

Chapter 2

Overview

Overview of the Disciplined Services

2.1 The disciplined services grades constitute some 32% of the total establishment in the civil service. As at 1 January 2008, the seven disciplined services departments together had an establishment of 62 144, of which 53 005 were disciplined services posts belonging to 29 grades and over 100 ranks. Details are set out in *Table 2.1*.

Table 2.1: Establishment of the disciplined services departments as at 1 January 2008

Disciplined Services Department	Disciplined Services Staff			Civilian Staff	Total Establishment
	No. of Posts	No. of Grades	No. of Ranks		
CSD	5 940	7	18	682	6 622
C&ED	4 536	3	12	1 066	5 602
FSD	8 720	5	22	594	9 314
GFS	166	5	16	57	223
HKPF	27 551	3	13	4 847	32 398
ImmD	5 035	3	12	1 596	6 631
ICAC	1 057 ²	3	16	297	1 354
Total	53 005	29	109	9 139	62 144

2.2 Staff of the Disciplined Services are remunerated according to the five pay scales (*Table 2.2*) as detailed in **Appendix 5**.

² The total number of disciplined services posts of the ICAC in Table 2.1 (1 057) includes 15 frozen/reserve posts.

Table 2.2: The Disciplined Services Pay Scales

Pay Scale	Pay Point	Ambit
General Disciplined Services (Commander) Pay Scale (GDS(C))	1 to 4	Directorate officers in General Disciplined Services
General Disciplined Services (Officer) Pay Scale (GDS(O))	1d to 38	Non-directorate officers in General Disciplined Services
General Disciplined Services (Rank and File) Pay Scale (GDS(R))	1a to 27	Rank and File in General Disciplined Services
ICAC Pay Scale (IPS)	1 to 48	All disciplined services staff in ICAC
Police Pay Scale (PPS)	1a to 59	All police officers

2.3 Similar to their civilian counterparts, the Disciplined Services are eligible for a range of allowances and benefits, including –

- (a) *Job-related Allowances (JRAs)* : JRAs are additional payments to staff to compensate them for aspects of their work which are not normally expected of their grade or rank, and which have not been taken into account in the determination of their pay scale. At present, there are 16 JRAs relevant to the Disciplined Services.
- (b) *Other allowances and benefits* : Key benefits include medical and dental benefits, leave, education allowances, housing benefits and retirement benefits as conditions of service. The levels of allowances vary depending on the staff's rank, length of service, terms of appointment and other rules.

2.4 Disciplined Services also enjoy the following special benefits, including some which are not conditions of service as such –

- (a) departmental quarters³ (DQ);

³ Under the prevailing policy, DQ in the Disciplined Services are provided for married disciplined services staff of the Rank and File, local married officers in the ranks of Inspector and Superintendent of the Police Force, and comparable ranks in other Disciplined Services, subject to availability of resources. As at 1 October 2007, the Disciplined Services together provided some 22 300 DQ, accounting for over 98% of the total number of DQ in the civil service. As at 1 January 2008, about 23% to 47% of the Rank and File cadre and 23% to 57% of the Officer cadre in the Disciplined Services were allocated with DQ (the ICAC was not included in these allocation statistics).

- (b) special quota in the Civil Service Public Housing Quota and related assistance;
- (c) special enhancement⁴ in retirement benefits under the Pension Benefits Ordinance and the Civil Service Provident Fund (CSPF) Scheme; and
- (d) welfare benefits (e.g. welfare funds)⁵.

2.5 The above benefits provide additional non-pay-related incentives in the total remuneration package to attract, retain and motivate staff in the Disciplined Services.

2.6 It is also evident from our visits and meetings that many disciplined services staff have a strong sense of mission. They have highlighted that intangible factors such as sense of achievement, the privilege and honour to serve, training and development opportunities, caring and supportive management, the staff's esprit de corps and stability of employment are also important in attracting them to the service and motivating them to deliver quality service with professionalism.

