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**Subcommittee on Members' Remuneration and
Operating Expenses Reimbursement**

**Report on the Survey on Members'
Operating Expenses Reimbursement**

**Part I: Staffing Requirements —
Research Services and Salary Adjustments**

Purpose

This paper highlights the findings of a study on the research needs of Members and provides an analysis of how the meeting of such needs would impact on the staffing complement and the computation of the salary portion proposed in LC Paper No. AS 322/09-10 in relation to Members' Operating Expenses Reimbursement. The paper also provides an analysis of the various bases of computation of salaries to cater for increments and adjustments due to market trends and inflations.

Background

2. On 14 September 2010, members of the Subcommittee on Members' Remuneration and Operating Expenses Reimbursements ("the Subcommittee") noted the outcome of the first part of a survey conducted by the Legislative Council ("LegCo") Secretariat on the necessary resources required by individual LegCo Members to recruit and retain a team of good quality staff to assist them in carrying out their LegCo duties. The survey revealed that Members did not have sufficient resources to hire adequate number of staff, or to pay the staff at a level which was commensurate with those with the same qualifications performing the same level of work. The survey also showed that staff retention was a common problem. The medium length of service of Members' staff was less than 3 years, and the turnover rate of full-time staff was as high as 34%. The majority of the Members who had difficulty in recruiting and

retaining suitable staff considered that poor career prospects, low salaries, irregular/long working hours and inadequate fringe benefits were the main reasons attributing to the recruitment and retention problems.

3. Having regard to the shortfalls as revealed from the survey, members generally supported the recommended staffing complement of 7 full-time staff per Member on the basis of running 3 offices including the central office. As the work of Members' staff is public service in nature, Members considered it appropriate and fair for their salaries to be pitched at a level which is commensurate with their counterparts in the civil service, having regard to their job duties, qualifications and experience requirements. To ensure continuity of service as well as to attract and retain a pool of high quality staff, an end-of-service gratuity is proposed to be provided to full-time staff engaged by Members, following similar arrangement in the civil service. The financial requirement for the proposed staffing complement is \$137,774 per month. Detailed computation of the financial requirement is in **Appendix I**.

4. Members also noted that based on previous utilization surveys on Members' Office Operation Expenses Reimbursement ("OOER"), on average about 70% of the OOER was for staff costs, which amounted to about \$95,400¹ per month for 2008-2009. If the salary portion was to be adjusted to \$137,774 per month, there will be a monthly shortfall of about \$42,374 (or \$508,488 a year). The annual accountable component of the OOER would have to be increased by about 31% from the current \$1,654,750² to \$2,163,238.

5. The Subcommittee held a meeting on 4 October 2010 to receive public views on the proposed staffing complement and related matters. The list of deputations/individuals attended the meeting and a summary of the views given to the Subcommittee are in **Appendices II and III**.

6. In the course of deliberation, it was noted that both Members and deputations considered that in order to enable Members to carry out their LegCo duties effectively, it is of utmost importance to have sufficient resources to recruit and retain a team of good quality staff to carry out public and social policies research. The Subcommittee decided that a separate study should be conducted to ascertain the resources needed for the purpose and the staffing complement proposal should be refined to reflect the research needs of Members accordingly.

¹ Appendix 1 to LC Paper No. AS 307/09-10

² The OOER was revised from \$1,631,900 to \$1,654,750 from 1 October 2010 onwards.

Separate study on the research needs of Members

7. To gauge Members' views on the amount of resources required for employing staff to carry out public and social policies research to assist them in carrying out their LegCo duties, a questionnaire was sent to all Members vide LC Paper No. AS 32/10-11 on 26 October 2010. 33 Members responded to the survey³ and provided information on their research needs.

8. It is noted from the survey that research service is provided through various sources. On a simple average of the data collected, about 73% is provided by the in-house staff of Members, 18% by the Members themselves, while 9% by external consultants, affiliated political parties/think tanks and affiliated trade associations/constituency associations, as shown in the table below.

Research services are provided by	Proportion of research work done
Members themselves	18 %
Full-time assistants	54 %
Part-time assistants	4 %
Jointly employed assistants	15 %
External consultants	2 %
Affiliated political party/think tank	5 %
Affiliated trade association/constituency associations	2 %
	100 %

9. According to the average ratings on the performance of each type of researchers, the Members who responded to the survey are more satisfied with the research work conducted by external consultants, affiliated political parties/think tanks and affiliated trade associations/constituency associations. Although external consultants had the highest rating, only five respondents used their service. Based on the figures provided by four respondents, an average of \$10,500 per month was spent on hiring consultants.

³ 34 Members responded but one Member did not make any comment.

