United Kingdom and depreciated earnings in Hong Kong, overseas officers had greater difficulties in meeting financial commitments such as mortgages in the United Kingdom. Similarly, they were concerned that depreciation of this sort would affect the value of their pensions which are paid in Hong Kong dollars but would be drawn in sterling.

8.13 None of the submissions asked us directly to produce an answer to this problem, and only a very few solutions were offered, e.g. a link, either across the board or for overseas officers, with sterling at a minimum guaranteed rate of exchange or the setting of a rate with reference to the so-called Effective Exchange Rate Index (trade weighted average of the external values of the Hong Kong dollar in terms of 15 foreign currencies minus the US dollar). Our understanding is that most of the representations we have received on this subject have been illustrative, and to show us that because of the present unfavourable exchange rate, overseas officers with United Kingdom commitments are seeing their salaries eroded, while pensions remitted overseas are losing their value. Such fluctuation of the exchange rate makes it difficult for overseas officers to plan ahead and make decisions on their careers. It was repeatedly emphasised to us that overseas officers were not advocating a pay differential in their favour over local officers. They considered such a solution would affect force morale very badly, and would be inimical to the excellent relations which prevailed between local and overseas officers throughout the police force.

8.14 Although we did not receive many representations on the subject of allowances other than Disciplined Services Special Allowance (DSSA), we feel it is worth noting that though some submissions argued that policemen should be paid an additional allowance similar to that received by ICAC officers, there were also several opposed to this suggestion. Those who favoured the payment of a "special allowance" argued that the police carry a greater responsibility than the ICAC and that the disparity in pay is inequitable. The alternative view however is that the payment of an allowance in addition to salary would not address the need for a separate pay scale for the police and would continue to a great extent, the current position.

8.15 We also received a small number of representations on subsistence, detective, and uniform allowances. There was criticism of the Government's amalgamation of all "professional" allowances into a single allowance structure which, the submission contended, could not recognise the exceptional nature of police work. The view was expressed that increases in allowances should not be subject to irregular reviews but rather, should be based on annual salary adjustments. One suggestion was for a separate allowance scale whose points value would be preserved through a link to pay scales.

#### Hours of work

8.16 The majority of submissions emphasised that many policemen worked long hours with a heavy workload. The conditioned working hours of 51 hours per week for the police were higher than for most other grades and departments, and both Rank and File and Officers (particularly up to Superintendent) often worked much longer hours to cope with the volume of work in responding to the public and in following through investigations or arrests. Crime and criminals, it was pointed out to us, did not work conditioned hours. It was impressed upon us that Junior Police Officers (JPOs) in Uniform Branch had to arrive at their stations some time before actual duty parade in order to change, and to draw fire arms from the armoury; and at the end of duty, such officers usually had paperwork or reports to complete that would not be counted as duty hours. Similarly, inspectorate officers in many posts were required to attend morning conference which required some preparation time. However, these officers' working days were not taken to begin when they report to prepare for morning conference, but rather, from normal office duty hours. It has been put to us therefore, particularly in respect of JPOs in Uniform Branch, that the normal duty hours worked were not six days x 8½ hours per day (i.e. 51 hours per week) but more like six days x 9 hours per day (54 hours per week) if not more. We have arranged to examine this further.

8.17 As a reaction to long working hours, some submissions suggested a reduction in conditioned working hours coupled with what was described as a realistic rate for overtime work. Conditioned hours outside the disciplined services were said to vary between 44 and 48 hours and it was suggested that police conditioned hours should be reduced to a similar level. (Note : The conditioned hours for most officers on the MPS are 44 hours (gross) : the conditioned hours for staff on Model Scale 1 are now 45 hours net, notionally equivalent to 51 hours gross for a six-day week.)

8.18 We have been given a number of details about shift systems. We have been made aware of the basic three 8-hour shift system upon which the Force operates, and that shift systems are different between land and marine regions. Setting aside the details of the operations of the shift system (a subject which we shall follow up in our Final Report), submissions on the subject basically made three points.

8.19 First, the nature of operational work (investigation, arrests, reports etc.) often required officers to work longer than their actual shift periods.

