

For discussion on  
17 October 2011

## **Legislative Council Panel on Public Service**

### **Attractiveness of Civil Service Jobs**

#### **Purpose**

This paper provides an overview of the attractiveness of civil service jobs through an analysis of the recruitment and resignation situation in the civil service from April to November 2010.

#### **Background**

2. It is important that civil service jobs remain competitive in attracting new recruits and retaining staff of high calibre. We have analysed the recruitment and resignation situation in the civil service from April to November 2010 with a view to ascertaining whether civil service jobs remain attractive in the job market.

#### **Recruitment**

3. From April to November 2010, a total of 5 154 appointments were offered, of which 603 were declined, representing a decline rate of 11.7% (see **Annex A**). This involved 217 recruitment exercises. In these exercises, a total of 655 514 applications were received, of which 421 046 met the stipulated qualification requirements.

4. A majority of the recruitment exercises (139 or 64.1%) were related to positions of the middle salary band, i.e. from Master Pay Scale 10 to 33 or equivalent. This group also had the highest decline rate of appointment offers (507 of 3 829 offers in this salary band or 13.2%), which was higher than the average decline rate of the civil service as a whole (603 or 11.7%).

5. Among the 603 candidates who declined civil service offers, more than half (385 or 63.8%) had a Bachelor degree or above (see

## **Annex B).**

6. According to information provided by 176 candidates who declined civil service appointment, the largest number declined the offer because they decided to take up another civil service job (49 or 27.8% of the 176 respondents) or remain in the current job (38 or 21.6%) (see **Annex C**).

7. Some other candidates declined appointment because they decided to take up a job in the private sector or in a publicly funded organisation, or set up their own business. Some candidates explained that they preferred jobs in the professional, scientific and technical services (15 or 22.7% of the 66 respondents), construction industry (12 or 18.2%) or financing and insurance sector (9 or 13.6%). These other jobs were usually chosen because of the salary offered, job nature or promotion prospects.

## **Resignations**

8. According to our records, there were 426 resignations of serving civil servants from April to November 2010, representing an annualised resignation rate of 0.41% of the strength of the civil service in the same period. This rate was comparable to the average annual resignation rate of 0.43% since 1996-97. Over the years, the annual resignation rate of civil servants ranged from 0.18% in 2003-04 and 2004-05, to 1.26% in 1996-97, as set out in **Annex D**.

9. As set out in **Annex E**, a majority of the resignees (249 or 58.4%) had a Bachelor degree or above. Over half of the resignees (226 or 53.1%) had less than three years of service in the Government or were still going through their probation period (see **Annex F**).

10. According to the information from 125 resignees who provided feedback to the appointment authorities, the largest group (34 or 27.2% of the 125 respondents) resigned because they had taken up a job in the private sector; while some (23 or 18.4%) cited marriage or family reasons for their resignations (see **Annex G**). Some resignees remarked that if the promotion prospects (23 or 23% of the 100 respondents), salary (22 or 22%), job satisfaction (15 or 15%) or fringe benefits (15 or 15%) of civil service jobs were improved, it would have most encouraged them to remain in the Government. Notwithstanding their decision to resign, some resignees (22 or 33.3% of the 66 respondents) acknowledged the job security offered by civil service jobs. Some (13 or 19.7%) also

expressed pride in having been able to serve the community.

### **Observations on the attractiveness of civil service jobs**

11. As evident from the large number of qualified applications for civil service jobs during the study period, the relatively low decline rate of appointment at 11.7% (which had not discounted the fact that a good number of candidates received more than one civil service job appointment – because they had applied for more than one job – and could only accept one offer), civil service jobs remain attractive to job seekers.

12. As regards resignations from the civil service, we are pleased to note that the unnatural wastage rate has remained low and there is no particular cause for concern. A majority of the resignees were those with less than three years of service in the Government. This may be attributable to the fact that new recruits would inevitably go through an adaptation process (from school/university to work place, or from private sector work to public service, etc.) and there are bound to be some new recruits who would find that the civil service jobs they are in do not meet with their expectations, or who would prefer to pursue further studies.

### **Advice sought**

13. We will keep the recruitment and resignation situation of the civil service under review so as to monitor the attractiveness of civil service jobs. Members are invited to note the content of this paper.

