

## **ITEM FOR ESTABLISHMENT SUBCOMMITTEE OF FINANCE COMMITTEE**

### **HEAD 62 - HOUSING DEPARTMENT Subhead 003 Recoverable salaries and allowances**

Members are invited to recommend to Finance Committee the retention of the following supernumerary multi-disciplinary posts for two years -

2 Chief Architect  
(D1) (\$98,250 - \$104,250)

### **PROBLEM**

The Housing Department needs to retain the existing directorate resources to cope with the increasing workload arising from the implementation of the quality housing initiatives and the enhanced project management work.

### **PROPOSAL**

2. The Director of Housing proposes to retain two supernumerary multi-disciplinary Chief Architect (CA) posts<sup>1</sup> for two years.

### **JUSTIFICATION**

#### **Background**

3. In March 1998, the Finance Committee approved, inter alia, the creation of two supernumerary multi-disciplinary CA posts for three years in the Housing Department, departmentally known as Project Managers (PMs), to cope

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<sup>1</sup> Open to all building disciplines.

with the increasing housing production, support the implementation of the streamlined housing development process, and achieve a clearer demarcation of project management and works functions. The posts are due to expire on 22 March 2001.

4. At the Establishment Subcommittee (ESC) meeting on 17 January 2001, the Department proposed vide EC(2000-01)29 to retain these two supernumerary posts for a further period of two years for the following reasons -

- (a) currently, there are four PMs handling 182 projects comprising 294 000 flats. Although the production level will be moderated in the coming two years (137 projects or 220 000 flats in 2001-02 and 117 projects or 207 000 flats in 2002-03), the workload will still be very heavy;
- (b) the implementation of the 50 quality housing initiatives requires continuous strong input from PMs. They have to spend more time and effort to ensure that the detailed designs and construction works are prepared and executed according to statutory requirements as well as requirements of the Housing Authority (HA); and
- (c) the recent consultancy study on the Review of the Production Process of the HA Development recommends that the present system of project management should be enhanced. The application of a full project management system is being studied in greater detail by the consultant, on a basis similar to that used for external consultants. It is expected that this would result in new responsibilities for the PMs.

ESC Members noted the gradual decrease in housing production in the coming two years and sought further clarification on the need for the two supernumerary multi-disciplinary CA posts. The Department undertook to provide supplementary information to and consult Housing Panel on the proposal before re-submission to the ESC.

### **Supplementary Information**

5. The level of housing production is only one of the workload indicators of the PMs. To assess their actual workload, we need to take into account the increased complexity and scope of project management. In the past year, the Department has implemented a great number of new strategies and initiatives to meet the rising public expectation for better quality public housing. These measures have increased considerably the workload of PMs, which are elaborated in the following paragraphs.

*/Adoption .....*

*Adoption of Site-Specific Design Approach*

6. For many years, the housing production of the HA has been based on a high degree of standardization and mass production. As public expectation on the built environment rises to new dimension, HA needs to take a proactive stance to adopt a site-specific and value driven delivery strategy to optimize site potential, enhance identity, increase diversity and lessen the impact of territory-wide standardization. In July 2000, the Building Committee (BC) of HA agreed to use this new design approach in four pilot projects. It is expected that the gradual migration from standard-block design to site-specific design<sup>2</sup> will be the future direction of public housing production. Under this approach, the PMs are required to tailor-make client project brief to fulfil the specific requirements of individual sites and to take conscious design decision on each individual project in order to produce the best possible design for each site. Moreover, programme and budgets will also be considered on a site-specific basis. All these departures from past practice in respect of standard blocks will create extra workload for PMs.

*Implementation of the Quality Housing Initiatives*

7. In April 2000, the HA endorsed the implementation of 50 quality housing initiatives to uplift its building quality. The actual implementation of these initiatives requires the input and effort of officers in various ranks and functional posts. In particular, input from PMs is required in the following areas -

*(a) New Sets of Procurement Strategies*

In August 2000, the BC revisited the current procurement strategies and introduced four new strategies, namely design and build contract, enhanced two-envelope system, direct appointment of consultants and open competition. The former three strategies require PM's greater involvement. For the design and build mode of procurement, PMs need to articulate a clear, detailed and precise design brief at an earlier stage in the construction process. Tender assessment will be more complicated and difficult than the conventional procurement method. For the enhanced two-envelope system, PMs are required to sit on two assessment panels<sup>3</sup> and will have a significant involvement in the selection of consultants. For the direct appointment of consultants, sub-consultants of other professional disciplines will no longer be under the direct management of the lead consultant. PMs

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<sup>2</sup> The site specific design approach will provide the flexibility for the adoption of either standard blocks or non-standard design or any combination thereof to address the specific site conditions.

