

CHAPTER 2

WORK UNDERTAKEN DURING THE PERIOD

2.1 In Chapter 12 of Report No. 5 we stated that we intended to devote our next phase of work to the following topics :

- (a) civil service pay policy,
- (b) educational qualification benchmarks,
- (c) grades with student ranks,
- (d) long service increments; and
- (e) grades requiring further review, including Model Scale 1 grades.

The progress on these topics since October 1980 is described in the following paragraphs.

Civil Service Pay Policy

2.2 Several of our Terms of Reference are concerned with civil service pay policy. Our views on certain aspects of the subject were given in our First Report on Principles and Practices Governing Civil Service Pay (Report No. 1). In subsequent general reports, we have indicated that an overall review of civil service pay policy would be conducted.

2.3 As the first stage of the review, we studied the origins and development of the present arrangements for determining civil service pay in Hong Kong. Civil service pay policies and practices in a number of countries including the United Kingdom, the United States of America and Singapore, were also examined.

2.4 We next sought expert advice on the subject from Mr. Vernon Morgan, the then Director of the United Kingdom Civil Service Pay Research Unit, who visited Hong Kong in late 1980 and gave us much helpful advice. Then in February 1981 we issued a Consultative Document in order to solicit views from civil service staff associations and individuals, the Administration, and interested parties in the private sector, on the three major aspects of the review :

- (a) the arrangements for general pay adjustments in the civil service;
- (b) the arrangements for adjusting individual civil service grade pay scales;
- (c) the status and operation of the Pay Investigation Unit.

A wide range of views on these issues was expressed by the respondents and these views were then studied in detail by us.

2.5 By the end of June 1981, we had identified a number of defects in the existing arrangements and had reached broad agreement on the measures necessary to rectify the situation.

2.6 However, following the concern expressed by some private sector organisations and some Unofficial Members of the Legislative Council in the wake of the 1981 civil service pay adjustment, we intensified our investigation of the present arrangements, particularly the operation and methodology of the pay trend survey system. In this connection, we engaged an international firm of employee benefit consultants to carry out for us a special study of the present pay trend survey system.

2.7 This detailed study of civil service pay policy necessarily involves a considerable amount of work and very careful deliberations, and will not be completed for some time. However, since there was a need for the Government to take early decisions on the arrangements to be adopted for the overall adjustment of civil service salaries in 1982, we addressed a letter to His Excellency the Governor on 27 November 1981 containing our advice on this aspect.

2.8 In this letter we proposed, as an interim measure and without prejudice to our future recommendations, that the pay adjustment for 1982 should, as in previous years, be based on the results of a survey of pay trends in the private sector. We have, however, proposed a number of changes to the system for 1982. The principal changes we have recommended are the following :

- (a) advancing the completion date of the pay trend survey so as to enable any pay award to be announced by April 1982 at the latest, instead of in July or August, in order to minimise the impact of the civil service pay adjustment on the next round of pay settlements in the private sector, and to eliminate retrospective payments;

- (b) weighting the survey results to reflect the major categories of employment in Hong Kong; and
- (c) making due allowance for differences in the value of private sector and civil service fringe benefits.

As these interim proposals were still being considered by the Government at the end of the report period, the letter conveying our advice will be published in a future report after a decision has been made by the Government on the matter.

2.9 We intend to accord priority to the continuation of our study of the whole system of civil service pay adjustments, and hope to submit our report during 1982.

Educational Qualification Benchmarks,
Grades with Student Ranks
and Long Service Increments

2.10 We have made considerable progress in our study of these topics and our advice will be submitted to His Excellency the Governor shortly in a separate report.

Review of Individual Grades

2.11 We stated in Report No. 5 that we would continue to review individual grades which warranted re-examination in the light of changed circumstances or new information available. In keeping with this undertaking we have made 21 submissions to His Excellency the Governor during the report period, tendering advice on the pay and structure of various grades. In all cases our advice has been accepted by the Government. Our recommendations in the order of their submission are summarised in paragraphs 2.12 - 2.32 and the letters conveying our advice are reproduced in full in Appendix IV.

