

77 Govt men get salaries slashed

Seventy-seven demarcators in the New Territories Administration have had their April salaries cut by 30 per cent for "failing to perform their full normal duties."

The Secretary for the Civil Service, Mr Alan Scott, said it was not reasonable to continue to pay staff who are failing to do a full day's work either from the taxpayer's viewpoint or from the standpoint of good management.

Mr Scott said the 350 demarcators who had been on a go-slow since January in support of a salary claim had been given a written warning last month that those who did not return to normal working would have their salaries reduced.

"However, 77 of the 350 demarcators ignored the written warning and are continuing to do less than their full normal duties.

"It was therefore necessary to cut the April salaries of these officers by 30 per cent under the authority vested in the Secretary for the Civil Service."

Mr Scott said employees who curtail their normal duties or cease to work cannot reasonably expect their employer to continue to pay them full salaries if they do.

He said that some private sector employers might stop salaries completely in such circumstances, and perhaps even terminate the services of employees.

"Different considerations apply to career staff such as civil servants," Mr Scott added, "although procedures do exist in the Civil Service to take such action if the situation requires it."

As to the demarcators pay claims and other minor issues, Mr Scott said the case put forward by the Demarcators Association has been looked at most carefully and in great detail on several occasions by the New Territories Administration and the Colonial Secretariat.

"It has not however proved justified, but discussions are continuing on certain aspects of it."