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5 November 2009

Ms. Joanne Mak
Clerk to Bills Committee
Bills Committee on
Public Officers Pay Adjustment Bill
Legislative Council Secretariat
8 Jackson Road,
Central, Hong Kong

[Fax No. 2121 0420]

Dear Ms. Mak,

Bills Committee on Public Officers Pay Adjustment Bill

Meeting on 6 November 2009

Thank you for your letter of 27 October 2009, seeking information on two issues. The information sought and our response are set out below.

(a) The estimated number of civil servants who suffer real pay cut after discounting the pay adjustments likely applicable to them in due course if the recommendations in the Grade Structure Review reports on the directorate, the disciplined services and specific civilian grades are implemented

As we have explained at the last meeting, the grade structure reviews (GSRs) and the annual civil service pay review are two separate and unrelated exercises. GSRs are conducted with a long-term perspective, focusing on significant changes in the work nature and level of responsibilities of specific grades and ranks. The annual civil service pay review is a yearly exercise conducted to ascertain whether there is a need to adjust civil service pay having

regard to six main considerations, namely, the surveyed average pay movements in the private sector over a twelve-month period from 2 April of the previous year to 1 April of the current year, the state of the economy, changes in the cost of living, the Government's fiscal position, the staff sides' pay claims, and the morale of the civil service.

Upon the completion of the annual civil service pay review exercise, the Government may decide to adjust (whether upward or downward) the pay of the whole civil service and the levels of adjustment may differ according to three salary bands (namely, upper, middle and lower); it may also decide to adjust the pay of civil servants only in particular – and not all – salary bands; it may also decide not to adjust the pay of the whole civil service. Civil servants falling within those salary bands covered by an annual pay adjustment decision will have their pay adjusted accordingly, irrespective of the grades and ranks they belong to and irrespective of their years of service in their present substantive ranks.

Upon completion of a GSR on specific grades and ranks, the Government may decide to adjust (whether upward or downward) the pay scale of all or only some of the concerned grades and ranks; it may also decide not to adjust the pay of all the concerned grades and ranks. Civil servants falling within those grades and ranks covered by a pay scale adjustment decision arising from a GSR may, or may not, have their pay adjusted. The outcome would depend on the details of the pay scale adjustment decision. For example, if the decision is to increase the maximum point of the pay scale of a particular rank and if a civil servant in the relevant rank has not yet reached the maximum point, his pay will not be adjusted immediately. The effect of a pay scale adjustment decision arising from a GSR may also depend on the personal circumstances of civil servants in the concerned grades and ranks. For example, if a decision arising from a GSR is to provide for a salary increment upon satisfactory completion of a specific number of years of in-rank service and if a civil servant has not yet attained the required number of years of service or if his service is not assessed as satisfactory, his pay will not be adjusted immediately.

In view of the above, we can only provide a rough assessment as follows –

- (a) all directorate civilian and disciplined services civil servants (around 1,200) would have their pay reduced by 5.38% from the month following the commencement of the Public Officers Pay Adjustment Bill. Subject to Finance Committee's approval of the relevant recommendations in the GSR Reports on the

directorate and on the disciplined services, about 40% of them would have their pay increased by around 3% from 1 April 2009;

- (b) all the civil servants in the disciplined services grades remunerated within the upper salary band (around 5,400) would have their pay reduced by 5.38% from the month following the commencement of the Public Officers Pay Adjustment Bill. Subject to Finance Committee's approval of the relevant recommendations in the GSR Report on the disciplined services, from 1 April 2009, all would have their pay increased by around 4%, and a small number – depending on their personal circumstances – may have their pay increased by slightly more; and
- (c) all the civil servants in the civilian grades remunerated within the upper salary band (around 12,000) would have their pay reduced by 5.38% from the month following commencement of the Public Officers Pay Adjustment Bill. Subject to Finance Committee's approval of the relevant recommendations in the GSR Report on specific non-directorate civilian grades facing recruitment and retention difficulties, around 40 of them in the Veterinary Officer and legal grades would have their pay increased by around 4-5% from 1 April 2009.

(b) Details of the five job levels adopted under the Pay Level Survey as against the three salary bands adopted under the Pay Trend Survey

The six-yearly pay level surveys for non-directorate civilian civil servants adopt a five-salary-band approach, under which non-directorate civilian civil servants are divided into five "job levels" as set out in the table below -

Job Level	Pay Range	Dollar Value <i>(as at 31 March 2009)</i>
Job Level 1	MPS 0 to 10 & MOD 1	\$8,455-\$15,785 & \$8,980-\$11,700
Job Level 2	MPS 11 – 23	\$16,760-\$30,615
Job Level 3	MPS 24 – 33	\$32,055-\$48,400
Job Level 4	MPS 34 – 44	\$50,475-\$77,675
Job Level 5	MPS 45 – 49	\$80,485-\$92,720

Note : MPS stands for the Model Pay Scale and MOD 1 stands for the Model Scale 1 Pay Scale.

The annual pay trend survey categorises non-directorate civilian and disciplined services civil servants into three “salary bands”. Details are as follows -

Salary Band	Pay Range	Dollar Value <i>(as at 31 March 2009)</i>
Lower Salary Band	Below MPS 10	Below \$15,785
Middle Salary Band	MPS 10 to MPS 33	\$15,785-\$48,400
Upper Salary Band	Above MPS 33 to GDS(O)38 ¹	Above \$48,400-\$97,545

Note: GDS(O) stands for the General Disciplined Services (Officer) Pay Scale

Separately, please be informed that the following officers from the Administration will attend the coming Bills Committee meeting now re-scheduled for 10 November 2009 -

Civil Service Bureau

Mr. Andrew HY Wong, JP Permanent Secretary for the Civil Service
Mr. Brian Lo Deputy Secretary for the Civil Service (2)
Mr. Chris Sun Principal Assistant Secretary for the Civil Service

Department of Justice

Mr. Eamonn Moran, JP Law Draftsman
Ms. Frances Hui Senior Government Counsel

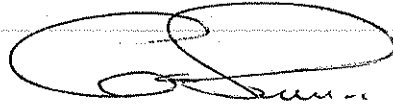
Social Welfare Department

Ms. Ann Hon Assistant Director of Social Welfare (Subventions)
Ms. Lily Ng Chief Social Work Officer (Subvention)

Thank you for your attention.

¹ GDS(O) 38 is the pay point with highest dollar value in the non-directorate segment of the civil service. Its dollar value is slightly higher than that of MPS 49, which is the pay point with highest dollar value for non-directorate civilian civil servants.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Sun", written over a horizontal dotted line.

(Chris Sun)
for Secretary for the Civil Service

c.c. Department of Justice (Attn: Mr. Eamonn Moran
and Ms. Frances Hui)

Director of Social Welfare (Attn: Ms. Ann Hon and Ms. Lily Ng)

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PEO(M)