10. 26 Members had provided information on the expenditure incurred by them on research work. On average, these Members spent about \$56,400 a month on research support, of which \$49,200 (about 87%) was reimbursed out of the OOER. This was paid through salaries, consultancy fees, etc. Separately, 29 respondents indicated that had they not been financially constrained, they would have conducted more researches to enable them to monitor the work of the Government more effectively. On average, about 63% of research projects were abandoned due to the lack of financial resources.

11. Members were also asked about the amount of resources they would have hoped to have for conducting research work. 31 Members replied to this question. The required amount of resources for conducting research ranged from \$15,000 to \$200,000 a month with a mean at \$74,300 a month. 18 respondents also indicated that if the required resources were available: on average, 77% would be allocated for hiring assistants to conduct research, 15% for hiring external consultants and 8% for employing their affiliated political parties/think tanks.

12. A brief summary of the essential information collected from the survey is given in **Appendix IV**.

Observations on research needs

13. We note that Part I of the survey on Members' Operating Expenses Reimbursement reveals that about half of the staff employed by Members are engaged in performing core LegCo duties which include, inter alia, the provision of legal and research support. On this basis, one Executive Officer I ("EOI") and two EOIs were proposed to undertake mainly the core LegCo duties such as providing legal and research support; organizing committee papers for meetings, preparing summaries of papers and highlighting areas of concern; preparing questions for meetings; drafting Council questions and speeches; conveying enquiries and requests from the LegCo Secretariat in relation to meetings especially if the Member is the chairman of a committee, and responding to enquiries from the Administration and the press, whereas 4 Assistant Clerical Officers ("ACOs") were proposed to undertake other LegCo duties.

14. From the separate study on the research needs of Members, it is revealed that Members generally considered that they did not have adequate resources to engage staff with the required background to conduct public and social policies research. The fact that 24 Members, despite their heavy workload, had to carry out the research work themselves (which accounted for

some 18% of the total work done) is evident that research support is seriously inadequate for Members.

15. In order that Members can have the research support they require, resources can be provided by way of one or more of the following options:

- (a) by enhancing the quality of hired staff, with at least one staff member who is qualified and experienced enough to undertake more complex research work;
- (b) by providing additional resources to hire part-time staff to undertake dedicated research work on a project basis; or
- (c) by engaging external consultants to undertake dedicated research work.

16. In respect of Option (a) above, one alternative to enable a Member to engage staff with the right calibre to undertake public and social policies research is to provide sufficient resources to engage at least one staff member who can undertake quality research work. A suggestion has been made by deputations that this staff member, in terms of academic background, intellectual capability and experience, is comparable to an Administrative Officer ("AO") (Master Pay Scale 27 – 44) in the Government. The Secretariat has studied the salary scales and entry requirements of an AO and an EO I (Master Pay Scale 28 – 33) (equivalent to Council Secretary ("CS") rank in the LegCo Secretariat) and noted that while both positions require a university degree, a CS ought to have at least 6 years of relevant experience while there is no requirement for working experience in the case of an AO. In terms of salaries, the starting salary for an AO is one point lower than a CS, but the maximum pay for an AO is 11 points more than a CS. The entry requirements for and duties of an AO and CS are at **Appendix V**.

17. In determining the ranking of the staffing complement, it is to be noted that back in 1993, when the allowance system was devised, the Administration applied a notional figure of \$44,630 for expenditure on staff. This staff cost figure was equivalent to the sum of the mid-point salaries of an EO I, a Personal Secretary II and a Clerical Officer II.

18. In the course of the survey, it is noted that the nature of work undertaken by a Member’s assistant to undertake more complex responsibilities including research work is more comparable to that performed by a CS in the Secretariat. In terms of costs, the difference between the option of engaging an EOI (equivalent to CS) and an AO is insignificant if the salaries are to be computed on the basis of starting point or starting point with an annual increment payment for a term of four years. Details are shown below:

Staffing complement	Monthly payment (salary plus gratuity)	
	Starting salary of comparable ranks	Average of the first four salary points of comparable ranks
1 AO + 2 EO IIs + 4 ACOs ⁴	\$135,773	\$147,225
1 EO I + 2 EO IIs + 4 ACOs ⁴	\$137,774	\$149,368

19. While Option (a) provides a more qualified staff to undertake policy research, hence strengthening the research capability of in-house staff, there is still no additional manpower to provide more research service. Options (b) and (c) aim to provide Members with the flexibility to engage experts to undertake ad hoc research projects as and when needed. The research survey reveals that at present, Members on average spent about \$56,400 a month on research support, but due to the shortage of resources, they could only recover about 87% of the related expenses (i.e. about \$49,200) from the OOER. This expenditure is mainly paid in the form of salaries to full-time and part-time staff. In other words, as far as research work is concerned, Members are paying out of their own pockets for some 13% of the research work which, in monetary terms, is about \$7,200 per month. We note that the required amount of research work ascertained from the research survey is at a mean of \$74,300 (as mentioned in paragraph 11 above) and on average, 77% (i.e. \$57,200) would be absorbed by the staff engaged by Members. The additional research fee required for briefing out to outside consultants is 15% (i.e. \$11,145). In total, with the