8.20 Second, the problems of shift change-overs were highlighted. Example quoted included finishing a "B" shift (1500-2300 hours) on day one, and having to start on "A" shift (0700-1500 hours) on day two. Taking travelling time into account, officers on such a change-over could have only a very short period of rest before resuming duty. Change-over from "C" shift (2300-0700 hours) to "B" shift (1500-2300 hours) was considered even worse by some JPOs, because the rest period fell in noisy daylight hours.

8.21 Third, some submissions stated that the combination of a long working week, the effect of shift working on sleep patterns, and insufficient rest, could damage an officer's health (producing, according to one submission an effect akin to "severe jet lag"); significantly reduce alertness and efficiency; and seriously affect personal social and family life.

8.22 Many submissions referred to the effect of the law that policemen are always deemed (even when off duty) to be available for duty and are required to act as Police Officers in any situation warranting police intervention; and that designated officers (an extensive category) are required to report their movements outside office hours (if they are not carrying pagers). We were told that such "24-hour availability" was disruptive to personal life and restricted the way in which designated officers could spend their spare time because of the need to report to their station if required. We were also told in respect of call-outs that as the location of quarters and duty posts bore no relation to one another, some officers faced difficulties in after hours travel and depending on rank, might not be eligible to make travel claims.

8.23 Most of the submissions we received touched at some point, often in detail, on problems relating to Disciplined Services Special Allowance (DSSA). We regard this as an important subject and have devoted a separate chapter to it in this Preliminary Report. As with the problem of shift patterns, we do not intend to go into details here, other than to report broadly on the representations made to us.

8.24 It is clear that DSSA is seen as a form of regular overtime allowance. As such, the DSSA rate at 1/210th (just under single time) was considered by many to be too low. It was put to us in a number of examples, that officers earn less for working overtime than they do for real time, both because 1/210th is too small a figure, and because regular allowances (e.g. detective allowance) are not included in the base figure. Various suggestions put to us were for DSSA to be paid at either time-and-a-half (like overtime for the rest of the civil service); or time-and-a-half as the standard with double-time for overtime worked on leave days, or a scale rising from time-and-a-quarter to double-time, depending on the period worked.

8.25 We also received views that eligibility for DSSA was too restricted, it being paid mainly to CID officers up to SIP level. Inspectorate officers are required to work 24 hours a month above conditioned working hours before being eligible for payment. Some submissions criticised the present 60 hours per month limit on DSSA payment. Others considered this was a sensible restriction, given that in certain exceptional circumstances and with appropriate authority it could be exceeded.

8.26 A view put to us a number of times was that the present restriction of paying DSSA only up to SIP rank should be removed. The point was made that a SIP at the top of his scale who was also drawing DSSA could earn more than his senior officer with two years service at CIP rank, even though the SIP had lesser responsibilities and the CIP worked the same or possibly even longer hours than he did. Views on the ceiling for eligibility for DSSA (or some form of overtime) varied but the general view was that it should be paid up to either CIP or SP rank on the basis that such officers worked under the same operational requirements as their junior colleagues. A supporting argument was that those ranks which had to work shift duty (up to SP) should be regarded as eligible for DSSA. However, the view was also expressed by some that CIPs would not object to the current limitation if CIP incremental scales were extended, failing which they would prefer to receive time-off in lieu instead of DSSA. Finally, we were told that one of the primary constraints on the payment of DSSA is the limitation of funds which requires police force formations to tailor the amount of overtime allowance paid to a fixed budget.

8.27 DSSA and time-off-in-lieu are related. The argument was strongly put that with the current shift system, conditioned working hours, and operational needs, officers regularly had very great difficulty in taking time-off that they had accumulated, and that time-off granted seldom matched the total number of extra hours worked. An

example that was mentioned to us on a number of occasions was the Inspectors who, attached to the Police Tactical Unit, regularly work many hours of overtime but are granted only a proportion of the time-off in lieu at the end of their PTU attachments because of operational needs in their new assignments. This example was put not as a complaint, but as an illustration of the impracticality of using time-off for compensation in certain circumstances.

### Conditions of service

8.28 Quarters and housing were the aspects of conditions of service on which we received most representations. We understand that the Government is giving further consideration to its policy on quarters. We were made aware of the problems that arise for officers nearing retirement with respect to quarters and public housing allocation.

