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## 26 pc civil service pay rise plan

By FANNY WONG

TOP civil servants are set to have their salaries boosted by between 19.3 and 26.6 per cent under a new package aimed at halting defections to the private sector.

Leading the 1,103 civil servants who stand to benefit from a salary review that includes improved education, medical, and leave and passage benefits, are the Chief Secretary, the Financial Secretary and several policy secretaries who could get pay increases of 26.6 per cent.

The package, which is contained in the Ross Committee report published yesterday, is designed to make the top jobs in the 185,000-

strong civil service more competitive with the private sector.

If the recommendations are approved by the Executive Council, the monthly salary of the Chief Secretary Sir David Ford will jump from \$79,650 to \$100,850 — an increase of \$21,200 or almost 27 per cent.

This would make Sir David's monthly salary higher than that of the Governor, Sir David Wilson, who earns \$99,550 a month.

The salary of the Financial Secretary, Sir Piers Jacobs, will also increase by the same percentage and go from \$75,300 to \$95,350.

Salaries of policy secretaries will rise from \$66,600 to \$84,350. Other director-

ate level officers will get an average increase of 19 per cent.

The Ross Committee — its full title is Standing Committee on Directorate Salaries and Conditions of Service — completed its 10th report this month.

In its report, the committee makes it clear that the salary scale is mindful of the pay increase awarded to all government staff last week.

This means that the 14.5 per cent increase awarded to directorate staff will have to be deducted from the final pay rise decided by the Executive Council.

A major feature of the report is the attempt to widen the gap in salary between top

civil servants and the rest of the service.

The gap between the lowest-paid senior civil servant on the directorate scale and the highest-paid middle-ranking official on the non-directorate scale will jump from 10.3 per cent to at least 15 per cent.

The purpose of this measure is to recognise the added responsibilities and complexities of the work undertaken by senior civil servants and to boost morale within the service.

The Secretary for Civil Service Harnam Grewal said: "These structural changes have been recommended by the committee to (Cont'd on Page 2, Col 7)

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recognise the increasingly complex responsibilities carried at directorate level."

The chairman of the Senior Non-Expatriate Officers' Association William Ko Chan-gock said he needed to study the report before making any comment.

The Executive Council discussed the Ross Committee report on Tuesday but deferred a decision on its proposal to introduce a new pay scale.

Mr Grewal said: "The Executive Council has decided that the structural changes should be dealt with separately from the annual pay adjustment exercise."

This is because the Government is still awaiting the findings of an overall review on the pay structure for the rest of the civil service.

"This will enable the Government to examine the proposed changes to the directorate salary structure in

conjunction with possible changes to the non-directorate salary structure," Mr Grewal said.

If approved, the pay structure will take effect on October 1.

The committee's recommendations are based on salaries and conditions in the private sector.

In the 33 private companies surveyed, senior managers were awarded average pay increases of 60 per cent over the four-year period from 1985 to 1989. By contrast, the public sector lagged behind with average increases of only 24.5 per cent over the same period.

Improved benefits are another major feature of the report.

Local officers who qualify for education allowances could send their children to a wider range of overseas countries. At present, the Government only pays for children studying in Britain.

The Executive Council has already accepted this recommendation in principle, but details have yet to be worked out.

Improved medical benefits include annual check-ups for officers over 40, which is in line with private sector practice.

A separate report for the judiciary was also released yesterday by the Standing Committee on Judicial Salaries and Conditions of Service. It recommended pay increases of between 13.4 and 29.1 per cent.

The Chief Justice would receive a 26.6 per cent pay increase, making his new salary of \$100,850 the same as that of the Chief Secretary.

It also recommended a 13.43 per cent increase for magistrates and lay magistrates and that the salaries and conditions of work for the judiciary be in line with the Ross Committee recommendations.