

**立法會**  
**Legislative Council**

LC Paper No. CB(1)727/11-12  
(These minutes have been seen  
by the Administration)

Ref : CB1/PL/ PS/1

**Panel on Public Service**

**Minutes of meeting held on  
Monday, 17 October 2011, at 10:45 am  
in Conference Room 1 of the Legislative Council Complex**

**Members present** : Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-ye, GBS, JP (Chairman)  
Dr Hon PAN Pey-chyou (Deputy Chairman)  
Hon LEE Cheuk-yan  
Dr Hon Margaret NG  
Hon CHEUNG Man-kwong  
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP  
Hon LI Fung-ying, SBS, JP  
Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung

**Member Attending** : Hon WONG Kwok-hing, MH

**Members absent** : Hon Mrs Sophie LEUNG LAU Yau-fun, GBS, JP  
Dr Hon LEUNG Ka-lau  
Hon WONG Sing-chi  
Hon IP Wai-ming, MH

**Public officers attending** : **Agenda item III**  
Miss Denise YUE, GBS, JP  
Secretary for the Civil Service

Mr Raymond H C WONG, JP  
Permanent Secretary for the Civil Service

Mrs Ingrid YEUNG, JP  
Deputy Secretary for the Civil Service 1

Mr Brian LO, JP  
Deputy Secretary for the Civil Service 2

Ms Shirley LAM  
Deputy Secretary for the Civil Service 3

Mr Patrick CHAN Nim-tak, JP  
Director of General Grades  
Civil Service Bureau

**Agenda item IV**

Miss Denise YUE, GBS, JP  
Secretary for the Civil Service

Mr Raymond H C WONG, JP  
Permanent Secretary for the Civil Service

Mrs Ingrid YEUNG, JP  
Deputy Secretary for the Civil Service 1

**Clerk in attendance** : Ms Annette LAM  
Chief Council Secretary (1)7

**Staff in attendance** : Mrs Constance LI  
Assistant Secretary General 1

Miss Lilian MOK  
Council Secretary (1)7

Miss Iris CHEUNG  
Legislative Assistant (1)7

Miss May KWONG  
Clerical Assistant (1)7

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Action

**I Information papers issued since the last regular meeting**

(LC Paper Nos. -- Submission from the Hong  
CB(1)2680/10-11(01) and (02) Kong Leisure Services Staff  
(*Chinese version only*) General Union on deployment  
of staff by Director of Leisure  
and Cultural Services to  
perform duties outside the  
purview of the Department  
and the Administration's  
response  
(Restricted to members)

LC Paper Nos. -- Submission from the Civil  
CB(1)2857/10-11 (01) and (02) Servants & Subsidized  
(*Chinese version only*) Organizations Committee of  
The Federation of Hong Kong  
& Kowloon Labour Unions on  
pay adjustment for non-civil  
service contract staff of  
schools and the  
Administration's response  
(Restricted to members)

LC Paper No. -- Submission from a member of  
CB(1)2859/10-11(01) the public on working  
(*Chinese version only*) conditions of the civil service  
(Restricted to members)

LC Paper No. -- Submission from the Hong  
CB(1)2895/10-11(01) (*Chinese* Kong Government Lifeguards  
(*version only*) General Union requesting for  
protection of lifeguards' eyes  
against strong lighting at  
public swimming pools  
(Restricted to members)

- LC Paper No. CB(1)2897/10-11 -- The 22<sup>nd</sup> Report on the Work of the Advisory Committee on Post-service Employment of Civil Servants  
(Restricted to members)
- LC Paper No. CB(1)2908/10-11(01) -- Submission from the Police Force Council Staff Associations reviewing the Pay Trend Survey methodology  
(Restricted to members)
- LC Paper No. CB(1)2954/10-11(01) -- Administration's response to the letter from Hon Emily LAU about the disclosure of illness of directorate civil servants and arrangements made during their temporary absence  
(Restricted to members)
- LC Paper No. CB(1)2986/10-11(01) *(Chinese version only)* -- Submission from the Government Disciplined Services General Union expressing regrets over radical and unlawful actions of protesters  
(Restricted to members)
- LC Paper No. CB(1)2991/10-11(01) *(Chinese version only)* -- Administration's response to the submission from a member of the public on working conditions of the civil service issued vide LC Paper No. CB(1)2859/10-11(01) on 4 August 2011  
(Restricted to members)
- LC Paper No. CB(1)3089/10-11(01) *(English version only)* -- Email from a member of the public regarding the posting arrangement for supplies grade

staff of Government Logistics  
Department  
(Restricted to members)

