

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

### **HEAD 170 - SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT Subhead 001 Salaries**

Members are invited to recommend to Finance Committee the creation of the following permanent directorate posts in the Social Welfare Department -

13 Principal Social Work Officer  
(D1) (\$98,250 - \$104,250)

1 Principal Executive Officer  
(D1) (\$98,250 - \$104,250)

to be offset by the deletion of the following permanent posts -

1 Administrative Officer Staff Grade C  
(D2) (\$116,650 - \$123,850)

5 Principal Social Work Officer  
(D1) (\$98,250 - \$104,250)

and endorsement of consequential changes to various permanent directorate posts in the Department.

### **PROBLEM**

The current three-tiered headquarters, regional and district structure of the Social Welfare Department (SWD) is no longer conducive to meeting operational requirements and new challenges arising from changing welfare needs

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of the community, and the present ranking of the 13 District Social Welfare Officers (DSWOs) (rank at Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO) (MPS 45-49)) will not be commensurate with the added responsibilities and experience required of the incumbents under an enhanced district structure. Also, the Department needs to strengthen its planning capability and human resources management.

## PROPOSAL

2. We propose to implement a package of proposals including, firstly, to streamline the three-tiered headquarters, regional and district structure into a two-tiered one by disbanding the regional offices, and secondly, to re-arrange work in the Headquarters to ensure greater efficiency and to create capacity for dealing with planning and human resource management work. These proposals will entail the following changes to the directorate establishment of SWD –

- (a) creation of 13 Principal Social Work Officer (PSWO) (D1) posts to head each of the 13 enhanced District Social Welfare Offices, to be offset by the deletion of five PSWO posts currently heading the regional offices;
- (b) creation of a Principal Executive Officer (PEO) (D1) post to head the new Human Resources Management Branch;
- (c) deletion of a permanent post of Administrative Officer Staff Grade C (AOSGC) (D2) pursuant to the re-distribution of work in the Headquarters; and
- (d) consequential revisions to the job description of various directorate posts in the Headquarters.

## JUSTIFICATION

### *District Level*

#### **Deletion of five PSWO (D1) posts upon disbandment of five Regional Offices**

3. Currently, SWD is serving the entire territory through 13 District Offices (each headed by a DSWO of CSWO rank) under the supervision of five Regional Officers (ROs) of PSWO rank who head the five regions<sup>1</sup> respectively. Over the years, the major roles and functions of ROs have changed. For example -

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<sup>1</sup> Five Regions, namely Hong Kong, East Kowloon, West Kowloon, New Territories East, and New Territories West.

- most of the general administrative and routine duties are adequately covered by the 13 DSWOs;
- departmental representation in District Councils (DCs) and District Management Committees has been taken up by the 13 DSWOs; and
- the administration of subvention is no longer carried out at the regional/district level, since the monitoring of subvented services is gradually taken over centrally by the Headquarters with the introduction of the Service Performance Monitoring System.

4. In addition, in the present day demand for greater responsiveness and with improved electronic communication between Headquarters offices and District Offices, it is doubtful whether a three-tiered structure is still appropriate. We propose to disband the Regional Office level to facilitate the streamlining of administrative and operational practices and improve the decision-making process in response to district matters. Upon the disbandment of the Regional Offices, we will delete five RO posts of PSWO rank together with their 39 supporting staff of non-directorate ranks.

#### **Upgrading the 13 DSWOs from CSWO (MPS 45-49) to PSWO (D1) rank**

5. Upon the disbandment of the Regional Offices, we will strengthen the 13 District Offices<sup>2</sup> to meet changing community needs in a more efficient and effective manner. In recent years, increasing emphasis has been placed on the district as an entity in planning and delivering welfare services. With rising community expectations and welfare services being human services, it is no longer adequate to rely solely on population-based planning standards across-the-board according to the Hong Kong Planning Standard and Guidelines. There is clearly a need for a more strategic assessment of local needs and characteristics to facilitate district-based planning of welfare services. Moreover, with rapid expansion in welfare services in the past decade, planning welfare services on a facility-driven approach and an incremental manner is probably not cost-effective. There are calls for better co-ordination between different service providers and across different sectors to ensure more optimal use of resources and that we are serving clients in a more holistic manner.

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<sup>2</sup> In the deliberations, we had given consideration to whether the SWD district boundaries should be re-aligned to follow those of district administration. This would mean splitting up those DSWOs which currently oversee two Home Affairs Department districts. We have decided against this for the time being so as not to complicate this re-organisation exercise. We will re-visit this in a few years' time taking account of the then population growth and distribution.

6. Recent initiatives such as the Fundamental Expenditure Review on Youth Services, the Special Job Attachment Programme for the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance recipients and the Enhanced Home and Community Care for the Elders all have a strong district focus. Both the Consultancy Studies on the Review of Day Services for the Elderly and the Family Services Review have pointed to the direction of planning of integrated services to meet the needs of the local community.

7. As mentioned in the Chief Executive's 2000 Policy Address, there is an imminent need to enhance outreaching services for those hard-to-reach target groups and to build up social networks to support the disadvantaged, i.e. the elderly, families and youth at risk, single parents and new arrivals, etc. who have critical needs for support services. Such outreaching networking work could best be done at the district level.

8. With all the above developments, it is necessary to strengthen capacity at the district level, to empower the DSWOs and to devolve to them greater responsibility/authority so that they can map out co-ordinated strategies to address proactively the welfare needs of the community. These enhanced responsibilities of the 13 DSWOs include -

- (i) planning welfare services on a district basis to meet community needs;
- (ii) collaborating with DCs, related government departments and district organisations to facilitate the implementation of social welfare policies in the district;
- (iii) co-ordinating with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in the district in respect of delivery of services in meeting the welfare needs of local community;
- (iv) establishing a more proactive social outreaching network in the district to help the needy and the disadvantaged; and
- (v) administering and managing centralised operational units.

9. To meet the growing demand for a more open, accountable and responsive government and to promote public participation in district affairs, close consultation and collaboration between government departments and DCs is essential. The DSWOs are playing an important role in explaining social welfare policies and proposals to the DCs and the local community, as well as lobbying

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support for new initiatives and service projects in the district. As district departmental representatives, the DSWOs should be senior and experienced officers who are able to adopt a wide perspective in discussing issues with and answering questions raised by DC members authoritatively.

10. The present rank of DSWOs i.e. at CSWO level, does not reflect adequately the proposed level of responsibilities having regard to the political sensitivity and complexity of the tasks the DSWOs need to handle and accomplish. Being the district head of the Department, the DSWOs will be empowered to undertake strategic planning and overall management of the welfare services in the district. They will be the key person responsible for formulating the strategies, setting specific improvement targets and recommending priorities for implementation on the basis of their judgement on the district needs and experience/exposures in the welfare services. In doing so, they need to co-ordinate departmental efforts, liaise with stakeholders and responds to public views, as well as strike a balance to meet competing needs and to address the political pressure from the local community and various interest groups. The DSWOs need tact and experience in explaining and promoting welfare policies in the district to facilitate their smooth implementation and acceptance.

11. Having regard to the responsibilities and input expected from the DSWOs, the requirement for sound political acumen, and their representational role in consulting and liaising with NGOs, DCs and other government departments, the Director of Social Welfare (DSW) considers it necessary to **upgrade** the rank of the 13 DSWOs from CSWO to PSWO level. The strengthened role of DSWOs is further elaborated in Enclosure 1. A proposed job description of the post is at Enclosure 2. The DSWOs will be responsible and accountable to DSW through the two Deputy Directors. The DSWOs will have direct access to the Headquarters Service Branches and be involved actively in the planning and co-ordination of welfare services at district level.

Encl. 1  
Encl. 2

12. Accordingly, the staffing structure of individual District Office has also been reviewed taking into account the range of welfare services, complexity and characteristics of each district. The main features of the proposed District structure are summarised at Enclosure 3 and the typical organisation chart of a District Office is at Enclosure 4.

