



康樂及文化事務署

Leisure and Cultural Services Department

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2 May 2019

Clerk to the Legislative Council Panel on Public Service
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong
(Attn.: Ms Shirley Hau)

Dear Ms Hau,

**Panel on Public Service
Meeting on 18 February 2019**

Regarding the supplementary information requested by Members at the meeting on 18 February 2019, I enclose the relevant information at Annex for Members' information.

Yours sincerely,

(Mrs Doris FOK)

for Director of Leisure and Cultural Services

**Legislative Council Panel on Public Service
Meeting on 18 February 2019**

Supplementary Information

PURPOSE

At the Legislative Council Panel on Public Service meeting on 18 February 2019, Members requested the Government to provide supplementary information regarding the issues relating to the lifeguards of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD):

- (1) conduct a study on the need for a grade structure review of civil service lifeguards;
 - (2) in light of the changing environments, review the entry requirements of civil service and non-civil service contract (NCSC) lifeguards so as to meet the current operational needs of public swimming pools/gazetted beaches and water sports centres;
 - (3) introduce a new type of job-related allowance for lifeguards who possess qualification of scuba diving so as to attract and retain talents; and
 - (4) assign Amenities Assistants III with life-saving and first aid working experience to manage pools/gazetted beaches and water sports centres.
2. This paper provides the relevant information.

Grade structure review and entry requirements

3. It is the Government's policy that grade structure reviews will only be considered for individual non-directorate civilian civil service grades when the following two criteria are met:
- (1) the grades have proven and persistent recruitment and retention difficulties which cannot be resolved through the regular pay surveys under the Improved Mechanism; or
 - (2) there are fundamental changes to the job nature, job complexity and level of responsibilities of the grades.

4. At present, there are no proven and persistent recruitment and retention difficulties for civil service lifeguards. Recent recruitment experience had shown that the number of candidates always exceeded the number of vacancies and there was adequate supply of suitable candidates to fill the positions. Furthermore, the resignation rate of civil service lifeguards has also been lower than the overall resignation rate of the civil service. Civil service lifeguards therefore do not meet the first criterion.

5. As for the second criterion, civil service lifeguards, as all other civil servants, are required to keep their services for the public abreast of ever changing circumstances. The job nature, job complexity and level of responsibilities of all civil service grades evolve constantly, having regard to policy initiatives, changes in conditions and expectations of the community, technological advancement, etc. While these developments may give rise to increase of workload for the civil service, including lifeguards, it is considered that there have been no fundamental changes to the job nature, job complexity and level of responsibilities of civil service lifeguards. Civil service lifeguards therefore do not meet the second criterion for having a grade structure review.

6. As such, LCSD considers that there is no basis to conduct a review or related study on the grade structure of lifeguards. Nonetheless, the Department will continue keeping in view of the recruitment and attrition statistics of civil service lifeguards to monitor whether the grade has proven and persistent recruitment or retention difficulties.

7. With regard to entry requirements for lifeguards, the major responsibility of lifeguards (including civil service lifeguards and NCSC seasonal lifeguards) is to provide lifesaving and related services. Hence, it is LCSD's requirement that applicants for the post shall possess a valid Beach Lifeguard Award and/or Pool Lifeguard Award issued by the Hong Kong Life Saving Society (HKLSS) (the internationally recognised lifesaving qualifications) to prove that they possess internationally recognised competence to perform lifesaving and lifeguard duties. In addition to the basic entry requirements, selection interview and trade test will be conducted so as to select the suitable candidates. Besides, LCSD also provides induction training to newly appointed lifeguards and opportunities for serving lifeguards to refresh and enhance skills through various trainings arranged every winter in an effort to equip them to meet daily operational needs. LCSD will review the entry requirements, contents of interview and trade test for lifeguards (including civil service lifeguards and NCSC seasonal lifeguards) from time to time to meet the actual operational needs.

8. LCSD will monitor closely the manpower supply with recognised lifesaving qualification in the human resources market and the recruitment situation of lifeguards, and take timely follow-up actions.

Introduction of job-related allowance for lifeguards who possess qualification of scuba diving

9. Under the existing mechanism, as a general rule, job-related allowance should be payable as compensation only if civil servants are required to take up duties which are not normally expected of their particular grade or rank, and which have not been taken into account in the determination of the normal pay scale, subject to the prior approval by the bureau concerned. LCSD will consider the suggestion and study if it is justified for granting job-related allowance to lifeguards who possess qualification of scuba diving pursuant to the established policy and mechanism.

Amenities Assistants deployed at LCSD's aquatic venues

10. The management of public swimming pools and beaches of LCSD is undertaken by a team consisting of Leisure Services Managers and Amenities Assistants. Amenities Assistant grade officers will be deployed to work at different LCSD's venues (including public swimming pools, beaches and water sports centres) to accumulate working and management experience in different types of leisure venues, regardless of whether they possess the working experience as a lifeguard before joining the service. The Training Section of LCSD has all along been providing course on management of aquatic venues for Amenities Assistants, including courses on management of swimming pools and beaches and integrated course on lifesaving skills, etc. so as to enhance their skills in management of aquatic venues.