

4 March 2002

Views of Overseas Inspectors' Association on Civil Service Pay Issues

The position of the OIA remains as already clearly recorded at the last Police Force Council. To reiterate this stance I have copied it below for ease of reference.

The Staff Side have expressed considerable concern regarding the decision of the Chief Executive in Council on 18 December 2001 to initiate a two phased comprehensive review of the pay policy and system for the civil service.

The Staff Side are of the view that the Administration should conduct the review process in a prudent manner as it has far-reaching implications for the civil service as a whole and on the Police Force in particular. They hope that there will be meaningful communication and thorough discussion with the Staff Side at each and every step of the review. In particular they wish to reiterate the special nature of the Police Force in maintaining a stable and safe Hong Kong.

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region remains one of the safest cities in the world. This is largely attributable to the partnership built up between the police force and the community of Hong Kong.

There have been vocal calls for a reduction in civil service salaries by both politicians and by some members of the public. However, the Staff Side note that there have been no calls expressly for police officers' pay to be reduced. Although, police officers are technically civil servants, the nature of their work is very different to that of other civil servants, hence the rationale behind the Police Pay Scale. Failure to recognize the inherent differences between the civil service, other 'disciplined services' and the Police Force could severely undermine police morale.

These matters should be taken into careful consideration in designing the scope of the comprehensive study.

It is understood that the above comments echo those of the Commissioner and Force management. It is hoped that all Force SA's and Force management can maintain close dialogue in order to present a cohesive and strong stance to any suggestion or party wishing to infer any proposed overhaul of police pay and conditions in any way, shape or form.

Mark Ford McNicol
Chairman OIA