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Monthly remuneration				
Salary	AO	EOI	EOII	ACO
Year 1	\$36,945	\$38,685	\$20,950	\$10,250
Year 2	\$38,685	\$40,515	\$22,005	\$10,910
Year 3	\$40,515	\$42,410	\$23,115	\$11,645
Year 4	\$42,410	\$44,400	\$24,255	\$12,380
Average salary	\$39,639	\$41,503	\$22,581	\$11,296
Gratuity	at 15% \$5,946	at 15% \$6,225	at 15% \$3,387	at 10% \$1,130
Average salary and gratuity per month	\$45,585	\$47,728	\$25,968	\$12,426

enhanced staff and an additional research fee of \$11,145, some 92% of the required funding for undertaking research work could be met. The additional research fee of \$11,145 is broadly in line with the current spending on engaging external consultants for researches as revealed in the survey. It is also higher than the out of pocket cost incurred by Members for paying research service as shown above.

20. Concern has been expressed that if the funding for the engagement of outside consultants to undertake research work is to be incorporated as part of the OOER, Members may make use of the funding to support the running of offices. It is therefore suggested that if additional funds are to be provided for research, the research fee of \$11,145 per month, i.e. \$133,740 per annum, should be kept in a separate fund and drawn for research purposes only. Consideration should also be made to requiring synopses of the relevant research studies to be made available to the public as and when feasible or no later than the end of the relevant session/term through the Members' websites.

Salary adjustments

21. At present, Members' OOER is subject to annual adjustment in accordance with the movement of Consumer Price Index (C) ("CPI (C)"). Separate funding is not provided in the OOER to allow Members to grant pay increments to staff or adjust their salaries in accordance with the annual civil service pay adjustment. With resources only allowing a minimal increase in salary each year, Members are unable to retain their staff members through the provision of increments. Without any provision for increments, as in the present situation, Members' staff often switch to other better-paid jobs after working for a few years in order to cope with their growing financial needs in supporting their families. Members, therefore, have to hire and train new staff, resulting in their weakened capability in monitoring the performance of the Government.

22. To assess how far Members can recognize the good service of their staff, an analysis has been made on the financial implications of adjusting the salary portion of the OOER (i.e. about 70% of the OOER as revealed in the survey) according to the pay adjustments in the civil service instead of the movement of CPI (C). Comparing the situation in 2010 with the base year in 1999, it is noted that the cumulative changes of the pay adjustments in the civil service is always higher than those of the CPI(C). The cumulative difference between the two could be quite significant, ranging from 5.1% to 12.47%. In 2010, the cumulative difference stood at 6.89% when compared to the base year

of 1999. A table showing the comparison of the changes in civil service adjustments and CPI (C) in the past ten years is given in **Appendix VI**.

23. To attract and retain quality staff, it has been suggested by some members of the Subcommittee that there should be an additional provision to allow for increments either as a separate fund or as part of the OOER. To this end, the Secretariat has studied various options in the computation of salaries inclusive of the annual increment element. These include the use of mid point and maximum point salaries. It is found that the financial provisions required would be substantially higher than the proposed increase of 31% of the OOER. Besides, as the salary scales of civil service posts are normally quite long while the term of a Member's office is four years, the adoption of the mid point or the maximum point salaries for computing the salary portion of the OOER may not be appropriate.

24. The Secretariat has devised another option. Since the present salaries paid to Members' staff are generally lower than the starting point of the relevant civil service posts, it is expected that if the salaries of Members' current staff would be suitably adjusted in the first year, increments would not be required until after the first year. Consideration may therefore be given to using the average of the first four salary points (i.e. to cover a LegCo term of four years) in computing the salary portion of the OOER. The financial provision of the proposed staffing complement of 1 EO I, 2 EOII and 4 ACOs will be \$131,849 per month. Together with a 10-15% gratuity of \$17,519 per month, the overall financial provision of the proposed staffing complement will be \$149,368 per month.

25. This computation method is only feasible if Members are allowed to retain the surplus from the funding for their annual OOER entitlements for roll-over to the next year until the end of a LegCo term. Since Members' claims of OOER are processed on the basis of actual amounts of expenditure incurred with documented proof and are open to public scrutiny, there are sufficient safeguards for ensuring the proper and prudent use of public funds.

