

Enrolled/Registered Nurses (Psychiatric) in the Hospital Services Department are remunerated on higher pay scales than their counterparts on general nursing duties. We considered it appropriate, therefore, that Correctional Services staff on psychiatric nursing duties should receive more than those on general nursing duties;

- (d) psychiatric nursing requires special dedication and care and is considered to be more demanding than normal custodial duties; and
- (e) we were not satisfied that the averaging approach adopted by the Rennie Committee had provided adequate compensation for the hardship faced and the special effort required in dealing with mentally-ill inmates.

6.36 We concluded that a Special Allowance, at a flat rate of 5% of the GDS(R) point 1 should be paid per month to staff who are required to work in constant close contact with mentally-ill inmates, irrespective of whether they possessed nursing qualifications. We also advised that the maximum number and ranks of eligible claimants should be prescribed by the Administration in consultation with the Commissioner, and that the allowance should be backdated to 1 February, 1989, because the issue in question involved not the payment of a new allowance, but the reinstatement of an allowance which was abolished with effect from 1 February, 1989 on the recommendation of the Rennie Committee.

6.37 We advised the Governor along these lines in October, 1989. The Commissioner was informed of our advice to the Governor later the same month.

Hardship Allowance for Customs and Excise Staff

6.38 In July, 1989, the Commissioner of Customs and Excise submitted a request to us for the reinstatement of a Hardship Allowance (Obnoxious Duties) to officers engaged in ship-searching and apron patrol duties.

6.39 We were informed that Customs and Excise staff who spend a considerable portion of their working hours on ship-searching or apron patrol duties were previously granted a Hardship Allowance (Obnoxious Duties). As a result of the Rennie Committee recommendations, the payment of this allowance ceased with effect from 1 February, 1989 and was incorporated into salary.

6.40 We noted that one of the main functions of the Customs and Excise Service is the prevention and detection of smuggling. This is achieved by the examination of cargo

imported and exported by air, sea and land; checking of passengers and their baggage at entry points; and searching aircraft, vessels and vehicles entering and leaving the territory. Ship searching and apron patrol duties are, therefore, inherent in the work of Customs and Excise officers. In the Guides to Appointment for Customs Officers and Senior Customs Officers, it is expressly stated that they are mainly deployed on "patrolling and searching duties on land and at sea in connection with customs and anti-narcotics work". Based on the principle that an allowance should not be paid for duties which are inherent in the work of the grade or rank to which the officer belongs, we concluded that the payment of a Hardship Allowance (Obnoxious Duties) to the Customs and Excise staff could not be justified.



Briefing by Customs and Excise officers during a visit to Man Kam To Control Point in December, 1989.

6.41 We were also satisfied that the Rennie Committee had sufficiently taken ship-searching and apron patrol duties into consideration when it adopted the averaging approach to deal with the wide range of Customs and Excise duties and in fixing the new pay scales of officers in the department. We, therefore, concluded that further payment of an allowance to the staff concerned was not justified.

6.42 We also concluded that the Commissioner should consider shorter posting periods for officers deployed on these duties to ensure a better rotation of staff and to produce a wider pool of experience.

6.43 We advised the Governor in October, 1989 that the Commissioner's request should not be supported. The Commissioner was informed of our advice to the Governor

later the same month.

**Special Allowance for Correctional Services Staff
performing Overnight On-Call Duty**

6.44 In April, 1989, the Commissioner of Correctional Services submitted a request to us for the payment of a Special Allowance to all staff who are required to perform overnight on-call duty, irrespective of whether or not they are in receipt of a Remote Stations Allowance (RSA) or are provided with quarters at or near their place of work.

6.45 We were satisfied that Correctional Services staff suffered hardship and disturbance as a result of their being required to perform frequent overnight on-call duty and should be compensated by the payment of a Special Allowance. We were informed that RSA was paid as an incentive for officers to work in remote areas and to compensate for the extra cost and inconvenience of living there. This being the case, we, therefore, saw no reason why the payment of RSA should debar an officer from receiving a Special Allowance if he/she is required to be on-call at his/her institution.

6.46 We concluded that a Special Allowance should be paid to all staff who are required to perform overnight on-call duty in the area of their institution and who are forced to do so away from their official place of abode. For this purpose, we considered that an officer's official place of abode should refer to his/her normal place of residence, which includes any departmental quarters provided to him/her in the area of his/her institution, but excludes barrack accommodation.

6.47 We considered that the requirement to be on-call would affect officers on-call in their official place of abode to a much lesser extent than officers who have to be on-call in barrack accommodation. The latter are required to be on-call away from their official place of abode and they are, therefore, unable to enjoy the same comforts and family life as their counterparts accommodated in departmental married or single quarters.

