

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL BRIEF

Grade Structure Review for Marine Officer and Surveyor of Ships Grades of Marine Department

INTRODUCTION

At the meeting of the Executive Council on 13 February 2018, the Council **ADVISED** and the Chief Executive (CE) **ORDERED** that –

- (a) the recommendations of the Grade Structure Review (GSR) for the Marine Officer (MO) and Surveyor of Ships (SoS) grades of the Marine Department (MD) in Report No. 57 of the Standing Commission on Civil Service Salaries and Conditions of Service (Standing Commission) should be accepted in full;
- (b) subject to the approval of the Legislative Council (LegCo) –
 - (i) the pay-related recommendations should be implemented with effect from the first day of the month immediately following the month of approval by LegCo or 1 August 2018, whichever is the later; and
 - (ii) the normal conversion arrangement¹ should be adopted for all affected serving staff in the MO rank.

JUSTIFICATIONS

Considerations of the Standing Commission

2. It is government policy that GSRs will be considered in view of –

- (a) proven and persistent recruitment and retention difficulties

¹ Normal conversion refers to the arrangement to convert the salary point of each serving officer when the pay scale of the rank or grade to which such an officer belongs is revised as a result of the recommendations of the Standing Commission. The overriding consideration is that no one should receive less pay on conversion.

of a grade; or

- (b) significant changes in the job nature, job complexity and level of responsibilities of a grade.

3. In December 2016, the Government invited the Standing Commission to conduct a GSR for the MO and SoS grades of MD which were facing serious recruitment difficulties. Having considered the proposals put forward by MD and views of the staff side, the Standing Commission submitted its findings and recommendations on the GSR vide its Report No. 57 on 31 October 2017. A copy of the report is attached at **Annex A**.

A

4. In drawing up its recommendations, the Standing Commission had considered the following guiding principles and key considerations –

- (a) the Government's civil service pay policy, which is to offer sufficient remuneration to attract, retain and motivate staff of a suitable calibre to provide the public with an effective and efficient service; and that such remuneration is to be regarded as fair by both civil servants and by the public whom they serve through broad comparability with the private sector;
- (b) the established pay principles, such as the qualification benchmark system for determining entry pay as well as the outcome of detailed deliberation in previous reviews, notably the 1989 Salary Structure Review²;
- (c) whether and how the job nature, job duties, responsibilities and workload of the MO and SoS grades have evolved since the 1989 Salary Structure Review;
- (d) the recruitment and retention situation of the two grades;
- (e) the morale and career progression situation of the two grades;
- (f) public expectation on the two grades under the prevailing social, economic and political climate;
- (g) relevant wider community interest, including financial and economic considerations; and

² Upon invitation of the Government in March 1989, the Standing Commission conducted a salary structure review of some 340 non-directorate civilian grades and completed the exercise in December 1990.

- (h) any service-wide implications that may be associated with changes to the grade structures or pay scales of the two grades.

Overview of the MO and SoS Grades

Overall Grade Structure

5. The MO and SoS grades are the two core professional grades in MD, responsible for discharging the statutory functions relating to all navigational matters in the waters of Hong Kong and safety standards of all classes and types of vessels³. Both grades consist of three ranks, i.e. the two non-directorate ranks of MO/SoS and Senior Marine Officer (SMO)/Senior Surveyor of Ships (SSoS); and the directorate rank of Principal Marine Officer/Principal Surveyor of Ships. The MO and SoS grades are also the two feeder grades for the senior directorate ranks in MD. At the entry rank, the SoS grade is divided into three streams, namely the Nautical stream (SoS(Nautical)), the Engineer & Ship stream (SoS(Engineer & Ship)) and the Ship stream (SoS(Ship)). The MO grade is not streamed.

Entry Requirements and Pay Scales

6. As officers in the MO and SoS grades are to perform a multi-faceted professional role in maritime-related duties, candidates for appointment to the MO and SoS ranks have to possess relevant professional qualifications and working experience. Specifically, candidates for the MO, SoS(Nautical) and SoS(Engineer & Ship) posts must have the professional qualification of Certificate of Competency (CoC) Class 1⁴ and a specified length of working experience at designated positions on ocean-going vessels. On the other hand, while there is no sea service requirement for candidates for the SoS(Ship) post, they have to accumulate four years of post-corporate membership experience in naval architecture to qualify for the post. The existing

³ Officers in the MO grade are mainly responsible for the management and supervision of the port in Hong Kong. Major duties include regulation of marine traffic, coordination of search and rescue operations and harbour control. Officers in the SoS grade are responsible for undertaking statutory and other related duties under a number of merchant shipping ordinances that pertain to maritime safety, pollution prevention, security and seafarers' welfare and management, etc.

⁴ The CoC is an internationally recognised qualification and therefore a proof of a person's professional knowledge in the maritime field. The CoC Class 1 is the highest class attainable. Candidates must have worked on board ocean-going vessels at designated positions for a specified period of time and pass the relevant examinations in order to obtain the qualification.

entry requirements of the MO and SoS ranks are set out in Appendix E of the Report at **Annex A**. The current pay scale of MO rank is Master Pay Scale (MPS) Points 29 - 44, while that of SoS rank is MPS Points 34 - 44. The pay scale for both SMO and SSoS ranks is MPS Points 45 - 49.

Findings and Recommendations of the Standing Commission

Review Findings

7. Having reviewed the manpower position (i.e. recruitment, vacancy and succession situation) and nature of duties of the MO and SoS grades, the Standing Commission noted that the two grades had been facing persistent recruitment difficulties and acute succession problem. MD had not been able to recruit enough numbers of MOs and SoSs despite the adjusted entry requirement on applicant's work experience through sub-entry point and relaxed language proficiency requirement. The vacancy rates of the MO and SoS grades at the non-directorate level remained high at 38% and 26% respectively as at 31 March 2017.

8. The Standing Commission also noted that the age of the new recruits of the MO and SoS grades was on the high side. Furthermore, with 16 of the 17 directorate officers in MD expected to retire in the coming five years and the average ages of SMOs and SSoSs at about 56 and 54 respectively, the two grades were facing a severe succession problem. The number of new intakes in the years ahead would not be sufficient to meet the normal wastage of the MO and SoS grades if the recruitment difficulties were not addressed.

9. As regards the job nature of the two grades, the Standing Commission noted that while job complexity, level of responsibilities and workload of the MO and SoS grades had increased due to changes and development in the maritime industry over the past decades, there was no fundamental change in the job nature of the two grades.

Recommendations

10. Taking into account the manpower situation of the MO and SoS grades, the Standing Commission made the following recommendations –

Assistant Ranks

- (a) to create a new tier of rank, namely Assistant Marine Officer (AMO) and Assistant Surveyor of Ships (ASoS), each for the MO and SoS grades to attract younger candidates with good potential to join MD. For entry into the AMO

rank, as well as the Engineer & Ship stream and Nautical stream of the ASoS rank, candidates should possess a professional qualification at CoC Class 3⁵ or above and a degree in a relevant discipline. As for the Ship stream of the ASoS rank, a degree in naval architecture or related technology is required. With reference to established pay principles, the pay scales of AMO, ASoS(Engineer & Ship) and ASoS(Nautical) should be at MPS Points 19 - 27 while the pay scale of ASoS(Ship) should be at MPS Points 16 - 27. A table summarising the proposed entry requirements is at **Annex B**; and

B

- (b) MD to consider meticulously the contents of the designated training programmes⁶ for the AMO and ASoS ranks and obtain accreditation from relevant professional organisations before launching recruitment exercises. Newly appointed assistant rank officers should be on probation for three years or for the time taken for them to complete the training and obtain the requisite qualification, whichever is the longer, subject to a maximum of five years; and the proposed assistant ranks should form a combined establishment of “AMO/MO” and “ASoS/SoS”⁷;

MO Rank

- (c) to introduce a degree in a relevant discipline as an academic entry requirement for the MO rank to align it with that of the proposed AMO rank. The starting pay of the MO rank should be revised from MPS Point 29 to 32. The existing omitted points of the MO rank should be repositioned from MPS Points 31, 35 and 38 to MPS Points 34 and 38; and
- (d) to adopt normal conversion arrangement for the proposed adjustment to the pay scale of the MO rank;

⁵ CoC Class 3 is the basic level of the qualification. In order to obtain a CoC Class 3, one should possess a minimum period of 12 months sea-service on ocean-going vessels (depending on the remission they are entitled to) and have passed an examination.

⁶ MD shall provide designated training programmes for officers at the assistant ranks to enable them to acquire the necessary knowledge and attain the required level of competency for undertaking the full range of duties of the MO and SoS ranks respectively in due course.

⁷ For grades which have a combined establishment, there is no specific limit on the number of posts in each of the constituent ranks.

SoS Rank

- (e) to reduce the post-corporate membership experience requirement of the Ship stream of the SoS rank from four to two years. The existing pay scale of SoS rank (MPS Points 34 - 44) should remain unchanged; and

Senior Ranks

- (f) the existing pay scales of the SMO and SSoS ranks (MPS Points 45 - 49) should remain unchanged.

11. The Standing Commission further recommended, among other things, that the Government should intensify its efforts (e.g. through offering scholarships for outstanding students) in attracting young people to join the maritime industry, and that MD should continue to promote the image of the MO and SoS grade officers and widely publicise the career opportunities. MD should also proactively reach out to students who are studying maritime-related programmes or those who may be interested in a sea-going career.