Encl. 3  
Encl. 4

### ***Headquarters Level***

13. In the light of the rapid social changes, complexity of the social problems and higher expectation on welfare services in both quantity and quality,

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there have been growing demands on the Headquarters in strategic and evidence-based planning, service review, developing new approaches and methods to cope with the changing demands. Also, as a multi-disciplinary department with over 5 200 staff, we need strengthened capacity in the Headquarters for human resources management and development, so as to build up a professional, dedicated and versatile taskforce. The subvention reform and the shift from input control to outcome evaluation have placed new demands on the Headquarters in developing service benchmarks and assessing performance of service providers. We have therefore taken the opportunity of re-organisation to strengthen certain areas of work in the Headquarters to meet these increasing demands. The strengthening of the Headquarters in these identified areas is made possible by resources released from the much streamlined work procedure in the new Lump Sum Grant (LSG) environment, the more efficient payment system and the revamping of Lotteries Fund procedures.

14. The main features of the proposed changes to the Headquarters are summarised as follows -

- (a) the Subventions, Finance and Project Planning Branches will be re-organised into two Branches of Finance, and Subventions and Performance Monitoring to achieve efficiency and to fit in the new mode of subvention system in the delivery of services, with emphasis being put on assisting NGOs to meet the challenge of the LSG (through the newly established Help Centre), maintaining close liaison with NGOs, undertaking the service evaluation and contract management role and overseeing the central support units to Service Branches, such as the Lotteries Fund Section, the Project Planning Section and the Architectural Section;
- (b) the Service Branches overseeing family and child welfare, elderly, youth, rehabilitation and medical social services will largely remain intact. They will, however, resume their project (facilities) planning role transferred from the Project Planning Branch which will be disbanded to enhance productivity and efficiency and to ensure greater integration between the planning of facilities and the planning of services. They will be re-positioned to play a more strategic role in service rationalisation and in setting service and performance standards. Upon the re-organisation, the Youth and Corrections Branch will also be relieved of its role over Human Resource Management (HRM) so that it may concentrate on taking forward the many funded initiatives to help youth at risk as announced in the 2001 Budget, to monitor the services for the offenders and monitor community development programmes;

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- (c) the Licensing Office function of various services (i.e. Licensing Office of Residential Care Homes for the Elderly, Child Care Centre Advisory Inspectorate, Licensing Office of Drug Dependants Treatment Centres) will be amalgamated into a central Licensing Office. This will ensure optimal utilisation of existing resources in terms of fire and building safety expertise to achieve greater efficiency and productivity;
- (d) a HRM Branch will be formed to implement various new initiatives in the Department;
- (e) a small Corporate Affairs Office will be set up under DSW. This will comprise of, inter alia, a core Planning Unit, which, together with an expanded Research and Statistics Unit, will support the senior directorate and co-ordinate departmental efforts in strategic planning of welfare services. The new set-up will also liaise and co-ordinate with concerned parties in the compilation and analysis of data, development of indices, local and overseas researches and benchmarking, etc.;
- (f) the current Information Systems and Technology Branch will remain intact but will need to be strengthened at a later stage to tie in with the implementation of Phase II of SWD's Information Systems Strategy; and
- (g) in addition to the Clinical Psychology Service, we will consider developing service specialty in the work related to domestic violence under a Chief Social Work Officer. The service covers the integrated approach on child abuse, elderly abuse, suicides and violence both inside and outside the family. This proposal may see the beginning of specialisation among social work practitioners, which should be beneficial to the development of specialised services and the social work profession.

15. Although the establishment changes in the Headquarters in relation to the above proposals in paragraph 14 (c), (e), (f) and (g) are related to non-directorate posts and hence are outside the purview of Establishment Subcommittee (ESC), they are nevertheless briefly described above as a package for Members' reference. Upon the endorsement of ESC of changes affecting the directorate establishment, the proposed creation and deletion of non-directorate posts will be dealt with in accordance with the normal procedures through the Departmental Establishment Committee mechanism of SWD.

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**Deletion of one AOSGC (D2) post**

16. As mentioned in paragraph 14 (a) above, the Project Planning Branch will be disbanded. The Project Planning Branch was set up in late 1998 to provide service on matters related to the planning and management of all capital projects including identification and acquisition of suitable premises, fitting out works and commissioning of projects to meet policy targets under various welfare service programmes. The Branch comprises three sections namely Services Section, Architectural Section and Project Planning Section headed by a supernumerary Senior Principal Executive Officer (SPEO) (D2) post held against an AOSGC (D2) post.

17. Following the re-organisation of the Finance, and the Subventions and Performance Monitoring Branches, the overall planning, management and commissioning of welfare services premises functions will be integrated into the Services Branches to enhance their productivity and efficiency and to ensure greater integration between the planning of facilities and the planning of services. The Architectural Section and Project Planning Section, which provide technical and executive support to the respective Services Branches in relation to acquisition and fitting out of suitable premises for welfare projects, are proposed to be administratively put under the purview of the Assistant Director of Subventions and Performance Monitoring. As a result, we are proposing to disband the stand-alone Project Planning Branch and accordingly to delete the permanent AOSGC post.

**Re-structuring of Subventions and Performance Monitoring Branch**

18. Upon the implementation of the LSG, the Subventions Branch has achieved much efficiency through streamlining the procedures in administering subventions. In line with the reform spirit, the Department is shifting its focus to monitoring the performance of NGOs. We propose to re-engineer the existing Subventions Branch into a Subventions and Performance Monitoring Branch with emphasis being put on assisting NGOs to meet the new mode of the LSG (through the newly established Help Centre), maintaining close liaison with NGOs, undertaking the service evaluation and contract management role and overseeing the various central support units, such as Project Planning Section, Architectural Section and Lotteries Fund Section. The revised job description of the Assistant Director for Social Welfare (D2) in charge of the Subventions and Performance Monitoring Branch is at Enclosure 5.

Encl. 5

**Creation of a PEO (D1) post for the new HRM Branch**

19. To build up a highly committed, resilient, competent, versatile and skilled workforce to meet the objectives of the Department and new challenges in

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the coming years, it is vital to set up a Human Resource Management Branch to plan strategically and adopt a proactive and integrated approach to managing human resources effectively. As at 1 April 2001, the Department has a workforce of 51 grades, 94 ranks and 5 247 staff of which 3 259 are departmental staff (2 109 in social work stream and 1 150 in social security stream) tasked to deliver human services. Our staff clearly need more skills than what they have been trained pre-service. HRM will be of increasing importance to equipping SWD to meet challenges. There is general staff feedback that more effort is needed in respect of empowering line managers in their role as HRM manager and formulating clearer HRM policies, in particular those related to career development and posting, and have these policies practised faithfully. The proposed HRM Branch shall put in place a comprehensive and dedicated system and structure to address the HR issues such as manpower planning, recruitment, training and development, performance management, posting and succession planning. The proposed organisation

Encl. 6 structure of the HRM Branch is at Enclosure 6.

20. The proposed PEO will assume the role as the department's human resource manager. He/she has to map out strategies and develop programmes to promote and support the necessary cultural change among staff in addition to the normal range of HRM functions including recruitment, promotion, staff welfare, staff relations and discipline. He/she is required to have a strategic input into HRM to support the function of the department as it faces the challenges. He/she will play a central role in the major programme to develop core competencies for the departmental grade staff with a view to help improving performance management. His/her strategic role will cover means of securing staff commitment, setting standards and providing development opportunities and management support to the staff in attaining the higher level of performance advocated by the Department.

21. The new HRM Branch is required to oversee a total of 28 departmental/common/MOD I grades and 44 ranks. Given the high level of responsibilities, the magnitude and complexity of the tasks involved, and the growing importance of the Branch's role as a change agent, we consider that the head of the Branch should be an experienced officer with strong management skills. We consider that a PEO will be appropriate for the post. The proposed job description of the post is at Enclosure 7.