LC Paper Nos. -- Submissions from the Joint  
CB(1)24/11-12(01) and (02) Committee of Government  
(*Chinese version only*) Driver Grade Unions  
regarding the direct  
appointment of personal  
chauffeurs for principal  
officials under the  
accountability system  
(Restricted to members)

LC Paper Nos. -- Submissions from the H.K.  
CB(1)48/11-12(01) and (02) Fire Services Department  
(*Chinese version only*) Ambulancemen's Union  
complaining about the meal  
break arrangements for  
ambulancemen and the  
interference of the Fire  
Services Department with the  
operation and internal affairs  
of the Ambulancemen's Union  
(Restricted to members))

Members noted that the above papers had been issued since the last meeting.

## **II Date of next meeting and items for discussion**

(LC Paper No. CB(1)25/11-12(01) -- List of outstanding items for discussion

LC Paper No. CB(1)25/11-12 (02) -- List of follow-up actions)

2. Members noted that the next regular Panel meeting would be held on 21 November 2011 at 10:45 am to discuss the following items proposed by the Administration –

- (a) Update on National Studies and Basic Law training for civil servants; and
- (b) Employment situation of non-civil service contract (NCSC) staff.

Direct appointment of personal chauffeurs for principal officials under the accountability system

3. Ms LI Fung-ying referred to the submissions dated 10 October 2011 from the Joint Committee of Government Driver Grade Unions (LC Paper No. CB(1)24/11-12(01) and (02)) concerning the direct appointment of personal chauffeurs for principal officials under the accountability system. Ms LI suggested and members agreed that the matter be discussed at a future Panel meeting.

*(Post-meeting note: The Government Logistics Department's written response to the Government Driver Grade Unions which was tabled at the meeting, was circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)102/11-12 on 17 October 2011. In consideration that the direct appointment of personal chauffeurs and personal secretaries for principal officials was part of the arrangements of the Political Appointment System which fell under the purview of the Panel on Constitutional Affairs (CA Panel), the Chairman considered it more appropriate for the CA Panel to take the lead in discussion. On the instruction of the Chairman, the matter had been referred to the CA Panel for consideration. In view of the impact of the direct appointment arrangements on the civil service system, it was also proposed that the Secretary for the Civil Service and Panel members be invited to join the discussion.)*

Hours of work of the civil service

4. Referring to the submissions dated 12 October 2011 from the H.K. Fire Services Department Ambulancemen's Union (the Ambulancemen's Union) (LC Paper Nos. CB(1)48/11-12(01) and (02)) complaining about the meal break arrangements for ambulancemen and the Fire Services Department (FSD)'s interference with the operation and internal affairs of the Ambulancemen's Union, Ms LI Fung-ying requested that the matter be discussed by the Panel.

5. The Deputy Chairman remarked that the meal break arrangements for civil servants in the disciplined services grades were related to "Hours of work of the civil service", which would be discussed under item 8 of the

Panel's list of outstanding items for discussion. He suggested that the item be discussed at the Panel's regular meeting scheduled for 19 December 2011.

6. Mr LEE Cheuk-yan referred to the earlier requests made by some officers of the Fire Services Department to reduce the conditioned hours of work to 48 hours per week. He opined that it was unfair that different grades in the civil service had different conditioned hours of work, and called for a comprehensive review on the hours of work of civil servants with a view to setting standard conditioned hours of work that would apply across-the-board to the whole civil service. He suggested that staff unions/associations of different grades be invited to the December Panel meeting to give views on the policy issues relating to the working hours of civil servants. Members agreed.