<sup>3</sup> These are Pre-qualification Assessment Panel for pre-qualification of Architectural, Engineering and Building Services Engineering Consultants, and Design Assessment Panel for assessment of design proposals of Architectural Consultants.

are therefore required to manage more consultants and to align the roles amongst disciplines in order to ensure effective functioning of the direct appointment system.

(b) *Enhancement of Project Partnering*

Greater input from PMs are required to reinforce the partnering spirit with contractors and consultants during project implementation. In August 2000, the BC decided to roll out the project partnering arrangement to selected projects. Under this new arrangement, PMs are required to participate actively in regular meetings/workshops with contractors/consultants and assist in driving and nurturing the success of the partnering relation.

(c) *Quality Control*

PMs are required to put additional effort in monitoring the quality of the housing flats through programmed visits to construction sites during construction stage. They need to interview contractors/consultants when required. For those problematic sites, they will draw the attention of the senior management and render advice on rectification work. To strengthen the support to PMs in this aspect, four Chief Technical Officers (Building Works) have been redeployed to assist PMs in the programmed visits with effect from March 1999.

The gradual implementation of the above initiatives has created considerable workload not only for directorate level officers but also throughout the Development and Construction Branch (D&CB) of the Department. To cope with the workload arising from the implementation of the above new public housing production strategies and quality housing initiatives, non-directorate posts had been adequately strengthened.

8. Against the above background, there are operational needs to retain these two supernumerary multi-disciplinary posts for two years. The job description for the two posts and the organisation chart of the D&CB are at Enclosures 1 and 2 respectively.

Encls.1-2

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

9. The additional notional annual salary cost of this proposal at mid-point is \$2,426,400. The full annual average staff cost of the proposal, including salaries and on-costs, is \$4,274,000. The amount will be fully recovered from the HA.

**/BACKGROUND .....**

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

10. At the Legislative Council Housing Panel meeting on 5 February 2001, Members discussed and supported the proposal to retain the two supernumerary CA posts for two years.

**CIVIL SERVICE BUREAU COMMENTS**

11. The Administration has considered carefully alternatives including redeployment bearing in mind the need for greater efficiency and productivity. We are satisfied that the proposals contained in this paper are functionally justified. The Civil Service Bureau considers the grading, ranking and duration of the proposed posts appropriate having regard to the level and scope of responsibility and the professional input required.

**ADVICE OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON DIRECTORATE SALARIES AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE**

12. As the posts are proposed on a supernumerary basis, the Department will report the creation, if approved, to the Standing Committee on Directorate Salaries and Conditions of Service in accordance with the agreed procedure.

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Housing Department  
February 2001

**Job Description  
Project Managers 1 and 2**

**Rank:** Chief Architect (D1) (open to all building disciplines)

**Major Duties and Responsibilities**

Responsible to Project Director (Assistant Director of Housing) (D2) for the following -