2.12 Technical Officer and Survey Officer Grades
(Appendix IV(1))

In Report No. 2, we undertook to conduct a further review of the Technical and Survey Officer grades in the light of the findings of a Joint Management and Staff Working Party which had been convened to examine a claim by the Association of Government Technical and Survey Officers for better remuneration.

The existing pay scales of the Technical and Survey Officer grades were established in 1977 as a result of a review of the professional support grades in the Public Works Department. These pay scales were disputed by staff and in September 1977, Professor P.G. Willoughby, Professor of Law at the University of Hong Kong, was appointed as a one-man Committee of Inquiry to determine whether the pay scales and structure introduced as a result of the review were fair or otherwise. Professor Willoughby's conclusion was that the pay scales were broadly fair according to the Government's pay policy. However, staff continued to dispute the results of the 1977 review and against this background a Working Party was appointed to consider, among other things, whether there was any evidence not previously taken into account in the 1977 review which would justify a change in pay scales.

The principal finding of the Working Party was that there were certain duties now performed by the staff of the Technical and Survey Officer grades which were not included in the ranking criteria at the time of the 1977 review, and that these should constitute new evidence to support a case for improving the pay scales of the grades. The Working Party also found that the great majority of these duties were being performed by staff of the Technical and Survey Officer grades before the 1977 review.

In our further study of the Technical and Survey Officer grades, we therefore examined the 140 items which the Working Party Report listed as not included in the 1977 ranking criteria in order to see to what extent they involved additional responsibilities. We also examined the nature of these duties to establish whether or not their inclusion in the ranking criteria in 1977 could have affected the pay scales introduced as a result of the review. We found however that an overwhelming proportion of the 140 items listed as "additional" either actually appeared (albeit sometimes differently worded) in the ranking criteria of one or other of the disciplines of the Technical and Survey Officer grades, or were so closely related to duties already appearing in the ranking criteria that, in our opinion, they could reasonably be regarded as included.

In the circumstances, our conclusion was that the additional duties listed would not have affected the outcome of the 1977 Technical Grades Review, nor were they such as to warrant an adjustment to pay scales under the principles we now use in determining such scales. We therefore recommended that the pay and structure of the Technical and Survey Officer grades should remain unchanged.

2.13 Housing Assistant and Housing Manager Grades
(Appendix IV(2))

In Report No. 2 we deferred consideration of the Housing Assistant and Housing Manager grades for two reasons. First, the qualifications for entry to the Housing Assistant grade were set at four separate educational levels, ranging from school certificate to university degree, each of which attracted different starting pay. We considered this arrangement unsatisfactory. Secondly, we had been advised that for many years vacancies in the Housing Manager grade had been filled solely by the appointment of suitably qualified Housing Assistants and thus that a case existed for merging the two grades.

We also said in Report No. 2 that we found difficulty in accepting that a university degree should be a stipulated entry qualification for the Housing Assistant grade and a job survey of the grade confirmed this view. In addition we found that while both a Polytechnic Higher Diploma and a post-secondary college diploma were suitable qualifications for appointment to the grade, they could not be regarded as minimum qualifications for the competent performance of the job. At the other end of the educational spectrum, we noted that the school certificate entry point was a relic from the days before the Resettlement Assistant grade was merged with the Housing Assistant grade and that no recruitment at this level had taken place in recent years.

After careful consideration we concluded that the minimum entry qualification for the Housing Assistant grade should be matriculation. In reaching this conclusion we took account of the fact that the nature of the duties of Housing Assistants is such as to require a degree of maturity and that advancement to and within the Housing Manager grade requires possession of the Certificate in Housing and Estate Management or its equivalent, and entrance to the courses leading to this Certificate requires matriculation. In the light of our conclusion that matriculation was the appropriate minimum qualification for appointment to the grade, we recommended that the pay scale of Housing Assistants should be adjusted in line with those of other comparable matriculation grades.