*(Post-meeting note: At the request of the Administration and with the concurrence of the Chairman, the discussion of the item "Hours of work of the civil service" was deferred to the regular Panel meeting scheduled for 16 January 2012.)*

### **III Briefing by the Secretary for the Civil Service on the policy initiatives of the Civil Service Bureau featuring in the Chief Executive's 2011-2012 Policy Address**

(LC	Paper	No. --	Administration's paper on
CB(1)25/11-12(03)			the policy initiatives of the
			Civil Service Bureau

The 2011-2012 Policy Address and Policy Agenda)

7. The Secretary for the Civil Service (SCS) briefed members on the Government's new and on-going initiatives relating to the Civil Service Bureau (CSB) set out in the 2011-2012 Policy Address and Policy Agenda.

#### Provision of paternity leave to civil servants

8. Mr WONG Kwok-hing expressed support for the provision of paid paternity leave to civil servants. Noting that the Administration would soon consult concerned stakeholders, he enquired about the consultation timetable, implementation arrangements, and how the initiative would be taken forward. He said that The Hong Kong Federation of Trade Unions (HKFTU) held the view that every eligible male government employee should be granted seven days paid paternity leave in connection with each childbirth and the HKFTU

would continue to urge the Government to make paternity leave mandatory for all employers in Hong Kong.

9. The Deputy Chairman said he welcomed the provision of paternity leave for civil servants although the initiative was not made a statutory requirement for all employers in the interim. He commented that in considering the provision of paternity leave, some grey areas and various implementation issues should be addressed during the consultation, such as whether the infant was born within marriage, whether the pregnant mother was residing in Hong Kong, and the place of childbirth etc.

10. SCS acknowledged that the provision of paternity leave would involve different considerations, and practical issues including the eligibility criteria would have to be examined before implementation. In this connection, a consultation paper was under preparation and should be ready in around two months' time. The consultation paper would set out preliminary proposals on the key components of the paternity leave to be provided by the Government to its employees, such as duration, eligibility criteria, timeframe and mode of leave-taking, etc. The Administration would consult departmental management, civil servants, staff sides of the four central consultative councils, advisory bodies on pay and conditions of service of civil servants, and the Legislative Council during the consultation period. Views and comments received during the consultation would be taken into account in finalizing the arrangements for the provision of paternity leave. It was expected that the initiative would be implemented in the second half of 2012 after analyzing the views collated in the consultation and making other preparatory work.

11. Ms LI Fung-ying asked whether health care professionals such as psychiatrists and doctors would be consulted to ensure that the physical and emotional state of women in childbirth and in caring for newborns would be taken into account in working out the arrangements. SCS replied that members of the civil service as well as staff associations/unions would be consulted. Health care professionals and specialists of different disciplines within the civil service could put forth their expert views individually or collectively through their affiliated associations/unions or established staff consultative channels. She had no plan at this stage to solicit views of professional bodies outside the civil service.

12. The Deputy Chairman asked whether the Administration would also consult NCSC staff and agency workers employed through outsourcing. SCS advised that civil servants and NCSC staff would be invited to give views on the initiative while employees of contractors and service providers



to the Government would not be consulted as they were not government employees.

13. The Chairman opined that the provision of paternity leave for civil servants would possibly create pressure on private enterprises to offer similar benefit to their employees. In this connection, the Chairman urged the Administration to consider extending the scope of consultation to include subvented organizations, public bodies and private sector organizations. SCS took note of the suggestion.

14. Mr TAM Yiu-chung called on the Administration to speed up the consultation process so that the initiative could be implemented as early as possible. He said that as there was a general consensus in the community on the provision of paternity leave for civil servants, the consultation should mainly focus on implementation arrangements and accordingly the consultation period did not have to be very long. In view of the lead time required for deliberating whether the provision of paternity leave should be made mandatory for all employers and the need to consult the Labour Advisory Board, he said that the Administration should commence consulting the private sector in parallel while taking forward the paternity leave initiative for civil servants.

15. Mr WONG Kwok-hing enquired whether the Administration would consider implementing paternity leave in subvented organizations and public bodies. SCS replied that as announced by the Chief Executive (CE) in the 2011-2012 Policy Address, the Government would take the lead in promoting the family-friendly employment practice of providing paid paternity leave for civil servants in the first place. Subvented organizations and public bodies might, having regard to their own operation, introduce good human resource management practices, including the provision of paternity leave to their employees. Indeed, some public bodies, subvented organizations and private sector enterprises had already been providing paternity leave to their employees.