Encl. 7

22. Upon the setting up of a dedicated HRM Branch, the current Assistant Director (Youth/HRM) will be relieved of HRM duties. A revised job description of the post is at Enclosure 8. The job descriptions of both Deputy Director (Services) and Deputy Director (Administration) will also have to be revised as per Enclosures 9 and 10 respectively.

Encl. 8  
Encls.  
9 & 10

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

23. The additional notional annual salary cost of this proposal at MID-POINT is -

	<b>New Permanent Posts</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>No. of Posts</b>
	PSWO	15,771,600	13
	PEO	1,213,200	1
Less	AOSGC	1,443,000	1
	PSWO	6,066,000	5
	<b>Additional cost</b>	<b>9,475,800</b>	<b>8</b>

The full annual staff cost of the proposal, including salaries and staff on-costs, is \$13,872,000. The additional cost will be fully offset by net savings at a notional annual mid-point salary cost of \$12,996,900 and a full annual average staff cost of \$20,953,000 arising from redeployment of resources at the non-directorate level under the re-organisation exercise. We are considering the redeployment of the remaining savings at a notional annual mid-point salary cost of \$3,521,100 and a full annual average staff cost of \$7,081,000 to strengthen the service performance monitoring areas upon a review to be concluded.

24. To contain the size of the civil service, we are keeping the proposed new structure within the establishment ceiling of the Department for 2001-02. It will not give rise to any staff redundancy. The establishment changes in departmental grades will not give rise to any surplus staff. As for general and common grades, the implementation of the service-wide Voluntary Retirement Scheme will take care of any surplus staff that may arise as a result of the proposal.

Encl. 11 25. The approved establishment and the proposed changes in establishment structure (in terms of pay scale according to four categories) upon implementation of the proposal are summarised at Enclosure 11. Members may realize that apart from a slight increase in establishment of staff in the pay group MPS 16-33, there is a slight decrease in the number for other categories including the senior level on and above MPS 45.

26. This proposal will have no impact on fees.

## CONSULTATION

27. Staff of the Department have been consulted widely through briefings, branch/unit meetings and focus groups since the issue of an internal consultation paper on 12 December 2000. Altogether 12 briefing sessions and more than 50 focus groups had been conducted from December 2000 to February 2001. The general feedback from staff was positive and supportive. The final package has taken on board views and comments from staff expressed during these internal consultations. When SWD briefed supervisory staff and staff associations on 24 April 2001, the finalized re-organisation package was well received by both groups. Their comments are by and large confined to the technicalities and the timing and pace of implementation.

28. Senior management staff have already started to brief all staff on the details of the re-organisation package to prepare and involve them in mapping out the requisite changes to ensure that the pace of implementation will suit the readiness of individual districts and branches resulting in a more seamless transition. Staff associations are also assured that an effective two-way dialogue will be maintained to address any concerns and technicalities.

29. The Social Welfare Advisory Committee discussed the proposal on 3 May 2001. Members responded very positively to the proposals. They agreed that the adoption of a flatter management structure, the establishment of a HRM office, the strengthened role and functions of the DSWOs were timely changes in the right direction to enhance efficiency and productivity, particularly in meeting the rapidly changing needs in the community. Their advice is focused on alerting the Department to take appropriate steps to prepare and empower staff for the change, to deal with possible concerns arising from the implementation process, and to keep partners in the welfare field informed of the changes. As regards the latter, DSW briefed NGOs in the welfare sector at a session organised by the Hong Kong Council of Social Service on 18 May 2001.

30. The Legislative Council Panel on Welfare Services also discussed the proposal on 14 May 2001. Members did not raise objection to the proposals, though SWD is making arrangements for Panel Members to receive feedback direct from SWD's staff groups.

31. SWD has also taken the opportunity of DSW's briefing 18 DCs on development of social welfare services to consult DCs on the proposal to eliminate the Regional Office level and strengthen the DSWOs, including the proposal to pitch the DSWOs at D1 level. The general response from the 16 DCs SWD has

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Encl. 12 consulted so far is positive and supportive. A summary of DC Members' comments on our proposal is at Enclosure 12. DSW will complete her briefing of the remaining DCs by mid June.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

32. The Department was last re-organised in 1979 when four Regional Offices and 11 District Offices were established. The regionalised structure was reviewed in 1980 and again in 1987 to cope with the rapid expansion of social welfare services, after which, splitting of two districts were implemented to make up a total of 13 District Offices. In 1989, the New Territories (NT) Region was further split into the NT East and NT West Regions. The regional (five regions) and district (13 districts) structure remains unchanged since then.

33. Over the last two decades, there has been a substantial and rapid growth in the scope, volume and complexity of the social welfare services undertaken by the Department and the NGOs. In the past ten years, total recurrent expenditure for SWD had increased from \$7.1 billion in 1992-93 to \$29.7 billion in the 2001-02 Estimates (+318%). The departmental establishment had also increased from 3 955 posts in the 1992-93 Estimates to 5 247 posts as at 1 April 2001 (+32.67%). In addition to departmental service units, over 180 NGOs are operating 3 000 units under subventions administered by SWD. For 2001-02, total welfare subventions amount to \$7.2 billion.

34. With the passage of time and the rapid expansion in social welfare services, the roles and functions of the Regional Offices have changed. A typical set-up of a Regional Office now consists of only eight or nine posts, headed by a RO ranked at PSWO (D1). Whilst they continue to perform oversight in relation to the work of District Offices, disseminate policy intent from the Headquarters to the districts, undertake certain personnel functions on a regional basis and exercise certain authority delegated only to RO level, they no longer have much essential operational work. In the present day demand for greater responsiveness and with improved electronic communication between Headquarters Officers and District Officers, it is doubtful whether a three-tiered structure of headquarters, region and district is still appropriate.

Encls. 13 & 14 35. We need to re-position the Department to increase our responsiveness to meet community needs, to enhance efficiency and productivity and to meet new challenges in the planning and co-ordination of welfare services. The existing and proposed organisation charts of the Department are at Enclosures 13 and 14 respectively.

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**CIVIL SERVICE BUREAU COMMENTS**

36. The Administration has considered carefully alternative means to provide the required directorate support to meet the service needs bearing in mind the need to ensure efficiency and effectiveness. The Administration considers this proposal the most appropriate way to proceed. Having regard to the justifications put forward, the Civil Service Bureau supports the creation of the Directorate posts and considers the grading and ranking of the posts to be appropriate. The Bureau also supports the endorsement of consequential changes to various permanent directorate posts in the Department. As at 1 May 2001, there are 17 directorate posts out of a total of 5 258 posts in SWD.

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

37. The Standing Committee on Directorate Salaries and Conditions of Service has advised that the grading proposed for the posts would be appropriate if the posts were to be created.

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Health and Welfare Bureau  
June 2001

## Strengthened Role of DSWO in the New SWD Structure

The DSWO is currently responsible for the delivery of welfare services in the district through overseeing the departmental service units, co-ordinating services provided by the NGOs, identifying and addressing district needs and attending/interfacing with the respective District Council. However, because of centralisation of planning functions in the Headquarters, less prompt and direct access to Headquarters and insufficient support, their work tends to be more activity-based, focusing on an individual's or target group's welfare needs rather than the needs of the community.

2. In the new SWD structure, the DSWOs will strengthen their role as a district welfare planner and service co-ordinator, working with increased district input from District Council members, NGO service providers, users and local personalities. They are expected to advocate welfare needs on behalf of their district and ensure that such needs are effectively reflected to Headquarters. They should come up with feasible options to address those needs and mobilise existing resources available to meet those needs. The DSWO will chair District Co-ordinating Committees (DCC) or Local Committees on Family and Child Welfare Services, Services for Young People, Elderly Services, Rehabilitation Services, Volunteer Movement and other topical issues as needed. These DCCs are instrumental in developing and formulating strategies in planning and co-ordinating welfare services and pioneering projects to meet particular needs of the district and timely response to rising public expectations. They also provide a valuable forum for interaction and co-operation among service providers, professionals in related disciplines, Government departments and local organisations.