Our review also confirmed the information previously provided to us that appointments to the Housing Manager grade were made solely from suitably qualified Housing Assistants and thus, in effect, Housing Assistant can be regarded as the entry rank to the Housing Manager grade. We therefore recommended that the Housing Assistant and Housing Manager grades be merged, with the following pay scales and structure :

<u>Existing</u>		<u>Proposed</u>
<u>Housing Assistant Grade</u>		<u>Housing Manager Grade</u>
Housing Assistant	MPS 13 - 29	MPS 16 - 30
<u>Housing Manager Grade</u>		
Assistant Housing Manager	MPS 25 - 32	MPS 31 - 37
Housing Manager	MPS 33 - 47	MPS 38 - 47
Senior Housing Manager	MPS 48 - 51	MPS 48 - 51

2.14 Works Supervisor Grade (*Appendix IV(3)*)

We commented in Report No. 2 on the similarity between the appointment and training requirements of Works Supervisors and Technical and Survey Officers. Following our review of the Technical and Survey Officer grades, we therefore also reviewed the Works Supervisor grade.

In the event, we found that the similarity between Works Supervisors and Technical and Survey Officers was more apparent than real. Our further examination showed that only a small proportion of Works Supervisors were appointed to the grade through the Trainee rank while the great majority of posts were filled either by the promotion of suitably qualified Model Scale 1 staff or by persons who had completed a Technical Apprenticeship. Furthermore the need for the Works Supervisor Trainee rank in its present form seemed doubtful and we therefore recommended that it be discontinued.

Our review did however bring to light certain factors which we felt warranted some improvement in the pay of the Works Supervisor grade. In particular, we noted that there were retention problems and having regard to the nature of the work of the grade, we recommended that the pay scales should be adjusted upwards. Our proposed pay scales were as follows :

	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
Works Supervisor II	MPS 11 - 13	MPS 11 - 15
Works Supervisor I	MPS 14 - 17	MPS 16 - 19

2.15 Assistant Registrar Grade (Appendix IV(4))

We recommended in Report No. 2 that the Assistant Registrar grade should be merged with the Executive Officer grade. Subsequently, we were provided with substantial new evidence regarding the duties and responsibilities of Assistant Registrars which suggested that the merger which we had proposed might be inappropriate. We therefore conducted a further review of the Assistant Registrar grade.

This review showed that recent developments had led to an increase in the complexity of the work of the Assistant Registrar grade, that this called for specialised knowledge and that there was a need for staff continuity. We therefore accepted that the Assistant Registrar grade should remain a departmental grade and should not be merged with the Executive Officer grade.

Having concluded that Assistant Registrar should continue as a separate grade, we conducted an examination of its pay scales and structure. We found that matriculation remained the appropriate minimum educational qualification for appointment to the grade and in our review we therefore had regard to the pay scales and structure of comparable grades within the matriculation group. As a result of this review we made the following recommendations :

- (a) the pay scale of the Assistant Registrar II rank should be improved to bring it into line with that of other matriculation grades exercising similar levels of responsibility;
- (b) the Assistant Registrar I rank should be divided into two ranks, i.e. Assistant Registrar I and Senior Assistant Registrar II, in recognition of the fact that we found two clearly definable levels of responsibility for Assistant Registrars I;
- (c) a rank of Chief Assistant Registrar should be created in order to provide a head of the Assistant Registrar grade.

The revised pay scales and structure which we proposed were as follows :

<u>Existing</u>		<u>Proposed</u>	
Assistant Registrar II	MPS 16 - 30	Assistant Registrar II	MPS 18 - 31
		(Assistant Registrar I	MPS 32 - 37
Assistant Registrar I	MPS 31 - 43	(Senior Assistant Registrar II	MPS 38 - 43
Senior Assistant Registrar	MPS 44 - 47	Senior Assistant Registrar I	MPS 44 - 47
		Chief Assistant Registrar	MPS 48 - 51

2.16 Trade Instructor Grade (*Appendix IV(5)*)

Our review of the Trade Instructor grade was in accordance with an undertaking given to staff that we would re-examine their grade in the light of the findings of a Departmental Working Party. The Working Party had been appointed by the Director of Social Welfare to report on a number of issues concerning Trade Instructors, including their career prospects.

The report of the Working Party drew attention to the demanding nature of the work of the grade, which involved the training, motivation and maintenance of discipline among the mentally retarded, the maladjusted and young offenders. It also referred to a similarity between the work of Trade Instructors and that of Workshop Instructors in the Education Department. We accepted the validity of the points made in the Working Party report and paid particular attention to the comparison between the Workshop Instructor and Trade Instructor grades and to a suggestion that the grades might be merged.

