

Whilst trying to "think out of the box", I have the following comments/suggestions on how the control mechanism could be modified to balance the conflicting elements of interest of those concerned.

- Apparently there are indeed cases in the past strongly suggesting that favours might have been passed to a commercial organisation by an officer in anticipation for "deferred reward" when he eventually retired from the public services. I believe the motive of doing so is largely hinged on the impressive monetary reward an officer can still enjoy after his retirement.
- On the other hand, with the drastic improvement in health conditions and life expectancy of the human race in recent years, many people are at or near the peak of their performance and form at the age of 55 or 60. In fact many countries are now deferring the age of retirement to 65 or 67 to make good use of such valuable human resource.
- The "unpaid works" which many retired officers are actively engaged in are mostly confined to charity works. They may not provide the challenges and sense of success some officers may like to have after their retirement. Top jobs or those in senior levels in the commercial world would become an attractive option to them. The prestigious positions and momentary reward gained from these jobs would provide a great sense of satisfaction to them, although the money may not be needed by these officers to sustain a comfortable life after their retirement.
- Based on the above consideration, I think a scheme with less stringent control on the period and nature of post-service outside works but more restrictive on the monetary reward a retired officer can take home would be a pragmatic approach to balance the conflicting elements of interest among the general public, the government and the officers retiring from the public services.

- I am fully in support of a minimum sanitisation period of 1 year (this could have been the leave period of some officers after retirement) during which the officer can take a rest or formulate plans for his future.
- After the sanitisation period, I suggest a much longer control period of, say, 5 years or more in which an officer can take up employment in the same field or even with those commercial organisations he has dealt with before his retirement, provided that there are no obvious indications of conflict of interest, having made reference to the involvements/behaviour/acts of the officers concerned before his retirement.
- To discourage possible "deferred reward" arrangement, I suggest that an upper limit be set on the monetary reward a retired officer could take home, which should be comparable to the maximum monthly pension payable to the rank of the officer concerned. While there should be no limit on the salary/commission a retired officer is to be paid when he works for a commercial organisation, I suggest that any reward in excess of the upper limit stated above should be contributed to government in the form of tax or other payment. Under such arrangement, the officer is making full use of his skill and experience in serving the society after retirement and at the same time making contributions (which could be very generous in some cases) to government even after his retirement. In this case, I think rules should also be set up to impose restrictions on the fringe benefits the retired officer may get from the commercial organisation employing him.
- The above suggestions are applicable to retired officers on pensionable terms. I believe similar arrangements can also be made for those engaged under contract terms.
- To implement the arrangements, it would most likely involve changes in relevant guidelines/rules/legislation. Understandably the practicability of making such changes would need to be looked into further.