

**Response to Points Raised in the Letter
from the Leisure Services Staff Association**

Classification of the Amenities Assistants Grade

By the definition in Civil Service Regulation 100(26), the Amenities Assistants (AA) Grade is a general grade as there are established posts of the grade in more than one Government department (currently the Leisure and Cultural Services Department and the Housing Department). The grade is managed by the Director of Leisure and Cultural Services (DLCS). Staff of the grade are subject to posting and transfer at the discretion of the Head of Grade.

In the context of an internal circular we issued in connection with the 2nd VR Scheme, we grouped the AA Grade along with other departmental and common grades under the purview of DLCS. We did this purposely in order to avoid possible confusion of the AA Grade with other general grades in respect of which VR applications had to be approved by the respective Heads of Grade.

DLCS had recommended for the Senior Amenities Assistants (SAA) and AA I ranks of the AA Grade to be included in the 2nd VR Scheme essentially on the basis of a projection of the manpower situation of the grade in the next few years. In consideration of service needs, the impact of the department's outsourcing programme and other cost saving measures on in-house staffing requirements, the deletion of established AA grade posts in the Housing Department and staff wastage, DLCS anticipated that a staff surplus situation would arise in the two upper ranks of the grade by 31.3.2007 and concluded that the 2nd VR Scheme would provide a satisfactory solution to the problem. Whether the AA Grade is a general or departmental grade was entirely irrelevant to the department's consideration.

Working Hours

By entry qualification benchmark, the AA Grade is grouped as one of the "Technician, Supervisory and Related Grades". This grouping was defined on the recommendation of the Standing Commission on Civil Service Salaries

and Conditions of Service in its Report No. 26. In the report, the Commission stated that the number of working hours for the AA Grade in this group of grades should be 45 net per week (exclusive of meal breaks). The Commission noted that this was necessitated by general operational requirements and was consistent with practices in the private sector. As the pay and conditions of service vary among grades under different qualification groupings, it would not be appropriate to argue for a reduction in the number of working hours for the AA Grade on the ground of alignment with the pattern of working hours for grades pertaining to other qualification groups.

Specific Questions Raised by the LSSA

In respect of the three specific questions raised in the letter, the following points are relevant –

- (1) Under the concept of one-stop service, work such as ticketing, procurement or organizing programme is related to the sports activities conducted at the particular sports venues. It is considered as part and partial of the management and operation of recreational and sports venues and the inclusion of such duties is job enrichment in response to service demand, rather than a fundamental change of the job nature for the AA Grade. Moreover, these are duties which AAs are capable of performing.
- (2) It appears that the Association has a misunderstanding about the definition of “General Grades” and has incorrectly associated it with staff posting and hours of work for the AA Grade. As explained above, the AA Grade is a “General Grade” in the sense that there are established posts of the grade in more than one Government department. Currently only LCSD and the Housing Department have AA posts, and inter-departmental posting is limited to these two departments.
- (3) The department provides a variety of job-related training courses for staff in the AA Grade. These include both local and overseas training in horticulture, recreation and sports. In 2003/04, for example, the department provided the following

training courses, amongst others –

Overseas Training

- ◆ Attachment training on aviary management in Singapore;
- ◆ Training visit to study the “Sports-for-all” programme and management of sports centre in Singapore;
- ◆ BTEC National Certificate in Horticulture (Amenities) Course in UK.

Local Training

- ◆ Recreation and Sports management course for AAs;
- ◆ Sports centre management training course for AA;
- ◆ Basic landscaping training course for AA; and
- ◆ Practical arboriculture training course for AA.

A list of the courses provided for 2003/04 is at the Annex for ease of reference. This arrangement will continue.