16. Mr LEE Cheuk-yan said that while he was pleased to see the Government taking the lead in providing paid paternity leave to civil servants, he was gravely concerned that paternity leave was not made a compulsory requirement on all employers. He opined that it would be grossly unfair that non-government employees in Hong Kong were not granted paternity leave. Referring to the case of 5-day week which was not extended to many employees in subvented organizations and private sector, he said that the disparity over paternity leave would further disrupt social harmony. Mr LEE held the view that paternity leave should be made

mandatory by way of legislation, and all eligible male employees in the public and private sectors alike should enjoy the benefits of paternity leave.

17. Sharing a similar view, Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong said that the Government should legislate to provide paternity leave to all employees. In his view, granting paternity leave to civil servants only was unfair to non-government employees and would also create a social divide and undermine social harmony. Mr CHEUNG strongly urged the Administration to make paternity leave compulsory by statute, saying that the possible impact of compulsory paternity leave on private sector operation and the economy as a whole would not be very significant as each eligible male employee might at most claim such benefits on two or three occasions throughout their work life. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung, too, called for the full implementation of paternity leave as a tribute to mothers and help relieve their psychological and physical pressure in child birth and confinement.

18. SCS reiterated that pursuant to paragraph 95 of the 2011-2012 Policy Address announced by the CE, the actual circumstances in Hong Kong would have to be taken into account in considering whether to make paternity leave a statutory requirement for all employers. She said that while CSB was actively working on the implementation of provision of paternity leave to Government employees, the Labour and Welfare Bureau was studying the feasibility of mandating the provision of paternity leave to all employees in Hong Kong. The Secretary for Labour & Welfare (SLW) would separately conduct a consultation in early 2012 on the provision of paternity leave to all employees and would consult the Panel on Manpower and relevant advisory bodies in due course. SCS agreed to relay members' views and observations to SLW.

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19. The Chairman expressed reservation over implementing paternity leave in the civil service first. She said that the Government, being the biggest employer in Hong Kong, should encourage non-government organizations and private sector enterprises to adopt good employment practices and implement family-friendly measures as part of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). She further pointed out that the paternity leave initiative should be viewed in the broader context of Hong Kong's overall population policy for which the Chief Secretary for Administration (CS) was responsible. She opined that a senior Government official such as the CS or a dedicated policy bureau should drive the development of CSR as well as to monitor and coordinate efforts on related policy initiatives which cut across different policy areas.

20. In reply, SCS said that the Steering Committee on Population Policy

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chaired by the CS was tasked to oversee and coordinate efforts on population policy. As regards CSR, it was outside the purview of CSB and no dedicated policy Bureau was presently responsible for promoting CSR. At the request of the Chairman, SCS agreed to relay to CS the Panel's suggestion for a dedicated policy bureau to promote and oversee the implementation of CSR in the society in a co-ordinated and comprehensive manner and that the Administration should consider the provision of paternity leave from the wider perspective of population policy.

21. Mr LEE Cheuk-yan observed that no dedicated policy bureau had overall policy responsibility for the oversight of subvented organizations and public bodies. He enquired whether there was a comprehensive government policy on the operation of these set-ups. SCS explained that CSB had no mandate over the management of subvented organizations and public bodies. Given the different service nature of individual subvented organizations and public bodies, Government bureaux/departments concerned would oversee the operation of those organizations under their respective policy purviews.

22. The Chairman commented that the piecemeal approach in governance was out-dated and ineffective. She reiterated the need for a dedicated policy bureau or a senior Government official to promote and oversee the implementation of government policies that required overall planning and coordination so as to achieve the optimal policy outcomes. SCS undertook to relay the suggestion to CS for consideration.