Previous Reviews

2.7 The last overall pay reviews of the Disciplined Services were conducted by the Rennie Committee in 1988, followed by subsequent reviews in 1990 by the then newly established Standing Committee. Since then, reviews on specific issues have been conducted by the Standing Committee from time to time. The Standing Committee also advised on the application of the results of

⁴ For pensionable disciplined services staff whose prescribed retirement age is 55 or 57 (i.e. earlier than age 60 of their civilian counterparts), their pensionable service shall be deemed to increase at specified enhancement factor of 1.25 to 0.25 months for every year of completed service. This is subject to the resultant total length of pensionable service not exceeding the maximum period that the officer would have completed under normal circumstances of retiring at the age of 60. Similarly, for officers under the CSPF (i.e. those appointed to the civil service on or after 1 June 2000), there will be a Special Disciplined Services Contribution (SDSC) at 2.5% of the basic salary on top of the Government's regular mandatory contribution and voluntary contributions applicable to the civil service as a whole. This SDSC will not be granted if the officer leaves the service earlier than the prescribed retirement age.

⁵ Welfare benefits include statutory welfare funds, education funds, sports and recreation clubs, holiday homes, etc.

the 1999 Review on Civil Service Starting Salaries, the 2006 Pay Level Survey and the 2006 Starting Salaries Survey to the Disciplined Services.

2.8 In between major pay reviews, pay adjustments in the Disciplined Services generally follow those for the rest of the civil service, which are determined by the Chief Executive-in-Council having regard to the Pay Trend Survey results and other relevant factors⁶.

The Operating Environment

2.9 As highlighted by the Rennie Review in 1988, the Disciplined Services as a group carries a unique position in the public service because of their role in maintaining the security, stability and well-being of Hong Kong. In this section, we highlight some of the more prominent inherent features of the duties of the Disciplined Services, and outline some major changes in their operating environment since the last reviews. We will then set out some common issues on the Disciplined Services in Chapter 3, followed by major aspects and issues concerning each of the Disciplined Services respectively in Chapters 4 to 10.

Inherent Characteristics of the Disciplined Services

2.10 Generally speaking, the duties of the Disciplined Services have the following features –

- (a) *Stress* (physical and mental stress) arising from the responsibilities carried, decisions to be taken, complexity of tasks, exposure to danger in discharging statutory, enforcement and rescue functions whilst being subject to time constraints, media and public scrutiny, and legal and other implications;

⁶ These civil service pay adjustments include three downward adjustments between 2002 and 2005 (reduction of 1.58% to 4.42% in October 2002 and 3% each in January 2004 and January 2005 which resulted in bringing the dollar value of all civil service pay scales to the position as of 30 June 1997), an increase of 4.62% to 4.96% in April 2007 and an increase of 5.29% to 6.3% in April 2008.

- (b) *Hardship* due to the requirement to work in distasteful or unpleasant conditions, exposure to all weather conditions, irregular meal times, etc.;
- (c) *Danger* arising from work-related health hazards, injuries and fatalities, and carrying firearms, etc.;
- (d) *Discipline* due to the requirement to observe strict disciplinary codes and exposure to public complaints, formal investigation and disciplinary proceedings;
- (e) *Restrictions on freedom* arising from on-call requirements, explicit restrictions on the right to join trade unions or take industrial action, restrictions on personal activities, etc.;
- (f) *Social segregation* because of their hours of work, shift pattern and in some cases, remoteness of the offices;
- (g) *Hours of work* in terms of conditioned hours of work and requirement to standby at or near their place of work;
- (h) *Unpredictable calls* related to on-call requirement, the liability to be called out when off-duty, and obligation to accept cancellation of leave at short notice; and
- (i) *Shift duty* for most of the disciplined services staff with many involving night shift and long periods of continuous duty.