Views of Departmental Management and Staff Side

12. Upon receipt of Report No. 57 of the Standing Commission on 31 October 2017, we invited views and comments from the MD management and the staff side of the MO and SoS grades.

13. MD management acknowledged the recommendations proposed by the Standing Commission to step up efforts to help attract young candidates to join MD and would like to see the recommendations implemented as soon as possible to help tackle the manpower shortage and succession problems of the two grades fundamentally and hence allowing MD to have sufficient and quality officers to discharge its statutory functions to maintain Hong Kong as an international maritime centre. The two staff associations representing the MO and SoS grades (i.e. the Marine Officers Association (MOA) and the Hong Kong Marine Department Local Professional Officers' Association (HKMDLPOA)) respectively also fully supported the recommendations of Report No. 57. In particular, MOA considered that in the long term, the proposed arrangements would improve the age profile and help the healthy and sustainable development of the MO grade. HKMDLPOA also agreed that the recommendations would help ease the manpower shortage and succession problems of the SoS grade and foster the sustainable development of the SoS grade. HKMDLPOA mentioned that the MD management should keep under constant review the appropriate split between the number of ASoSs and SoSs taking into account operational need in view of the proposed combined establishment of the grade.

HKMDLPOA also asked for adequate resources to cope with the training needs of the ASoSs.

The Government's View

14. The recommendations of the Standing Commission are well-justified for tackling the serious recruitment difficulties and succession problems faced by the MO and SoS grades. MD management and the staff side of the two grades also fully support the recommendations. The CE-in-Council has decided that the recommendations as summarised in paragraphs 10 to 11 above should be accepted in full. Our observations on details in relation to individual recommendations are set out below.

Combined Establishment

15. With regard to the Standing Commission's recommendation to create a new tier of assistant rank, namely the AMO and ASoS, as well as the combined establishment of "AMO/MO" and "ASoS/SoS", MD could in future either appoint MOs/SoSs by promotion (from those AMOs/ASoSs who have completed the designated training programmes, obtained professional qualification and fulfilled any other criteria for promotion as specified by MD management) or direct recruitment. This dual track of appointment will enable MD to cast a wider net in trawling suitable candidates to join the two grades. MD should adopt a prudent approach in determining the appropriate split between the number of officers in the assistant and professional ranks for the two grades. This will be conducive to healthy staff management as well as effective operation of the department.

Academic Qualification

16. According to MD, it is the requirement of the approving/accrediting organisations for the designated training programmes (i.e. the Institute of Marine Engineering, Science and Technology (IMarEST)⁸ and the Hong Kong Institution of Engineers (HKIE)⁹) that the candidates of AMO and ASoS should possess a degree. MD management is of the view that since AMOs/ASoSs should be able to perform the full range of duties of the MO/SoS ranks upon

⁸ IMarEST is an international professional body and learned society for marine professionals.

⁹ HKIE is an engineering society of Hong Kong to promote the advancement of engineering and to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and ideas.

successful completion of an intensive, designated training programme¹⁰ taking about four years (individual candidates may take three to five years to complete depending on the qualifications they have attained upon first joining), it is essential that the candidates concerned have prior knowledge or experience as demonstrated by a degree in a relevant discipline and a professional qualification of at least CoC Class 3.

17. As for the introduction of an academic qualification requirement for the MO rank, MD management has advised that it is an international trend to upgrade the academic qualification requirement for port authority officials to the degree level. It is also appropriate to pitch at a degree in a relevant discipline as the academic qualification requirement for the MO rank to align it with that of the AMO rank.

Normal Conversion Arrangement

18. When advising on the conversion arrangement for incumbent staff given the proposed increase in the starting pay of the MO rank, the Standing Commission recommended, in accordance with established practice, that the normal conversion arrangement should be adopted. The overriding principle is that no one should receive less pay on conversion to the new scale. In the present case where only the minimum of the pay scale of the MO rank is raised (from MPS Point 29 to 32) and the maximum (at MPS Point 44) remains unchanged, the normal conversion arrangement provides that (a) where a civil servant's pay is less than the minimum of the revised scale, he should receive the new minimum; and (b) where a civil servant's pay is equivalent to or above the new minimum, he should advance to the next point on the revised scale subject to this not being above the scale maximum. The CE-in-Council has decided that the normal conversion arrangement should be adopted for the MO rank. Details are shown in **Annex C**.

C

Post-Corporate Membership Working Experience of SoS(Ship)

19. As no degree programme in naval architecture is offered by tertiary institutions in Hong Kong and there are no longer any major shipyards locally, students who wish to obtain such a qualification have to study and accumulate the required working experience overseas. Against this background, the supply of candidates for the SoS(Ship) post has been very limited. In view of the severe recruitment difficulties of SoS(Ship), the post-corporate membership working experience requirement for SoS(Ship) will be reduced from four years to two years while maintaining the existing pay scale, enabling MD to

¹⁰ The designated training programmes will comprise on-the-job training, studies on sub-disciplines of maritime operations, and attachment to shipping companies or ship surveying training that will lead to accreditation by international and local organisations.

compete more effectively in the global market for the small pool of suitable candidates who possess the required qualification and experience in the field.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

20. The implementation of the recommendations of Report No. 57 of the Standing Commission is in conformity with the Basic Law, including the provisions concerning human rights. It has no competition, economic, environmental, family, gender, productivity or sustainability implications.

21. The financial implications will be around \$10.9 million per year¹¹.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

22. We consulted the LegCo Panel on Public Service (PS Panel) on the Standing Commission's Report on 22 December 2017¹². Members present supported the Standing Commission's recommendations in general.

PUBLICITY

23. A press release will be issued and a spokesperson will be available to answer media enquiries. We will brief the PS Panel, after which, we will seek the approval of LegCo.

24. Enquiries on this brief should be addressed to Mr Benjamin MOK, Principal Assistant Secretary for the Civil Service (Tel: 2810 3112).

Civil Service Bureau
13 February 2018

¹¹ Including adjustment to the pay scale of the MO rank arising from the adoption of normal conversion arrangement in the form of additional payroll cost to the civil service per year; training-related expenses; and the creation of additional posts to strengthen the manpower of the AMO/MO and ASoS/SoS ranks. This estimate has not included the increase in pension payments and allowances pegged with monthly salary.

¹² Members of the LegCo Panel on Economic Development and all other LegCo Members were invited to join the PS Panel meeting.

HONG KONG
STANDING COMMISSION ON CIVIL SERVICE
SALARIES AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

REPORT No. 57

**GRADE STRUCTURE REVIEW
FOR MARINE OFFICER AND
SURVEYOR OF SHIPS GRADES**

CHAIRMAN

DR WILFRED WONG YING-WAI, GBS, JP

OCTOBER 2017

公務員薪俸及服務條件常務委員會
Standing Commission on Civil Service Salaries and Conditions of Service

31 October 2017

The Honourable Mrs Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor, GBM, GBS
The Chief Executive
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
People's Republic of China
Tamar
Hong Kong

Dear Madam,

At the invitation of the Government, the Standing Commission on Civil Service Salaries and Conditions of Service (Standing Commission) has conducted a grade structure review for the Marine Officer and Surveyor of Ships grades.

On behalf of the Standing Commission, I have the honour to submit our Report No. 57: Grade Structure Review for Marine Officer and Surveyor of Ships Grades which contains our findings and recommendations.

Yours faithfully,



(Wilfred Wong Ying-wai)
Chairman
Standing Commission on Civil Service
Salaries and Conditions of Service

HONG KONG
STANDING COMMISSION ON CIVIL SERVICE
SALARIES AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

REPORT NO. 57

GRADE STRUCTURE REVIEW
FOR MARINE OFFICER AND
SURVEYOR OF SHIPS GRADES

OCTOBER 2017

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Abbreviations

AD of M	Assistant Director of Marine
AMO	Assistant Marine Officer
ASoS	Assistant Surveyor of Ships
CoC	Certificate of Competency
Commission	Standing Commission on Civil Service Salaries and Conditions of Service
DD of M	Deputy Director of Marine
D of M	Director of Marine
Fund	Maritime and Aviation Training Fund
GSR	Grade Structure Review
HKCCSA	Hong Kong Chinese Civil Servants' Association
HKIE	Hong Kong Institution of Engineers
HKMDLPOA	Hong Kong Marine Department Local Professional Officers' Association
HKSGOA	Hong Kong Senior Government Officers Association
IMarEST	Institute of Marine Engineering, Science and Technology
IMO	International Maritime Organisation
Improved Mechanism	Improved Civil Service Pay Adjustment Mechanism

MD	Marine Department
MO	Marine Officer
MOA	Marine Officers Association
MPS	Master Pay Scale
PMO	Principal Marine Officer
PSoS	Principal Surveyor of Ships
QG	Qualification Group
SCSC	Senior Civil Service Council
SGTIS	Sea-going Training Incentive Scheme
SMO	Senior Marine Officer
SOLAS	International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea
SoS	Surveyor of Ships
SSoS	Senior Surveyor of Ships
Steering Committee	Steering Committee on Systemic Reform of the Marine Department
VO	Veterinary Officer

