

Information Note for LegCo Panel on Planning, Lands and Works

Proposals to rationalize the starting pay for Assistant Landscape Architect and to revise the rates of honoraria for graduate trainees in the landscape architectural stream under the Works Bureau Graduate Training Scheme

We plan to seek a recommendation from the Establishment Subcommittee (ESC) at its meeting on 13 June on a proposal to raise the starting pay for Assistant Landscape Architect. Separately, we will submit to the Finance Committee (FC) at its meeting on 6 July 2001 a proposal to revise downwards the rates of honoraria for new graduate trainees in the landscape architectural stream under the Works Bureau Graduate Training Scheme. The purpose of this note is to brief Members on these proposals.

PROBLEM

2. We have two distinct but related problems. The Graduate Training Scheme was extended to include the landscape architectural stream in 1998. Since then, university graduates in relevant subjects may be recruited as Landscape Architectural Graduates (LAG) instead of as Assistant Landscape Architects (ALA) as in previous years. At the same time, the appointment requirements for ALA have been upgraded to include two years' post-qualification practical training/experience satisfying a requirement for professional qualification. However, this has not been reflected in the starting pay for ALA.

3. Separately, when we sought approval from the Finance Committee in May 2000 to revise downwards the rates of honoraria for trainees under the Works Bureau Graduate Training Scheme to bring them in line with Civil Service benchmark and entry pay for civil servants with similar qualifications, we considered it not appropriate to propose the same new rates of honoraria for graduate trainees in the landscape architectural stream because they would overlap with the current pay for ALA. Instead, we have frozen the recruitment of LAG pending the upgrading of the pay for ALA and the subsequent revision of rates of honoraria for LAG.

PROPOSAL

4. We propose to raise the starting pay for ALA by two points from MPS 11 (\$16,095) to 13 (\$18,140) in order to recognise the additional appointment requirement as explained in paragraph 2 above.

5. Following this, we also propose to revise downwards the rates of honoraria for new LAG with effect from 1 August 2001 to bring them on par with those for graduate trainees in other streams under the Graduate Training Scheme. The proposed rates of honoraria will be as follows –

- (a) First year - pegged to the benchmark for Qualification Group 13 – Degree and Related Grades, which is MPS 11 (\$16,095) at present.
- (b) Second year - set at one point higher than the above benchmark, which is MPS 12 (\$17,100).

JUSTIFICATION

Revision of Starting Pay for ALA

6. Prior to 1998, entry to the ALA rank required an appropriate academic qualification recognized by the Landscape Institute in the United Kingdom, or equivalent. No post-qualification experience was required. In line with the established pay principles for those assistant professional ranks which do not require post-qualification experience on appointment, the starting pay for the ALA rank has been pitched at MPS 11 (the benchmark for grades in the Degree and Related Grades Qualification Group).

7. In 1996, the Hong Kong Institute of Landscape Architects (HKILA) was established under the Hong Kong Institute of Landscape Architects Incorporate Ordinance (Cap. 1162). In 1998, a Graduate Training Scheme for Landscape Architecture was introduced as part of the Works Bureau Graduate Training Scheme. Under this Scheme, fresh graduates in landscape architecture, or equivalent would be appointed as LAG instead of ALA as in the past, to undergo a two-year post-qualification practical training. On successful completion of the graduate training programme, LAG may apply for appointment as ALA, subject to the availability of vacancies. Accordingly, the appointment requirement for ALA was revised in 1998 to "a degree/diploma in Landscape

Architecture or a qualification for admission into the HKILA Examination, plus two years' post-qualification practical training/experience satisfying the training requirements for corporate membership of the HKILA" to cater for this experience requirement.

Encl. 1 8. Following the revision to the appointment requirements for ALA, the existing starting pay for ALA at MPS 11 has become two points below that for other assistant professional ranks requiring comparable post-qualification experience on appointment. The experience requirements and pay scales of these assistant professional ranks are shown at Enclosure 1. We thus propose to rationalize the starting pay for ALA by raising it from MPS 11 to 13. This will bring it in line with the established pay principle for assistant professional ranks.

9. We consulted the Standing Commission on Civil Service Salaries and Conditions of Service on the proposal on 12 April 2000. The Standing Commission has advised that the proposed revision of the starting pay for ALA is appropriate.