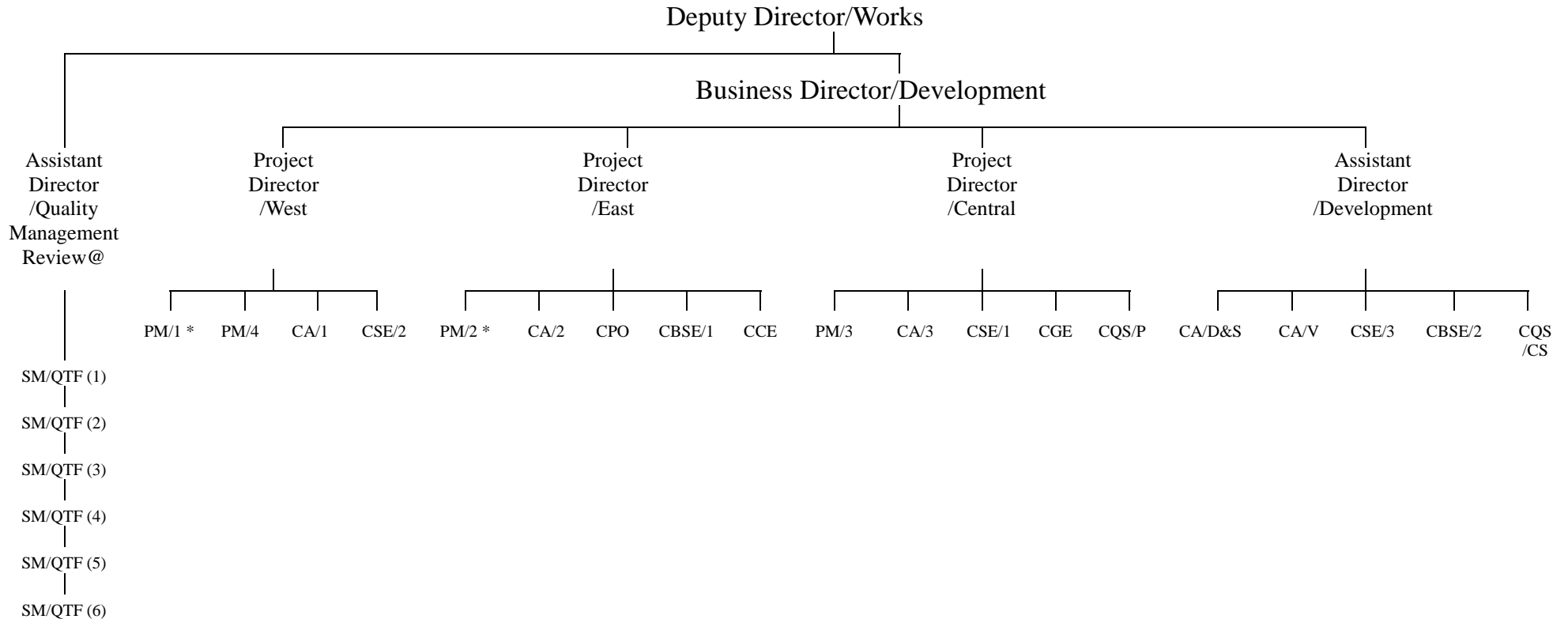
1. to monitor the programme and budget of public housing projects assigned through all stages of the development process, prepare project status report and assist respective Project Director in the overall monitoring of the public housing production and financial management;
2. to assist the Client to establish the Client's requirements and development parameters on sites included on the Control List for public housing development;
3. to co-ordinate the preparation of feasibility studies of the identified housing sites;
4. to oversee the preparation of development proposals by Design Team Leaders, including conceptual layout plans and associated project estimates for public housing projects;
5. to coordinate with the concerned departments on the implementation programme of public housing project (i.e. rezoning, clearance, resumption, infrastructure provision, site formation and cost), ensure their progress of works in accordance with the agreed programme, and resolve any inter-departmental conflicts at the district level;
6. to ensure the scheme and detailed designs prepared by the Design Team Leaders are in compliance with the Client's requirements, development parameters and financial requirements;
7. to ensure the works executed on site under the supervision of the Contract Manager are in compliance with the Client's requirements, development parameters and financial requirements;
8. to monitor the progress and expenditure of various types of contracts for housing development and, in case of deviation, liaise with the Design Team Leaders and Contract Managers on ways to take corrective actions;

9. to represent the Housing Authority in dealing with the Ombudsman, LegCo, District Council, utility companies, other government departments, local related/inter-departmental committees and clients on issues related to business of the Section;
10. to supervise the staff of the Section, monitor and coordinate the work and staff with a view to maintaining consistent professional standards;
11. to plan and manage resources, report on staff performance and ability, and to handle various human resources management functions within the Section;
12. to identify and recommend the need for outsourcing in order to provide necessary resources and expertise to meet Clients' requirements and the housing programme; and
13. to assist in the selection and appointment of consultants and to manage them including their performance.





**Organisation Chart of Development and Construction Branch**



**Legend:**

@ Supernumerary post endorsed for creation of 18 months  
 \* Supernumerary posts proposed for a further retention of 2 years  
 SM/QTF Senior Manager/Quality Task Force  
 PM Project Manager  
 CA Chief Architect  
 CSE Chief Structural Engineer  
 CPO Chief Planning Officer

CBSE Chief Building Services Engineer  
 CCE Chief Civil Engineer  
 CGE Chief Geotechnical Engineer  
 CQS/P Chief Quantity Surveyor/Projects  
 CA/D&S Chief Architect/Design and Standards  
 CA/V Chief Architect/Vetting  
 CQS/CS Chief Quantity Surveyor/Construction Services