

For information

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
PANEL ON PLANNING, LANDS AND WORKS**

**Proposed Conversion of Four Supernumerary Posts in the
Urban Renewal Teams of Planning and Lands Bureau,
Lands Department and Planning Department to Permanent Posts**

PURPOSE

This paper informs Members of the Administration's plan to submit to the Establishment Subcommittee of the Finance Committee a proposal to convert four supernumerary posts to permanent posts to provide adequate support and assistance for the implementation of a 20-year urban renewal programme consisting of 200 new projects and 25 uncompleted projects of the Land Development Corporation (LDC). The four supernumerary posts are –

	<i>Expiry date</i>
<i>Planning and Lands Bureau (PLB)</i>	
1 Administrative Officer Staff Grade C (AOSGC) (D2)	1 November 2001
<i>Lands Department (Lands D)</i>	
1 Chief Estate Surveyor (CES) (D1)	1 November 2001
<i>Planning Department (Plan D)</i>	
1 Government Town Planner (GTP) (D2)	1 November 2001
1 Chief Town Planner (CTP) (D1)	1 November 2001

BACKGROUND

2. In November 1999, the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council approved the retention of the following four supernumerary posts up to the date of the dissolution of the LDC to assist the Administration in dealing with matters relating to the LDC –

- (a) 1 AOSGC in PLB;
- (b) 1 CES in Lands D;
- (c) 1 GTP in Plan D; and
- (d) 1 CTP in Plan D.

3. The Urban Renewal Authority Bill was passed by the Legislative Council in June 2000. The Urban Renewal Authority (URA) was established on 1 May 2001 to undertake urban renewal under a new institutional and statutory framework. The LDC was dissolved on the same day. Accordingly, the four posts lapsed on 1 May 2001. On the same day, four directorate posts were created on a supernumerary basis for six months up to 31 October 2001 under delegated authority to head the urban renewal teams in PLB, Lands D and Plan D so as to facilitate the initial operation of the URA. During this six-month period, these teams are responsible for preparing the draft urban renewal strategy (URS), consulting the public on the draft URS, liaising with the URA on the preparation of its first draft five-year corporate plan and first draft annual business plan, and formulating new planning, resumption and clearance procedures for URA projects in accordance with the Urban Renewal Authority Ordinance (Cap. 563).

Post of AOSGC in PLB

4. The AOSGC heads the Urban Renewal Unit (UR Unit) in PLB. The UR Unit is responsible for –

- (a) formulating the draft URS and consulting the public before finalising it;
- (b) updating the URS (tentatively on a biennial basis) to take account of any change in circumstances and the changing needs of the community;
- (c) providing policy guidelines to the URA on the urban renewal programme;
- (d) scrutinising the draft five-year corporate plans and draft annual business plans to be submitted by the URA annually;
- (e) putting in place measures to improve the financial viability of the urban renewal programme;
- (f) reviewing the ex gratia compensation for owners and tenants of industrial properties affected by land resumption;
- (g) processing land resumption applications from the URA; and
- (h) dealing with any public relations aspects concerning land resumption.

5. In view of the above commitments, the continued support of the AOSGC is needed.

Post of CES in Lands D

6. The CES is the head of the Urban Renewal Section (UR Section) in Lands D. The UR Section is responsible for –
- (a) implementing resumption, compensation and clearance policies relating to URA projects and the land resumption programme of the URA;
 - (b) carrying out land resumption under the Lands Resumption Ordinance (Cap. 124);

- (c) co-ordinating site clearance to make available cleared sites for development by the URA;
- (d) monitoring expenditure of resumption funds; and
- (e) approving the release of statutory compensation and/or ex gratia allowances to owners and tenants affected by land resumption and executing compensation agreements.

7. Although the land resumption procedures in relation to the implementation of urban renewal projects have been streamlined under the Urban Renewal Authority Ordinance, the workload of the UR Section will continue to grow since a larger number of projects will be carried out each year in order to complete the 20-year urban renewal programme. The continued support of the CES is required to lead the UR Section in handling the above commitments and in assisting PLB in handling any land matters relating to URA projects so as to ensure the timely and smooth implementation of the urban renewal programme.