26. Compared with the staff remuneration and related expenses as revealed in the regular utilization survey on Members' OOER for 2008-2009 (i.e. about \$95,400), there will be a monthly shortfall of about \$36,449 (without gratuity) or \$53,968 (with gratuity) if the package is revised as proposed above. The annual accountable component of the OOER will have to be increased from the current \$1,654,750 to \$2,092,138 (+26%) (without gratuity) or \$2,302,366 (+39%) (with gratuity). This component should be subject to adjustments based on the civil service pay adjustments and subject to review once every four years.

27. It should be noted that the purpose of this review is to ensure that Members can have sufficient resources to engage and retain a team of quality staff. It does not mean that the salaries of Members' existing staff ought to be automatically adjusted as it is entirely Members' discretion to decide how their staff should be paid. The flexibility in determining the salary level for individual staff still rests with Members who will take into account factors such as individual staff's academic qualifications, experience, etc. for achieving the effective management of their staff.

28. There has been a suggestion that where possible, salary scales be drawn up, with reference to the entry requirements for the various posts, so that Members would have a better idea of how they should pay their staff. For this purpose, the entry requirements and the salary scales of the various posts mentioned in this paper, i.e. AO, CS, EOII and ACO, are given in **Appendix V and Appendix V(a)** for members' reference.

29. For those Members who are currently engaging more than 7 full-time staff, they should have the flexibility to continue to engage the present staff within the resources provided under the OOER. As the proposed additional funding in this exercise is to provide incentives to Members' staff, such funding should as far as possible be used to ensure that the staff would have sufficient incentives to continue to provide an effective service to assist Members in performing their LegCo functions.

30. Some deputations have expressed concern about the possibility that not all additional funds to be provided for salary increments would be used for that purpose, because some Members might use the additional funds for other purposes, such as opening more offices or hiring more staff. One safeguard they suggested is that the funding for financing the increments could be put into a separate pool each year for each individual Member and held by the Secretariat.

31. Although there are merits in the above suggestion, there are practical difficulties to ensure that it is fool proof. It is also extremely difficult to monitor if the funding for increments is entirely used for the purpose, bearing in mind that there are staff turnovers which make the computation most difficult. Furthermore, tracking the salary rises of every staff member⁵ and charging each salary rise portion to the corresponding Member's pool every month is administratively costly.

⁵ Members have over 300 full-time staff at present.

32. In relation to staff contract gratuities, views have been expressed that as the number of Members' staff and their salaries vary from one Member to another, the enhanced Members' OOER may not be adequate to cover the provision of contract gratuities to existing staff which may exceed the staffing complement of 7 members as proposed in the paper. There should be flexibility for Members to determine whether contract gratuities should be granted to individual staff and if so, the exact level. Some suggested that instead of increasing the OOER, the increase in the OOER for gratuity payment should be kept by the Secretariat and made directly to their staff concerned at the end of each term. Provided all the relevant documents and pay records are available for verification, this suggestion is feasible.

Advice sought

33. Members are invited to note the outcome of the study on the research needs of Members and advise on the following:

- (a) whether the staffing complement for the purpose of computing the salary portion of OOER should be on the basis of one EO I, two EO IIs and four ACOs for operating three offices including the central office [paragraphs 3 and 13];
- (b) whether the salaries of staff should be computed on the basis of the average of the first four salary pay points of comparable ranks in the civil service (i.e. one EO I, two EO IIs and four ACOs), and whether subsequent adjustment of the salary portion of the OOER (about 70%) should follow that of the civil service pay adjustment [paragraphs 18, 22 to 24 and 26];
- (c) whether an additional provision of \$133,740 per annum for research work undertaken by outside consultants should be sought [paragraphs 19 and 20];
- (d) whether Members' research reports or synopses of their research reports should be made available to the public if additional funds for research is provided [paragraph 20];
- (e) whether a separate fund should be maintained for each Member to pay for their research projects if additional funds for research is provided [paragraph 20];

- (f) whether end-of-service gratuities should be paid to staff who serve up to the end of a LegCo term [paragraphs 3 and 32];
- (g) whether Members should be allowed to retain the surplus from the funding for their annual OOER entitlements for roll-over to the next year within the term [paragraph 25].

Administration Division
Legislative Council Secretariat
February 2011

**Financial requirement
of the proposed staffing complement**

The proposed staffing complement comprises the following:

- (a) one staff member pitched at the rank of Executive Officer I ("EO I") with a starting salary of \$38,685 (i.e. Master Pay Scale ("MPS") 28) to head the central and district offices operated by a Member and to perform core LegCo duties;
- (b) two staff members pitched at the rank of EO II with a starting salary of \$20,950 (i.e. MPS 15) to work in the central or district offices to perform core LegCo duties and other LegCo-related duties; and
- (c) four staff members pitched at the rank of Assistant Clerical Officer ("ACO") with a starting salary of \$10,250 (i.e. MPS 3) to work in the central or district offices to perform mainly other LegCo-related duties.