Revision of Rates of Honoraria for LAG

10. In May 2000, the Finance Committee approved Works Bureau's proposal to revise downwards the rates of honoraria for new graduate trainees under the Graduate Training Scheme with effect from 1 August 2000, so as to bring them in line with the starting pay for civil servants with similar qualifications. The rates of honoraria for trainees in the first, second and third years have since been set at \$16,095, \$17,100 and \$18,140 (equivalent to MPS 11, 12 and 13) respectively.

11. In parallel with the revision of the starting pay for ALA, we propose to set the rates of honoraria for new LAG at \$16,095 and \$17,100 in respect of their two-year training period. This will bring the rates of honoraria in line with those for trainees in other streams under the Graduate Training Scheme. When this is achieved, we will resume the appointment of LAG this summer.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

12. Upon revision, the notional annual mid-point salary for ALA will be increased by \$13,140 from \$264,900 to \$278,040.

13. As the intake of LAG under the Graduate Training Scheme ranges from one to two each year, we estimate that the proposed downward revision of the rates of honoraria for LAG will bring about savings of \$21,840 in 2001-02, about \$44,000 in 2002-03 and \$49,000 in 2003-04 onwards in recurrent expenditure.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Landscape Architect Grade

14. The Landscape Architect grade is classified under Group I of the "Professional and Related Grades" Group. The grade is responsible for planning, design, implementation, maintenance and supervision of landscape projects in open spaces, estates, highways and adjoining areas, administration of landscape contracts, and advising on landscape proposals associated with private developments. It is a common grade with Director of Architectural Services as Head of Grade. ALA is the basic rank of the grade. Created in 1983, the rank of ALA forms a combined establishment with Landscape Architect. Members of the grade now serve in Architectural Services Department, Civil Engineering Department, Highways Department, Lands Department, Planning Department and Territory Development Department. There are also Senior Landscape Architects, Landscape Architects and ALA in Housing Department. They are under the grade management of Director of Housing. The distribution of Landscape Architect grade posts in departments is at Enclosure 2.

Encl. 2

Graduate Trainees in the Landscape Architectural Stream under the Works Bureau Graduate Training Scheme

15. Graduate trainees in the landscape architectural stream under the Graduate Training Scheme are holders of a recognized degree or an equivalent qualification who have to undergo two years' practical training under supervision in order to acquire corporate membership of the HKILA. The Graduate Training Scheme provides a total of three places for LAG. Graduate trainees do not occupy civil service posts but are paid an honorarium during the period of training. They are under no obligation to join the Government service on completion of their training; nor is the Government committed to providing employment for

them after they have completed training under the Scheme.

16. The current rates of honoraria for LAG in the first and second years are \$17,460 and \$18,480 respectively.

Works Bureau
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**Experience Requirements for Appointment to Assistant Ranks of
Professional and Related Grades (Group I)**

Grade/Rank		Post-graduate Professional Experience (years)	Pay Scale (MPS)
1.	Assistant Assessor	Nil	11-22
2.	Assistant Bank Examiner	Nil	11-22
3.	Assistant Insurance Officer	Nil	11-22
4.	Assistant Landscape Architect	2	11-22
5.	Assistant Valuation Surveyor	2	13-22
6.	Assistant Telecommunications Engineer	2	13-22
7.	Assistant Building Surveyor	2	13-22
8.	Assistant Land Surveyor	2	13-22
9.	Assistant Maintenance Surveyor	2	13-22
10.	Assistant Building Services Engineer	2	13-22
11.	Assistant Electrical and Mechanical Engineer	2	13-22
12.	Assistant Electrical Engineer	2	13-22
13.	Assistant Electronics Engineer	2	13-22
14.	Assistant Mechanical Engineer	2	13-22
15.	Assistant Town Planner	2	13-22
16.	Assistant Architect	2	14-22
17.	Assistant Engineer	3	14-22
18.	Assistant Quantity Surveyor	3	14-22
19.	Assistant Geotechnical Engineer	3	14-22
20.	Assistant Structural Engineer	3	14-22

**Distribution of Posts in the Landscape Architect Grade
in Departments in 2001-02**

Rank	Department	No. of Posts
Senior Landscape Architect	Architectural Services Department	5
	Territory Development Department	1
	Civil Engineering Department	1
	Highways Department	2
	Planning Department	1
	Lands Department	1
	Housing Department	3
	Sub-total	14
Landscape Architect/ Assistant Landscape Architect	Architectural Services Department	11
	Territory Development Department	6
	Highways Department	8
	Planning Department	4
	Lands Department	2
	Housing Department	15
	Sub-total	46
Total		60