6.48 We, therefore, concluded that the following revised eligibility criteria governing the payment of a Special Allowance for Correctional Services staff performing overnight on-call duty should be adopted -

- (a) subject to (b) below, staff required to remain on-call in the area of the institution away from their official place of abode should be eligible for a Special Allowance of \$50 per night;

- (b) staff provided with quarters at or near their place of work should not be eligible for the allowance; and
- (c) staff provided with barrack accommodation only should be eligible for the allowance.

6.49 We considered that the number and ranks of eligible claimants should be prescribed by the Administration in consultation with the Commissioner and that claims for the allowance by staff required to perform overnight on-call duty should not exceed 12 nights per month per officer. We advised that these new arrangements should take effect from a current date.

6.50 We advised the Governor in September, 1989 and informed the Commissioner of Correctional Services of our advice to the Governor later the same month.

Special Allowance for Police Officers in the Special Duties Unit

6.51 In June, 1989, the Commissioner of Police submitted a request to us for a revision of the rate of the Special Allowance payable to Police officers in the Special Duties Unit to reflect inflation.

6.52 We were informed that the Special Duties Unit was formed in 1974 to counter threats and other forms of terrorism; members of the Unit also assist in difficult domestic policing operations. We noted that combating terrorism is a duty not normally expected of Police officers and we were satisfied that counter-terrorism is more demanding and intrinsically more valuable than general duties. Accordingly, we considered it appropriate that officers should be recompensed by an allowance.

6.53 We noted that, to take account of inflation, the Special Allowance payable to Police officers in the Special Duties Unit was last revised in September, 1987 to \$720 per month. In order to obviate the need for regular reviews of the rate of the allowance and to take account of inflation, we concluded that the allowance should be set at a percentage of a point on the Police Pay Scale and that it should be payable to all officers in the Special Duties Unit, including Superintendents of Police, subject to their meeting the eligibility criteria.

6.54 We advised the Governor in September, 1989 that the rate should be revised and should be set at 18% of point 1 of the Police Pay Scale, and that the existing eligibility criteria adopted by the Administration should continue. We proposed that the revised rate should be implemented with effect from a current date. We informed the Commissioner of Police of our advice to the Governor

later the same month.

Special Subsistence Allowance for Fire Services Staff

6.55 In July, 1989, the Director of Fire Services submitted a request to us to replace the existing rates of Special Subsistence Allowance, payable to staff who were required to work shifts of 12 hours or more, by a common flat rate of \$18 per day.

6.56 We noted that under CSR 712(2), the rates of Special Subsistence Allowance payable to officers who work 12 hours or more in any period of 24 hours as part of a shift system are approved by the Secretary for the Civil Service. We noted that there are at least five different rates of Special Subsistence Allowance applicable to different situations and for different purposes. Officers in the Fire Services Department who are on regular shifts of 12 hours or more are eligible for 50% of the Standard Subsistence Allowance, ranging from \$9.00 to \$17.50 per day, depending on the salary of the officer concerned.

6.57 We did not consider these rates to be unreasonable, having regard to the fact that meals provided for staff in fire stations or on fire boats are prepared by cooks employed by the Government using facilities provided at Government expense. However, we felt that there is merit in replacing the existing range of rates by a common flat rate. We, however, were not convinced that a flat rate of \$18 per day could be justified, since meals provided for staff are already subsidized by the Government. We, therefore, concluded that the Administration should review the rates of Special Subsistence Allowance for the staff concerned, in conjunction with the Director in order to reach agreement on a flat rate for the allowance, which should be introduced from a current date.

6.58 We advised the Governor along these lines in September, 1989. The Director of Fire Services was informed of our advice to the Governor in October, 1989.

Uniform Laundering Arrangements and Related Allowances

6.59 Between June and August, 1989, we received several requests from the disciplined services concerning laundry and related allowances. We were asked to -

- (a) include the real cost of uniform maintenance in the basic salary of all ranks in the Police Force;

- (b) replace the existing reimbursement arrangements for laundering soiled overalls of Customs and Excise Service staff engaged on ship rummaging, cargo examination and anti-smuggling duties by a non-accountable allowance at the rate of \$180 per month;
- (c) extend the existing reimbursement arrangements for Customs and Excise Service staff on ship rummaging duties to Fire Services operational staff and Immigration Service staff, subject to -
 - (i) a ceiling of \$120 per month, proposed by the Fire Services Department; or
 - (ii) a ceiling to be specified, proposed by the Immigration Department;
- (d) reinstate the Plain Clothes Allowance (PCA) in the Immigration Department; and
- (e) restore the free laundry service, which was withdrawn as a result of the Rennie Committee recommendations, for staff in the Correctional Services Department.