Summary of Recommendations

Paragraph

Assistant Ranks

- (1) A new assistant rank each for the Marine Officer (MO) and Surveyor of Ships (SoS) grades (i.e. Assistant Marine Officer (AMO) rank for the MO grade and Assistant Surveyor of Ships (ASoS) rank for the SoS grade) should be created for the chief purpose of attracting younger candidates with good potential to join the Marine Department (MD). 4.11
- (2) For that purpose, the entry requirements of the AMO and ASoS ranks should be set as detailed in paragraph 4.12. 4.12 & 4.21
- (3) MD should consider meticulously the contents of the designated training programmes for the AMO and ASoS ranks and obtain accreditation from relevant professional organisations before recruitment exercises are launched. 4.25
- (4) Newly appointed assistant rank officers should be on probation for three years or for the time taken for them to complete the training and obtain the requisite qualification, whichever is the longer, subject to a maximum of five years; and the proposed assistant ranks should form a combined establishment of “AMO/MO” and “ASoS/SoS”. 4.28
- (5) The pay scales of AMO, ASoS(Engineer & Ship) and ASoS(Nautical) should all be set at Master Pay Scale (MPS) Points 19-27. 4.34
- (6) The pay scale of ASoS(Ship) should be set at MPS Points 16-27. 4.35

MO Rank

- (7) A degree in a relevant discipline should be introduced as an academic entry requirement to the MO rank. 4.39
- (8) The starting pay of the MO rank should be increased from MPS Point 29 to 32. The existing omitted points of the MO rank should be repositioned to MPS Points 34 and 38. 4.43 – 4.44
- (9) Normal conversion arrangement should be adopted for the proposed adjustment to the pay scale of the MO rank. 4.50

SoS Rank

- (10) For entry into SoS(Ship), the post-corporate membership experience requirement should be reduced from four to two years; and the existing pay scale of the SoS rank (MPS Points 34-44 with an omitted point at MPS Point 36) should remain unchanged. 4.48

Senior Ranks

- (11) The existing pay scales of the Senior MO and Senior SoS ranks (MPS Points 45-49) should remain unchanged. 4.49

Other Related Issues

- (12) The Government is invited to intensify its efforts in attracting young people to join the maritime industry. The Government may consider providing financial support to encourage young people with potential to join the industry. 4.53
- (13) To encourage maritime professionals to join MD, MD should continue to promote the image of the MO and SoS grade officers and widely publicise the career opportunities. MD should proactively reach out to students who are studying maritime-related programmes or those who may be interested in a sea-going career. 4.54

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 This Report sets out the findings and recommendations of the Standing Commission on Civil Service Salaries and Conditions of Service (Commission) in relation to the Grade Structure Review (GSR) for the Marine Officer (MO) and Surveyor of Ships (SoS) grades.

Background

The Commission

1.2 The Commission is a body appointed by the Chief Executive to advise on the structure, salaries and conditions of service of the non-directorate civilian grades in the civil service. Its terms of reference and membership are at Appendix A and Appendix B respectively.

Civil service pay policy

1.3 The Government's civil service pay policy is to offer sufficient remuneration to attract, retain and motivate staff of a suitable calibre to provide the public with an effective and efficient service; and such remuneration is to be regarded as fair by both civil servants and by the public they serve through broad comparability with the private sector.

Improved Civil Service Pay Adjustment Mechanism

1.4 To implement this policy, the Improved Civil Service Pay Adjustment Mechanism (Improved Mechanism) has been put in place since 2007. Under the Improved Mechanism, civil service pay is compared with private sector pay on a regular basis through regular surveys, namely the six-yearly Pay Level Survey, the three-yearly Starting Salaries Survey and the annual Pay Trend Survey.

Grade Structure Review for non-directorate civilian grades

1.5 Notwithstanding the conduct of regular service-wide surveys under the Improved Mechanism, some grades may still face recruitment and retention difficulties from time to time, which may have to be addressed through a revamp of the grade structure after a GSR. The Commission last conducted a GSR for the Veterinary Officer (VO) grade as well as the Government Counsel grade and the related grades in 2008 (2008 GSR). The Commission's recommendations and observations in that GSR were set out in its Report No. 43.

Invitation from the Government

1.6 In December 2016, the Government invited the Commission to conduct a GSR for the MO and SoS grades which are apparently facing serious recruitment difficulties. The Government asked the Commission to submit its findings and recommendations to the Chief Executive within 2017. Having reviewed the information presented by the Government, the Commission was satisfied that there was a case to carry out a GSR for the two grades, and therefore accepted the Government's invitation to take on the task. The GSR commenced in February 2017.

Chapter 2

General Framework and Principles

Scope of the Review

2.1 Before embarking on a detailed analysis, the Commission considered it necessary to lay down a general framework for the review, setting out its broad scope, the principles that should guide its analysis and the key considerations that it should take into account. Drawing reference from the experience of the 2008 GSR, the Commission considers that the current exercise should focus on whether and how the grade structures, entry requirements, pay scales and training opportunities should be altered if problems in the manpower situation are identified for the two grades. The Commission will draw the Government's attention to other findings which may be relevant but fall outside the ambit of the GSR.

Guiding Principles and Key Considerations

2.2 Taking into account its terms of reference and building on the experiences of past reviews, the Commission considers that the review should be guided by the following principles and key considerations –

- (a) the Government's civil service pay policy as set out in paragraph 1.3, which is to offer sufficient remuneration to attract, retain and motivate staff of a suitable calibre to provide the public with an effective and efficient service; and that such remuneration is to be regarded as fair by both civil servants and by the public they serve through broad comparability with the private sector;
- (b) the established pay principles, such as the qualification benchmark system for determining entry pay as well as the outcome of detailed deliberation in previous reviews, notably the 1989 Salary Structure Review¹;

¹ Upon invitation of the Government in March 1989, the Commission conducted a salary structure review of some 340 non-directorate civilian grades and completed the exercise in December 1990.

- (c) whether and how the job nature, job duties, responsibilities and workload of the two grades have evolved since the 1989 Salary Structure Review;
- (d) the recruitment and retention situation of the two grades;
- (e) the morale and career progression situation of the two grades;
- (f) public expectation on the two grades under the prevailing social, economic and political climate;
- (g) relevant wider community interest, including financial and economic considerations; and
- (h) any service-wide implications that may be associated with changes to the grade structures or pay scales of the two grades.

Mode of Operation

2.3 The Commission has established a dedicated Working Group, with Mr Wilfred Wong Kam-pui, JP, as the Convenor and Mr Lee Ming-kwai, GBS, Mr Joseph Lo Kin-ching and Mr Tony Tse Wai-chuen, BBS, as Members, to conduct the GSR.

2.4 The Working Group conducted the GSR through a combination of fact-finding exercises, discussion meetings, as well as a visit and meetings with various parties. **Appendix C** lists out these activities. In addition, four written submissions from both MD management and staff bodies as listed at **Appendix D** have been carefully examined.

2.5 As in previous reviews, the Commission firmly believes that engagement with staff is crucial, in that it facilitates the Commission to understand more deeply the operations of the grades under review and to gain a first-hand grasp of staff views and sentiments. In the course of this review, the Commission invited various staff bodies, including the staff associations for the two grades (the Marine Officers Association (MOA) and the Hong Kong Marine Department Local Professional Officers' Association

(HKMDLPOA)), and the Senior Civil Service Council (SCSC) and the Model Scale 1 Staff Consultative Council to offer views. The Working Group met the two staff associations and the Hong Kong Senior Government Officers Association (HKSGOA) of the SCSC. The Working Group also considered a written submission from the Hong Kong Chinese Civil Servants' Association (HKCCSA) of the SCSC.

2.6 Taking staff sides' views into account as appropriate, and having considered the characteristics and the manpower situation of the two grades, the Working Group put forth a series of preliminary recommendations for the consideration of the Commission. Guided by the principles and key considerations set out in paragraph 2.2 above, the Commission has finalised its recommendations which the Commission believes will help MD address the manpower problems of the MO and SoS grades that have been identified and be conducive to the long-term development of the two grades.

Chapter 3

Overview of Marine Officer and Surveyor of Ships Grades

Basic Information

3.1 The MO and SoS grades are the two core professional grades in MD, responsible for discharging the statutory functions relating to all navigational matters in the waters of Hong Kong and safety standards of all classes and types of vessels. Both grades comprise three ranks, i.e. the two non-directorate ranks of MO/SoS and Senior Marine Officer (SMO)/Senior Surveyor of Ships (SSoS); and the directorate rank of Principal Marine Officer (PMO)/Principal Surveyor of Ships (PSoS) (D1 on the Directorate Pay Scale). The MO and SoS grades are also the two feeder grades for the senior directorate ranks in MD, i.e. Assistant Director of Marine (AD of M) (D2), Deputy Director of Marine (DD of M) (D3) and Director of Marine (D6).

MO grade

3.2 Officers in the MO grade are mainly responsible for the management and supervision of the port in Hong Kong. Their main job duties include regulation of marine traffic, coordination of search and rescue operations, harbour patrol, management of ferry terminals, planning of maritime facilities, and prosecution for violation of maritime laws.