2. The overall financial requirement of the proposed staffing complement is \$137,774. Details are as follows:

Post	Starting salary	Contract gratuity	Monthly total
1 EO I	\$38,685	15% (i.e. \$5,803)	\$44,488
2 EO IIs	\$20,950	15% (i.e. \$3,143)	\$48,186 (i.e. \$24,093 x 2 posts)
4 ACOs	\$10,250	10% (i.e. \$1,025)	\$45,100 (i.e. \$11,275 x 4 posts)
			Total : \$137,774

立法會議員酬金及工作開支償還款額小組委員會
Subcommittee on Members' Remuneration and
Operating Expenses Reimbursement

個人/團體給小組委員會的口頭申述意見/書面意見
List of individuals/organizations that have made oral presentation/
written submissions to the Subcommittee

口頭申述意見

Oral presentation

議員工作人員協會*	Councillors' Workers Association *
林立志先生	Mr LAM Lap-chi
--	Miss Canny LUI
--	Miss Lilian HO
黃俊恆先生*	Mr Billy WONG *
陳嘉偉先生	Mr CHAN Ka-wai
陳小萍小姐	Miss Ivy CHAN
陳義文先生	Mr Steve CHAN
蔡旭明先生	Mr CHOI Yuk-ming
郭仲文*	--

書面意見

Written submissions

李永成先生	Mr LEE Wing-shing
鄧徐中	--

* 個人/團體亦有提交書面意見

Individuals/organizations that have also given written submissions

Summary of views given by deputations/individuals on the Report on the Survey on Members' Operating Expenses Reimbursement (Part I: Staffing requirements) ("Report")

General resource issues

Insufficiency of resources for Members

- The scope of public policy issues requiring Members' attention is very wide. Independent Members or Members of small political parties/groups in particular face a shortage of resources.
- Members in the past focused on vetting of legislations and review of public policies, but today they, in addition, have to serve their constituencies, e.g. handling complains, building networks in the community, etc. and face the rising expectations of the public.
- In order to monitor the performance of the Government effectively, and to meet the expectations of the public, Members have a strong practical need for the research support provided by their personal assistants to help them raise pertinent questions in the deliberation on those policies.
- The current portion of Office Operation Expenses Reimbursement ("OOER") for paying staff salaries is inadequate making it practically impossible to increase the pay of one staff member without cutting the pay of others in the same office.
- After paying for expenses for running their offices, Members have little left to pay for staff expenses under their OOER entitlements. OOER entitlements should be significantly increased to meet the needs of Members in performing their work and to attract and retain experienced talent to support them in deliberating policies and undertaking community work.
- In order for LegCo to effectively fulfill its functions to monitor the performance of the Government, LegCo Members should have adequate resources to hire well qualified people in the labour market.

- Also, the Report has not taken into account the inherent limitations imposed on the scope of work of Members' offices by the lack of resources.

Arrangement for Members of functional constituencies and of geographical constituencies

- Members of functional constituencies and of geographical constituencies should be separately treated as the needs of the two types of Members are different.
- Members from geographical constituencies should be allowed to have a greater number of offices to serve their constituencies. The OOER ceiling should be raised sufficiently to enable them to do so.
- An objective yardstick such as the geographical location or the size of electoral population should be used as the basis for determining the number of offices that a Member is entitled to have.

Members' total package

- It has been suggested that the total package of a Member including his remuneration and OOER entitlement in the Fifth LegCo should be increased to \$20 million.

Staffing complement

- It has been suggested that a Member from geographical constituency basically requires 3 district offices each of which having a staff complement of at least 3 staff members which could either be two full-time staff members plus 1 part-timer or 1 full-time staff member plus 2 part-timers.
- A suggestion is that there should also be 2 staff members in the central office of the Member for carrying out policy research or administrative duties.

- Some hold the view that staff with legal background and experience of handling community affairs and cases, policy research, etc should be included in the proposal on the staffing complement for Members' offices.
- It has been suggested that a Member should be allowed to employ 10 full-time staff and that the upper limit of Member's offices should be kept unchanged, i.e. one central office plus 4 district offices.

Provision of resources for research

- A provision under OOER for research expenses should be made on conducting research related to a Member's core duties. A condition suggested for claims for research expenses is that Members are required to publish their research reports.

