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26 November 2003

The Hon. Tam Yiu-chung, G.B.S., J.P.  
Chairman  
Legislative Council Panel on Public Service

A handwritten signature in cursive script, likely belonging to the Secretary for the Civil Service.

**Development of an improved pay adjustment mechanism  
for the civil service**

Earlier this year, the Administration announced its decision to embark on an exercise to develop, in consultation with staff, an improved civil service pay adjustment mechanism. To take forward the exercise, the Civil Service Bureau (CSB) has set up a Steering Committee comprising selected members drawn from the three advisory bodies on civil service salaries and conditions of service to provide independent and professional advice for the exercise. A Consultative Group involving staff representatives from the staff sides of the central consultative councils and the major service-wide staff unions has also been formed to provide staff input to the exercise.

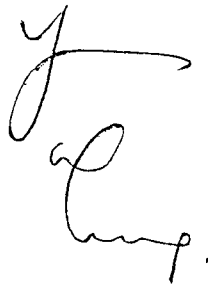
Taking account of the deliberations in the Steering Committee and the Consultative Group, CSB has worked out a broad framework of the improved civil service pay adjustment mechanism. Details of our proposal are set out in a progress report, which we have issued this afternoon.

Based on the proposal we have drawn up, we shall continue our discussion in the Steering Committee and the Consultative Group on the implementation details of the three constituent components of the improved

civil service pay adjustment mechanism, i.e. the conduct of periodic pay level surveys, the conduct of annual pay trend surveys based on an improved methodology and an effective means for implementing both upward and downward pay adjustments. We aim to present proposals on the pay level survey methodology and improvements to the pay trend survey methodology as well as general ideas on the application of the pay level survey findings in the second quarter of 2004 for consultation.

Taking account of the views expressed to us that adequate time should be allowed for detailed examination of the many complicated issues involved, in particular the detailed methodology of the pay level survey and the application of the pay level survey results, we consider it desirable to conduct more extensive consultation within the civil service and inform the public of the progress of the exercise from time to time so that different sectors of the community have an opportunity to express their views on this important subject. Hence, we now plan to proceed with the field work of the pay level survey in the fourth quarter of 2004. The whole exercise, including presentation of detailed proposals on the application of the pay level survey results and the introduction of any necessary legislation for implementing both upward and downward pay adjustments in future, is expected to be completed in the second quarter of 2005. This would mean a slight delay to the original aim of completing the exercise within 2004.

We intend to brief the Legislative Council Panel on Public Service on 15 December 2003 on the progress of the exercise. A paper for this purpose is enclosed.



(Joseph W P Wong)  
Secretary for the Civil Service

c.c. Clerk to LegCo Panel on Public Service – 80 copies of the progress report are enclosed for distribution to all Legislative Council Members.