3. Based on some current activities of our District Offices, we wish to illustrate how the DSWO can facilitate *inter-sectoral collaboration* and undertake *co-ordination* of welfare programmes aimed at building a caring community in the district -

- (a) the DSWO will, working through the DCC on Family and Child Welfare, take a lead in ensuring co-operation amongst various disciplines, Government departments and NGOs in the -
  - prevention of domestic violence by involving the hospital, Department of Health, the Hong Kong Police Force and schools in the district to undertake studies and surveys on how children

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perceive corporal punishment and to address the concerns found; and by organising a series of promotional and educational multi-disciplinary workshops for teachers, social workers and para-medical staff on identification and early intervention of various abuses; and

- promotion of harmonious family relationship and responsible parenting by developing training package on parenting, holding training sessions, and open talks and interactive drama shows;
- (b) the DSWO will through the District Local Committee on Services for Young People strengthen collaboration with the education sector, co-ordinating with staff and students of local schools, youth service workers and parents to equip parents with parenting skills, and develop a more co-ordinated strategy to strengthen multi-disciplinary collaboration and support service for young people in the district. At the same time, there will be close collaboration with Government departments such as Education Department, Home Affairs Department, local Police and Fight Crime Committee to train police officers as volunteers giving guidance to youth-at-risk;
- (c) the DSWO can press ahead with work on healthy ageing by mobilising and co-ordinating efforts of NGOs, psychiatrists, geriatric medical officers in hospital, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department in launching health talks, district wide activities to publicise healthy ageing;
- (d) the DCC on Rehabilitation will organise local students to participate in seminars and workshop on mental health, visits to rehabilitation service units to promote local community's understanding and acceptance of the disabled and support for integration of people with disabilities in the community, especially when such projects are to be set up within the district;
- (e) the DSWOs are well positioned to promote Volunteer Movement in the district by launching promotional and publicity campaigns to recruit, train and mobilise local volunteers, advocating the building of a caring community and encouraging proactive participation of local people to help those in need; and
- (f) through networking by the DSWO, DCC representatives and DC members can join hands in forming support groups to provide assistance to residents affected by clearance and estate re-development programs, as well as on-going support and tailor-made assistance to move the able-bodied unemployed towards self-reliance and work.

4. On *planning* work, the DSWO will take reference from the population characteristics of the district to propose welfare services that best meet the needs of the community. In the coming years, we envisage that the DSWO will play an instrumental role in commissioning new pilot projects on more integrated care services for the elders, in liaising with NGOs and schools in implementing the Understanding Adolescent Project in secondary schools, in expediting the formation of integrated teams in youth services and in taking forward recommendations arising from the family services review.

5. There is one particular area that we believe the strengthened DSWOs are best placed to further develop and that is, *outreaching* to vulnerable groups such as new arrivals, single parent families, elders living alone and street sleepers to ensure they have access to community support services. In this respect, we propose to pool Social Welfare Assistants in the Youth Office and Rehabilitation and Elderly Office of DSWO to form an outreaching team under the District Planning and Co-ordinating Team. The outreaching team will work closely with the District's Group Work Units (based in community centres and estate community centres) to identify and offer services to vulnerable families in the community. They would mobilise and network these reached target families to become volunteers to reach out to other vulnerable families. We hope that through a strong and effective outreaching network, we would be able to promote neighbourhood support and community solidarity, leading to a more harmonious society.

**Proposed Job Description for  
District Social Welfare Officer**

- Rank** : Principal Social Work Officer (D1)
- Office** : 13 District Social Welfare Offices<sup>1</sup>
- Responsible to** : Two Deputy Directors of Social Welfare (D3)

**Description of main duties -**

- (1) As district welfare planner and service co-ordinator working with increased district input from District Council members, NGO service providers, users and local personalities, to develop and formulate strategies in the planning and co-ordinating the delivery of welfare services in the district, to identify and assess social welfare needs of the district and to respond timely to rising public expectation;
- (2) to review and make recommendations on how departmental objectives, policies and operational procedures might be developed and improved at the district level;
- (3) to facilitate inter-sectoral collaboration and undertake co-ordination of welfare programmes aimed at building a caring community in the district with the NGOs, schools and community leaders;
- (4) to represent the Department on District Council, District Management Committee, inter-departmental committees, working groups, etc., to explain and promote welfare policies in the district;
- (5) to provide information and views to Service Branches on district needs, specific features, complexities and local political dynamics on planned projects to facilitate service planning;
- (6) to administer and co-ordinate the operation of all the departmental service units in the district, to oversee the mode of service delivery and programmes design, and to recommend measures to improve efficiency in management and operation to meet departmental objectives;

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<sup>1</sup> 13 District Offices, namely, Central and Western/Islands, Eastern and Wanchai, Southern, Kwun Tong, Wong Tai Sin and Sai Kung, Yau Tsim Mong, Sham Shui Po, Kowloon City, Shatin, Tai Po and North, Yuen Long, Tsuen Wan and Kwai Tsing and Tuen Mun

- (7) to promote volunteer movement in the district by launching promotional and publicity campaigns to recruit, train and mobilise local volunteers, advocating the building of a caring community and encouraging participation of local people to help those in need;
- (8) to provide assistance to vulnerable groups such as new arrivals, single parent families, elders living alone and street sleepers to ensure they have access to community support services through networking and outreaching services and provide assistance to those able-bodied unemployed towards self-reliance and re-integrated into the workforce and community;
- (9) without duplicating or conflicting the role of the Human Resource Management Branch in the headquarters, to assume the role of Human Resource Manager in the district, ensuring that Human Resource policies and procedures are practised down to frontline level staff; to supervise, develop and manage staff under his charge, and to maximize the utilization of available resources; and
- (10) to perform any other duties as assigned by the senior directorate.

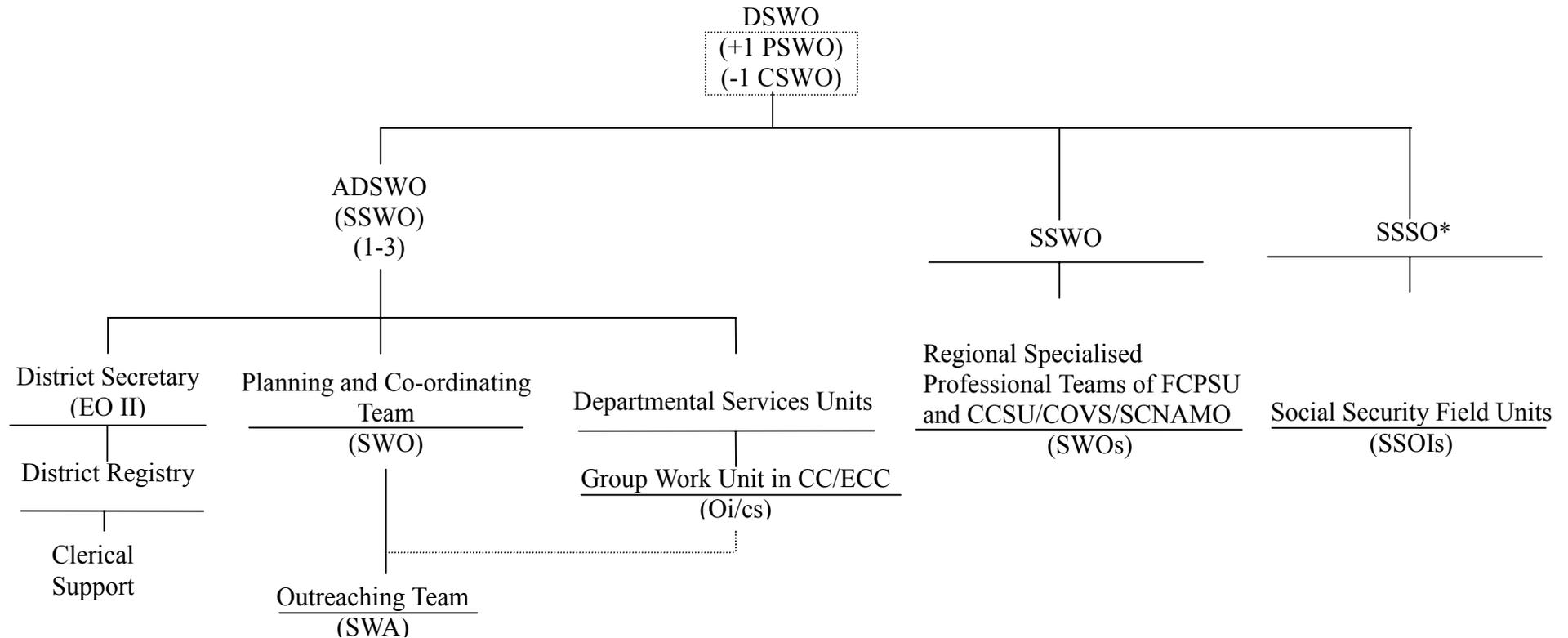
**Main Features of the Proposed Structure of a District Office**