Staff remuneration issues

Comparison of posts of Members' staff

- Some hold the view that the proposed staffing complement in the Report based on ranks in the Government, i.e. Executive Officer I, Executive Officer II and Assistant Clerical Officer, is inappropriate since these ranks cannot reflect the wide range of duties undertaken by Member's personal assistants. Instead, in the light of the nature of work of personal assistants, the compatible ranks in the Government are in grades such as the Administrative Officer or grades requiring legal background.
- Some opine that comparison should be made between the job of Member's personal assistants and comparable jobs in the LegCo Secretariat and the Government for identifying suitable salary benchmarks.
- Some consider that a Member's personal assistant undertakes a wider range of duties and heavier workload than an Executive Officer, and as such should be paid around \$38,000. Personal assistants are now grossly underpaid.

Establishment of a system of pay scales and ranks

- A system of pay scales should be established for different positions in a Member's office in order to provide an objective standard for the hiring of staff required for providing support to a Member.
- The resource funding mechanism should recognize the number of years of service of staff. Use of the mid point or maximum point of the pay scales of comparable ranks in the Government as the basis for determining the resources for paying Members' staff is proposed. However, concern has been raised as to the use of one-line vote as a basis for resource funding as it might have the effect of dragging down the pay levels of staff.
- Some personal assistants are concerned that they may not be able to benefit from an increased OOER entitlement as Members might make use of the OOER increase to pay for the higher rent for an office at better location. As such, in determining the OOER ceiling, the Member's expenses in staff salary should be separated from other recurrent expenses of the Member's office.
- There should be some form of differentiation of ranks in the job of personal assistant whereby new entrants to the job could have an idea about their career prospects.

Annual adjustment of pay scales

- Annual salary increment for personal assistants should be factored in the calculation of Members' OOER entitlements. The adjustment of the pay of Members' staff according to CPI(C) Index resulting in annual pay increases of merely around 2% had made it very difficult for Members' offices to attract or retain experienced staff.
- In order for Members to attract and retain capable and experienced talent, a mechanism for determination of salary, promotion and years of service making reference to the civil service system should be established.

Gratuity

- The proposal for an end-of-service gratuity for staff retention purposes is supported.

Severance payment

- Some have suggested that the requirement of offsetting the severance payment payable upon the cessation of the employment of a personal assistant by the accrued benefits attributable to the employer's contribution made to the employee in the Mandatory Provident Fund ("MPF") scheme should be abolished.
- However, there is also the view that exempting personal assistants from the application of offsetting requirement would invite queries and criticisms as to why personal assistants could receive a special treatment under the MPF Schemes Ordinance.

Other matters

Political talent

- There have been views that in the light of the implementation of universal suffrage in 2020, working as Members' staff is an ideal way for developing political talent. However, the lack of resources for Members and their staff impedes their abilities to serve the community and restricts the development of political talent for Hong Kong.

Findings of the Study on the Research Needs of Members

In October 2010, we invited Members to complete a questionnaire vide LC Paper No. AS 32/10-11 to gauge their views on the resources required for employing staff or hiring consultants to carry out public and social policies research. Thirty-three Members responded to the survey⁶.

2. It is noted from the survey that most Members obtained their research service through various sources. Out of the 33 Members who responded to the survey, 24 Members (73%) indicated that they participated in their researches themselves. Meanwhile, 29 Members (88%) indicated that they also employed full-time assistants to undertake the related work. Further details are set out below.

Research service is done by	Number of respondents
Members themselves	24 Members (73%)
Full-time assistants	29 Members (88%)
Part-time assistants	7 Members (21%)
Jointly employed assistants	8 Members (24%)
External consultants	5 Members (15%)
Affiliated political party/think tank	6 Members (18%)
Affiliated trade associations/constituency associations	3 Members (9%)

3. A further analysis of the above information indicates that of the 24 Members who indicated that they had participated in their own researches, about a quarter of their research work were done by themselves. Of the 29 Members who employed full-time assistants for research, about 61% of their research work were done by their full-time assistants. Further details of the analysis are set out below.

⁶ In total, 34 completed questionnaires were returned. One of the respondents had no specific comments on the survey.

Research conducted by	No. of respondents	Proportion of research work done	
		Range	Mean
Members themselves	24	5% - 50%	25%
Full-time assistants	29	10% - 100%	61%
Part-time assistants	7	2% - 40%	20%
Jointly employed assistants	8	50% - 100%	61%
External consultants	5 ⁷	10% - 30%	19%
Affiliated political party/think tank	6	5% - 48%	30%
Affiliated trade associations/constituency associations	3	5% - 20%	15%

4. On average and in relation to the overall amount of research work done by all parties involved, about 73% of the research work was provided by the in-house staff of Members, 18% by the Members themselves, while 9% by external consultants, affiliated political parties/think tanks and affiliated trade associations/constituency associations. Details are as follows:

Research conducted by	Proportion
Members themselves	18%
Full-time assistants	54%
Part-time assistants	4%
Jointly employed assistants	15%
External consultants	2%
Affiliated political party/think tank	5%
Affiliated trade associations/constituency associations	2%
	100%

⁷ Of the 5 Members who indicated that they had engaged external consultants to conduct researches, one of them did not provide a complete set of data for our further analysis.