6.60 We were informed that members of the disciplined services are provided with uniforms at Government expense and that it is the duty of officers in the disciplined services to maintain their uniforms and to present a smart appearance. In 1979, the Standing Commission agreed that civil servants who were required to wear uniforms and to maintain a smart appearance should not personally have to meet the cost of laundering. In 1980, a Laundry Allowance (LA) at the rate of \$40 per month was introduced; the rate was subsequently adjusted to \$60 per month in 1988. The rate of LA was set by reference to the costs incurred by Police officers using private contractors and was not based on the fees charged by commercial laundries. The allowance was, therefore, designed to provide some recompense, but did not seek to provide full recompense, for the cost actually incurred if officers chose to launder their uniforms in commercial laundries.

6.61 PCA was first granted to police officers in 1947 "to enable an officer on plain clothes duty to obtain civilian clothes suitable to his work in lieu of the uniform he would otherwise receive". The rate was then set at \$50 and \$20 for Inspectorate and Junior Police Officers respectively. This allowance was subsequently extended to other disciplined service staff who, for operational reasons, were also required to wear plain clothes on duty, such as Customs and Excise and Immigration staff engaged in surveillance and investigation work. In 1988, the rates were increased to \$110 for officers and \$85 for rank and file staff.

6.62 LA and PCA were mutually exclusive. Those in receipt of PCA were not eligible for LA. In 1988, some 83% of the disciplined service staff were in receipt of one or other of the two allowances.

6.63 The Rennie Committee recommended that LA and PCA should be abolished and incorporated in basic pay. As a result, these two allowances were abolished on 1 February, 1989. The Committee did not specify how these two elements were included in the pay scales it proposed.

6.64 When we considered the request from the Commissioner of Police to include the real cost of uniform maintenance in the basic salary of Police officers, we noted that, prior to their abolition, 94% of Junior Police Officers were in receipt of either LA or PCA; the corresponding figure for the Officer ranks up to and including the level of Superintendent was 76%. We, therefore, considered it reasonable for the Rennie Committee to recommend the abolition of these allowances and their incorporation in the salaries of the officers concerned.

6.65 The Commissioner proposed that the level of LA or PCA should be based on the 'real costs' of uniform maintenance, which comprise laundry charges, dry cleaning charges and uniform preparation charges. We did not consider it reasonable to include in the calculation, uniform preparation charges which are paid by individual Police officers to private civilians employed to prepare their uniform for them. We considered that it is the duty of Police officers, and other members of the disciplined services, to maintain their uniform and to present a smart appearance. We, also, considered that this is part of the general discipline of the disciplined services for which they are compensated by salary scales separate from the rest of the civil service.

6.66 We were, therefore, satisfied that the salaries of Police officers who previously were eligible for LA or PCA adequately reflected the current real costs incurred. Increased costs in future would be reflected in annual salary adjustments.

6.67 When we considered the Commissioner of Customs and Excise's request to replace the existing reimbursement arrangements for laundering soiled overalls of his staff engaged in ship rummaging, cargo examination and anti-smuggling duties by a non-accountable allowance at the rate of \$180 per month, we were informed that prior to the Rennie Committee recommendations, Customs and Excise staff who wore overalls did not receive a laundry allowance; instead, they were permitted to claim reimbursement of expenses for laundering their overalls at a rate of \$6.00 per pair up to a maximum of 20 pairs per month. This special arrangement was based on the rationale that their overalls were soiled to such an extent that they had to be cleaned at commercial laundries, necessitating higher

out-of-pocket expenses. After the Rennie Committee, the rate of reimbursement was reduced by half, because LA was abolished and included in the basic pay of all officers, including Customs and Excise staff, even though they were not previously eligible for the allowance.

6.68 We noted that since the Correctional Services Department provides a laundry service for its own staff at a cost of \$37 per person per month, the Department could also be asked to provide a laundry service for the overalls of Customs and Excise staff at the same cost. We proposed that the Administration should make arrangements to provide a laundry service in the Correctional Services Department for, as a first step, only the overalls of Customs and Excise officers engaged in ship rummaging duties at a cost of \$37 per month per officer. As a second step, we proposed that the service should be extended to Customs and Excise staff engaged in cargo examination, government dockyard guard duties, dog handling duties, apron patrol duties and escort duties. However, since the overalls of these officers are not subject to the same degree, or the same kind, of soiling as those of their colleagues engaged in ship rummaging, we proposed that the Administration should consider whether these cases merit the same service, with a view to keeping the number of overalls for the Correctional Services Department's laundry service to a manageable quantity.