Posts of GTP and CTP in Plan D

8. The GTP heads the Urban Renewal Division (UR Division) and the CTP heads a URA team under the UR Division in Plan D. The UR Division, through its URA team, is responsible for –

- (a) undertaking planning studies to provide necessary planning input for the updating exercise of the URS;
- (b) providing planning and development parameters and advice to PLB in processing the URA's corporate plans and business plans;
- (c) undertaking planning work on URA projects for the improvement and restructuring of old built-up areas;

- (d) co-ordinating and processing development schemes submitted by the URA for Town Planning Board's consideration and for Executive Council's approval;
- (e) monitoring the implementation of URA projects to ensure the projects' compliance with statutory planning requirements;
- (f) reserving adequate rehousing land for timely delivery to the rehousing agencies of the URA; and
- (g) co-ordinating the provision of infrastructure, Government/Institution/Community facilities and open space in URA projects.

9. The continued guidance and professional support of the GTP and CTP are required to handle the above complex and important tasks in respect of URA projects.

PROPOSAL

10. Dedicated directorate support is required to closely monitor the operation of the URA, to liaise with the URA in pursuing the urban renewal programme, to regularly review and update the URS to take account of changing conditions of our urban fabric and the needs of the community, to introduce policies and measures to facilitate the timely implementation of the urban renewal programme, to expedite the vetting of planning and land resumption applications from the URA and to ensure the efficient and effective handling of planning and land resumption matters in the process of urban renewal.

11. We consider that there is a need to convert the supernumerary posts of the AOSGC in PLB, the CES in Lands D, as well as the GTP and

CTP in Plan D, to permanent posts in view of Government's long-term commitment to the URA and urban renewal.

12. To provide the necessary professional and secretarial support to the above urban renewal teams, we have retained 54 non-directorate posts currently funded by the URA. These include the six posts of one Senior Administrative Officer, one Senior Estate Surveyor (SES), one Senior Town Planner (STP), one Personal Secretary (PS) I and two PS II in the UR Unit in PLB; the 29 posts of three SESs, four Estate Surveyors, two Principal Survey Officers, three Senior Survey Officers (SSOs), six Survey Officers, one Chief Land Executive, one Senior Land Executive, one Land Executive, one Land Inspector I, one Executive Officer I, one PS II, one Clerical Officer, three Assistant Clerical Officers (ACO) and one Workman II in the UR Section in Lands D; and the 19 posts of two STPs, five Town Planners, one SSO, two Survey Officers, one Senior Technical Officer, two Technical Officers, one PS I, one PS II, one ACO, two Clerical Assistants and one Office Assistant in the UR Division in Plan D.

13. The organisation charts of the urban renewal teams in PLB, Lands D and Plan D are at Annexes A, B and C respectively. The job descriptions for the posts of the AOSGC, the CES, the GTP and the CTP are at Annexes D to G.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

14. The additional notional annual salary cost of the proposal to convert the four supernumerary posts to permanent posts at mid-point is \$5,577,600. The full annual average staff cost of the proposal, including salaries and staff on-costs, is \$9,157,428.