#### Political neutrality of civil servants

23. Ms LI Fung-ying said that some civil servants considered it unfair to them for having to participate in policy debates and to justify Government policy proposals before the media and the public. They had relayed to her their concern about political neutrality of civil servants. SCS advised that in accordance with the Civil Service Code issued in 2009, civil servants had the duty and responsibility to explain policies of the Government of the day and present policy proposals to the community, including the District Councils, community groups, concerned stakeholders and the Legislative Council, etc. Civil servants' participation in formulating and explaining government policies in their official capacity would not compromise their political neutrality. To avoid misunderstanding and to address civil servants' concern in this regard, SCS said that efforts would be stepped up to further explain the application of political neutrality to civil servants.

24. In response to the Chairman's enquiry about participation of civil servants in electioneering activities, SCS advised that all directorate officers,

Administrative Officers, Information Grade Officers and Police Officers were prohibited from participating in any political parties and electioneering activities. Other civil servants participating in political party activities in their private capacity were required to refrain from activities that might lead to any real, perceived, or potential conflict of interest and bias with their official positions or with the discharge of their duties and responsibilities. Undertaking electioneering activities during office hours and accepting any advantage which could constitute a conflict of interest were some examples of misconduct that were prohibited. SCS added that the Government had laid down clear regulations and guidelines governing civil servants' participation in elections and electioneering activities. The relevant rules and guidelines would be circulated to remind all civil servants before each major election.

#### Complaint by the H.K. Fire Services Department Ambulancemen's Union

25. The Deputy Chairman referred to the submission from the FSD Ambulancemen's Union (LC Paper No. CB(1)48/11-12(02) complaining that the FSD management had interfered with its operation and internal affairs by refusing to allow its representative, a former staff member of FSD, to attend the department's regular internal meetings to discuss issues of staff concern. He enquired whether CSB had investigated into the matter to ascertain whether the management had unreasonably interfered with the autonomy of the Ambulancemen's Union in nominating its representative.

26. SCS said that according to her understanding, the Deputy Director of Fire Services and the departmental management would meet with representatives of staff associations every six months to discuss internal operational issues. As sensitive and confidential information relating to operational issues might be discussed during these internal meetings, it had been the standing arrangement and the established practice of FSD that these internal departmental meetings should be attended only by serving staff members who were bound by confidentiality rules. She added that FSD management was most willing to meet with representatives of staff associations/unions through other established communication channels outside the regular internal departmental meetings.

27. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung objected strongly to the current arrangement whereby only serving staff members would be allowed to attend internal departmental meetings. He maintained that the management should respect representatives of staff associations and unions, regardless of whether or not they were serving civil servants, as they were duly elected to represent their fellow staff members. Mr LEUNG said that to ensure confidentiality, the

FSD management could require those staff representatives who were not serving civil servants to undertake in writing to observe confidentiality.

28. The Chairman asked whether there were any precedent cases where the attendance of former civil servants at internal departmental consultative meetings was permitted. SCS advised that under the existing consultative machinery within the civil service, there were four Central Consultative Councils, namely the Senior Civil Service Council (SCSC), the Model Scale 1 Staff Consultative Council, the Police Force Council and the Disciplined Services Consultative Council (DSCC). Of the four Central Consultative Councils, the constitution of SCSC did not require its staff representatives to be serving staff members in accordance with the 1968 Agreement made between the Government and the three constituent staff associations of SCSC. Former civil servants nominated by its three constituent staff associations could serve as the Staff Side members. The Government would continue to honour the agreement as enshrined in the 1968 Agreement. For consultation at the departmental level, staff representatives attending Departmental Consultative Committee meetings should be staff members serving in the department concerned. She reiterated that departmental management would meet with representatives of individual staff associations/unions including former staff members to enhance communication as and when necessary. As regards disciplined services staff, such as staff of FSD, they could express their views via members of the Staff Side of DSCC.

29. SCS further advised that the complaint made by the Ambulancemen's Union against the FSD management had been reported to the Registry of Trade Unions. After review, the Registrar of Trade Unions concluded that the attendance of union representatives at meetings with the management was a matter between the staff union and the management concerned, which fell outside the scope of the Trade Unions Ordinance (TUO) (Cap. 332). The FSD management had not violated the TUO in refusing the attendance of a former staff member of FSD, nominated by the Ambulancemen's Union, at the half-yearly meeting with the FSD management. The complaint was found unsubstantiated. At the request of the Deputy Chairman, SCS agreed to follow up the complaint, and report to the Panel in due course.

