

CHAPTER 7

THE MASTER PAY SCALE

The Master Pay Scale

7.1 In our First Report on Principles and Practices, we explained that we intended to conduct this review within the framework of the existing Master Pay Scale, that is to say within the present 48-point scale. To have done otherwise would have seriously delayed this Report.

7.2 We do not, however, propose that the Master Pay Scale be left entirely unchanged. In our previous report we had expressed our sympathy for the lowest paid employees in government and earlier in this Report we have recommended improvements in the pay of Model Scale 1 employees. It would therefore have been inconsistent for us not to propose improvements to the bottom of the Master Pay Scale on which the lowest paid of all government employees serve. We therefore propose that the value of the minimum point on the Master Pay Scale should be raised from the present \$900 to \$1,000.

7.3 The raising of the minimum of the scale requires consequential adjustments to the value of other points in the scale and we have given considerable thought to the level to which increases should be applied. Since we were not engaged in a general pay level review, one option open to us was to taper the increase to produce a situation whereby civil servants paid from the highest points in the scale received no increase whatsoever. After careful consideration however, we have concluded that to taper the scale to this extent would unreasonably reduce differentials related to levels of responsibility. Furthermore, we were conscious of the fact that while we have been able to propose adjustments to the pay scales of grades paid from the lower and middle ranges of the Master Pay Scale, where we consider such adjustments to be justified, the constraints imposed by the maximum of the Master Pay Scale preclude more than minimal adjustments being made to the scales of the more senior civil servants. We have therefore revised the value of the points on the Master Pay Scale to provide an increase at all points, but tapering from 12.3% towards the bottom of the scale to 3.7% at the maximum.

7.4 In revising the Master Pay Scale we have taken the opportunity to restore the incremental progression of the scale to a more usual pattern.

7.5 Our proposed scale is in Table D at the end of this chapter. We also record here that we shall wish to take a further look at the upper end of the Master Pay Scale and the equivalent points on the Disciplined Services Pay Scale in the light of the results of the forthcoming review by the Standing Committee on Directorate Salaries and Conditions of Service.

Qualifications and benchmarks

7.6 Our proposals for the pay scales for individual grades paid from the Master Pay Scale are contained in Chapters 8 to 16, grouped largely according to qualifications required. In describing qualifications we have elected to use the traditional terms "school certificate" and "matriculation" which are still widely used and well understood within the civil service, to cover the range of jobs requiring certain gradings in the Hong Kong Certificate of Education or Hong Kong University Advanced Level Examination.

7.7 The benchmarks, that is to say the normal entry point in the scale assigned to a particular qualification before other factors are recognised, are contained in each chapter but a summary of the principal educational qualification benchmarks is contained in Appendix XI.

Overtime allowance

7.8 Under our proposals, pay scales for certain ranks have a maximum of Point 24. The cut-off point for overtime is, however, Point 23. As a result civil servants who normally receive overtime payments may receive little or no benefit from the final increment in the scale. We would therefore ask Government to consider determining eligibility for overtime in future by reference to ranks, rather than to a fixed point in the scale.

Efficiency bars

7.9 In our First Report on Principles and Practices we recommended the abolition of efficiency bars except where a pass in an examination is involved. We have therefore made no provision for efficiency bars in our proposed scales. Where passage beyond a specified point in the scale requires success in an examination we feel the point might be better described as a "promotion bar". We leave it to the Administration to effect any changes to the points where such bars occur and where these are necessary as a result of our proposed alterations to scales.

Omitted points

7.10 In our First Report on Principles and Practices we proposed to examine in the context of our review of individual grades the present unsatisfactory arrangement whereby a small number of civil service pay scales contain provision for civil servants to jump points in the scale. We have since received representations from departments and staff concerned emphasising the need for omitted points in the pay scales of specific grades. Nevertheless, we are still not entirely persuaded by the arguments and remain particularly doubtful about their selective application in individual pay scales. However, pending a more detailed study on the practical consequence of abolishing such points, we do not propose any change in existing arrangements. Meanwhile, we recommend that the Administration should not add to the present points.

TABLE D

MASTER PAY SCALE

<u>Point</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>Increment</u>
48	11200	-
47	10800	400
46	10400	400
45	10000	400
44	9600	400
43	9200	400
42	8800	400
41	8400	400
40	8000	400
39	7650	350
38	7300	350
37	6950	350
36	6650	300
35	6350	300
34	6050	300
33	5800	250
32	5550	250
31	5300	250
30	5050	250
29	4800	250
28	4600	200
27	4400	200
26	4200	200
25	4000	200
24	3800	200
23	3600	200
22	3400	200
21	3250	150
20	3100	150
19	2950	150
18	2800	150
17	2650	150
16	2500	150
15	2350	150
14	2200	150
13	2050	150
12	1900	150
11	1750	150
10	1650	100
9	1550	100
8	1450	100
7	1350	100
6	1275	75
5	1200	75
4	1150	50
3	1100	50
2	1050	50
1	1000	50