8.29 We were told that JPOs had no major disagreements in principle with quartering policy which they understood was to provide quarters for all married JPOs. We noted that rental of quarters cost 5%-7 % of salary, and were informed that for private accommodation, average costs would be nearer 30%. However, there was great concern that the number of quarters available was insufficient to accommodate all married JPOs with the result that there is a considerable waiting list. Couples without children were accorded a lower priority, and currently would require to wait about nine to ten years before being allotted a quarter. Single JPOs are ineligible for quarters under existing policy. The view was also expressed that the majority of quarters were too small for families and that in many of the existing older quarters, the lack of partition walls to subdivide the quarter was a serious deficiency.

8.30 We were also told that under existing policy childless couples and single JPOs were not eligible for public housing under the quota system and therefore did not benefit on retirement like their colleagues with families. However, we were told that the takeup rate among JPOs for public housing allocation was low because such units were often in New Territories locations where they did not choose to live.

8.31 We received a variety of views about the quartering of Officers. The view was put to us that, as far as possible, discriminatory practices between overseas and local officers in quartering should be reduced in order to maintain the harmony that is important to the police force. Another view was that some form of housing should be provided for all officers (local and overseas) at all ranks in the police force and that such provision would greatly help to retain local officers at middle management levels in the police force. It was recognised that the government could not in the short term buy or build enough accommodation to house the

police force; but alternative measures such as rent allowance for the local inspectorate, or non-taxable home purchase allowance to ensure adequate housing for officers during their careers and on retirement, were suggested. Other views on quarters included criticism of the standard of quarters and the ineligibility of overseas Inspectors for Non-departmental Quarters (NDQ), and the low priority accorded to overseas Senior Inspectors in the allocation of NDQs.

8.32 We were also told of the marked difference between Departmental Quarters (DQs) and the type of accommodation which a local inspectorate officer of eligible rank could obtain with Private Tenancy Allowance (PTA). In many cases, DQ was preferred to PTA because the standard of the former was higher.

8.33 Apart from concern at protecting their value (as described in paragraph 8.12 above) views on pensions were mainly linked to the statutory ages of retirement promulgated in connection with the Pension Benefits Ordinance 1987. The general civil service could serve until 60 under the new pension scheme, but officers of Assistant Commissioner rank and below had to retire at 55 on operational grounds. A general civil service officer could obtain full pension after joining at 22½ years but a police officer had to join at 21 or less to receive full pension, even with enhancement. We were also told that although such officers would receive enhanced pension, this would be little compensation for the loss of five year's salary and allowances. A large percentage of police officers would serve until the age of 60 if they could and the present ruling is seen as one of a large number of unfavourable decisions affecting the police service. Another view was that curtailment of five years service should be compensated for either by revised remuneration or by a greater enhancement of pension.

8.34 We received a number of adverse comments about medical and dental facilities. These were brought to our notice not as a problem for which we were expected to provide a solution, but as a sore point among policemen. We were told that a number of officers in the force already paid for their own medical insurance scheme because of their dissatisfaction with the government's provision. It was also suggested to us that medical checks at three year intervals were necessary to monitor the state of health of the force.

8.35 Although the subject appeared in only a few submissions and it is not, strictly speaking, a condition of service, we consider it worth noting that eligibility for linked contracts was a cause for some concern. We were told, with some background detail, that since April 1987, linked agreements (two tours of 2½ years) have been offered to overseas officers up to the rank of CIP only. However this can produce an anomaly whereby a CIP promoted to Superintendent during the course of a linked agreement could



be offered a new linked agreement of six years whereas a more senior Superintendent may be eligible only for single agreements of 2½ years. It was put to us that on the basis of demonstrated commitment and the Sino-British Joint Declaration on the future of Hong Kong which provides for expatriates in the force up to and beyond 1997 (except at Deputy Commissioner and Commissioner level), linked agreements should be reinstated for Superintendents.

#### **Nature of work**

8.36 The underlying theme of many submissions was that police work is unique and extremely varied. Many submissions pointed out the diverse duties that the police force is required to undertake as stipulated in the Police Force Ordinance. A number of submissions emphasised that the police force has to take enforcement action throughout the very wide range of activities covered by the laws of Hong Kong. It was put to us that there is no other department in the Hong Kong Government, and certainly no other disciplined services department, that has such a wide range of responsibilities. A further unique characteristic of police work in Hong Kong that was stressed was the para-military training and duties of the force. These were required to cope with internal security problems, which included not only the larger events but also smaller local incidents with no political connotations which could escalate quite quickly to the stage of requiring action by formed-up units, as well as border duties.