5. Twenty-six of the 33 Members who responded to the survey also provided information on the amount of research expenditure. The average expenditure of the 26 Members who responded to the survey was **\$56,400 a month**, but only **\$49,200 was reimbursed** out of the OOER. Information provided by these 26 Members is set out below:

Research conducted by	No. of valid responses	Monthly expenditure (average)
Members themselves	24	n/a
Full-time assistants	22	\$43,600
Part-time assistants	7	\$12,700
Jointly employed assistants	8	\$25,000
External consultants	5 ⁸	\$10,500
Affiliated political party/ think tank	4	\$31,500 (not claimed)
Affiliated trade associations/constituency associations	1	\$50,000 (not claimed)

6. The respondents were generally satisfied with the research done by the aforesaid parties, albeit the overall ratings were only slightly above the "pass mark". From a scale of "1" (very unsatisfactory) to "6" (very satisfactory), the overall ratings for the **speed** and **quality** of their research work were **3.81** and **3.71** respectively⁹. According to the average ratings on the performance of each type of researchers, the respondents were more satisfied with the research conducted by external consultants, affiliated political parties/think tanks and affiliated trade associations/constituency associations:

⁸ Of the 5 Members who indicated that they had engaged external consultants to conduct researches, one of them did not provide a complete set of data for our further analysis.

⁹ Sixteen Members rated the speed of their research and 17 Members rated the quality aspect.

Research conducted by	Rating	
	Speed	Quality
Members	3.67	3.58
Full-time assistants (including jointly employed full-time assistants)	3.70	3.62
Part-time assistants	4.14	4.29
External consultants	4.83	5.00
Affiliated political party/think tank	4.50	4.50
Affiliated trade associations/constituency associations	4.67	4.67
Overall	3.81	3.71

Note: Ratings are given on a scale ranging from "1" (very unsatisfactory) to "6" (very satisfactory).

7. Twenty-nine respondents indicated that had they not been financially constrained, they would have conducted more research. On average, about **63%** of research projects were **abandoned**.

8. On the question of how much resources should be required for conducting research, 31 Members responded. The required amount ranged from \$15,000 to \$200,000 a month; and the mean was **\$74,300 a month**. Eighteen respondents also indicated how they would allocate their research funds if the required resources were available: on average, 77% would be allocated for hiring assistants to conduct research, 15% for hiring external consultants and 8% for employing their affiliated political parties/think tanks.

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Accounts Office
Legislative Council Secretariat
December 2010

Administrative Officer [MPS 27 (\$36,945) - MPS 44 (\$74,675)]

Entry Requirements

For the basic entry requirements for the Administrative Officer rank, candidates should have:

- (a) (i) A first or second class honours bachelor's degree from a Hong Kong university, or equivalent; or
 - (ii) A postgraduate degree from a Hong Kong university, or equivalent, where the qualifications considered in totality are comparable to the requirement in (a)(i);
- (b) A pass result in the Aptitude Test in the Common Recruitment Examination (CRE);
- (c) A good command of both Chinese and English and have met the language proficiency requirements of "Level 2" results in the two language papers (Use of Chinese and Use of English) in the CRE, or equivalent; and
- (d) Resided in Hong Kong for not less than seven years and must be permanent residents of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region at the time of appointment.

Duties

Administrative Officers are multi-skilled professional administrators who play a key role in the Government of the HKSAR. They are involved in policy formulation, resource allocation, implementation of major Government programmes and promotion of the interests of Hong Kong in the Mainland and overseas.

They may be posted to:

- A bureau to assist in the formulation of Government policies closely related to the well being of society and the control and monitoring of the use of public resources;

- a District Office to steer and co-ordinate provision of government services and facilities in the district, to represent the Government at the frontline and to oversee community building programmes;
- a Government department to provide quality management and steer the delivery of services to the public; or
- the Office of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region in Beijing or one of the 13 Hong Kong Economic and Trade Offices in major cities around the world to promote the interests of Hong Kong.

Council Secretary [MPS 28 (\$38,685) - MPS 33 (\$48,670)]

Entry requirements

Candidates should have:

- (a) a recognised university degree;
- (b) at least 6 years' relevant experience in committee work, human resources management, functions coordination, research or complaints handling, preferably with the HKSAR Government or public sector organizations;
- (c) excellent command of written and spoken Chinese and English; and
- (d) very good analytical, communication and supervisory skills, and the ability to work independently and under pressure.

