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Government Secretariat
Hong Kong

19 July 1995

CIVIL SERVICE BRANCH CIRCULAR NO. 14/95

Flight Awards from Government Passages

**To : Branch Secretaries c.c. Judiciary Administrator
 Heads of Department**

*(Note : Distribution of this Circular is Scale A.
 To be brought to the attention of all staff
 and officers dealing with passage
 matters.)*

Introduction

This circular announces the revised policy for civil servants to accept flight awards arising from government passages. Circular Memoranda No. 24/91 and No. 77/91 dated 28.2.91 and 8.7.91 respectively are hereby replaced and cancelled.

Flight Awards from Duty Travel

2. As there has been public concern that civil servants are permitted to use the flight awards earned from duty travel for private purposes, the current policy has recently been reviewed. Amongst other things, the airlines have advised us that they will not agree to credit the awards directly to a government account for subsequent duty travel by the same or other officers. So this avenue is not open. But if we strictly rule that civil servants may only use such flight awards for subsequent duty travel, the likely result will be that the awards will not be claimed or utilised at all. To strike a balance between upholding the good image of the civil service and depriving civil servants of commercial offers which are available also to non-government flyers, we have therefore decided to modify our current policy.

3. **With effect from duty travel taking place after 31 July 1995**, officers may continue to claim and accept flight awards arising from duty travel, which includes passages provided for overseas postings and training in this context. But the **first call** on the use of such awards must be for subsequent duty travel, which may include upgrading of passages or the passage for a spouse to travel with the officer where there is justification but where normal rules or funding would not permit public funds to be used.

4. If an award is not expected to be used for subsequent duty travel before the expiry date of the award, the Head of Department concerned can exercise his/her discretion to grant approval for the officer to use the award for private purposes. We expect Heads of Departments to use their discretion/common sense in assessing individual cases. In respect of their own cases, Heads of Departments who wish to use such awards for private purposes for the same reason should notify the Civil Service Branch in writing, for record purposes.

5. The Administration does not oblige officers on duty travel to claim flight awards from airlines. However, if and when such awards are claimed and credited to an officer's mileage account, the officer should report the awards to his/her department to facilitate planning for the possible use of the awards for subsequent duty travel.

6. This revised policy for flight awards earned as a result of duty passages does not change the existing procedures for the booking of duty passages.

Flight Awards from Other Government Passages

7. There is **no change** to the current policy permitting civil servants to accept flight awards earned from other Government passages, including leave-cum-duty passages. General permission is given under paragraph 4 of the Acceptance of Advantages (Governor's Permission) Notice 1992 for them to accept flight awards earned from leave passages. Approval is also given under CBS Circular No. 17/92 for officers to accept flight awards earned from other Government passages, subject to the conditions stipulated in paragraphs 3 to 5 above for awards arising from duty travel.

Enquiries

8. If officers have any query about this circular, please contact the Departmental Secretary of your department.

Michael V Stone
for Secretary for the Civil Service

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