6.69 When we considered the requests from the Director of Fire Services and Director of Immigration to extend the existing reimbursement arrangements for Customs and Excise staff on ship rummaging duties for expenses incurred in cleaning their overalls, to Fire Services and Immigration staff, we noted that their overalls are part of the uniform of the staff in each department; the cost of their laundering had already been incorporated into their salary scales by the Rennie Committee. We were not satisfied that the degree of soiling of these overalls or working clothes is such that they require special laundering. We considered, therefore, that their requests were not justified.

6.70 We also considered that the Director of Immigration's proposal to pay the difference between the previous PCA and LA as a new PCA in order to top up the losses of a small proportion of staff, who were previously eligible for PCA, is not justified because it would be at variance with the averaging approach adopted by the Rennie Committee. Should his proposal be accepted, it would logically lead to the "assumed" gains of those previously eligible for LA being clawed back. We felt that clawing back would not be possible and that the amount (\$25 per month for the rank and file) was so small that payment would not be cost-effective.

6.71 When we examined the Commissioner of Correctional Services' request to restore the free laundry service which was withdrawn as a result of the Rennie

Committee recommendations, we accepted the Commissioner's concern that there might be monitoring and administrative difficulties in charging staff \$37 a month for using the departmental laundry service. However, we concluded that it would be inappropriate to support the request because the current pay scale for Correctional Services staff already includes an element for LA, for which they were previously ineligible. Unless the amount already incorporated in the pay scales were clawed back, the provision of a free laundry service would mean that the staff would be receiving a double benefit.

6.72 We did not accept the claim that there had been a drop in the standard of uniform turnout as a result of the levy of a charge on laundry service. We considered that the departmental management should take steps to enforce its discipline upon the staff concerned.

6.73 In examining these requests for reimbursement of laundry expenses, we observed that the eligibility criteria, which was based on the degree of soiling resulting from the duties carried out by the disciplined services, could be open to criticism because they required subjective judgements to be made. We concluded that the Administration should develop and introduce a more quantitative method of determining the payment of laundry expenses and revise the existing criteria accordingly.

6.74 We also noted that uniforms are provided to staff in the disciplined services as well as some staff in the non-disciplined services. The laundry arrangements for these uniforms vary from grade to grade and the disparity in treatment between different grades could cause dissatisfaction amongst staff who might feel that they are unfavourably treated. We concluded, therefore, that the Administration should conduct an overall review of the laundry arrangements for the uniforms provided to all of its staff, with a view to reducing any disparity in treatment.

6.75 We advised the Governor on these submissions in September, 1989. The disciplined services were informed of our advice to the Governor in October, 1989.

Detective Allowance

6.76 In August, 1989, the Commissioner of Police submitted a request to us to revise the rates of Detective Allowance payable to Police officers deployed on detective duties. He proposed that the allowance should be pegged to a point on the GDS(R) pay scale.

6.77 We were informed that a Detective Allowance is paid because officers engaged in detective duties are frequently required to pay small out-of-pocket expenses

when trailing suspects and contacting informants and witnesses, and that it is not practicable for these officers to claim reimbursement for every single item of expenditure incurred in the course of their duties. We considered it appropriate, therefore, that officers engaged in detective duties should be recompensed by the payment of an allowance.

6.78 However, we did not agree that the allowance should be pegged to a point on the GDS(R) pay scale because -

- (a) it would not be appropriate to adjust the allowance automatically in line with salary revisions; and
- (b) the allowance was revised in the past to reflect increases in the cost of living, whereas the annual salary adjustment for the Civil Service is based on pay trend indicators which took into account pay increases in the private sector attributable to the cost of living, general increases in market rates, the general prosperity of the companies surveyed, merit payments and in-scale increments.

6.79 We considered that it would be more appropriate for the allowance to continue to be revised having regard to the cost of living only and not to the other factors included in the pay trend indicators. We noted that the Detective Allowance was last revised in June, 1987 (to \$160 and \$80 per month for Inspectorate officers and for Junior Police Officers respectively) and we concluded that it should be revised on the basis of the movement in the Consumer Price Index (A) between July, 1987 and May, 1989. Taking into account the 17.5% increase in Consumer Price Index (A), we considered that the allowance should be revised to \$190 per month for Inspectorate officers and \$95 per month for Junior Police Officers.

6.80 We also concluded that the revised allowance should continue to apply to equivalent officers in the Customs and Excise and Immigration Departments and the ICAC and that the existing eligibility criteria adopted by the Administration should continue. We considered that the new rates should take effect from a current date.

6.81 We advised the Governor along these lines in October, 1989. The disciplined services were informed of our advice to the Governor later the same month.

Remote Stations Allowance

6.82 In August, 1989, the Commissioner of Police submitted a request to us to set the rates of the Remote