Duties

A Council Secretary is deployed to perform duties in the following work areas:

- (a) to provide secretariat and research support for committees of the Legislative Council ("LegCo"), such as co-ordinating logistical support for meetings and visits, drafting background briefs and minutes of meetings, conducting desk research, and managing database systems;
- (b) to provide administrative support to LegCo Secretariat, such as office administration, human resources management and training;

- (c) to coordinate social functions and provide general administrative support for LegCo Members;
- (d) to handle complaints and representations and to service meetings pertaining to the LegCo redress system; and
- (e) to provide information on topical issues, research support for Members' overseas duty visits, research studies on major legislative proposals, and background information for Members' meetings with overseas delegations.

Appendix V(a)

Executive Officer II [MPS 15 (\$20,950) - MPS 27 (\$36,945)]
Executive Officer I [MPS 28 (\$38,685) - MPS 33 (\$48,670)]

The Executive Officer (EO) Grade comprises six ranks. EO II is the entry rank and EO I is the promotion rank of EOII. Promotion is considered on the basis of character, ability and performance.

Entry Requirements

The basic entry requirements for the Executive Officer Grade are:

- (a) a bachelor's degree from a Hong Kong university, or equivalent; and a pass result in the Aptitude Test in the Common Recruitment Examination (CRE); and
- (b) a good command of both Chinese and English and have met the language proficiency requirements of "Level 2" results in the two language papers (Use of Chinese and Use of English) in the CRE (or equivalent results).

Duties

The main job functions of the EO Grade are:

Human Resource Management - discharging a full range of HRM functions including manpower and succession planning, recruitment, promotion, performance management, training and development, conduct and discipline, etc.

Financial Resource Management - including planning, allocating and managing financial resources, and exercising control over revenue and expenditure to ensure proper use of public funds.

Administration Support -

General Administration - provision of a wide range of general administration services including office accommodation, building management, departmental transport services, etc.

Policy Support - providing assistance in research of background information, presentation and analysis of the information collected, and liaison with parties concerned to facilitate the formulation of policies.

System/Project Planning and Development - including internal audit and system development duties, and coordinating the planning and implementation of projects.

Direct Services to the Public, Support to Boards and Councils and Event Management - including the delivery of licencing and registration services, investigation of complaint cases, handling of public enquiries, provision of secretariat support to various boards and councils, provision of administration and logistic support to events and elections, etc.

Assistant Clerical Officer [MPS 3 (\$10,250) - MPS 15 (\$20,950)]

Entry requirements

Candidates should have:

- (a) Level 2/Grade E or above in five subjects including Mathematics in the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (HKCEE), or equivalent;
- (b) met the language proficiency requirements of Level 2 or above in Chinese Language and English Language in HKCEE, or equivalent; and
- (c) Chinese word processing speed of 20 words per minute and English word processing speed of 30 words per minute and knowledge in the application of common business software.

Duties

An Assistant Clerical Officer is mainly deployed on general clerical duties which may involve multi-tasks relating to one or a combination of the following functional areas:

- (a) general office support;

- (b) personnel;
- (c) finance and accounts;
- (d) customer service;
- (e) licensing and registration;
- (f) support to Government Counsel, and court support and registry services to judges and court users;
- (g) statistical duties;
- (h) information technology support; and
- (i) other departmental support.

An Assistant Clerical Officer is subject to posting to any government offices in any district of Hong Kong; required to use information technology applications in the discharge of duties; and may be required to work irregular hours or shifts and wear uniform at work.

Comparison of Civil Service Pay Adjustment (Middle Salary Band) and Consumer Price Index (C)

Year		2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Middle Salary Band	Effective mth	Apr	Apr	Oct	Apr	Jan	Jan	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
- (MPS11 to 33)	(1)	0%	2.38%	-1.64%	0%	-3.07%	-3.17%	0%	4.62%	5.29%	0%	0.56%
Compared with base year 1999	(2)	100.00%	102.38%	100.70%	100.70%	97.61%	94.52%	94.52%	98.88%	104.11%	104.11%	104.70%
Consumer Price Index (C)												
With effect from October each year	(3)	-5.10%	-2.00%	-2.30%	-2.90%	-1.90%	0.40%	1.90%	2.40%	4.50%	1.80%	1.40%
Compared with base year 1999	(4)	94.90%	93.00%	90.86%	88.23%	86.55%	86.90%	88.55%	90.67%	94.75%	96.46%	97.81%
Difference	(5)=(1)-(3)	5.10%	4.38%	0.66%	2.90%	-1.17%	-3.57%	-1.90%	2.22%	0.79%	-1.80%	-0.84%
Cumulative difference	(6)=(2)-(4)	5.10%	9.38%	9.84%	12.47%	11.06%	7.62%	5.97%	8.21%	9.36%	7.65%	6.89%