**Civil Service Bureau**  
**October 2011**

**Recruitment position of the civil service**  
**(from April to November 2010)**

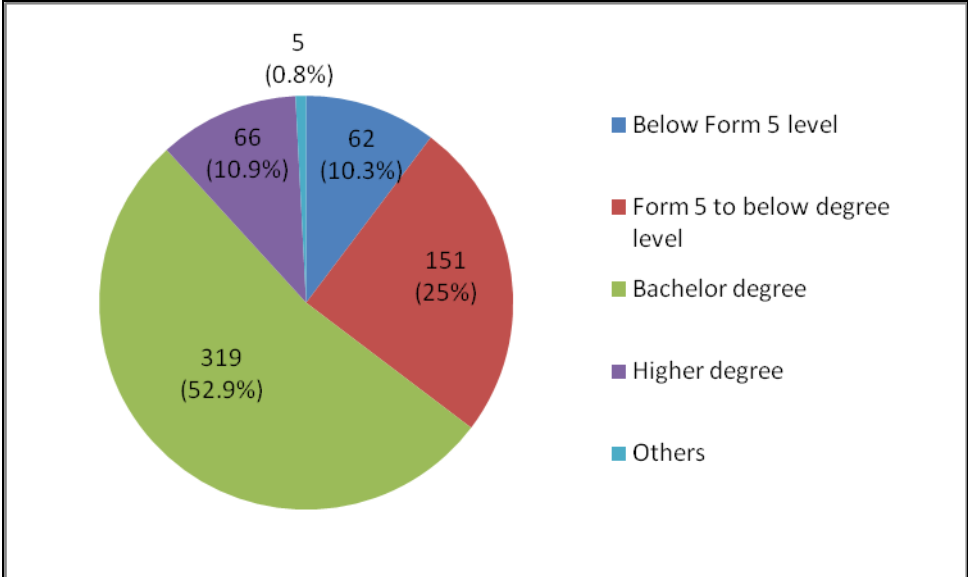
Salary band (Note)	Number of					Decline rate
	recruitment exercises	applications received	qualified candidates	appointments offered	appointments declined	
Directorate	2	77	19	2	0	0%
Upper	43	79 227	60 506	582	30	5.2%
Middle	139	539 982	346 494	3 829	507	13.2%
Lower	33	36 228	14 027	741	66	8.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>655 514</b>	<b>421 046</b>	<b>5 154</b>	<b>603</b>	<b>11.7%</b>

Note

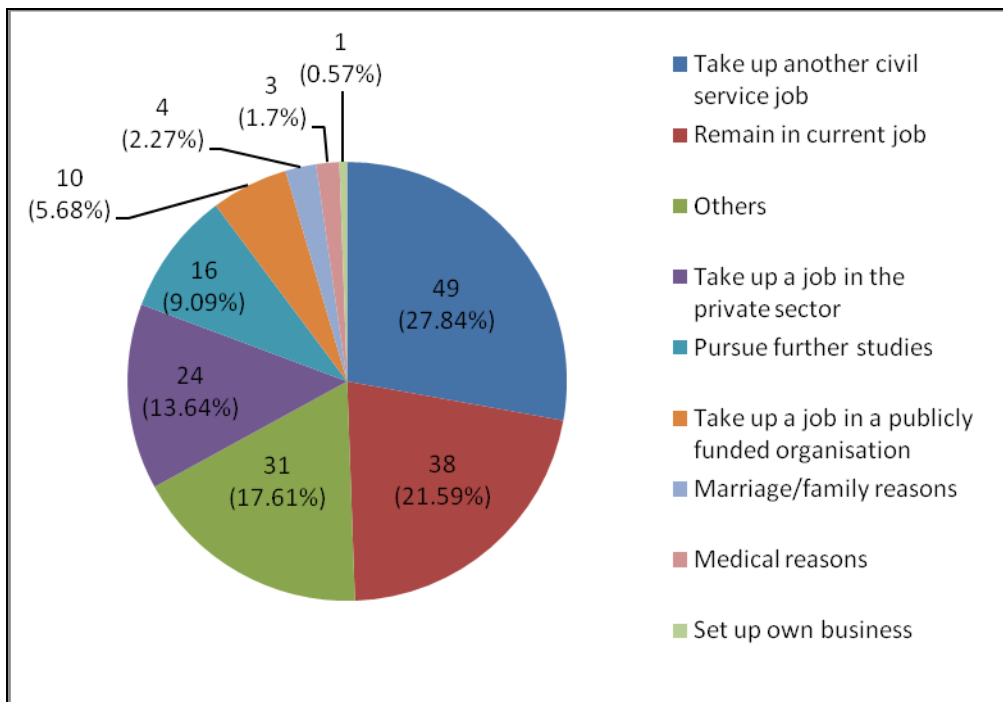
The salary band is drawn according to the pay scales of civil service ranks:

- (1) Directorate: From D1 to D8 on the Directorate Pay Scale (DPS) or equivalent, i.e. from \$106,600 and above;
- (2) Upper: From Master Pay Scale (MPS) 34 or equivalent to just below the DPS or equivalent, i.e. from \$53,060 to \$95,595;
- (3) Middle: From MPS 10 to 33 or equivalent, i.e. from \$16,855 to \$51,670; and
- (4) Lower: Below MPS 10 or equivalent, i.e. below \$16,855.

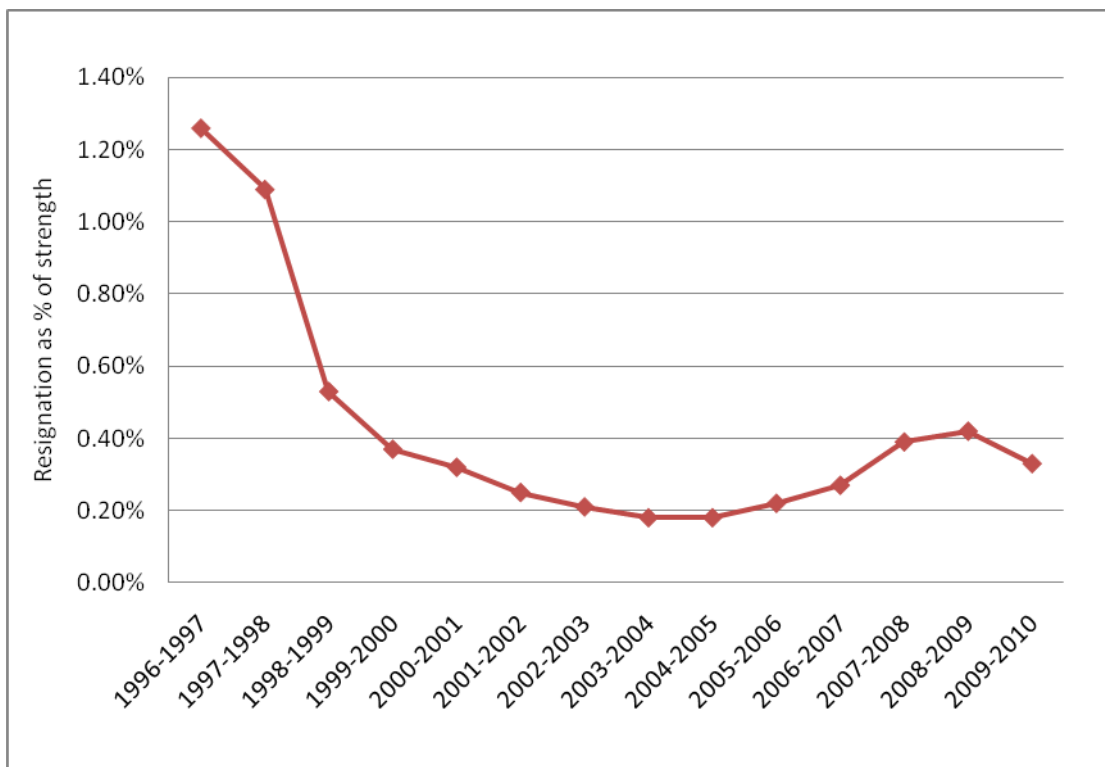
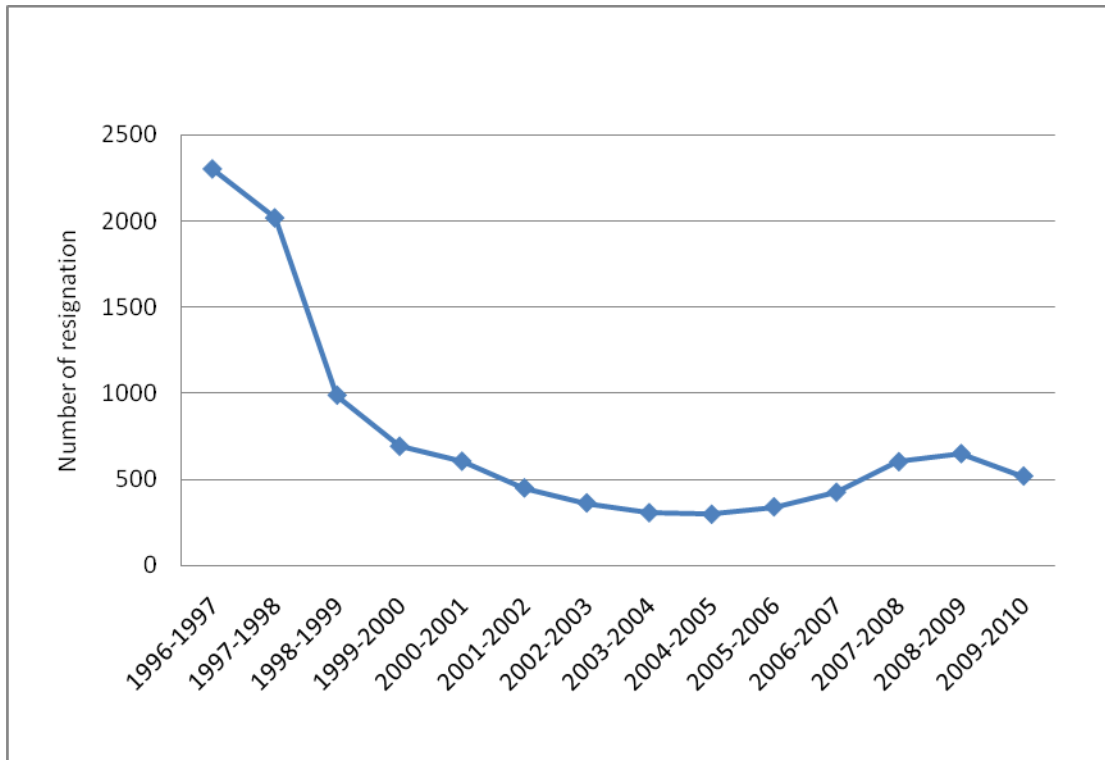
**Educational background of candidates  
declining civil service job offers  
(from April to November 2010)**