Main features of the proposed structure of a district office -

- (a) Each district will be headed by a DSWO of D1 rank (upgraded from CSWO rank to PSWO rank). They will be responsible for and accountable to DSW through the two Deputy Directors. The DSWOs will have direct access to the Headquarters Service Branches and be involved actively in the planning and co-ordination of welfare services at district level. The DSWO will be supported by one to three Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (ADSWO) at Senior Social Work Officer (SSWO) rank overseeing various departmental social work service units, as well as one Senior Social Security Officer (SSSO) who supervises Social Security Field Units in two districts.
- (b) The DSWOs also oversee the centralized service units which are mainly operational in nature (including those decentralised from Headquarters) headed by a SSWO such as the regional Standardised Care Need Assessment Management Office (Elderly Services), the regional specialised professional team of Family and Child Protective Services Unit and Child Custody Services Unit and Central Office for Volunteer Service.
- (c) Social Work Officers and Assistant Social Work Officers currently in the Youth Office (YO) and Rehabilitation and Elderly Office (REO) within the district office will be pooled to become members of a Planning and Co-ordination Team (PCT) in the district. In addition to carrying out YO and REO duties in a more flexible and integrated manner, the PCT will carry out district-wide liaison, district-based planning, networking and collaborating duties.
- (d) An outreaching team will be formed as an executive arm of the PCT. It will be manned by pooling the Social Work Assistants of YO and REO. The team may be based in the existing Group Work Unit of SWD within community centres and estate community centres. This will tie in with the re-focusing of the Group Work Units to carry out the Policy Address initiative on reaching out to vulnerable groups and build up a mutual support network for early identification of problems and timely assistance and to strengthen the networking and outreaching services.
- (e) Each District Office (DO) will be supported by an Executive Officer II as District Secretary responsible for executive duties and providing secretarial support to various district committees. All supporting staff will be pooled and flexibly deployed under the new structure.

2. The numbers of staff will vary from one DO to another, reflecting the span of control and the number of departmental service units, regional specialised professional teams and centralised operational units under the DSWO's purview, in particular when some DOs will support two District Councils. For instance, the number of ADSWOs will range from one to three. Likewise, in determining the number of other professional and supporting staff, due regard will be given to the span of control of the DSWO and the number and scale of centralised operational units placed under the DSWO's supervision.

**Proposed Structure of a Typical District Social Welfare Office (DSWO)**



- PSWO : Principal Social Work Officer (D1)
- CSWO : Chief Social Work Officer (MPS 45-49)
- SSWO : Senior Social Work Officer (MPS 40-44)
- SWO : Social Work Officer (MPS 34-39)
- SSSO : Senior Social Security Officer (MPS 34-44)
- SSOI : Social Security Officer I (MPS 28-33)
- SWA : Social Work Assistant (MPS 7-22)
- EO II : Executive Officer II (MPS 12-27)

- \* A total of 7 SSSOs to oversee FUs in 13 Districts
- Proposed upgrading of CSWO to PSWO
- CC/ECC Community Centre/Estate Community Centre
- FCPSU Family and Child Protective Services Unit
- CCSU Child Custody Services Unit
- COVS Central Office for Volunteer Service
- SCNAMO Standardised Care Need Assessment Management Office



**Revised Job Description**

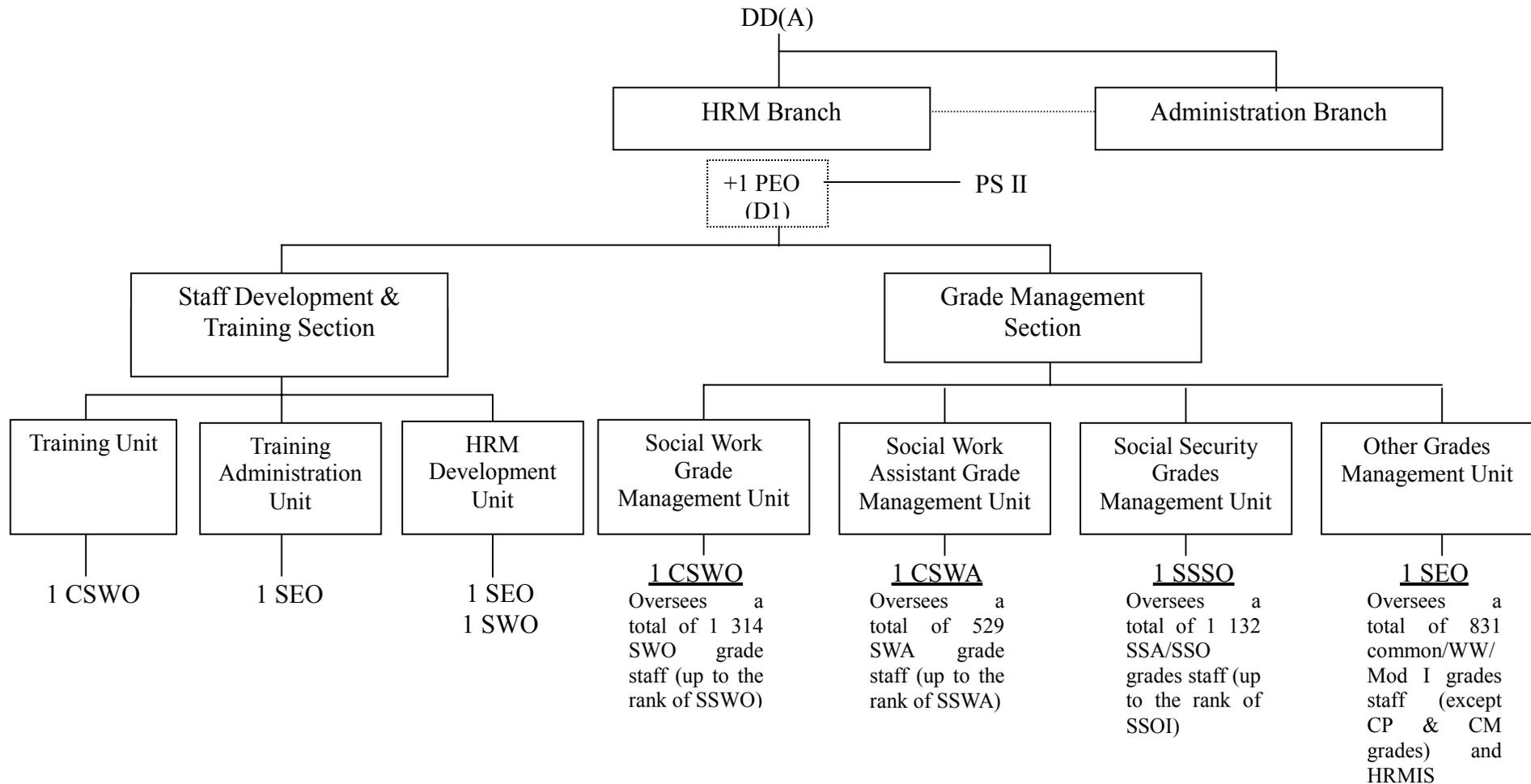
**Rank** : Assistant Director of Social Welfare (D2)  
**Branch** : Subventions and Performance Monitoring Branch  
**Responsible to** : Deputy Director of Social Welfare (Administration) (D3)

