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PUBLIC SERVICE ACT, 1904.

Proposal of the Public Service Commissioner relating to Classification of the Professional Division.

INTRODUCTION.

1. The Commissioner has, with few exceptions, personally interviewed each of the officers now classified.

2. The position, not the officer who for the time being occupies it, has been classified. All salaries are fixed at Perth rates. On the goldfields and in the tropics a district allowance is paid in addition to the salary.

3. If an officer is not, for any reason, properly fulfilling the duties of his position, an obligation under the Act and Regulations rests on his superior officer to see that he does, or report him to the Commissioner. The names placed against the respective positions do not necessarily entitle those officers to the positions.

4. The value of a position is not enhanced by reason of the officer occupying such position being capable of performing more important work than the position demands. Such capacity must look for reward to promotion to a position carrying a higher classification. Seniority only counts when there is equality of efficiency.

5. The measure of capacity for promotion towards a professional-cum-administrative position will embrace an officer's ability to get satisfactory work out of others.

6. No officer in charge of others will be recommended by the Commissioner for promotion to a higher position if he, to the knowledge of the Commissioner, fails to report to his chief the inefficient, indolent, or unsatisfactory officers in his office, or fails in getting junior work done by junior officers.

7. The visit of the Commissioner to the various Departments or Offices, for the primary purpose of classification, must not be confounded with the "examination of the Department" referred to in Section 36, Subsection 8, of the Public Service Act. Such examination will be made at a later date, when the systems in vogue will be inquired into.

8. The appointment of a Commissioner under the Public Service Act does not relieve an officer

in an administrative position of responsibility, but confirms and defines such responsibility which he retains until matters that require rectification are properly reported by him.

9. The title "Resident Engineer" has been abolished. An Engineer may, by courtesy, be permitted to use it when actually resident as engineer on a work, but no place has been found for such a title officially on the classification. Its use in the past has resulted in senseless anomalies. The title of "Engineering Surveyor" has also been abolished in favour of "Assistant Engineer."

10. When an Engineer is placed in charge of a work of considerable magnitude in the dual capacity of engineer and contractor, the Commissioner considers he should be recompensed by means of a special allowance to continue only so long as the special circumstances continue. A permanent fixed salary for such services would not be fair to the State.

11. A considerable portion of the time of many of the professional officers, more particularly of those attached to the Public Works Department, is taken up in connection with reports on and investigations into "propositions." These entail the maintenance of a staff which exceeds what is required to carry out undertakings actually authorised.

12. The Commissioner has found it impossible, at this stage, to express an opinion as to whether the various engineers now in the service of the State are all required. The position will be clearer when the authorised programme of light railways is completed. The matter is also complicated by circumstances, beyond the control of the Commissioner, mentioned in the preceding paragraph.

13. The following tabulation will enable the number of engineers in the employ of the State, under the Public Service Act, to be more clearly realised. It does not include the engineers employed by the Commissioner of Railways, the Goldfields Water Supply Board, or the Perth Water Supply Board.