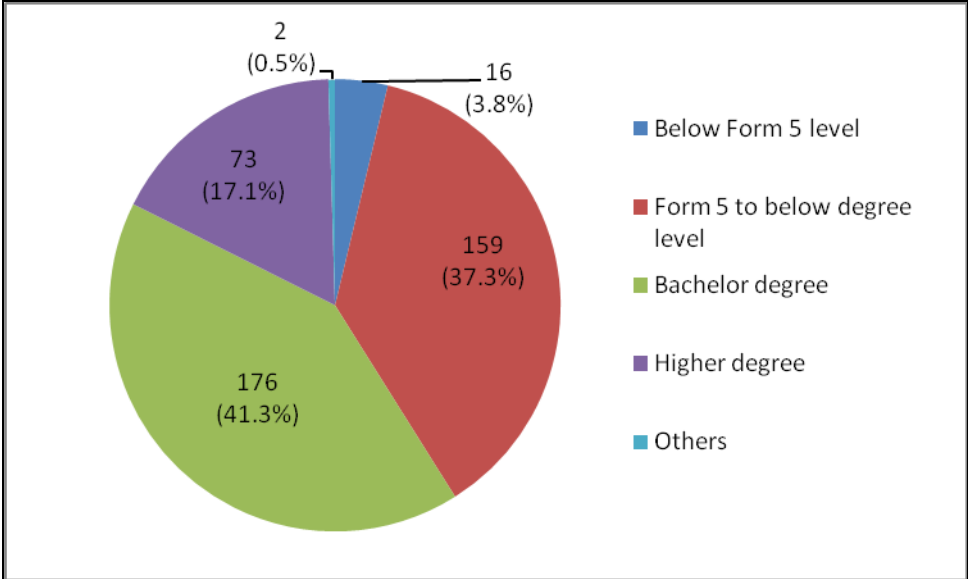
**Most important factors for declining civil service job offers**  
**from limited respondents**  
**(from April to November 2010)**