**Description of main duties -**

- (1) Executing, reviewing and interpreting subvention policies, rules and procedures, including the Lump Sum Grant (LSG) arrangements;
- (2) administering the social welfare subventions LSG system, formulating and evaluating the policies and practices in relation to service performance monitoring of the service providers, including the non-governmental organisations (NGOs);
- (3) planning and reviewing the policies on competitive bidding of welfare services and matters in relation to contract management;
- (4) reviewing the policies and control of charitable fund raising activities;
- (5) establishing close liaison with NGOs, evaluating the effectiveness of the system in the provision of one-stop service to NGOs;
- (6) administering the Lotteries Fund;
- (7) reviewing the principles and procedures for allocation from the Lotteries Fund, overseeing the processing of applications for grants and loans from various funding bodies;
- (8) overseeing the planning and co-ordination of capital projects financed by the Lotteries Fund and other funding bodies, including the determination of the physical design standards for new capital projects; and
- (9) supervising the Project Planning Section and Architectural Section on the provision of services relating to the acquisition and fitting-out of welfare premises.



**Proposed Structure of HRM Branch, Social Welfare Department  
(position as at 1.4.2001)**



DD(A) : Deputy Director of Social Welfare (Administration) (D3)

PEO : Principal Executive Officer (D1)

CSWO : Chief Social Work Officer (MPS 45-49)

CSWA : Chief Social Work Assistant (MPS 30-33)

SSSO : Senior Social Security Officer (MPS 34-44)

SEO : Senior Executive Officer (MPS 34-44)

SWO : Social Work Officer (MPS 34-39)

PS II : Personal Secretary II (MPS 3-15)



**Proposed Job Description**

**Rank** : Principal Executive Officer (D1)  
**Post** : Head, Human Resource Management Branch  
**Responsible to** : Deputy Director of Social Welfare (Administration) (D3)

**Description of main duties -**

- (1) Overseeing and supervising the management of, and to draw up manpower plans and to formulate strategic plans and policies relating to the social work officer grade, social work assistant grade, social security officer and assistant grades, welfare worker grade and other common grades/MODI grades to match with the Department's strategic goals and objectives;
- (2) to formulate departmental Human Resource Management (HRM) plans in accordance with the strategic directions set by the HRM Steering Committee, and determine the priorities for implementation;
- (3) to deal personally with grade management matters of all Chief Social Work Officers (CSWO), Chief Social Welfare Assistants (CSWA), Chief Social Security Officers (CSSO), Senior Social Security Officers (SSSO), and, Senior Executive Officers of HRM Branch in consultation with the Departmental Secretary;
- (4) to administer career development and planning system in respect of grades under Item (1) above, deciding on their posting/transfer, regularly reviewing their progress and achievements, including the conduct of career interviews, and providing staff counselling where necessary;
- (5) planning and monitoring the performance management and development system of these grades and be personally involved in respect of those ranks in Item (3);
- (6) administering the competency-based assessment system of these grades;
- (7) advising on discipline/award and extension of service for the ranks of the CSWO, CSWA, CSSO and SSSO ranks and disciplinary cases of other ranks involving serious misconduct;
- (8) identifying training needs vis-a-vis the operational requirements and initiating action to fulfill these needs, including drawing up of training programmes;
- (9) approving passage over probation/trial bars and advising on cases of refusal /deferment of probation/trial bars and stoppage of increments; and
- (10) dealing with staff unions on grade management matters.

**Revised Job Description**

**Rank** : Assistant Director of Social Welfare (D2)  
**Branch** : Youth and Corrections Branch  
**Responsible to** : Deputy Director of Social Welfare (Services) (D3)

**Description of main duties -**

- (1) Planning and developing youth, probation and corrections services, and services for drug abusers;
- (2) setting benchmark, output/outcome measurements and service standards relating to these services, developing and reviewing social welfare policies for the Department and the non-governmental sector;
- (3) evaluating the effectiveness and adequacy of existing services in these fields and making recommendations for their improvement and development;
- (4) planning all departmental resources and facilities for these services, including detailed planning for the development of departmental capital projects, ensuring these projects be delivered on time to meet policy targets and service priorities;
- (5) designing and reviewing procedures for the operation of these services;
- (6) implementing these services in departmental service units in the Districts, as well as through the NGOs and other services providers;
- (7) overseeing the Youth Offender Assessment Panel; and
- (8) overseeing and promoting volunteer services in the community.

**Revised Job Description**

**Rank** : Deputy Director of Social Welfare (D3)  
**Post** : Deputy Director of Social Welfare (Services)  
**Responsible to** : Director of Social Welfare (D6)

**Description of main duties -**

- (1) Executing the approved welfare policies and programmes and developing services of the department through Assistant Director (Family and Child Welfare), Assistant Director (Elderly), Assistant Director (Youth and Corrections) and Assistant Director (Rehabilitation and Medical Social Services), Chief Clinical Psychologist and Chief Social Work Officer on domestic violence;
- (2) formulating policies for the improvement and development of social welfare services to be provided by the Department and service providers, including subvented non-governmental organisations;
- (3) managing and developing social welfare manpower to meet service requirements as well as career development of senior professional officers;
- (4) liaising with the non-governmental welfare sector, including the Hong Kong Council of Social Service and other services providers for the efficient and effective delivery of services;
- (5) overseeing the Licensing Office in the execution and administration of licensing of Residential Care Homes for the Elderly, Drug Dependents Treatment Centres, Child Care Centres, etc. of the Department; and
- (6) supervising District Officers (PSWO) (D1).

**Revised Job Description**

**Rank** : Deputy Director of Social Welfare (D3)  
**Post** : Deputy Director of Social Welfare (Administration)  
**Responsible to** : Director of Social Welfare (D6)

**Description of main duties -**

- (1) Executing welfare policies and programmes and developing services of the department through Assistant Director (Social Security), Assistant Director (Subventions and Performance Monitoring), Assistant Director (Finance), Departmental Secretary and Principal Executive Officer (Human Resource Management), Subject Chiefs of Information Systems and Technology Branch;
- (2) formulating policies for the improvement and development of social security and subventions services, human resource management and application of information technology in the Department and welfare sector;
- (3) formulating the budgets and managing the resources of the Department to meet service needs;
- (4) liaising with the non-governmental welfare sector, including the Hong Kong Council of Social Service and other service providers on the administration and development of a viable non-governmental sector;
- (5) overseeing the Internal Audit Section; and
- (6) supervising District Officers (PSWO) (D1).

