

For information

Legislative Council Panel on Public Service

Follow-up to meeting on 16 December 2013

Item V – Manpower Situation of the Hongkong Post

At the meeting of the Legislative Council Panel on Public Service on 16 December 2013, Hongkong Post (HKP) was requested to provide the following information relating to the manpower situation of HKP :

- (a) details of the open recruitment exercises conducted by HKP in 2012-13 in filling civil service vacancies, including the numbers of vacancies offered, applications from serving non-civil service contract (“NCSC”) staff in HKP and others, as well as their respective success rates in each exercise;
- (b) take-up rates for acting appointments in the Postal Officer and Postman grades prior to as well as after the implementation of measures by HKP to resolve the unwillingness of staff to take up acting appointments in the next higher rank, and in what ways those measures have helped to improve the take-up rates; and
- (c) number of NCSC positions that have been converted into civil service posts in HKP in the past, broken down by posts.

Open Recruitment Exercises in 2012-13

2. In 2012-13, HKP conducted open recruitment exercises to fill civil service vacancies at the basic ranks of the three departmental grades, i.e. the Postman rank, the Postal Officer rank and the Assistant Controller of Posts II rank.

3. In the 2012 open recruitment exercise for the Postman rank, out of 10 341 applicants meeting the entry qualifications requirement, 515 were serving NCSC staff in HKP. As at 31 December 2013, a total of 142 new recruits have

taken up appointment as Postman, comprising 70 (49%) serving NCSC staff in HKP and 72 (51%) other applicants.

4. In the 2012 open recruitment exercise for the Postal Officer rank, out of 18 071 applicants meeting the entry qualifications requirement, 284 were serving NCSC staff in HKP. As at 31 December 2013, a total of 157 new recruits have taken up appointment as Postal Officer, comprising 12 (8%) serving NCSC staff in HKP and 145 (92%) other applicants.

5. In the 2012 open recruitment exercise for the Assistant Controller of Posts II rank, out of 8 790 applicants meeting the entry qualifications requirement, 4 were serving NCSC staff in HKP. As at 31 December 2013, a total of 15 new recruits have taken up appointment as Assistant Controller of Posts II. These new recruits are not serving NCSC staff in HKP.

Acting Appointments in the Postal Officer and Postman Grades

6. In view of the unwillingness of some staff of the Postal Officer and Postman Grades to take up acting appointments in the next higher rank¹ arising from the recommendations of promotion boards, HKP has implemented various measures to tackle the situation, including the following :

- (a) Additional guidance and coaching have been provided to staff recommended for acting in the next higher rank, so that they will have a better understanding of the requirements of the duties involved and thus become more confident in taking up such duties. To support Postmen acting in or newly promoted to the Senior Postman rank, especially those engaged in counter duties, a mentorship scheme has been set up so that they can look to their mentors, in addition to their supervisors, for guidance whenever they encounter difficulties at work;
- (b) In arranging postings for staff recommended for acting appointments, grade management strives to ensure better matching between job requirements and staff capability;
- (c) Supervisors are reminded to assess staff performance in the acting rank

¹ There are two ranks in the Postman grade, i.e. Postman and Senior Postman. As for the Postal Officer grade, there are three ranks, i.e. Postal Officer, Senior Postal Officer and Superintendent of Posts.

if the acting period exceeds six months so as to give due recognition to staff performance at the higher rank and to facilitate consideration by future promotion boards;

- (d) Staff who decline acting appointments are required to state their reasons in writing for the reference of future promotion boards; and
- (e) A selection panel will be set up to consider officers for filling vacancies in the next higher rank when the list of officers recommended by the last promotion board for acting appointments has been exhausted, so that the vacancies can be filled in the interim before the next promotion exercise while providing opportunities for younger officers with ability and aspiration to be tested for higher responsibilities at an earlier juncture.

7. With the implementation of the above measures, officers of the Postal Officer and Postman Grades are better equipped and inspired to take up acting appointments to demonstrate their capability to undertake duties at the next higher rank. As a result, the take-up rates for acting appointments increased from 45% in 2012 to 58% in 2013 in the Senior Postman rank, from 52% in 2012 to 58% in 2013 in the Senior Postal Officer rank and from 66% in 2012 to 71% in 2013 in the Superintendent of Posts rank.

Conversion of NCSC positions to civil service posts

8. HKP keeps NCSC positions in the department under review and converts them to civil service posts upon confirmation that there is a long-term operational need for these positions and the service need is sustainable. As the NCSC staff in the department typically take up specified tasks rather than the full range of duties normally assigned to civil service posts, the conversion of NCSC positions to civil service posts normally entails some reshuffling of duties. As at 31 December 2013, a total of 48 NCSC positions in HKP have been converted to civil service posts since April 2008 (a breakdown is at Annex). HKP plans to convert 10 more NCSC positions to civil service posts within 2013-14.

Hongkong Post
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**Conversion of NCSC positions to civil service posts in HKP
from April 2008 to 31 December 2013**

Civil Service Rank	Number of Posts
Controller of Posts	1
Assistant Controller of Posts II	6
Accounting Officer II	7
Senior Systems Manager	1
Systems Manager	1
Analyst/Programmer I	2
Analyst/Programmer II	2
Executive Officer I	1
Executive Officer II	1
Postal Officer	12
Postman	2
Assistant Clerical Officer	10
Clerical Assistant	2
Total :	48