**Resignation in the civil service from 1996-97 to 2009-10**

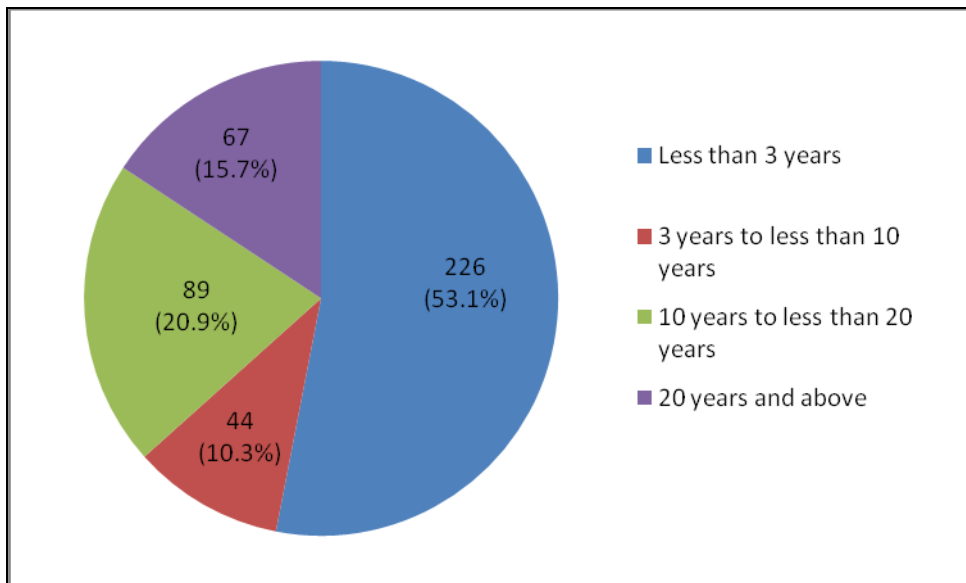


**Educational background of resignees**  
**(from April to November 2010)**

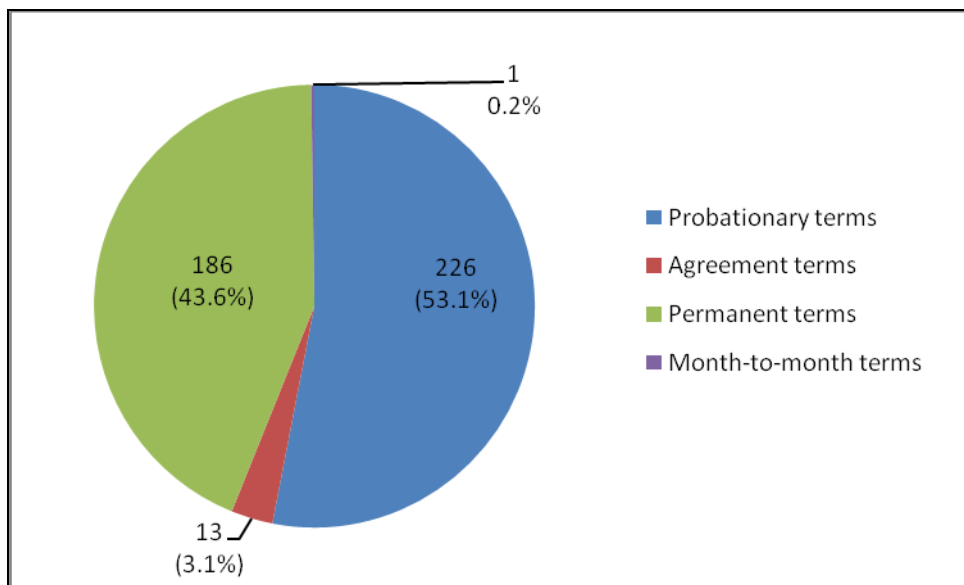




**Resignees' years of service in the Government**  
**(from April to November 2010)**



**Terms of employment at the time of resignation**  
**(from April to November 2010)**



**Most important factors for resignation from limited respondents**  
**(from April to November 2010)**