SoS grade

3.3 At the entry rank, the SoS grade is divided into three streams, namely the Engineer & Ship stream, the Nautical stream and the Ship stream. In the establishment of MD, there are posts in the SoS rank for each of the three streams as well as posts which may be filled by an officer of any of these streams. All officers in the SoS grade are responsible for undertaking statutory and other related duties under a number of merchant shipping ordinances that pertain to maritime safety, pollution prevention, security, seafarers' welfare and management including casualty investigations and audit on Hong Kong registered ships and their companies. Duties concerning the three respective streams are –

Engineer & Ship

Undertake duties as a marine engineer consultant or manager for the Government on the construction of new vessels and maintenance of the Government Fleet; conduct examination for all classes of marine engineer officers' Certificate of Competency (CoC); and undertake statutory and other related duties under the Boiler and Pressure Vessels Ordinance (Cap. 56);

Nautical

Undertake duties as a nautical consultant for the Government; and conduct examination for all classes of deck officers' CoC; and

Ship

Undertake duties as a naval architect for the Government on the construction of new vessels and maintenance of the Government Fleet.

Entry requirements and pay scales

3.4 As staff of the MO and SoS grades are to perform a multi-faceted professional role in maritime-related duties, candidates for appointment have to possess relevant professional qualifications and working experience. **Appendix E** sets out the prevailing entry requirements. Entry into the MO and SoS ranks normally requires a professional qualification at CoC Class 1, which is the highest class attainable. The CoC is an internationally recognised qualification and therefore a proof of a person's professional knowledge in the maritime field. In order to obtain the Class 1 qualification, a candidate must work on board sea-going vessels at designated positions for the required sea-service. In addition, a candidate must have a defined length of working experience (ranging from one to four years, depending on the stream in which the candidate is to join and the qualifications possessed). A degree in a relevant discipline is also required for entry into the SoS rank.

3.5 The current pay scale of the MO rank is Master Pay Scale (MPS) Points 29-44, with omitted points at MPS Points 31, 35 and 38. The pay scale of the SMO rank is MPS Points 45-49.

3.6 The current pay scale of the SoS rank is MPS Points 34-44 with an omitted point at MPS Point 36. The pay scale of the SSoS rank is MPS Points 45-49.

Changes in Job Nature, Job Duties, Responsibilities and Workload

3.7 The MO and SoS grades were among the grades covered in the 1989 Salary Structure Review. The Working Group considered that as the first step, it should look into any changes in the job nature, job duties, responsibilities and workload of the two grades that may have taken place since then which warrant adjustments to the grade structures, entry requirements or pay scales.

3.8 MD has advised that the nature of the professional duties that officers of the two grades are now to discharge remains essentially the same as in the last review. That said, there has been an increase in complexity of the job duties, level of responsibilities and workload of the two grades, as evidenced by the need to keep pace with the changing standards and requirements promulgated by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) and relevant bodies, the growing demands arising from an increase in sea traffic within Hong Kong waters and in the volume of passenger throughput, as well as a rapid growth in the number of ships registered in the Hong Kong Shipping Register.

International Maritime Organisation

3.9 Being an international maritime hub and an associate member of the IMO, Hong Kong has to follow and enforce IMO standards which are under continuous updating. Taking one of the key IMO conventions, the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), as an example, SOLAS has made more than 40 amendments, introduced six new chapters as well as some other systems and regimes since 1990. As IMO standards encompass a wide spectrum of technical and legal aspects, including maritime safety and security, ship/port interface, prevention of marine pollution, liability and compensation matters, both the MO and SoS grades have to refine their areas of competence and acquire new knowledge in response to updated IMO standards. The introduction of tighter controls and additional requirements for the maritime industry inevitably increases the complexity and level of responsibilities of the two grades.

Sea traffic of Hong Kong

3.10 Since 1990, the number and size of visiting vessels especially river trade vessels have increased continuously. Marine works in the waters of Hong Kong, coupled with a large amount of dumb steel lighters, tug boats and work barges, have also impacted on the traffic pattern. These circumstances have brought about rising challenges to traffic management policies and strategies as well as their enforcement in Hong Kong's busy waterways. Over the years, there have been increasing requirements and pressure on implementation of new traffic management measures, deployment of on-scene patrol, better coordination of marine works, provision of vessel traffic services, enforcement against non-compliance of local or international regulations and realignment of fairways and anchorages.

3.11 The following figures provided by MD illustrate the impact on workload brought about by the changing circumstances since 1990 –

	Year			
	1990	2000	2010	2016
Ships Registered in HK (gross tonnage in million)	6.3	10.4	56.1	107.6
Vessels Arrivals				
Ocean-going vessels (number / 000' NRT [#])	20 360 / 110 231	37 680 / 243 256	32 645 / 401 831	27 642 / 409 453
River trade vessels (number / 000' NRT)	102 440 / 19 633	178 980 / 57 350	179 168 / 109 049	157 369 / 112 186

NRT denotes net registered ton.

3.12 Whilst there has been no fundamental change in the job nature of the MO and SoS grades, there has indeed been an increase in complexity of the job duties, level of responsibilities and workload of the two grades since the 1989 Salary Structure Review. Moreover, subsequent to the collision of vessels incident near Lamma Island in 2012, MD has undertaken a comprehensive, systemic review and reform. Under the supervision of the Steering Committee on Systemic Reform of the Marine Department (Steering Committee), MD has implemented a series of marine safety measures and enhanced the business process and work procedures of the Department. Details of such measures and enhancements can be found in the Final Report of the Steering Committee issued in April 2016. MD will have to continue to face up to the challenges, and being the core professional grades in the Department, the MO and SoS grades will even be more pivotal in enhancing the Department's capabilities to discharge its functions and responsibilities.

Manpower Situation

3.13 One of the key considerations in this GSR is whether there are persistent or foreseeable problems in the manpower situation. The Working Group has looked into the matter in terms of recruitment, vacancy and succession.

Recruitment

3.14 MD has provided the Commission with the outcome of its previous four recruitment exercises for the MO and SoS ranks –

MO[#]

Date of Recruitment Exercise	Target Number of Recruits	Number of Applications Received / Applicants Invited for Interview	Number of Offers Made	Number of Offers Declined	Number of Candidates Reported for Duty
February 2014	10	27 / 7	3	0	3
January 2015	11	23 / 8	4	2	2
December 2015	10	37 / 11	3	1	2
November 2016	12	74 / 14	3	0	3

[#] New recruitment exercise for the MO rank was launched in May 2017 and the result is pending.

SoS[^]

Date of Recruitment Exercise	Target Number of Recruits	Number of Applications Received / Applicants Invited for Interview	Number of Offers Made	Number of Offers Declined	Number of Candidates Reported for Duty
November 2013	8	28 / 6	4	0	4
January 2015	7	46 / 9	5	1	4
February 2016	10	54 / 19	5	1	4
January 2017	9	74 / 18	3	0	3*

[^] New recruitment exercise for the SoS rank was launched in September 2017 and the result is pending.

* Preliminary figure. Besides one new recruit who has reported for duty, two more candidates are expected to report for duty in November 2017.

Vacancy: Establishment and strength

3.15 The establishment and strength of the two grades as at 31 March 2017 are as follows –

MO

Rank	Establishment	Strength	Vacancy (%)
MO	36	20	16 (44%)
SMO	19	14	5 (26%)
Overall (non-directorate ranks)	55	34	21 (38%)

SoS

Rank	Establishment	Strength	Vacancy (%)
SoS	35	24	11 (31%)
SSoS	18	15	3 (17%)
Overall (non-directorate ranks)	53	39	14 (26%)

Succession

3.16 As at 31 March 2017, the succession situation of the directorate and senior officers in MD was as follows –

Rank	Strength	Average Age	Retire in 3 Years	Retire in 4 or 5 Years
DD of M/AD of M	5	57.8	4	1
PMO	5	56.6	3	1
PSoS	7	57.4	5	2
Overall (directorate ranks)	17	-	12	4
SMO	14	55.9	9	2
SSoS	15	54.0	4	4
Overall (senior ranks)	29	-	13	6

Note: The number of unnatural wastage has been on the low side. In the past three years, the number of resignation was one for the MO grade and nil for the SoS grade.

3.17 The Working Group also notes that the average length of service for an MO to earn promotion to SMO is about 18 years and the average length of service for an SoS to earn promotion to SSoS is about seven years.

3.18 Paragraphs 3.14 to 3.17 above reveal the following –

- (a) Recruitment – During the last four recruitment exercises conducted for the MO and SoS ranks respectively, on average MD only successfully recruited 2.5 MOs (out of a target number of 10 – 12) and 3.8 SoSs (out of a target number of 7 – 10) in each exercise. This is notwithstanding the various stop-gap measures that have been implemented to cast the net wider (including relaxation of the language proficiency requirement and waiving/relaxation of entry requirement on working experience through sub-entry point).
- (b) Vacancy – As at 31 March 2017, the vacancy rates of the MO and SoS ranks were 44% and 31% respectively. At the non-directorate level, the vacancy rates of the MO and SoS grades were 38% and 26% respectively.
- (c) Succession – As at 31 March 2017, the average age of directorate officers was above 55. Twelve out of the 17 directorate officers will, under normal circumstances, retire in three years' time, and 16 of these 17 directorate officers will retire in five years' time. At the same time, the average ages of SMOs and SSoSs were about 56 and 54 respectively. Nine out of the 14 SMOs and four out of the 15 SSoSs will retire in three years' time, whilst 11 out of the 14 SMOs and eight out of the 15 SSoSs will retire in five years' time.

Chapter 4

Analysis and Recommendations

4.1 On the basis of the manpower statistics as set out in Chapter 3, the Working Group concludes, and the Commission agrees, that the MO and SoS grades are facing acute recruitment and succession problems. In none of the recent recruitment exercises could MD identify sufficient candidates to meet its recruitment target, and the recruitment difficulties are further aggravated by the fact that some offers were declined. On average, MD only successfully recruited 2.5 MOs (out of a target number of 10 – 12) and 3.8 SoSs (out of a target number of 7 – 10) in each exercise.