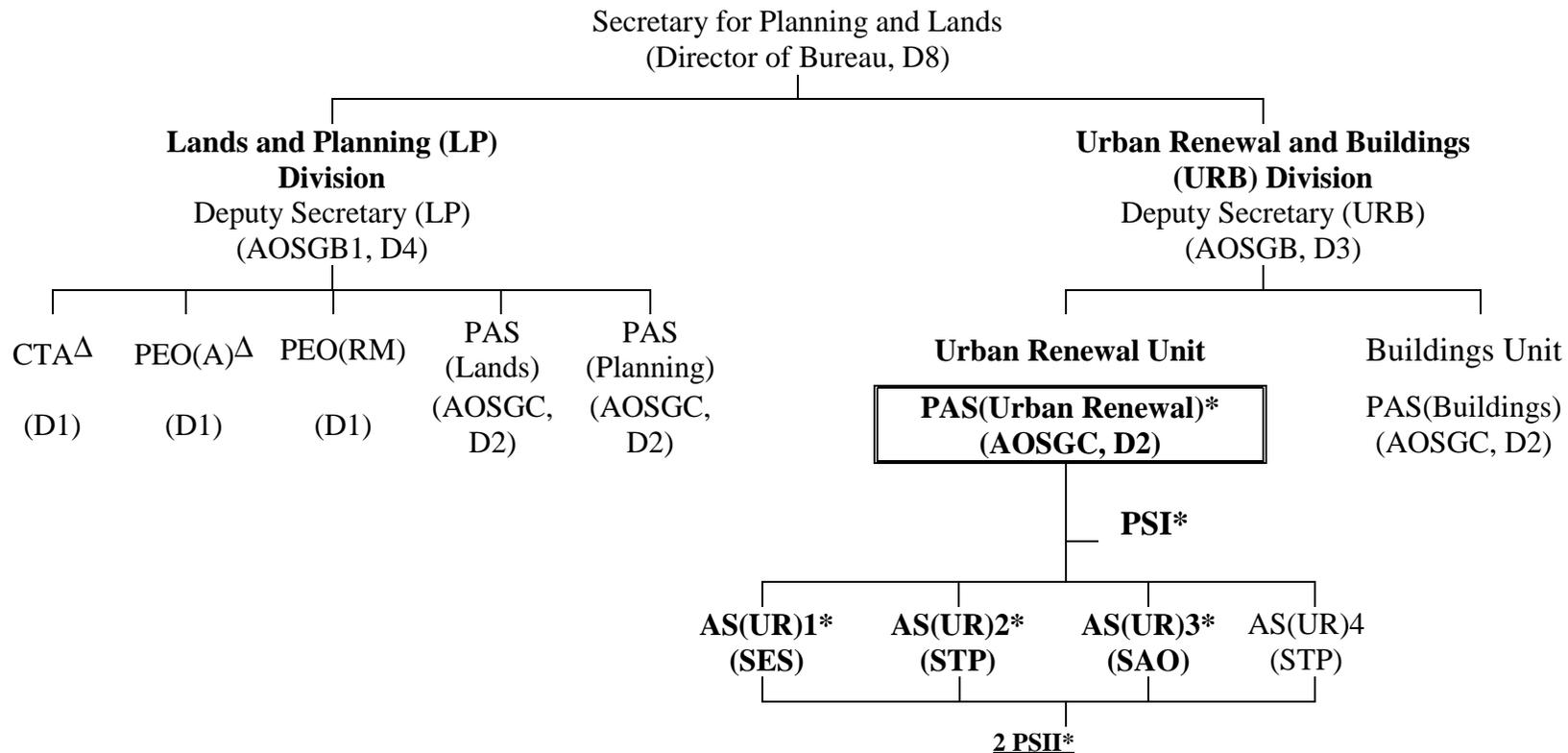
15. The UR Unit in PLB, the UR Section in Lands D and the UR Division in Plan D were previously funded by the LDC and are currently funded by the URA which has agreed to fund the teams up to 31 March 2002. We shall recover the full staff costs of the proposed posts of the AOSGC, CES, GTP and CTP and the 54 non-directorate posts, including on-costs, from the URA until 31 March 2002.

16. Subject to the approval of the Legislative Council, sufficient funding has been earmarked to meet the full staff costs of the UR Unit in PLB and the UR Division in Plan D, including the proposed posts of the AOSGC, GTP and CTP and the 25 non-directorate posts, starting 1 April 2002. As for the proposed post of the CES and the 29 non-directorate posts in Lands D, since the UR Section mainly deals with land resumption matters to facilitate URA projects, the URA has agreed to continue to meet the full staff cost of the posts, including salaries and staff on-costs. This arrangement has the advantage of allowing flexibility in adjusting the strength of the UR Section to tie in with the fluctuation in resumption workload arising from URA projects.

THE WAY FORWARD

17. We intend to submit to the Establishment Subcommittee of the Finance Committee the proposal to convert the four supernumerary posts to permanent posts before the expiry date of the four posts on 1 November 2001.

