

LegCo Panel on Public Service

List of follow-up actions (as at 17 May 2000)

Briefing Notes on Voluntary Retirement Scheme

At the meeting of the Panel held on 15 May 2000, Members requested further information on the proposed Voluntary Retirement (VR) scheme and other related issues. They are :

(a) **Which of the 59 grades exist in name only?**

All the 59 grades included under the VR Scheme are existing grades within the Government. Some of these grades have stopped recruiting new members to their grades for over five to ten years. They are :

Carpark Attendant I
Court Reporter
Data Processor
Launch Mechanic
Lift Operator
Midwife
Police Communications Assistant
Police Communications Computer Operators
Radiographic Technician
Sailor
Supervisor of Typing Services
Telephone Operator
Timekeeper

(b) **Breakdown of number of staff of the 59 grades redeployed to other grades**

In 1999/00, a clearing house mechanism was established to redeploy staff surplus to requirement to engage in time-limited projects in various departments. Though redeployed from parent departments to work in other places, these staff belong to their own grades and are required to undertake assignments which are comparable to their normal duties. Of the 59 grades, the number of staff redeployed to undertake time-limited projects, through the central clearing house mechanism, is as follows :

Grades	Number of staff
Artisan	17
Clerical and Secretarial	216
Calligraphist	28
Chinese Language Officer	30
Data Processor	31
Photographer	2
Supplies Supervisor and Attendant	10
Workman I & II	22
Works Supervisor	2
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Furthermore, when demand for the service of a grade diminishes, members of the grade will be gainfully employed in other areas. For example, four Lift Operators serving in the Director of Administration's Office have been redeployed to undertake other duties such as guarding and patrolling government buildings. Thirty-four out of 48 Telephone Operators serving in 12 departments have also been taking up reception and answering public enquiries duties other than operating telephone systems.

(c) **Redeployment and training of staff in 59 grades who do not wish to join VR**

Whilst the 59 grades designated under the VR scheme include some 70,000 staff, it does not mean that they are surplus staff. We expect that about 3500 of these staff would leave under the VR scheme. The departure of these staff will make room for introduction of efficiency enhancement measures. Those who do not apply for VR will continue to serve in their own grades. When a surplus situation arises, we shall identify redeployment opportunities for these staff through the central clearing house mechanism. We also plan to establish a Resource Centre with the help of the Civil Service Bureau and Civil Service Training and Development Institute to assist those staff who are in need of retraining and placement information. Detailed redeployment and training programmes would be drawn up when the number and grade/rank of VR-takers, and hence job vacancies and staff surplus situations are known.

(d) **Plans for contracting out services being provided by the 59 grades**

The pace and extent of further contracting out of the services being provided by the 59 grades will be affected by the number of VR-takers. Contracting out proposals will be worked out with due regard to staff wastage situation, including the VR take-up rate.

(e) **Ceasing all contracting out services**

Government is committed to enhancing efficiency and to responding to changing needs of the community in a cost-effective manner. At the same time, Government should take account of the continuity and stability of the provision of service to the public. In taking forward outsourcing plans, staffing implications will be carefully considered. The pace of outsourcing will be adjusted in the light of the staffing situation where appropriate.

Civil Service Bureau
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