4.2 The Commission understands from MD that the manpower shortage problem of the MO and SoS grades has been persistent. Indeed, MD has drawn up stop-gap measures to help alleviate the manpower shortage problem. To cast a wider net in recruitment, MD has adjusted the entry requirement on applicants' working experience through sub-entry point and relaxed the language proficiency requirement. Yet, the number of candidates found suitable for MO and SoS posts remained to be small and the number of new recruits were still insufficient to tackle the manpower shortage.

4.3 The Commission also notes the high vacancy rates of the MO and SoS grades (i.e. 38% and 26% respectively). The situation is far from healthy and positive action is definitely required.

4.4 As mentioned in paragraph 3.4, MO and SoS recruits are required to possess the relevant professional qualification and working experience. By the time a maritime practitioner has attained the professional qualification and accumulated the required working experience in the private sector, the practitioner will have established a steady professional career. The Commission understands from MD that as revealed in the recruitment exercises, only when a maritime professional decides to have a career change and look for a land-based job will he apply for the post of MO or SoS. This explains why in general the age of new recruits of the MO and SoS ranks is on the high side (many are above 40). Judging from the age profiles and the projected wastage figures, the Commission notes that the two grades will be facing severe succession

problems at the promotion ranks. If the recruitment difficulties are not addressed, the number of new intakes in the years ahead will not be sufficient to meet the normal wastage of the two grades.

4.5 In order to address the recruitment and succession difficulties, MD management has put forth a package of proposals –

- (a) creating a new assistant rank each for the MO and SoS grades;
- (b) varying the entry requirement and pay scale of the MO rank; and
- (c) varying the entry requirement of the Ship stream of the SoS rank (SoS(Ship)).

Analysis and Recommendations

4.6 The Commission has carefully considered the proposals put forth by MD management, taking into account stakeholders' views as well as other relevant considerations. We set out our analysis and recommendations in the ensuing paragraphs.

Creating a new assistant rank for MO and SoS grades

Overall grade structure

4.7 MD proposes to create a new tier of rank (i.e. Assistant Marine Officer (AMO) and Assistant Surveyor of Ships (ASoS)) each for the MO and SoS grades. The aim is to attract younger candidates with good potential but who are not yet fully qualified for entry at the MO/SoS rank under the current entry requirements.

4.8 The MO and SoS grades are classified under Qualification Group (QG) 7 (Professional and Related Grades) (Group I). More than half of the grades in QG 7 (i.e. 30 of 52) have in their grade structures an assistant rank. Assistant ranks are common in the Engineer grade and

related grades. Nine Engineer grade and related grades² have an assistant rank. In the engineering field, there has been a well-established route for grooming these assistant rank officers to take up professional duties through further training or study and after gaining experience in the related disciplines.

4.9 The Commission understands that Hong Kong's maritime sector has been facing an acute shortage of maritime professionals, primarily due to a general lack of interest to work on board ocean-going vessels amongst young people. In addition, among the students who pursue a study in logistics or maritime programmes, few opt for sea-going deck cadet training. The supply of home-grown trained seafarers has been limited and experienced maritime professionals are much sought after in the global maritime market. MD has to compete with the private sector in a global market for a small pool of suitable candidates.

4.10 Against the above backdrop, the Commission sees a strong case for changing the recruitment approach to attract talents to join MD. With reference to the Engineer grade and related grades, the Commission agrees with MD that the Department should look for younger candidates with good potential and that the proposed creation of assistant ranks for the MO and SoS grades will be a sensible option. This proposal will help address the ageing concern and succession problem of the two grades.

4.11 The Commission therefore **recommends** the creation of the AMO and ASoS ranks for the two grades.

Proposed entry requirements of assistant ranks

4.12 To achieve the basic aim of creating the assistant ranks (i.e. to attract younger candidates with good potential), MD has examined in particular the professional qualifications and experience required of these assistant ranks. MD suggests the following entry requirements –

² The grades are Building Services Engineer, Electrical and Mechanical Engineer, Electrical Engineer, Electronics Engineer, Engineer, Geotechnical Engineer, Mechanical Engineer, Structural Engineer and Telecommunications Engineer.

AMO Rank	
Stream	Entry requirements -
-	(a) a CoC (Deck Officer) Class 3 or above; and (b) a degree in a relevant discipline or a qualification which satisfies the academic requirements for Chartership of the Institute of Marine Engineering, Science and Technology (IMarEST) ³ .
ASoS Rank	
Stream	Entry requirements -
Engineer & Ship	(a) a CoC (Marine Engineer Officer) Class 3 or above; and (b) a degree in a relevant engineering discipline or a qualification which satisfies the academic requirements for Corporate Membership of the Hong Kong Institution of Engineers (HKIE) ⁴ .
Nautical	(a) a CoC (Deck Officer) Class 3 or above; and (b) a degree in a relevant discipline or a qualification which satisfies the academic requirements for Chartership of the IMarEST.
Ship	A degree in naval architecture or related technology, or a qualification which satisfies the academic requirements for Corporate Membership of the HKIE.

Basic CoC qualification at CoC Class 3

4.13 As mentioned in paragraph 3.4, at present, entry into the MO and SoS ranks normally requires a CoC Class 1, which is the highest class attainable. All holders of CoC Class 1 have substantial sea-going experience and passed all the examinations of the three levels. These are stringent requirements to meet.

³ IMarEST is an international professional body and learned society for marine professionals. It provides grades of membership for those seeking to become chartered or gain other professional recognition.

⁴ HKIE has its mission of promoting the advancement of engineering and to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and ideas. It provides a broad range of services to members, including the award of various classes of membership.

4.14 The Commission acknowledges that the manpower shortage of the MO and SoS grades is partly attributable to the stringent entry requirements of the basic ranks of both grades (i.e. MO and SoS ranks). Furthermore, the Commission notes that the existing entry requirements of the MO and SoS ranks were introduced a long time ago and were then comparable to similar posts in many overseas port authorities. A study commissioned by MD reveals that other authorities such as those in Singapore and the UK have realigned the entry requirements for similar ranks in their respective administrations and now put less emphasis on the length of sea-going experience and the class of professional qualifications that candidates have gained.

4.15 Under MD's proposal, for entry into the AMO rank as well as the Engineer & Ship stream and Nautical stream of the ASoS rank, candidates must possess a professional qualification at CoC Class 3 at the minimum. CoC Class 3 is an internationally recognised maritime-related qualification at the basic level. In order to obtain a CoC Class 3, candidates should possess a minimum period of 12 months sea-service on ocean-going vessels (depending on the remission they are entitled to) and have passed an examination. As for ASoS(Ship), similar to SoS(Ship), a degree in naval architecture is required but in the light of its job nature, sea-going experience is not essential.

4.16 In order to enable them to acquire the necessary knowledge and attain the required level of competency for undertaking the full range of duties of the MO and SoS ranks, MD will provide designated training programmes to groom junior officers at the assistant rank. Upon successful completion of the training programmes, these officers will obtain a certification from a professional institution (i.e. Chartership of the IMarEST or Corporate Membership of the HKIE). The training programmes will last for about four years.

4.17 According to MD's plan, in the future after the assistant ranks are created, it can appoint MOs/SoSs by promotion or direct entry. Officers who join at the AMO/ASoS ranks and complete the designated training programmes and obtain a professional recognition could be considered for promotion to the MO/SoS ranks. MD will at the same time continue with the existing arrangements of recruiting holders of CoC Class 1 who have substantial sea-going experience for direct entry at the MO/SoS ranks. The Commission agrees with MD's assessment that this

arrangement will strengthen the two grades and be conducive to their long-term development.

Academic qualification

4.18 A degree in a relevant discipline is currently the academic requirement for entry to all streams of the SoS rank. As the SoS grade will continue to be a feeder grade for MD's senior directorates, MD considers it appropriate for the SoS grade to continue to be made up of members with academic qualifications at the degree level in a relevant discipline. The academic qualification required for entry at the proposed ASoS rank (the holders of which could be promoted to senior ranks in the grade) should therefore be pitched at the degree level as well.

4.19 Currently, no academic qualification is specified for entry to the MO rank. In the light of the development of tertiary education and of the fact that the MO grade is a feeder grade for its senior directorates, MD suggests that an academic qualification at the degree level should be set for recruits to the AMO rank. This academic qualification requirement can better ensure that appointees are with a solid foundation for continuous learning and development to keep pace with the ever-increasing job complexity.

4.20 In examining MD's proposed entry requirements, the Commission considers it necessary to strike an appropriate balance between the need to attract a sufficient pool of candidates to apply for the job and the professional requirements of the job. The Commission notes that upgrading the academic requirement for port authority officials to the degree level is the international trend and also commensurate with the job requirements of the MO and SoS grades in MD. At the same time, the utility of the proposed assistant ranks will to a large extent hinge on the effectiveness of the designated training programmes, which are necessary to prepare the relatively junior talents to develop the core competencies required for taking up additional responsibilities at the professional ranks and beyond as they progress along the career path.

4.21 In the light of the above, the Commission **recommends** that the specific entry requirements of the AMO and ASoS ranks be set as detailed in paragraph 4.12 above.

