

CHAPTER NINE

FACTORS IN PAY DETERMINATION

Introduction

9.1 In the work that has been done in earlier years on the determination of pay in the disciplined services a variety of factors have been taken into account. These factors include some which are common to many if not all jobs in the civil service, in respect of which factors the task of pay assessment for the disciplined services has been in essentials no different from that for the rest of the service; some which are experienced elsewhere in the service only to a limited degree; and some which are exclusively or almost exclusively experienced in the disciplined services.

9.2 Understandably, most of the submissions we have received have given most attention to those factors which are exclusive to the disciplined services or are shared by the rest of the civil service only to a limited degree. The major factors in these two categories arise from the nature of the work of the disciplined services, all of which direct some if not all of their activities to the protection of the community against a wide range and variety of threats; from the need over large parts of the services to provide 24-hour comprehensive cover, including a quick response to emergencies; from the kind of people with whom they have to deal; from the environments in which they have to do their work; and from the institutional and legal structures which have been evolved to provide, direct, and control the services.

9.3 Factors which are relevant to most civil service jobs include the know-how, problem-solving and accountability factors used in the Pay Level Survey evaluations. Age and qualifications are factors which are particularly relevant to entry grades, no matter what the service. We review these common factors briefly below, before turning to other factors with more specific relevance to the disciplined services.

Know-how, problem-solving, and accountability

9.4 In the Pay Level Survey the three common factors used by Hay in the evaluation of all jobs were know-how, problem-solving, and accountability. These are defined in Annex 9.1, quoted from the Second and Final Report on the 1986 Pay Level Survey. In our work we are not undertaking job evaluation, but we shall be giving weight to these factors in two broad ways. In Chapter Four above they are very broadly reflected in our selection of comparators for the disciplined service grades among the general civil service grades, and we expect to develop our views on that further in our later work; and in our consideration of the relativities between ranks

within and across the disciplined services we shall inevitably again take these factors into account to the fullest extent we can, though of course not in the systematic way used in a Hay-type job evaluation. Apart from this general use of the Hay factors, we have been impressed by the degree of specialist know-how required for some posts, and will be considering whether there are examples where this requires special recognition.

Age and qualifications

9.5 These factors are of obvious relevance to entry grades and the salary progressions in these grades.

Stress

9.6 Of all the topics mentioned in submissions made to us, stress has understandably received the most emphasis. Most of the factors mentioned below have some bearing on stress, and in our later work we shall make the best assessment we can of the cumulative effects in each service.

Hours of work and shift patterns

9.7 A quantifiable factor of great importance of which we are seeking to build up as complete a picture as we can get is hours of work and shift patterns. For most disciplined services staff conditioned hours and actual hours of work are greatly different from those for the rest of the civil service, and there are substantial variations among the disciplined services themselves. Some have particularly long periods of continuous duty. We expect these factors to have considerable weight in our deliberations. Time that staff are required to spend on stand-by at or near their place of work is a closely-related factor.

Unpredictable calls upon staff time

9.8 The duty to be available on-call is common among the disciplined services, particularly among senior officers, and there is a related liability, differently expressed, to be called out when off-duty. These unpredictable requirements have material effects upon the lives of staff and their families, often compounded by the obligation to work irregular hours, to accept time-off in lieu of extra time worked at very short notice, to accept cancellation of leave, and to attend for duty on certain typhoon signals and other events.

Risks

9.9 The disciplined services are exposed to many risks, about which we have gathered a good deal of information, though this is an area where it is difficult to get quantifiable information. We shall require to take a view on the weight to be attached to a range of risks, including exposure to a wide

variety of danger, sometimes extreme danger and sometimes even when off-duty, work-related health hazards, risks to families, risks from carrying firearms, the possibility of being taken hostage, and exposure to possible corruption.

Hardship

9.10 Factors in disciplined services employment which cause varying degrees of hardship, in addition to the demands on staff time mentioned above, include the remoteness of places of work, poor and harsh working environments including exposure to weather, irregular meal times, inability to obtain a hot meal, and even the necessity to eat in obnoxious places.

Social segregation

9.11 Many of the staff suffer a degree of social segregation and disruption to their social and family life, including children's schooling and the work opportunities open to wives, as a result of their employment, varying with the service. Location, hours and timing of work and of time-off are obviously all major factors in this, and suspension of leave is a further problem in some cases. There is the additional factor, for some services, of a degree of social stigma associated with the work. The mass media are an important influence here, but traditional Chinese cultural attitudes are still sometimes found. "Good iron is not made into nails"; and some of the disciplined services are sometimes exposed to this attitude, in addition to feelings more specific to the particular service.

Discipline

9.12 Being a member of a disciplined service means being subject to a disciplinary code particular to the service, which is distinctly more severe than that applicable to the rest of the civil service; and some services have more severe requirements than others. In addition to service discipline, there is the further factor of exposure to public complaints and formal investigation, particularly fully developed in the police, but also experienced in other services. Exposure to complaints employed as a routine defence tactic is a matter of particular concern.

Restrictions on freedom

9.13 In some services the on-call requirements mentioned above already impose a very great restriction on personal freedom; but in addition to these restrictions some disciplined services require to impose further material restrictions on movements and activities. Among those, the statutory prohibition in the police of membership of a trade union and the organising of strike or other industrial action is perhaps the most notable; and the police are also subject to a number of personal restrictions relating to the places of

entertainment they may visit in Hong Kong, and restrictions on travel outside Hong Kong. The prohibition on taking a second job is also a material restriction. We shall examine the effect of all such restrictions carefully.

Promotion opportunities

9.14 A further relevant factor is promotion opportunities and practices. Where promotion opportunities are few, longer incremental scales may be more appropriate than where promotion opportunities are many; and promotion opportunities may also be relevant to the question of overlapping incremental scales.

Efficiency, effectiveness, recruitment, retention and motivation

9.15 We have been asked to look to efficiency and effectiveness as well as recruitment, retention, and motivation. Arguments soundly based on these considerations are likely to be persuasive with us. In relation to recruitment, retention, and motivation pay comparisons are obviously important, and we shall consider them with care.

Other earnings and benefits

9.16 Finally, we shall require to consider carefully all the information we can obtain about earnings other than basic pay, and also non-pay benefits, including welfare benefits which vary considerably between services.