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30. Mr LEE Cheuk-yan said that the Labour Relations (Public Service) Convention 1978 (International Labour Conventions No. 151) had provided protection for public employees' organizations against any acts of interference by a public authority in their establishment, functioning or administration; and also provided public employees' organizations with the protection on the procedures for determining the terms and conditions of employment with the public authorities. As such, public employees'

organizations were entitled to nominate representatives of their own choice to negotiate with public authorities. He added that instead of adopting a consultative machinery under which only the four Central Consultative Councils would be consulted, staff associations/unions should have the right to collective bargaining of terms and conditions of employment with the management. He urged the Administration to review the central consultative machinery to enhance communication. SCS responded that the issue of collective bargaining fell within the policy purview of SLW and should more appropriately be followed up by the Panel on Manpower.

Employment of Non-Civil Service Contract (NCSC) staff and the use of agency workers

31. Noting that the civil service establishment had grown by around 1% each year since 2007-2008, Mr LEE Cheuk-yan expressed concern that while containing the size of the civil service, the Administration had continued to employ NCSC staff and agency workers to meet the growing demand for public services which should be delivered by civil servants. He criticized the Administration of exploiting NCSC staff and agency workers by engaging them in work where there was a justified long-term need for the services concerned. He enquired about the respective numbers of NCSC staff employed by the Government in the past few years.

32. SCS responded that the Administration would update the Panel on the latest employment situation of NCSC staff at the next Panel meeting to be held on 21 November 2011. She then advised members of the numbers of NCSC staff employed by the Government from 2007 to 2011 as set out below.

<u>Year (as at 30 June)</u>	<u>Number of NCSC staff</u>
2007	18 344
2008	17 403
2009	16 186
2010	15 867
2011	14 818

33. Mr LEE Cheuk-yan expressed dissatisfaction at the slow progress in replacing NCSC positions with civil service posts. He said that although the review on the employment situation of NCSC staff in 2006 had identified some 4 000 NCSC positions which would gradually be replaced by civil service posts, the number of NCSC staff had remained more or less the same since 2007. He urged the Administration to expedite the replacement of NCSC posts.

34. SCS explained that the number of NCSC staff employed by bureaux/departments would vary from time to time depending on their operational needs. The actual phasing out of NCSC positions would also have to tie in with the expiry of the employment contracts of the NCSC staff concerned. Moreover, while some NCSC positions had been phased out, other new short-term or time-limited needs might arise which called for employment of NCSC staff. Since the review in 2006, individual bureaux/departments had reviewed from time to time their employment of NCSC staff and would, where appropriate, seek approval from CSB for converting NCSC positions to civil service posts.

#### **IV Attractiveness of civil service jobs**

(LC CB(1)25/11-12(04)	Paper	No. --	Administration's paper on attractiveness of civil service jobs)
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35. SCS briefed members on the salient points of the Administration's paper providing an overview of the attractiveness of civil service jobs and an analysis of the recruitment and resignation situation in the civil service from April to November 2010.

#### Decline of civil service jobs

36. Noting that more than half of the candidates who had declined offers of civil service jobs had a Bachelor degree or above and a majority of resignees were also degree holders or above, Ms LI Fung-ying enquired whether this was mainly due to the reduction of two pay points in the starting salaries for degree and related grades arising from the Starting Salaries Survey conducted in 2009.

37. SCS advised that based on the feedback received from the candidates who declined civil service appointments, most of the candidates (about one-third) declined the offer because they had decided to take up other civil service jobs while some others opted for jobs in public funded organizations or in the private sector. The reduction in the starting salaries was not considered to be the main reason for declining civil service jobs, and no obvious link between the two was identified.

38. The Deputy Chairman expressed concern on whether the conditions of service of civil service jobs were competitive in attracting candidates having

a Bachelor degree or above. In response, SCS acknowledged that grades in the middle salary band (i.e. from Master Pay Scale 10 to 33 or equivalent) and which required higher diploma/certificate (i.e. technical grades) to bachelor degree or above (i.e. graduate grades) had the highest rate of decline of appointment offers. She however pointed out that with reference to the 2009 Starting Salaries Survey, the starting salaries for technical grades were considered appropriate and remained unchanged. Despite the two-pay point reduction, the starting salaries for degree and related grades were above the entry pay for comparable jobs in the private sector requiring similar academic qualifications.