Designated training programmes

4.22 Under MD's proposal, ASoS(Engineer & Ship) and ASoS(Ship) will receive training approved by the HKIE for obtaining Corporate Membership, whilst AMO and ASoS(Nautical) will receive training accredited by the IMarEST for obtaining Chartership. The training programmes will comprise on-the-job training, studies on sub-disciplines of maritime operations, and attachment to shipping companies/on sea-going vessels or ship surveying training in classification societies⁵. Upon completion of the training programmes, the assistant rank officers are expected to obtain Chartership from the IMarEST or Corporate Membership from the HKIE (as appropriate) and attain the competency level required for the professional ranks in about four years.

4.23 The HKIE sets standards for the training and admission of engineers and awards various classes of membership to engineers in various engineering disciplines, including building, civil, electrical, marine and naval architecture, mechanical, etc. Most employers in Hong Kong (including the Government) recognise Corporate Membership of the HKIE for employment of professional engineers. The IMarEST is an international professional body and learned society for marine professionals, which provides grades of membership for those seeking to become chartered. The Commission is of the view that MD's collaboration with the above institutions should help assistant rank officers attain the required level of competency with professional recognition in the field.

4.24 During the Commission's staff engagement, some SoS grade members commented that well-designed training programmes with robust quality assurance have to be put in place. Some MO grade members also suggested that the training programmes will be critical in equipping AMOs with the required level of competency for undertaking the duties of the MO rank.

4.25 The Commission agrees to these staff views. As the training programmes are indispensable for grooming the relatively junior AMOs

⁵ Classification societies are non-governmental organisations that establish and maintain technical standards for the construction and operation of ships (and offshore structures). They validate if ships are constructed up to the applicable standards, carry out regular surveys of ships in service to ensure compliance with the standards.

and ASoSs to undertake the full range of duties of the MO and SoS ranks in the course of time, the Commission **recommends** that MD consider meticulously the contents of the designated training programmes and obtain accreditation from the IMarEST and HKIE for the programmes. These steps should be completed before recruitment exercises for AMO and ASoS are launched.

Progression arrangement and combined establishment

4.26 MD proposes that newly appointed assistant rank officers will be on probation for three years or for the time taken for him to complete the training and obtain the requisite qualification, whichever is the longer, subject to a maximum of five years. Assistant rank officers are expected to obtain the necessary professional recognition upon successful completion of the designated training programmes and attain the required level of competency for undertaking professional duties. They would be qualified for advancement to the MO/SoS rank through a promotion step, subject to meeting other necessary requirements set by the appointment authority (e.g. character, performance and potential).

4.27 MD also proposes that the proposed assistant ranks should form a combined establishment of “AMO/MO” and “ASoS/SoS”. The progression arrangement and combined establishment proposed by MD are common for other professional grades in QG 7. The Commission understands that for grades with assistant ranks, there is a conscious policy and practical need to attract people to join the Government at an early stage, with a view to retaining them when they have acquired the technical or professional qualifications to carry out the full range of duties at a higher level. It is not necessary for departments to prescribe a specific proportion of officers at the assistant and professional ranks under combined establishment.

4.28 Combined establishment provides flexibility for MD to have intakes at assistant ranks and professional ranks to form its professional teams. MD is of the view that this arrangement will strengthen the two grades and be conducive to their long-term development. The Commission agrees to MD’s views and therefore **recommends** that newly appointed assistant rank officers be on probation for three years or for the time taken for him to complete the training and obtain the requisite qualification, whichever is the longer, subject to a maximum of five years;

and that the proposed assistant ranks form a combined establishment of “AMO/MO” and “ASoS/SoS”.

4.29 Some staff have expressed that MD should not recruit too many assistant rank officers at one time. Otherwise, serving officers may be overburdened in providing on-the-job coaching to newly recruited assistant rank officers and this may result in another retirement wave some years down the road. While agreeing that it would be impossible to prescribe a ratio between assistant and professional rank officers at this stage, some other staff consider that MD management should adopt a prudent approach. The Commission trusts that MD would keep under constant review the appropriate split between the number of assistant and professional rank officers, taking into account the operational need of MD as well as the sentiments of serving officers.

Proposed pay scales of assistant ranks

4.30 MD proposes that the pay scales of AMO, ASoS(Engineer & Ship), ASoS(Nautical) be set at MPS Points 19-27, and the pay scale of ASoS(Ship) be set at MPS Points 16-27. The Commission has considered these proposals in the light of the established pay principles.

4.31 There are 22 assistant ranks in QG 7 (Group I) and their starting pays are pitched at MPS Point 16, 18 or 19, with a majority at MPS Point 18; and their maximum pay points are identical (i.e. pitched at MPS Point 27).

4.32 The Commission notes that for assistant ranks which do not require any training and/or experience, their starting pays are pitched at MPS Point 16. For assistant ranks which require a longer period of training and/or experience, their starting pays are generally higher. For assistant ranks which normally require two to three years of training and/or experience, their starting pays are pitched at MPS Point 18 or 19.

AMO, ASoS(Engineer & Ship) and ASoS(Nautical)

4.33 The proposed entry requirement for AMO, ASoS(Engineer & Ship) and ASoS(Nautical), on top of a degree qualification, is passing of the CoC Class 3 examination, which requires candidates to possess a minimum period of 12 months’ sea-service on ocean-going vessels.

4.34 The Commission understands that whilst it is common to have an additional requirement on training and experience, the requirement to possess a professional qualification, albeit at a basic level (i.e. CoC Class 3), is unique at the assistant rank level. For existing professional grades with assistant ranks, the fully qualified officer (upon passing the professional assessment) may be appointed to the professional ranks; while those without the professional qualification may be appointed at the assistant ranks. Hence, the Commission considers it inappropriate to compare mechanically the proposed experience and professional requirements with those of the existing assistant ranks. This notwithstanding, arguably, the proposed experience and professional requirements may be considered as broadly comparable to a minimum period of two or three years of training and/or experience (taking into account the need to prepare for and pass the CoC Class 3 examination). With reference to the pay scales of other assistant ranks, the Commission **recommends** that the pay scales of AMO, ASoS(Engineer & Ship) and ASoS(Nautical) all be set at MPS Points 19-27.

ASoS(Ship)

4.35 The Commission notes, and agrees to, MD's rationale for pitching the starting pay for ASoS(Ship) at MPS Point 16, as only a degree in a relevant discipline is required for entry. The Commission **recommends** that the pay scale of ASoS(Ship) be set at MPS Points 16-27.

Varying entry requirement and pay scale of MO rank

Entry requirement of MO rank

4.36 MD proposes to lay down an academic entry requirement at the degree level for the MO rank. As set out in paragraph 4.26, in the future, MOs may be appointed by promotion from the AMO rank or direct entry. The two sets of requirements are set out below –

By promotion	By direct entry
(a) a degree in a relevant discipline; (b) a CoC Class 3 or above; (c) Chartership of the IMarEST upon successful completion of MD's designated training programmes; and (d) being found suitable for promotion in all aspects as decided by the appointment authority.	(a) a degree in a relevant discipline; (b) a CoC Class 1; and (c) one year's experience as Chief Officer or above on sea-going ships.

4.37 The justifications for specifying a degree qualification as a mandatory requirement for AMO are set out in paragraph 4.19 above. Under MD's proposal, MOs appointed by promotion should normally possess a degree qualification. As for the appointment of MOs via direct entry, MD considers it suitable to align the academic requirement of the MO rank with that of the AMO rank (i.e. possession of a relevant degree).

4.38 The Commission understands from MD that upgrading the academic requirement for the port authority officials to degree level is the international trend and also commensurate with the job requirements of the MO grade in MD. A formal training and attainment of academic qualification at the degree level would ensure that MO grade staff could keep pace with the international requirements, and are with a solid foundation for continuous learning and further development. MD management has also highlighted the importance of possessing a degree qualification given that the MO grade is a feeder grade for the senior directorate ranks in MD.

4.39 Taking into account the above considerations, the Commission **recommends** the introduction of an academic entry requirement, a degree in a relevant discipline, to the MO rank.

Pay scale of MO rank

4.40 MD proposes that the starting pay of the MO rank should be increased from MPS Point 29 to 34. The omitted points should be

repositioned from MPS Points 31, 35, 38 to MPS Point 36. With the proposed changes, the pay scale of the MO rank will be aligned with that of the SoS rank.

4.41 In conducting past reviews, the Commission has come to the view that in situations where a grade experiences persistent difficulties in recruitment or retention, it may be necessary to alleviate them by introducing pay-related measures. In the 2008 GSR, the Commission recommended that the starting pay of the VO rank should be raised in recognition of a significant increase in the complexity of work and level of responsibilities of the VO rank and the persistent recruitment and retention difficulties.

4.42 The statistics of the previous four recruitment exercises of the MO grade clearly show that it is facing persistent and serious recruitment difficulties. Against the target of ten to 12 new MO recruits, MD only successfully recruited an average of 2.5 MOs in each exercise. As at 31 March 2017, the vacancy rate of the MO rank was at a high level of 44%. This is clearly not satisfactory. The starting pay of the MO rank is the lowest among the professional ranks in QG 7 (Group I). The Commission therefore considers that there is a case to improve the starting pay of the MO rank to help address the proven serious and persistent recruitment difficulties. Such an improvement in pay would also be in step with the proposed raising of the entry requirement of the MO rank from no academic qualification required to possession of a relevant degree.