We found that while there were similarities between the work of Trade Instructors and Workshop Instructors, the range of trades taught and the qualifications required for entry to the two grades were different. In the circumstances, we considered it impracticable to merge the Trade Instructor grade with the Workshop Instructor grade within the latter's existing rank structure. We took the view however that Trade Instructor could be merged with the Workshop Instructor grade as a lower pay rank in that grade and recommended accordingly. The proposed pay scales and structure for the combined grade were as follows :

<u>Existing</u>		<u>Proposed</u>	
Trade Instructor	MPS 9 - 15	Workshop Instructor III	MPS 9 - 17
Workshop Instructor II	MPS 18 - 23	Workshop Instructor II	MPS 18 - 23
Workshop Instructor I	MPS 24 - 31	Workshop Instructor I	MPS 24 - 31

2.17 Certain Marine Department Grades (Appendix IV(6))

During our first review of individual grades, we noted a number of grades under the management of the Marine Department with similar entry qualifications, job content and levels of responsibility : these were the grades of Inspector (Land Boilers), Instructor (Machinery), Naval Architectural Design Draughtsman and Ship Inspector. We therefore conducted a further review of these grades to see whether they might be merged.

2.17.1 Ship Inspector

The largest of the four grades is the Ship Inspector grade and it was with this grade that we considered the other grades might be merged. As a first step, therefore, we re-examined the pay and structure of the Ship Inspector grade.

At the time of our review, the Ship Inspector grade had a two-rank structure but our examination revealed that there were in fact three clear functional levels of responsibility. Moreover, we found that the duties at the lowest functional level were relatively routine and their performance did not require a very high degree of technical skill or lengthy period of experience. We therefore recommended that the Ship Inspector grade should be restructured in line with other grades in the Technical Inspectorate and Related Grades group as follows :

<u>Existing</u>		<u>Proposed</u>	
-		Assistant Ship Inspector	MPS 17 - 27
Ship Inspector II	MPS 28 - 36	Ship Inspector II	MPS 28 - 36
Ship Inspector I	MPS 38 - 41	Ship Inspector I	MPS 38 - 41

In the light of our proposal to introduce a new lower rank in the Ship Inspector grade to perform the less demanding of the Ship Inspectors' duties, we also recommended that the post-apprenticeship experience required for appointment should be reduced from six years to three years.

2.17.2 Inspector (Land Boilers)

Inspectors (Land Boilers) were employed in the Labour Department on secondment from the Marine Department and the basic qualifications for appointment to the grade were similar to those of Ship Inspectors. We therefore proposed that Inspectors (Land Boilers) should be merged with Ship Inspectors II. This proposal formalised the existing arrangement whereby the avenue of advancement for Inspectors (Land Boilers) was to Ship Inspector I and resulted in no change in the pay scale.

2.17.3 Instructor (Machinery)

The qualifications for appointment as an Instructor (Machinery) were the same as those required for Ship Inspectors II. The duties and level of responsibility exercised by the grade were also comparable to those of Ship Inspectors II. We therefore recommended that Instructors (Machinery) should be regraded as Ship Inspectors II in the machinery workstream. This recommendation also involved no change in pay scales.

2.17.4 Naval Architectural Design Draughtsman

Like Ship Inspectors, Naval Architectural Design Draughtsmen were engaged in inspecting vessels and the only difference between the grades was in the length of post-apprenticeship experience required for appointment, i.e. four years in the case of Naval Architectural Design Draughtsman as against six years in the case of Ship Inspector. We therefore recommended that the ranks of Naval Architectural Design Draughtsman (MPS 20 - 27) and Senior Naval Architectural Design Draughtsman (MPS 28 - 36) be merged with appropriate ranks in the hull and deck stream of the restructured Ship Inspector grade.

2.17.5 Surveyor (Land Boilers)

We included in our review of certain marine grades the grade of Surveyor (Land Boilers). This was a professional grade on which we had not previously reported. We found that the existence of the Surveyor (Land Boilers) as a separate