8.37 Representations on similar scale were made about the dangers of police work and the versatility and adaptability it requires at virtually all ranks. The most common example quoted was that of an armed Police Constable on the beat who has to deal with a range of criminal, social, personal and community problems; and who at any moment, can face a life or death situation without warning. We were also made aware of the dangers faced by specialist units such as bomb disposal and those involved in security duties. The exposure to such a spectrum of dangers was also cited to us as another unique feature of police work.

8.38 Danger is linked to stress but it is fair to say that many submissions took the two in professional stride. We would like to emphasise that no police submission even hinted at the possibility of shirking the dangers and stresses of the job. It was pointed out to us that another source of stress is a police officer's constant awareness that he is accountable for his actions, which sometimes had to be based on decisions taken very quickly in critical circumstances. An officer's actions are always subject to complaints (through the Complaints Against Police Office and

Police Complaints Committee) and open to analysis and cross-examination in a court of law. Numerous submissions pointed out that the elaborate system of monitoring police actions is unique among Hong Kong Government departments. It was said officers had virtually no protection against false and malicious complaints, and that in cases where charges were being preferred, complaints were frequently lodged as a defence tactic.

8.39 A number of submissions represented that the various factors in police work such as its diverse responsibilities, unique position in the government, danger and stress, were undervalued and not fully recognised by the government. Some submissions stated that the discretionary powers of all police officers entailed an important responsibility in the exercise of duty; and that officers frequently had to assume higher responsibilities than they were paid for. A number of comparisons were made with ICAC officers and ranks in the Administrative Service to illustrate comparative levels of responsibility and pay.

8.40 Finally, while certain factors mentioned above are difficult to quantify, we were also presented with statistics to show the increasing workload and responsibilities undertaken by the force, and the trend in complaints against police. Figures for the latter show a steady increase but are qualified by a majority of complaints that are either unsubstantiated or withdrawn. Nevertheless, this demonstrated that public expectation of the force is high, and that the Hong Kong public today is more liable to lodge complaints against the police.

#### Status

8.41 We were told in a number of submissions that policemen consider they have a poor social status in Hong Kong. This is attributed partly to Chinese cultural values, and partly to the fact that police work places them in adversarial relationships with the public who generally dislike and criticise them. They receive more reproach than praise from the public. This low esteem in which policemen were said to be held affected their private lives, ranging from social ostracism of police families in public housing estates, to rejections of a police spouse's employment application on account of her husband's occupation.

8.42 Numerous submissions emphasized that the training programme and number of examinations which Inspectors have to take are comparable to professional qualifications. A number of these submissions suggested that the police inspectorate should therefore have the same status as professional grades in the rest of the civil service, and be given comparable remuneration.

## Separate pay machinery and separate pay scales

8.43 Many submissions argued for machinery for determining pay and conditions of service for the police and a pay scale for the police that were separate from those for the other four disciplined services departments and the rest of the civil service.

8.44 The essence of the police case as it was put to us in a variety of ways is :-

- (a) the Police Force Ordinance prohibits police officers from joining trade unions (a unique provision among the disciplined services departments);
- (b) the Police Force Ordinance makes it a penal offence to commit any act which might cause a member of the police force to withdraw his labour (also in the Immigration Service Ordinance);
- (c) Police Officers are prohibited by Disciplined Regulations from being absent from duty without leave or good cause (not unique to the police);
- (d) the police must be apolitical and impartial; but the role of the Police Force Council (PFC) as one of the three consultative councils on pay and conditions of service can seriously compromise their impartiality if the PFC had to side with either of the two other councils when they are divided in their views. Moreover, the present negotiating machinery for the police force is not separate from that for civil service unions, and they are de facto drawn into the invidious position the ban on union membership seeks to avoid;
- (e) the underlying reason for maintaining these three requirements is that it is the police who have to be deployed to maintain law and order at times of industrial unrest and action, regardless of who the groups taking action might be. If they are to carry out this duty effectively and with full commitment, the police cannot be put in a position where they are joined with groups who might decide to take industrial action.

