

CHAPTER 2

PROCEDURE

2.1 To comply with our Terms of Reference, we decided from the outset that we should have wide consultation with the civil service on this subject. As a first step, we circulated on 12th February 1980 a Consultative Document on Civil Service Consultative Machinery to all departments and requested that it be brought to the attention of all staff associations and individual staff. The Document (a copy of which is attached at Appendix II) outlined the existing systems in the civil service, and invited comments from both management and staff on how these could be improved.

2.2 We have noted with gratification the good response to the Consultative Document. Some 70 submissions were received from heads of department, staff associations or groups, and individuals. We also held a number of meetings with staff representatives, including the Staff Side of the Senior Civil Service Council, who had indicated special interest in the subject. A list of the written representations received from staff, and meetings with staff groups are given in Appendix III, while Appendix IV lists the written representations from management.

2.3 We are conscious of the fact that the recommendations we make, if adopted, will have a service-wide impact on consultation systems throughout the Government. In order to follow a more objective approach, we have, apart from studying the local system, also studied the consultative machinery in the public services in other countries. These include the Whitley Councils in the United Kingdom civil service, and consultative systems in the U.S.A., the Federal Republic of Germany, Japan, Singapore, France, the Netherlands, Belgium and Kenya. Our study of the systems in these countries has assisted us in formulating our views and recommendations on the form of consultative machinery suitable for Hong Kong.

2.4 In this review, we have also taken account of the Administration's views forwarded to us by the Secretary for the Civil Service both in regard to general principles and specific issues.