4.43 As for the magnitude of the increase, MD proposes to raise the starting pay of the MO rank from MPS Point 29 to 34. With this proposed change, the pay scale of the MO rank will be aligned with that of the SoS rank. The Commission notes that the starting pay of the SoS rank is the highest among the professional ranks, and that the SoS rank is the only rank with a starting pay at MPS Point 34 in QG 7 (Group I). In fact, the starting pays of the majority of the professional ranks is pitched at MPS Point 32. Instead of raising the starting pay of the MO rank to MPS Point 34, the Commission **recommends** that the starting pay of the MO rank be increased from MPS Point 29 to 32.

4.44 In view of the proposed change of the starting pay, the Commission **recommends** that the existing omitted points be repositioned from MPS Points 31, 35, 38 to MPS Points 34 and 38, such that the number

and positions of the omitted points will be aligned with those applied to most of the other professional ranks with the same starting pay.

Varying entry requirement of SoS(Ship)

4.45 For entry into SoS(Ship), MD also proposes taking the opportunity to adjust the post-corporate membership experience requirement from four to two years. With the proposed change, the experience requirement of SoS(Ship) will be the same as those of the Engineer & Ship stream and the Nautical stream.

4.46 According to MD, for entry into SoS(Ship), the existing requirement of four years' post-corporate membership experience is too stringent. Candidates for SoS(Ship) posts have to first obtain a relevant degree in naval architecture or a related technology. They then need to obtain the corporate membership and accumulate four years' post-corporate membership experience in the relevant field to fulfill the entry requirements. As no degree programme in naval architecture is available in Hong Kong and there are no longer any major shipyards in Hong Kong, students who wish to obtain such a qualification have to study and accumulate the required working experience in shipyards overseas. Furthermore, the number of overseas universities offering such degree courses is on the decline. Against this background, the supply of candidates for SoS(Ship) has been very limited. MD is competing in a global market for a small pool of suitable candidates who possess the required qualification and experience in the naval architecture field. In view of the severe recruitment difficulties of SoS(Ship), lowering the post-corporate membership experience requirement could be a pragmatic way to attract more candidates to apply without compromising the performance expected of successful appointees.

4.47 In reviewing the pay scale of the SoS rank, the Commission has taken into account the recruitment situation of the rank. Similar to the MO rank, the SoS rank is also encountering recruitment difficulties. Against the target ranging from seven to ten new recruits in recent recruitment exercises, MD only successfully recruited an average of 3.8 SoSs in each exercise. As at 31 March 2017, the vacancy rate of the SoS rank was at a high level of 31%. Yet, as the starting pay of the SoS rank is already the highest among the professional ranks in QG 7, there is little room to improve the prevailing pay of the rank. As for SoS(Ship), MD

faces immense difficulties in recruiting SoS in this stream due to the acute shortage of professionals with the required expertise. Hence, the Commission considers it justified to keep the starting pay of SoS(Ship) at a competitive (i.e. the current) level.

4.48 Taking into account the above considerations, the Commission agrees with MD that it is not realistic to impose an overly stringent entry requirement on post-corporate membership experience for SoS(Ship). The Commission therefore **recommends** that for entry into SoS(Ship), the post-corporate membership experience requirement be reduced from four to two years; and that the existing pay scale of the SoS rank (i.e. MPS Points 34-44 with an omitted point at MPS Point 36) remain unchanged.

Senior ranks

4.49 For senior ranks in a grade, under the broadbanding principles adopted in previous reviews, the major criterion for setting the pay scales is the level of responsibility exercised by officers of those ranks. In these ranks, the managerial, administrative or professional responsibilities are the most important aspects of the duties performed and they tend to outweigh other features of individual grades. For the highest ranks of the non-directorate civil service, the particular type of qualification associated with an individual grade is of little relevance in pay determination. All senior professional ranks are therefore broadbanded with a common pay scale. In line with this principle, the existing pay scales for the SMO and SSoS ranks (MPS Points 45-49) are broadbanded with, and hence identical to, that of all other senior professional ranks in the group. The Commission therefore **recommends** that the existing pay scales of the SMO and SSoS ranks remain unchanged.

Conversion Arrangement

4.50 If the starting pay of the MO rank is raised to ease recruitment difficulties of the grade, it is necessary to consider the conversion arrangement for incumbent staff. In this connection, the overriding principle is that no one should receive less pay on conversion to the new scale. In line with the established practice, the Commission **recommends** that normal conversion arrangement be adopted for the proposed adjustment to the pay scale of the MO rank. Under this arrangement, where a civil servant's pay is less than the minimum of the revised scale, he

should receive the new minimum; where a civil servant's pay is equivalent to or above the new minimum, he should advance to the next point on the revised scale, subject to this not being above the scale maximum. In implementing the proposal to reposition omitted points, the Government should draw up the conversion arrangement for serving staff, having regard to the established practice as appropriate.

Other Related Issues

Supply of maritime professionals

4.51 The limited supply of maritime professionals is an industry-wide phenomenon and one of the key factors contributing to the recruitment difficulties of the MO and SoS grades. The recruitment difficulties of the two grades could not be resolved merely by changes to their grade structures. The Commission notes that the Government has been encouraging young people to pursue a career in the maritime industry. For example, the Transport and Housing Bureau launched a \$100-million Maritime and Aviation Training Fund (Fund) in April 2014 to provide support to youngsters and encourage more of them to join the maritime industry. In particular, the Sea-going Training Incentive Scheme (SGTIS) under the Fund offers a monthly subsidy of \$6,000 to deck or engine room cadets on ocean-going vessels for a maximum period of 18 months. In addition, MD has recently launched a thematic website on the maritime industry, which introduces the various aspects of work in the industry as well as the career pathways of some grades in MD including the MO and SoS grades.

4.52 Some staff have commented that the SGTIS is very useful. A staff member shared with the Working Group his own personal experience: without the subsidy, he might not have pursued a seafaring career given the relatively low salary of sea-going cadet at the beginning of the career.

4.53 The Commission suggests that the Government be invited to intensify its efforts in attracting young people to join the maritime industry. The Government may consider such measures as providing financial support to encourage young people with potential to join the industry, for instance offering scholarships for outstanding students undertaking maritime-related degree programmes, particularly naval architecture programmes.

4.54 To encourage maritime professionals to join MD, MD should continue to promote the image of the MO and SoS grade officers and widely publicise the career opportunities. MD should proactively reach out to students who are studying maritime-related programmes or those who may be interested in a sea-going career. Where possible, MD should keep track of potential candidates for MO and SoS posts, and offer advice to them on career choices. In view of the absence of a degree programme in naval architecture in Hong Kong, MD may also establish contacts with potential candidates for SoS(Ship) posts through liaison with overseas universities offering such programmes.

Support to serving staff

4.55 In conducting the GSR, the Commission has come across issues which are not directly related to the structure of the two grades but are of relevance to the internal operation of MD. These issues are set out below for the Government's consideration and follow-up as appropriate.

4.56 Some staff have raised concerns on the availability of additional resources that are necessary to cope with the additional workload arising from providing on-the-job training and coaching to AMOs/ASoSs. Some staff also express their wish for having enhanced administrative support to discharge their duties amidst their heavy workload. In this connection, MD may consider, in the process of re-engineering its business processes and procedures, measures for enhancing operational efficiency such as optimising the use of information technology.

4.57 The Commission is fully aware that it will take quite some time for the main proposal of creating the two assistant ranks to achieve its full effect. In view of the present serious succession problem of the MO and SoS grades, MD may consider a robust approach in succession planning in the interim. Consideration may be given to identifying officers with good potential and providing them with all-round training with a view to grooming them for senior posts. In addition, MD should make use of the Post-retirement Service Contract Scheme in retaining the services of serving officers beyond their normal retirement age to pass on their valuable experience to junior officers. MD may also explore if there is room to flexibly deploy human resources tools to smoothen recruitment procedures.

Chapter 5

Concluding Remarks and Acknowledgements

Concluding Remarks

5.1 Having the benefit of reviewing the written submissions received, meeting with the management of MD and the relevant staff associations and visiting a number of facilities in MD, Members of the Commission have gained a better understanding of the challenges the MO and SoS grade officers are facing. The Commission is pleased to note that MD management has been keeping staff informed of the progress of the GSR. The staff associations of the two grades (i.e. the MOA and HKMDLPOA) are supportive of the proposed directions of change. The Commission also understands that the proposed creation of an assistant rank for each of the MO and SoS grades is supported by the HKSGOA and HKCCSA.

5.2 Today, Hong Kong is one of the leading international maritime hubs in the world. This remarkable achievement would not have been possible without the support of and professional services rendered by staff in MD. The Commission is confident that its recommendations when implemented will help alleviate the manpower shortage of the two grades, which will in turn enhance the delivery of services to the public by the Department.

5.3 As pointed out in the preceding Chapter, the main proposal of creating the assistant ranks will take some time to achieve its full effect. The Commission understands that MD will look into the existing establishment of the MO and SoS grades and examine if manpower and other resources are sufficient to meet challenges ahead and cope with the additional workload arising from the need to provide on-the-job training and coaching for assistant rank officers. The Commission encourages the Government to consider whether there is scope for enhancing the resource provisions for MD where necessary and justified.