EXAMPLES OF TRAINING COURSES CATERING FOR THE AMENITIES ASSISTANT GRADE

LOCAL TRAINING

COURSE TYPE	COURSE TITLE
FIRST AID	REFRESHER AQUATIC FIRST AID TRAINING COURSE STANDARD FIRST AID CERTIFICATE COURSE
FIXED PENALTY	FOCUS GROUP ON TACTICS OF MANAGING CONFLICTS AND PREVENTING COMPLAINTS IN ENFORCING THE FIXED PENALTY LEGISLATION FIXED PENALTY-SELF DEFENSE TRAINING TRAIN-THE-TRAINER COURSE ON TACTICS OF MANAGING CONFLICTS AND PREVENTING COMPLAINTS IN ENFORCING THE FIXED PENALTY LEGISLATION FOR AA
HORTICULTURE	3-DAY BASIC ZOO & AVIARY MANAGEMENT TRAINING FOR AA BASIC LANDSCAPING TRAINING COURSE FOR AA BRIEFING ON GREENING AND AUXILIARY TREE GANGS COMMISSIONED ARBORICULTURE TRAINING COURSE FOR AA GENERAL HORTICULTURE TRAINING COURSE FOR AA HARDSCAPING TRAINING COURSE FOR AA HORTICULTURAL MACHINERY TRAINING COURSE FOR AA INDOOR GREENING TRAINING COURSE FOR AA LANDSCAPE FEATURES CONSTRUCTION FOR AA LANDSCAPE FEATURES CONSTRUCTION TRAINING COURSE FOR AA PLANTING, ESTABLISHMENT & MAINTENANCE TRAINING COURSE FOR AA PRACTICAL ARBORICULTURE TRAINING COURSE FOR AA PRACTICAL TREE WORK GROUNDSMAN TRAINING COURSE PRACTICAL ARBORICULTURE TRAINING COURSE FOR AA SEMINAR ON PREVENTION OF DENGUE FEVER AND CONTROL OF MOSQUITOES TALK AT HONG KONG STADIUM LEADERSHIP-VS-MANAGEMENT IN THE OPERATION OF PUBLIC ASSEMBLY VENUE TURF MAINTENANCE TRAINING COURSE FOR AA
RECREATION	BEACH & SWIMMING POOL MANAGEMENT FOR AA COMMISSIONED AQUATIC FACILITY OPERATOR COURSE CONTRACT MONITORING TRAINING COURSE FOR AA CROWD MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP FACILITIES MANAGEMENT TRAINING COURSE FOR AA INDUCTION COURSE FOR AA LAW ENFORCEMENT FOR AA MARINE OIL POLLUTION TRAINING COURSE MASS PSYCHOLOGY IN CROWD MANAGEMENT SEMINAR PARKS & PLAYGROUNDS & SPORTS CENTRE MANAGEMENT FOR AA PLAYGROUP DESIGN AND SAFETY WORKSHOP FOR AA SPORTS CENTRE MANAGEMENT TRAINING COURSE FOR AA STADIUM & SPORTS GROUND MANAGEMENT FOR AA
SPORTS	FITNESS MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP-PRACTICAL APPROACH TO PROGRAMMING, MAINTENANCES AND TRENDS HKCAP LEVEL I PART A SPORT GENERAL THEORY LEARN-THE-SPORT SERIES-THERAPEUTIC RECREATION LEARN-THE-SPORTS SERIES-ATHLETICS LEARN-THE-SPORTS SERIES-DANCE LEARN-THE-SPORTS SERIES-FENCING LEARN-THE-SPORTS SERIES-GATEBALL LEARN-THE-SPORTS SERIES-HYDRO FITNESS LEARN-THE-SPORTS SERIES-LIFESAVING LEARN-THE-SPORTS SERIES-SWIMMING LEARN-THE-SPORTS SERIES-TABLE TENNIS LEARN-THE-SPORTS SERIES-TAI CHI LEARN-THE-SPORTS SERIES-TRIATHLON LEARN-THE-SPORTS SERIES-WATER SPORTS CENTRE MANAGEMENT LEARN-THE-SPORTS SERIES-WORKSHOP ON MENTALLY HANDICAPPED PERSON & VISIT TO SPECIAL EDUCATION SCHOOL RECREATION AND SPORTS MANAGEMENT COURSE FOR AAS RECT & SPORTS TRAINING FOR AA-ADVENTURE WORKSHOP
OVERSEAS TRAINING - SINGAPORE	
HORTICULTURE	ATTACHMENT TRAINING ON AVIARY MANAGEMENT, JURONG BIR PARK
SPORTS	2-WEEK OVERSEAS TRAINING VISIT TO SINGAPORE TO STUDY THE "SPORT-FOR-ALL" PROGRAMME AND MGT OF SPORTS CENTRES
OVERSEAS TRAINING - UK	
HORT	BTEC NATIONAL CERTIFICATE IN HORTICULTURE (AMENITIES) COURSE