

INTRODUCTION

We were appointed by the Standing Commission on Civil Service Salaries and Conditions of Service in April 1988 to undertake a review of disciplined services pay and conditions of service. The terms of reference for our review are -

"Having regard to the responsibilities of the disciplined services for the enforcement of the law and the maintenance of public order and public safety -

- (1) to review the work of the disciplined services, bearing in mind -
 - (a) recent and future developments in the responsibilities and workload of the disciplined services, including, in particular, the resumption of anti-illegal immigration border duty by the police;
 - (b) the stress and dangers to which the disciplined services are exposed; and
 - (c) the restrictions placed on officers of the disciplined services (individually and collectively) and their families by virtue of their duties and responsibilities as members of the disciplined services;
- (2) in the light of the conclusions reached on (1) and of the need to recruit, to motivate and to retain suitable officers so as to maintain and further improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the disciplined services, to consider -
 - (a) the basis for determining pay and conditions of service within the disciplined services; and
 - (b) appropriate levels of remuneration in relation to the rest of the civil service;
- (3) to review the machinery for determining the pay and conditions of service of the disciplined services, having regard to the special place of the disciplined services within the civil service; and to make recommendations.
- (4) the review is to be conducted as far as possible in two distinct parts, dealing first with the police and thereafter with the remaining disciplined services."

Our terms of reference are generally to be understood in the context of the responsibilities of the Standing Commission on Civil Service Salaries and Conditions of Service, that is, they concern the non-directorate civil service. However, there is a structural relationship between non-directorate and directorate pay scales in that the latter establishes the ceiling for the former. In addition, we are aware that any comments we may have to make on matters concerning the directorate would be welcomed by the Government. The evidence we have received contains a great deal about directorate-level matters, and we have told the Standing Committee on Directorate Salaries and Conditions of Service that we shall consider this evidence fully, and intend to offer observations on any issues arising where we feel this is justified and to keep them informed of our work in this regard.

It will be evident from this report that our work so far has been concerned primarily with the police, the service with which our remit asks us to deal first. As the largest of all the disciplined services departments, and overall the largest department in the Hong Kong Government, we consider that this priority of attention has been entirely appropriate. However, to accomplish our task within the schedule we were set we have had to initiate, in parallel, an examination of the work of the other disciplined services. The work is continuing and a complete statement of our findings will be included in our Final Report. It will be evident that we still have some work to complete in our examination of the police and this will also be covered in our Final Report. We are satisfied that we have adopted a realistic approach to our fourth term of reference and consider we have complied with it in the most appropriate and practicable way.

We recognise also that our terms of reference are wide-ranging whereas the time to accomplish our work must be limited. It was made clear to us at the outset that it was necessary to submit this Preliminary Report within three months of our appointment, and to complete our Final Report with recommendations as soon as practicable after that, if at all possible within another three months. We recognise and accept that if our work is to be of the maximum use to the Hong Kong Government and to the staff with whom it is concerned, then the Final Report should be submitted within six months of our appointment. To continue much beyond that date could add to the problems that led to the establishment of this Review Committee, while a more rapid review would not permit us to cover the ground as fully as the subjects of our remit require.

It has not been our intention to reach definitive conclusions or to make recommendations in this Preliminary Report. To do so would have been premature in view of the scale and timing of this review, and would have required us to single out specific questions for decision without the full context that we shall seek to provide in the completed Review.

Our Preliminary Report is intended to serve several functions. First, to report on our progress to date and to explain our working methods in conducting the review. Second, to set out the facts we have collected, and, in summary form, the main arguments that have been put to us; and third, to indicate the questions which we intend to pursue in framing our recommendations in the Final Report. This report is substantially longer than we had at first planned. The main reason is that as our review has progressed we have come to believe that it is highly desirable that all those who will be concerned with the outcome of our review and with the determination of pay in the disciplined services should have a clear and reasonably full account of the relevant facts and arguments.

We also wish this report to serve the further function of being a consultative document for interested parties. It will be helpful to us in the completion of the review for those concerned to understand our way of working and the kind of evidence we are considering, and to be aware of the issues which have been put before us and those which we have sought out. This will enable them to comment on any of these matters if they wish, to correct any errors of fact, and to point out any material omissions or wrong emphases in our summaries. Accordingly, we are inviting comments on this Preliminary Report to help us in our further deliberations.

Finally, we wish to emphasize the independence of this Review Committee. We have started out without any preconceptions as to the results of the review, and at all stages we have sought to maintain an open and unbiased approach to the issues before us. We have had every assistance from the Administration and from the services with which we are concerned in the explanation of policies and the provision of background information. No restrictions have been put upon the scope of our inquiries. We also appreciate the position of the Standing Commission which has all along maintained a scrupulous distance from this review and the Review Committee. Because they did not wish to influence the review, the Standing Commission has not offered us any comments, and we have no knowledge of any views they might take on the subjects covered by our terms of reference.