Macro Changes Since Last Reviews

2.11 In this GSR, we have received a wealth of submissions from the Disciplined Services and gained a better understanding of their changing operating environment through the series of visits, informal discussions and exchanges. The management and staff have pointed out that the work of the Disciplined Services has become more complex and wider in scope over the years, resulting in heavier responsibilities and greater hardship and stress for the staff, and that such should be duly recognised and reflected in their pay and conditions of service. Some key developments are highlighted below –

- (a) *Political* : The past two decades marked important milestones for Hong Kong. Our Reunification with the Mainland charted a new constitutional order for Hong Kong. With the political development, increased openness and accountability, the development of civil society and the introduction of new legislation to protect and enhance civil and political rights, the political and social landscapes in Hong Kong have undergone significant changes. Public awareness and expectations are higher. The public is more ready to resort to complaint and redress mechanisms. Public order events have increased in scale and frequency. The whole Government, including the Disciplined Services, is subject to close media and public scrutiny, resulting in increase in workload and stress.
- (b) *Legal* : Since 1990, a considerable volume of new legislation and amendments to existing legislation have been introduced, resulting in substantial growth in law enforcement duties. The new legislation and amendments necessitate introduction of new procedures and training, or amendments to existing procedures, which in turn bear upon individual officers to adapt to new modes of operation and to acquire new knowledge and skills. By way of example, it has been highlighted to us that the Interception of Communications and Surveillance Ordinance (Cap. 589) has significant impact on investigative functions, particularly undercover work and covert surveillance, resulting in new procedures, longer processes and heavier responsibilities for the Disciplined Services.
- (c) *Socio-economic* : Hong Kong's population has substantially grown from 5.7 million in 1988 to over 6.9 million in 2007, and we have moved to a knowledge-based, service-oriented economy. Hong Kong is a gateway to the Mainland, and acclaimed as "Asia's World City". With the signing of the Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement (CEPA) with the Mainland, the

introduction of the Individual Visit Scheme, the hosting of an increasing number of major international events in Hong Kong (such as the 2008 Olympic and Paralympic Equestrian Events and the Sixth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organisation (WTO)), regional and international flows of people, goods, trade and finances are continuing to surge in volume and complexity, resulting in heavier responsibilities and greater challenges for the Disciplined Services. Along with globalisation, cross-border crimes have increased, requests for mutual legal assistance process are more prevalent, and better co-ordination with international authorities is necessary. Changing family structure, evolving demographic profile and advance in technology have brought new challenges to the areas of child abuse, money laundering, domestic violence and technology and computer crime.

- (d) *Civil service* : The civil service as a whole has encountered major challenges. Cost savings exercises such as the Enhanced Productivity Programme, containing the size of the civil service and the recruitment freeze had an impact on manpower resources, succession planning and morale. The Disciplined Services have to cope with rising service demands with more stringent resources through process re-engineering, re-organisation and other new initiatives. Apart from resource management, the Government has launched public sector reforms to modernise and improve administration, including the Serving the Community Programme, the Performance Pledge Programme, the Code on Access to Information and the codes of practice on protection of personal data privacy. Frontline staff have to bear the brunt of a series of changes.

2.12 To cope with these new challenges, the disciplined services staff have to constantly upgrade their skills and undertake new and expanded functions, sometimes with no corresponding

increase in resources. Their success in rising to these challenges has won them the recognition of the local community and acclaim on the international arena. Credit should go to the unfailing hard work, dedication and professionalism of the staff and the exemplary leadership of their management.

2.13 It should, however, be noted that many of the changes and challenges facing the Disciplined Services have emerged in step with globalisation and the transformation of Hong Kong into an international metropolitan city and financial centre. The Disciplined Services are not alone in experiencing the changes. These developments also impact on the work of different grades and ranks, Disciplined Services and civilians alike, to varying degrees. Whilst wider use of technology and more efficient deployment of resources have helped in coping with these challenges, these new developments have undeniably added to the scope, complexity and stress of the work of the Disciplined Services.