The thrust of this argument therefore is that the police must be, and must be seen to be apolitical and impartial, a stance that cannot be maintained if they have to negotiate with the Government alongside trade unions free to adopt a political stance if they wish. It was put to us that this special position of the police went unrecognised by the Standing Commission on Civil Service Pay and Conditions of Service

with the introduction of the Disciplined Services Pay Scale which grouped the police, who cannot join trade unions, with the other four disciplined services departments whose staff can if they choose. We were told that this had led to a serious lack of confidence in the Standing Commission among police staff associations.

8.45 Two basic proposals for separate police pay machinery were suggested to us. The first was an enlarged Police Force Council with a revised membership to bring in a "third party" chairman and a wider range of "official members". The second was for a Standing Commission on Police Pay and Conditions of Service which would perform for the police, the same functions as the existing advisory bodies do for the remainder of the civil service.

8.46 We received similar requests for the establishment of a separate police pay scale, a proposal which many linked with the need for separate pay machinery. The arguments for a separate pay scale were similar to those for pay machinery and reinforced by two points concerning the coverage that such a scale should have. First, it was put to us that "every Police Officer is a constable from a legal view point and the responsibilities of the office of constable, and the stresses and restrictions accompanying them, are applicable to all ranks". It was inappropriate therefore, to create an artificial division between the senior ranks of the force (Chief Superintendent and above) and the remainder, by placing senior ranks on the directorate pay scale. Second, if this division were removed, then pay and conditions of service matters regarding non-directorate and directorate staff would not have to be referred to two separate bodies, i.e. a Standing Commission for the non-directorate ranks and the Standing Committee on Directorate Salaries and Conditions of Service respectively. It was contended that the proposed integrated police pay scale could and should be dealt with by one advisory body.

8.47 We have taken careful note of these arguments for a separate pay scale and pay machinery for the police and regard this as an important question. The present position on consultative machinery in the Government and the arguments for a separation of the Police from it are brought together in Chapter 7 of this Report.

#### **Promotion prospects**

8.48 Promotions and promotion rates are not a matter on which we are asked to make recommendations, but they have some bearing on our terms of reference, and we did receive a number of comments on the subject which we noted. These

comments were made largely in the context of comparisons which police submissions made with other grades in the Government. A number of submissions pointed to what was perceived as a faster rise by Administrative Officers to ranks equivalent to Senior Superintendent and Assistant Commissioner. Numerous submissions also pointed out that equivalent ranks (in approximate dollar value earnings) in general and professional grades in the civil service had fewer promotion steps and examinations (if any) from entry rank to Senior Professional (MPS 48-51) than from Probationary Inspector to Senior Superintendent. For example, the professional architect or engineer joins the Government on the same salary as a Senior Inspector. However, the professional has an incremental scale which takes him to Senior Professional with only one promotion whereas a Senior Inspector must pass three promotions, taking at least 15 years, to reach a rank with the same salary; and the nature of the promotion pyramid means that some officers never reach such a rank. In addition, some submissions argued that District Commanders (D1 rank) had responsibilities that seemed at least as heavy as those of District Officers in the City and New Territories Administration (Administrative Officer Staff Grade C, i.e. D2 rank). It was also very strongly argued that the current ranking which placed Regional Commanders (D2) at the same level as District Officers was wrong.

#### **Morale**

8.49 We received a number of submissions which explicitly mentioned morale, and a number of others which, while not mentioning the subject specifically, contained comments that obviously related to the subject; for example, the individual who is weighing up whether to continue or resign on the basis of current earnings.

8.50 It is important that we should reflect the view that shone through many submissions that the morale of staff as professional Police Officers within the force was good. Job satisfaction appears to be high, and loyalty among officers to the force was strong. However, many submissions also stated that morale was suffering because of poor pay, and a strong feeling that the work which the police carry out was not appropriately recognised and appreciated. Unless these problems were rectified, it was said that morale would sink and wastage would rise. A number of submissions expressed concern and some unease at the change in sovereignty in 1997. Some officers said that they and a number of others would leave by 1997, but a number of both local and overseas officers expressed a wish to stay and continue to serve Hong Kong. It was stressed that a strong and efficient police force was necessary to maintain the stability and prosperity of Hong Kong. The point emerged strongly that terms and conditions of service which gave due recognition to police officers' work and their unique place in the public service would help to bolster their confidence and morale, and recognise the need for a strong and stable police force in the years leading up to and beyond 1997.