## Summary of the Proposed Establishment Changes in Social Welfare Department

<u>Category</u>	<u>Before Re-Organisation</u> <u>No. of Posts at 1.2.2001</u>		<u>After Re-Organisation</u> <u>No. of Posts at 1.9.2001 (Tentatively)</u>		<u>Difference</u>	
	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>
1. < MPS 16 (including MOD I)	3 674	68.78%	3 655	68.77%	-19	-0.52%
2. MPS 16 - 33	1 143	21.40%	1 144	21.52%	+1	0.09%
3. MPS 34 - 44 (including GDPS(O) Pt.21)	467	8.74%	460	8.66%	-7	-1.50%
4. MPS 45 & above (including Directorate)	58	1.08%	56	1.05%	-2	-3.45%
<b>Total :</b>	<b>5 342</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>5 315</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>-27</b>	<b>-0.51%</b>

### **Consultation with District Councils**

Since January 2001, we have taken the opportunity of DSW briefing individual District Councils (DCs) on social welfare services to consult the DCs on the SWD re-organisation proposal. We discussed with the DCs the necessity of re-structuring SWD to meet future challenges and sought their views towards the plan of eliminating the Regional Office layer and strengthening the District Offices, including the proposal to upgrade the 13 District Social Welfare Officers (DSWOs) to D1 level. So far we have consulted 16 DCs and DSW will complete her meeting with the remaining two DCs by mid June.

2. The overall response from the 16 DCs is positive. They appreciated SWD taking a proactive approach in discussing with them social welfare policies and service provision in their respective districts. Most DC members who had spoken during the DC meetings expressed concrete support to the re-organisation proposal. They anticipated that the delayering of regional offices and strengthening of district offices would improve the communication among the DCs, DSWOs and SWD Headquarters. They shared the views that the enhanced roles and authorities of district offices would make co-ordination work in the districts more effective, and thus facilitate more efficient operation of the DCs in respect of social welfare matters.

3. While welcoming the re-organisation proposals, DC members have also raised the following related concerns -

- a couple of DC members asked if resources would be cut upon SWD re-organisation (which is not our objective);
- some DC members asked if the promotion prospect, workload, work pressure and morale of staff would be affected;
- several DC members reminded us that with enhanced roles responsibilities, DSWOs should also be given sufficient resources to deal with district issues effectively;
- members of Islands, Eastern and Wan Chai DCs suggested putting in more resources to set up a designated welfare office for the districts (at the moment, Central and Western and Islands come under one SWD District; the same exists for Eastern and Wan Chai).

4. In response to the above concerns, DSW explained that it was not feasible at the moment to re-align the SWD districts with the DCs but the span of control would be taken into account in determining the actual resources of individual DSWOs. DSW also assured DC Members that maximum staff buy-in and no staff redundancies were main parameters guiding the re-organisation.

5. Specific views of the DCs are summarised below for reference -

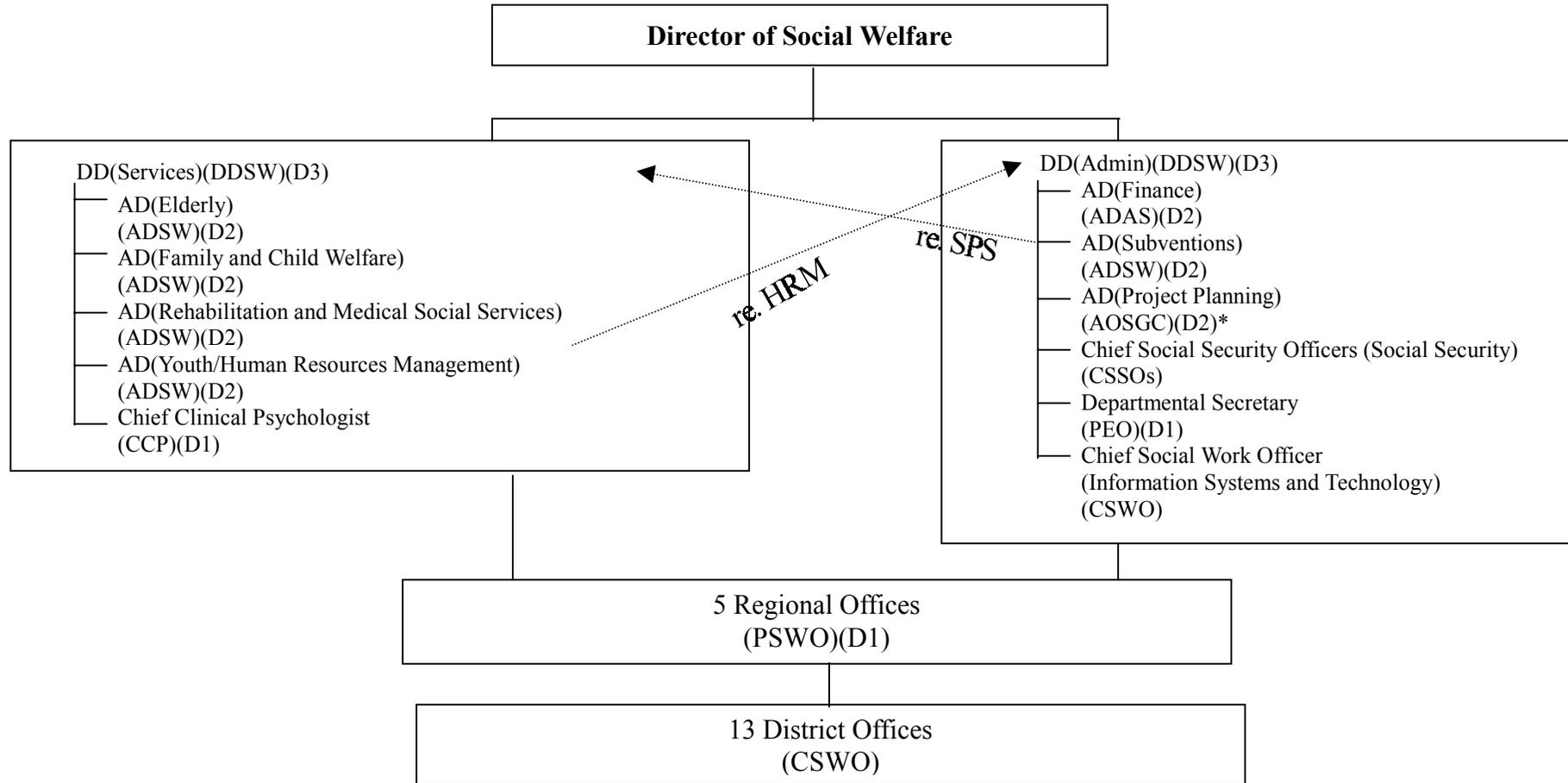
<b>Date</b>	<b>District Council</b>	<b>Specific views/concerns</b>
19 January	Sha Tin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A member was concerned if the re-organisation would affect promotion prospects and staff morale.</li></ul>
2 February	Islands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Three members spoke in support of the proposed re-organisation.</li><li>• The district office overseeing both Central and Western district and Islands district should have sufficient manpower and there should be sufficient publicity to educate residents.</li></ul>
8 February	North	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A member complimented that the proposal was proactive.</li><li>• A member expressed agreement to the streamlining proposal, as DSWOs would be upgraded and empowered to reflect district affairs to Headquarters (HQs).</li></ul>
22 February	Eastern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A member expressed agreement to the streamlining, as upgrading of DSWOs could empower them with more authority to answer DC members more directly and facilitate the operation of DC.</li><li>• A member raised that Eastern district was quite different from the Wan Chai district in population characteristics, and suggested giving more resources to set up a designated office for Eastern district.</li></ul>
1 March	Southern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Altogether six members spoke in support of the streamlining proposal, the two-tier structure, and the strengthening of the district office and enhancing the role and accountability of DSWOs. They believed that it would be conducive to the co-ordination of district affairs, resulting in more efficient reflection of district views, direct communication with HQs, and better district welfare work.</li><li>• A member was concerned if more workload would be shifted to lower level staff.</li></ul>

/1 March .....

