

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

(This Chapter briefly recapitulates the work completed in the first two phases of the 1989 Non-Directorate Salary Structure Review and describes the procedures adopted in this final phase)

1.1 We began this overall review of the salary structure of all the civil service grades within our remit (see note) in March 1989. In view of the extensive scope of the exercise, the complexity of the issues involved and the large number of grades falling within our purview, we had estimated that the review would take about two years to complete. We also decided that our study should concentrate on matters relating to salary structure, leaving the complex subject of fringe benefits to be dealt with separately.

1.2 The first phase of the review, lasting about six months, focused on the general principles and practices governing civil service pay so as to establish the basis for examining individual grades in subsequent phases. We also initiated a series of Pay Comparison Surveys to obtain information from the private sector in assessing civil service salary levels. Concurrently, at the request of the Administration, we examined the problems of recruitment and retention in the civil service, with particular reference to a number of the more seriously affected grades. The First Report on the 1989 Salary Structure Review (Report No. 23 or 'the First Report') was submitted to the Governor on 12 October 1989. The recommendations therein have been accepted by the Government.

Note : The Commission's remit covers the non-Directorate civil service other than the disciplined services and the judicial service. Altogether 342 grades came within our purview at the start of the review.

1.3 Our review of the salary structure of individual grades then began. Because of the large number of grades involved, we decided to examine them in batches, setting the order by reference to the prevailing civil service qualification groupings. In the second phase (from October 1989 to March 1990) of the review, altogether 126 grades belonging to the Professional, Degree and Related Grades and the Polytechnic Higher Diploma, Diploma and Related Grades were dealt with. Our recommendations were contained in the Second Report on the 1989 Salary Structure Review (Report No. 25 or 'the Second Report'), which was submitted to the Governor on 29 March 1990. The Second Report also included our findings and recommendations on several general issues mentioned in the First Report, including those relating to the Training Pay Scale, Model Scale 1 and the Master Pay Scale. The Government has accepted all these recommendations.

1.4 This final report covers the third and last phase of our work. As mentioned in paragraph 1.1, the original plan was to complete the entire review in two years. Noting the concern of staff about the timing of the review of their respective grades and their desire to have the whole exercise finished as early as possible, we decided against further phasing and dealt with all the remaining 216 grades together, thereby completing our task ahead of the original schedule. We also studied and made recommendations on a number of general issues which arose in the course of the review of individual grades.

Procedures

1.5 The review of individual grades in this phase continued to be conducted in the same manner as in the second phase, i.e. they were first examined in detail by the Working Groups which then reported their recommendations to the Commission for consideration and endorsement. Membership of these Working Groups is at Appendix C.

1.6 In the final phase, we received 177 representations (listed at Appendix D) from staff and departmental management. These are in addition to the 563 written submissions acknowledged in the First and Second Reports. Where appropriate, we had meetings with the staff and the departmental management to discuss their submissions. These meetings, which are recorded at Appendix E, provided a useful forum for exchange of views and for clarifications.

1.7 We also made another series of visits to Government departments to see staff at work. We were thus able to gain a better idea of the working environment of staff, the nature of their work and the problems they faced in discharging their duties. Details of the departments visited are at Appendix F.

1.8 We have taken full account of all the views expressed by staff and management in our deliberations. They may not have been specifically mentioned in our comments on the grades concerned, but it does not mean that they have not been considered.