Acknowledgements

5.4 The Commission would like to express our sincere gratitude to all parties which have contributed to the GSR. We would like to thank both the management of MD and the staff bodies for providing us with information and written submissions which have been of great assistance to our deliberation. We have received every co-operation and assistance from them, which enable us to gain a better understanding of the operation of the department and challenges faced by the MO and SoS grades. We would also like to thank the Steering Committee for sharing with us their valuable insights.

5.5 The Commission would also like to record our appreciation to the staff of the Joint Secretariat for their hard work and unfailing support throughout the exercise.

Standing Commission on Civil Service Salaries and Conditions of Service

Terms of Reference

- I. To advise and make recommendations to the Chief Executive in respect of the non-Directorate Civil Service, other than the Judiciary and the Disciplined Services, on –
- (a) the principles and practices governing grade, rank and salary structure;
 - (b) the salary and structure of individual grades;
 - (c) whether overall reviews of pay scales (as opposed to reviews of the salary of individual grades) should continue to be based on surveys of pay trends in the private sector conducted by the Pay Survey and Research Unit, or whether some other mechanisms should be substituted;
 - (d) the methodology for surveys of pay trends in the private sector conducted by the Pay Survey and Research Unit, subject to advice under I(c) and having regard to the advice of the Pay Trend Survey Committee;
 - (e) matters relating to those benefits, other than salary, which the Commission advises as being relevant to the determination of the civil service remuneration package, including the introduction of new benefits or proposed changes to existing benefits;
 - (f) suitable procedures and machinery to enable staff associations and staff to discuss with management their views on matters within the terms of reference of the Commission;
 - (g) the circumstances in which it would be appropriate for the Commission itself to consider any issue, and how staff associations and management might present their views to the Commission in such circumstances; and
 - (h) such matters as the Chief Executive may refer to the Commission.

II. The Commission shall keep the matters within its terms of reference under continuing review, and recommend to the Chief Executive any necessary changes.

III. The Commission shall give due weight to any wider community interest, including financial and economic considerations, which in its view are relevant.

IV. The Commission shall give due weight to the need for good staff relations within the Civil Service, and in tendering its advice shall be free to make any recommendations which would contribute to this end.

V. In considering its recommendations and advice, the Commission shall not prejudice the 1968 Agreement between the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and the Main Staff Associations (1998 Adapted Version).

VI. The staff associations making up the Staff Side of the Senior Civil Service Council and the Model Scale 1 Staff Consultative Council may jointly or individually refer matters relating to civil service salaries or conditions of service to the Commission.

VII. The heads of departments may refer matters relating to the structure, salaries or conditions of service of individual grades to the Commission.

VIII. The Commission shall not consider cases of individual officers.

IX. The Commission may wish to consider in the light of experience whether changes in its composition or role are desirable.

X. In carrying out its terms of reference, the Commission should ensure that adequate opportunities are provided for staff associations and management to express their views. The Commission may also receive views from other bodies which in its view have a direct interest.

Membership of the Commission

Chairman

Dr Wilfred Wong Ying-wai, GBS, JP

Members

Mr T C Chan, BBS, JP

Mr Lee Luen-fai

Mr Lee Ming-kwai, GBS

Ms Angela Lee Wai-yin, BBS, JP

Mr Joseph Lo Kin-ching

Ms Elaine Lo Yuen-man

Professor Suen Wing-chuen, JP

Mr Tony Tse Wai-chuen, BBS

Dr Carrie Willis Yau Sheung-mui, SBS, JP

Mr Wilfred Wong Kam-pui, JP

List of Meetings / Visit Conducted by the Commission

	Date
Commission / Working Group Meetings	6 February 2017 1 March 2017 6 June 2017 26 June 2017
Meeting with Departmental Management	
Management of Marine Department	3 April 2017
Meetings with Staff Bodies	
Marine Officers Association (the staff association of the Marine Officer grade)	4 May 2017
Hong Kong Marine Department Local Professional Officers' Association (the staff association of the Surveyor of Ships grade)	4 May 2017
Hong Kong Senior Government Officers Association, Senior Civil Service Council	6 June 2017
Meeting with Other Stakeholder	
Steering Committee on Systemic Reform of the Marine Department	23 March 2017
Visit to Marine Department (Tours to Marine Department Training Centre, Government Fleet Division and Vessel Traffic Centre)	24 April 2017

List of Submissions Received

Departmental Management

Director of Marine

Staff Bodies

Hong Kong Chinese Civil Servants' Association, Senior Civil Service Council

Hong Kong Marine Department Local Professional Officers' Association

Marine Officers Association

Existing Entry Requirements of Marine Officer and Surveyor of Ships Ranks

<u>Marine Officer rank</u>	
Stream	Entry requirements -
-	<p>(a) a Certificate of Competency (CoC) (Deck Officer) Class 1 (Master Mariner); and</p> <p>(b) one year's experience as Chief Officer or above on a sea-going ship.</p>
<u>Surveyor of Ships rank</u>	
Stream	Entry requirements -
Engineer & Ship	<p>(a) (i) a degree in engineering or technology relevant to the work of the surveyor of ships; or a corporate membership of an engineer institution by examination acceptable to the Director of Marine (D of M); and a CoC (Marine Engineer Officer) Class 1; or</p> <p>(ii) a CoC as Extra First Class Marine Engineer Officer; or</p> <p>(iii) a degree in mechanical/marine engineering or equivalent; a corporate membership of an engineer institution acceptable to the D of M; and a CoC (Marine Engineer Officer) Class 2; and</p> <p>(b) for candidates having qualifications as stipulated in –</p> <p>(i) (a) (i) and (ii) above, two years' experience at the rank of second engineer or above on sea-going ships or at equivalent responsible levels in the maritime engineering related industry; or</p> <p>(ii) (a) (iii) above, four years' experience at the rank of second engineer or above on sea-going ships or at equivalent responsible levels in the marine engineering related industry.</p>

Stream	Entry Requirements -
Nautical	(a) (i) an Extra Master's CoC; or (ii) a degree in nautical studies or related subject acceptable to the D of M; and a CoC (Deck Officer) Class 1 (Master Mariner); and (b) two years' experience at the rank of the Chief Officer or above on sea-going ships or at equivalent responsible levels in the nautical related industry.
Ship	(a) a degree in naval architecture or related technology acceptable to the D of M; (b) a corporate membership of a naval architect institution acceptable to the D of M; and (c) four years' relevant experience after obtaining corporate membership.

Master Pay Scale

(w.e.f. 1 April 2017)

Point	\$	Point	\$
49	124,280	24	44,415
48	119,960	23	42,410
47	115,795	22	40,505
46 (44B)	111,730	21	38,675
45 (44A)	107,870	20	36,830
44	101,070	19	35,085
43	97,560	18	33,425
42	93,540	17	31,855
41	89,675	16	30,320
40	85,970	15	28,865
39	82,425	14	27,485
38	78,775	13	26,160
37	75,320	12	24,675
36 (33C)	71,910	11	23,225
35 (33B)	68,730	10	21,880
34 (33A)	67,270	9	20,650
33	67,065	8	19,395
32	64,055	7	18,205
31	61,170	6	17,080
30	58,425	5	16,065
29	55,825	4	15,055
28	53,300	3	14,140
27	50,900	2	13,270
26	48,630	1	12,480
25	46,445	0	11,735

Annex B

Proposed Entry Requirements of Assistant Ranks

*(Extracted from Report No. 57 of the Standing Commission
“GSR for MO and SoS Grades”)*

AMO Rank	
Stream	Entry requirements -
-	(a) a CoC (Deck Officer) Class 3 or above; and (b) a degree in a relevant discipline or a qualification which satisfies the academic requirements for Chartership of the Institute of Marine Engineering, Science and Technology (IMarEST) ¹ .
ASoS Rank	
Stream	Entry requirements -
Engineer & Ship	(a) a CoC (Marine Engineer Officer) Class 3 or above; and (b) a degree in a relevant engineering discipline or a qualification which satisfies the academic requirements for Corporate Membership of the Hong Kong Institution of Engineers (HKIE) ² .
Nautical	(a) a CoC (Deck Officer) Class 3 or above; and (b) a degree in a relevant discipline or a qualification which satisfies the academic requirements for Chartership of the IMarEST.
Ship	A degree in naval architecture or related technology, or a qualification which satisfies the academic requirements for Corporate Membership of the HKIE.

¹ IMarEST is an international professional body and learned society for marine professionals. It provides grades of membership for those seeking to become chartered or gain other professional recognition.

² HKIE has its mission of promoting the advancement of engineering and to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and ideas. It provides a broad range of services to members, including the award of various classes of membership.

Conversion Arrangements for MO Rank

<u>Existing Pay Scale</u>		<u>Proposed Pay Scale</u>
MPS 44	→	MPS 44
MPS 43	→	MPS 43
MPS 42	→	MPS 42
MPS 41	→	MPS 41
MPS 40	→	MPS 40
MPS 39	→	MPS 39
MPS 38 (omitted point)	→	MPS 38 (omitted point)
MPS 37	→	MPS 37
MPS 36	→	MPS 36
MPS 35 (omitted point)	→	MPS 35
MPS 34	→	MPS 34 (omitted point)
MPS 33	→	MPS 33
MPS 32	→	MPS 32
MPS 31 (omitted point)	→	
MPS 30	→	
MPS 29	→	

MPS: Master Pay Scale

Note: In line with the usual practice, where the pay after conversion is higher than the pay before conversion by **two** pay points or more (omitted points inclusive), the incremental date of the staff concerned will be realigned to the effective date of implementing the new pay scale.