Date	District Council	Specific views/concerns
1 March	Yau Tsim Mong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members supported streamlining SWD structure, as it would enhance work efficiency.</li> <li>• A member suggested keeping original manpower to facilitate changes.</li> <li>• A member concerned if re-organisation was a means to cut cost.</li> <li>• Two members raised objections to the proposals, saying that it would lead to more staff and more senior staff.</li> </ul>
6 March	Tuen Mun	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The DC did not discuss the proposals specifically but thanked DSW for the briefing, requested SWD to take the views of the DC in policy making and hoped that such consultation could be conducted annually.</li> </ul>
20 March	Wan Chai	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A member agreed that the streamlining would enhance efficiency and suggested having a designate DSWO for Wan Chai district.</li> </ul>
27 March	Tsuen Wan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A member spoke in support of re-organising district office to improve efficiency and asked for increased resources for Tsuen Wan and Kwai Tsing districts.</li> <li>• A member asked not to cut resources upon re-organisation.</li> <li>• A member asked for sight of the new staffing establishment in the restructured Tsuen Wan district office.</li> </ul>
3 April	Wong Tai Sin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three members spoke in support of the proposal.</li> <li>• There was concern whether the changes would affect staff morale and services in the district.</li> </ul>
10 April	Sai Kung	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A member spoke in support of the streamlining but was concerned if it would assert a higher pressure on frontline staff, e.g. staff in Social Security Field Units.</li> <li>• A member asked SWD to maintain close co-ordination with local people.</li> </ul>

<b>Date</b>	<b>District Council</b>	<b>Specific views/concerns</b>
12 April	Sham Shui Po	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A member appreciated that a customer-oriented approach was adopted in the reform of administration and policy of social welfare but was concerned if staff of SWD was able to follow the pace of reform.</li></ul>
17 April	Kwun Tong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Four members spoke in support of the streamlining proposal.</li><li>• One member concerned if any staff would be dismissed owing to the re-organisation.</li><li>• Another member suggested that resources saved from the re-organisation should be put back into welfare services.</li></ul>
19 April	Kowloon City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The DC did not discuss the proposals specifically but appreciated that the discussion had given members a deeper understanding towards overall welfare service policies and future development.</li></ul>
8 May	Tai Po	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A member hoped that after the re-organisation and streamlining, district social welfare services would be beneficial to more clients in the community.</li></ul>
24 May	Kwai Tsing	<b><i>Minutes not yet available</i></b>

**Current Structure of the Social welfare Department**

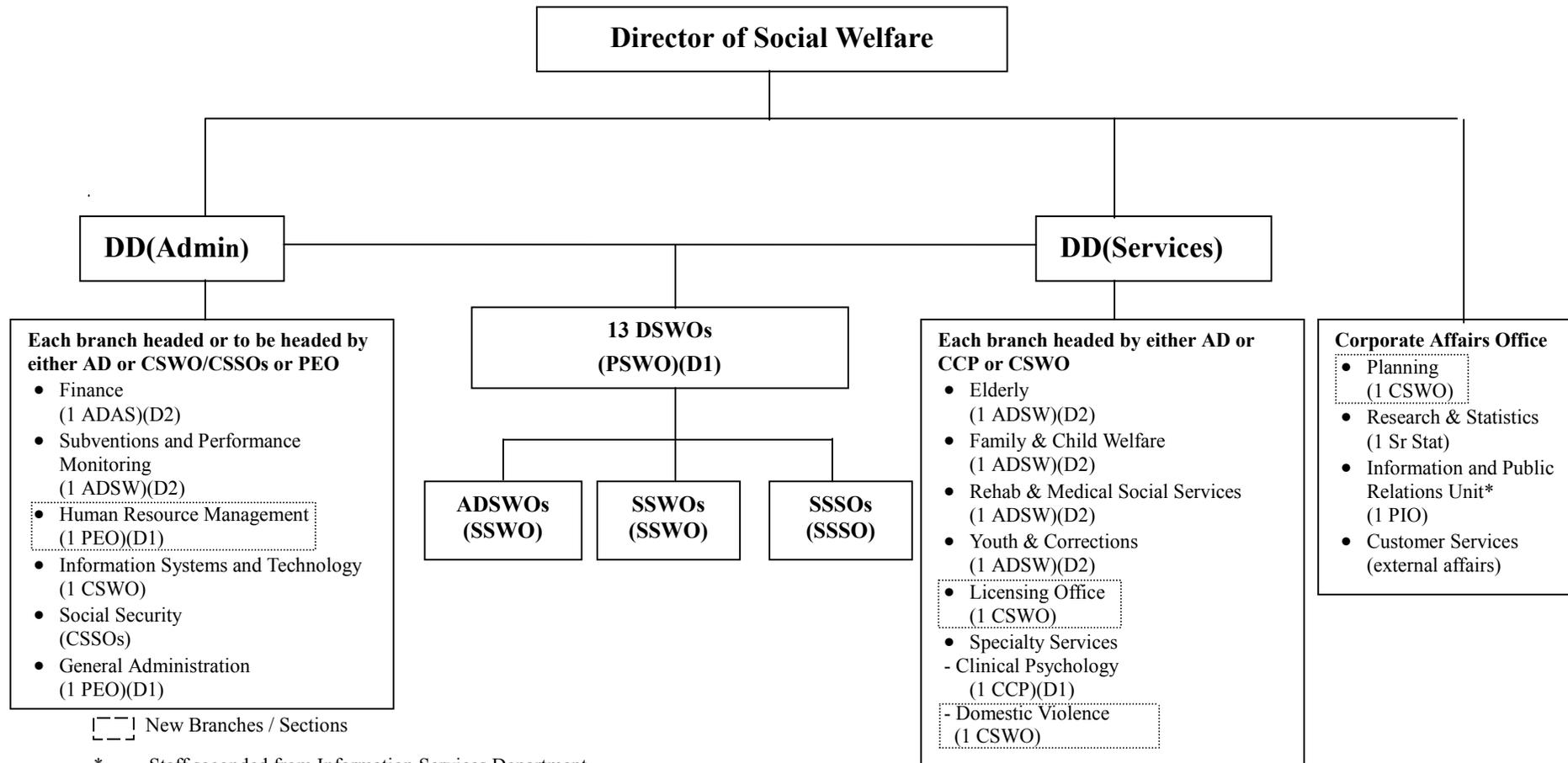


**Legend:**

- DD(S) : Deputy Director of Social Welfare (Services) (D3)
- DD(A) : Deputy Director of Social Welfare (Administration) (D3)
- AOSGC : Administrative Officer Staff Grade C (D2)
- ADSW : Assistant Director of Social Welfare (D2)
- ADAS : Assistant Director of Accounting Services (D2)
- \* : Temporarily held against by a PEO post (D1) since April 2001

- PSWO : Principal Social Work Officer (D1)
- CCP : Chief Clinical Psychologist (D1)
- PEO : Principal Executive Officer (D1)
- CSWO : Chief Social Work Officer (MPS 45-49)
- CSSO : Chief Social Security Officer (MPS 45-49)

**Proposed New Structure of the Social welfare Department**



[---] New Branches / Sections

\* Staff seconded from Information Services Department

DD(A) : Deputy Director of Social Welfare (Administration) (D3)  
 DD(S) : Deputy Director of Social Welfare (Services) (D3)  
 ADSW : Assistant Director of Social Welfare (D2)  
 ADAS : Assistant Director of Accounting Services (D2)  
 PSWO : Principal Social Welfare Officer (D1)  
 CCP : Chief Clinical Psychologist (D1)

PEO : Principal Executive Officer (D1)  
 CSWO : Chief Social Work Officer (MPS 45-49)  
 CSSO : Chief Social Security Officer (MPS 45-49)  
 SSWO : Senior Social Work Officer (MPS 40-44)  
 SSSO : Senior Social Security Officer (MPS 34-44)  
 Sr Stat. : Senior Statistician (MPS 45-49)  
 PIO : Principal Information Officer (MPS 40-44)



