

Private Business and Industry

Other occupations in the community currently are being paid rates which when compared to the existing rates for police and firemen pose a more desirable attraction, especially in view of the qualification and physical requirements, hazardous and other work conditions as are present in police and fire occupations. One of these occupations is that of local bus driver which has a salary rate of \$7,000, requiring that a person have good health, valid driver's permit, clear police record, be at least 21 and no older than 45 years of age, have a minimum height of 5'-6" with a maximum of 6'-4", and proportionate weight.

Also, according to the United States Employment Service, one of the most consistent sources of employment in the Washington Metropolitan area for a person with little or no experience is with construction operations. Based on current prevailing rates published by the United States Department of Labor, following are some of the typical local construction jobs and their rates of pay:

Occupation	Hourly rate	Annual Rate
Line Construction Groundman.....	\$3.00	\$6,240
Laborer.....	3.125	6,500
Marble Setters Helper.....	3.175	6,604
Plumbers Helper.....	3.20	6,656
Truck Driver (Medium-Heavy).....	3.35	6,968
Tile Setters Helper.....	3.475	7,228

Vacancies

A crucial problem of recruiting continues in the police and fire services. The following table shows the trend in vacancies:

	1-1-67	2-1-67	3-1-67	4-1-67
Police.....	307	304	308	317
Fire.....	37	35	41	35
	5-1-67	6-1-67	7-1-67	9-29-67
Police.....	313	333	348	376
Fire.....	34	45	38	28

While the vacancy problem in the Fire Department is not as acute as it is in the Metropolitan Police force, there is still a need to fully man both forces to carry out these vital services in the District of Columbia. It is therefore essential that effective action be taken with respect to pay and recruiting benefits and techniques so as to enable the District Government to fully staff these forces.

Recommendations

The improved competitive position of the nearby communities due to their increased rates, comparison to rates for other occupations within the District of Columbia which have less demanding working conditions and requirements than do police and firemen, and the lowering of the District's relative standing with other major cities in the rates paid police and firemen, fully substantiate a need to increase the rates for D.C. Government police and fire forces.

Using \$7,500 as the entrance salary for police and fire privates as previously recommended for police privates by the Commissioners on February 9, 1967, to Congress, a proposed schedule of rates has been developed as a measure to insure salaries that would both attract and retain qualified personnel. The proposed increase which averages approximately 7% (costing an estimated \$3.6 million for a full fiscal year) would improve considerably the District's competitive salary position both locally and nationally, by assuring the continuation of the District's first place ranking with nearby communities, and raising the recruiting salaries for District police and firemen from 12th to 5th and 11th to 5th respectively among the 20 other major cities.

In addition to the proposed increase, the Commissioners also propose to eliminate the longevity steps from the salary schedule but retain the principle of longevity step increases with a reduction of time between three such increases from four to three years. This would permit a private to reach the maximum salary rate in sixteen years rather than in nineteen years as is now the case.