#### Staff retention in the civil service

39. Ms LEE Fung-ying said that despite the relatively low annual resignation rate, she was concerned whether the terms and conditions of civil service jobs were competitive in retaining high calibre staff. Although the majority of the resignees were those with less than three years of service in the Government or were still going through their probation period, Ms LEE considered their resignation a waste of government resources in training the new recruits. She asked what measures the Administration would put in place to retain these staff.

40. SCS said that based on observations and feedback from the resignees, the resignation of civil servants with less than three years of service in the Government might be due to a mismatch between what these new recruits expected and what the job actually offered, or the new recruits opting to pursue further studies or taking up jobs in the private sector. It was also noted that this group of staff who were usually young might prefer jobs in other sectors that were perceived as having better promotion prospects and higher salary. There were also cases in which candidates had applied for a number of civil service jobs and had to decline some of the civil service offers. Furthermore, some of these new staff might decide to resign after they were advised that their performance was not up to standard during the probation period.

#### Resignations of civil servants

41. Referring to Annex F (resignees' years of service in the Government from April to November 2010) of the Administration's paper, the Chairman noted that while most of the resignees (53.1%) were those with less than 3 years' service in the Government, quite a large number of resignees had worked in the Government for 10 to 20 years (20.9%), or for 3-10 years (10.3%). She enquired whether the relatively high resignation rate of these



two groups of civil servants might be attributed to the expiry of the ten-year entitlement to housing benefits. She shared her observations that some senior civil servants, including Administrative Officers (AO) at Staff Grade B and C, might consider moving on to the commercial sector or statutory bodies upon the expiry of housing benefits entitlement. The Chairman also expressed concern about the resignation of some high calibre staff in the AO grade and said that the Administration should be mindful of the need to inject new blood into the civil service and to forestall any succession problem.

42. SCS said that under the Civil Service Reform in 2000, a number of new measures had been introduced for new recruits. These included new leave earning rates, the cessation of post-service medical and dental benefits, and replacing the pension system with the Civil Service Provident Fund Scheme, etc. The Administration would keep in view the situation, including the impact of these measures on staff recruitment and retention, particularly for professional and graduate grades. CSB would also continue to closely monitor the staffing situation and the attrition rate as well as provide suitable training for officers at different ranks to address the succession problem.

43. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung expressed concern about the post-service employment of directorate civil servants. He said that the Administration should study the impact of the handover in 1997, the introduction of the political appointment system, and the setting up of statutory bodies on the mass exodus of senior public officials.

44. SCS said that on the whole there were no significant changes in the annual resignation rate of civil servants before and after 1997. Under the control regime on post-service outside work, directorate civil servants on final leave or former directorate civil servants were required to apply for SCS's prior approval if they wished to take up post-service outside work during the specified restriction periods. Based on the information collated in the past five to six years, it was noted that not many former directorate civil servants had taken up jobs in the business sector or public bodies after ceasing government service. SCS further advised that the Standing Committee on Directorate Salaries and Conditions of Service had commissioned a consultant to conduct a pay comparison study for directorate civil servants in 2009. The study had found that although the salary of senior officials at D3 or above was below market median, staff members of these grades had strong commitment to serving the community. She added that salaries aside, better job satisfaction could promote a stronger sense of belonging and improve service quality. At the request of Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung, SCS agreed to consider commissioning an academic institution

to conduct a longitudinal study to keep track on the career development of civil servants who had resigned from the Government to review whether civil service jobs remained competitive and attractive in the job market.

**V Any other business**

45. The Chairman said that she and the Deputy Chairman would meet with SCS shortly to discuss the annual work plan of the Panel for the 2011-2012 session. She invited members to inform the Secretariat in writing by 26 October 2011 if they wished to raise any item for discussion at Panel meetings to be held from December 2011 to July 2012.

46. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 12:50 pm.

Council Business Division 1  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
29 December 2011