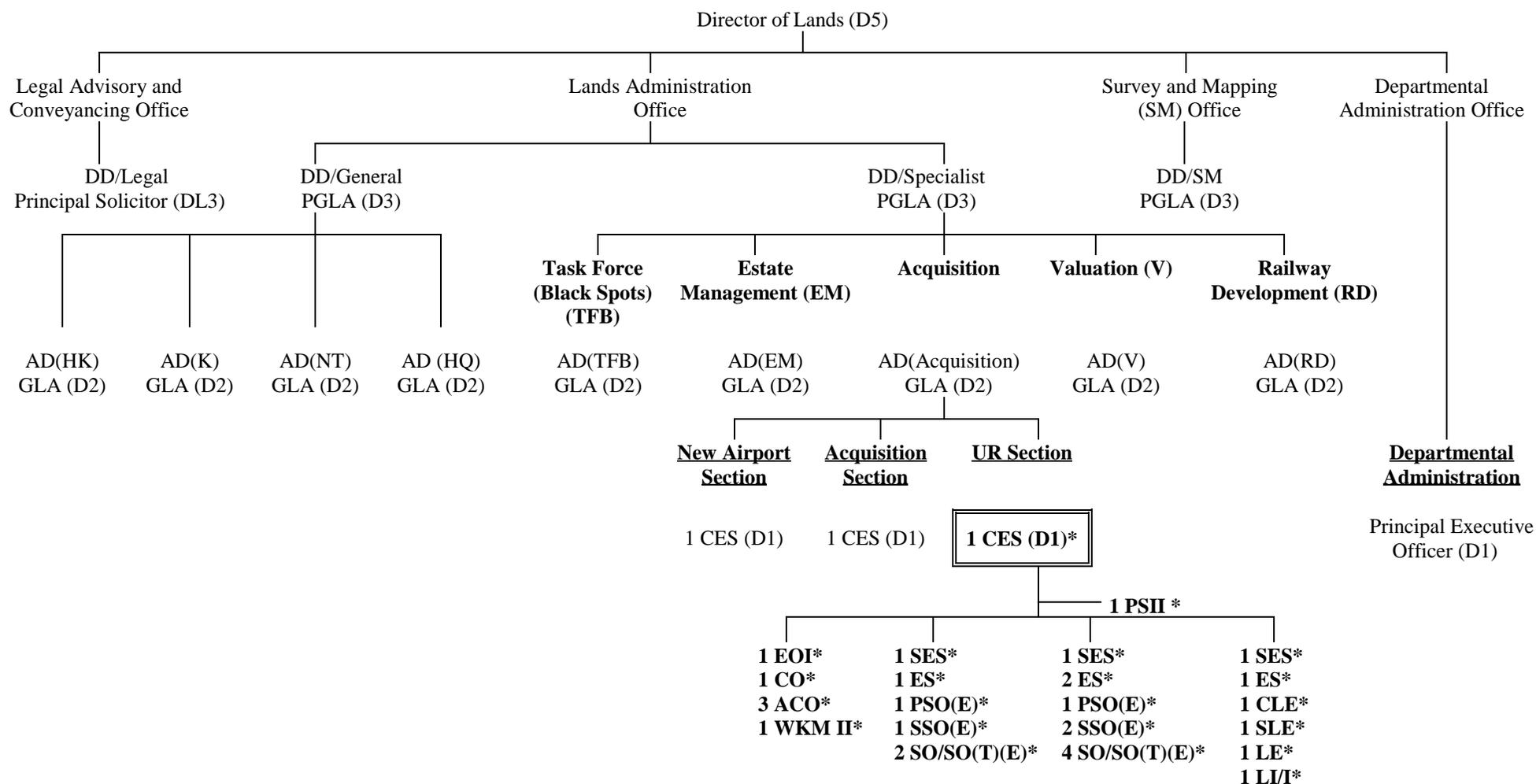
Organisation Chart of the Urban Renewal Unit, Planning and Lands Bureau



Legend	AOSG	Administrative Officer Staff Grade
	PAS	Principal Assistant Secretary
	PEO	Principal Executive Officer
	CTA	Chief Treasury Accountant
	A	Administration
	RM	Resource Management
	STP	Senior Town Planner
	SES	Senior Estate Surveyor
	SAO	Senior Administrative Officer
	PS	Personal Secretary

 	Proposed post for retention
*	Posts currently funded by Urban Renewal Authority (URA)
Δ	Serving both PLB and Works Bureau

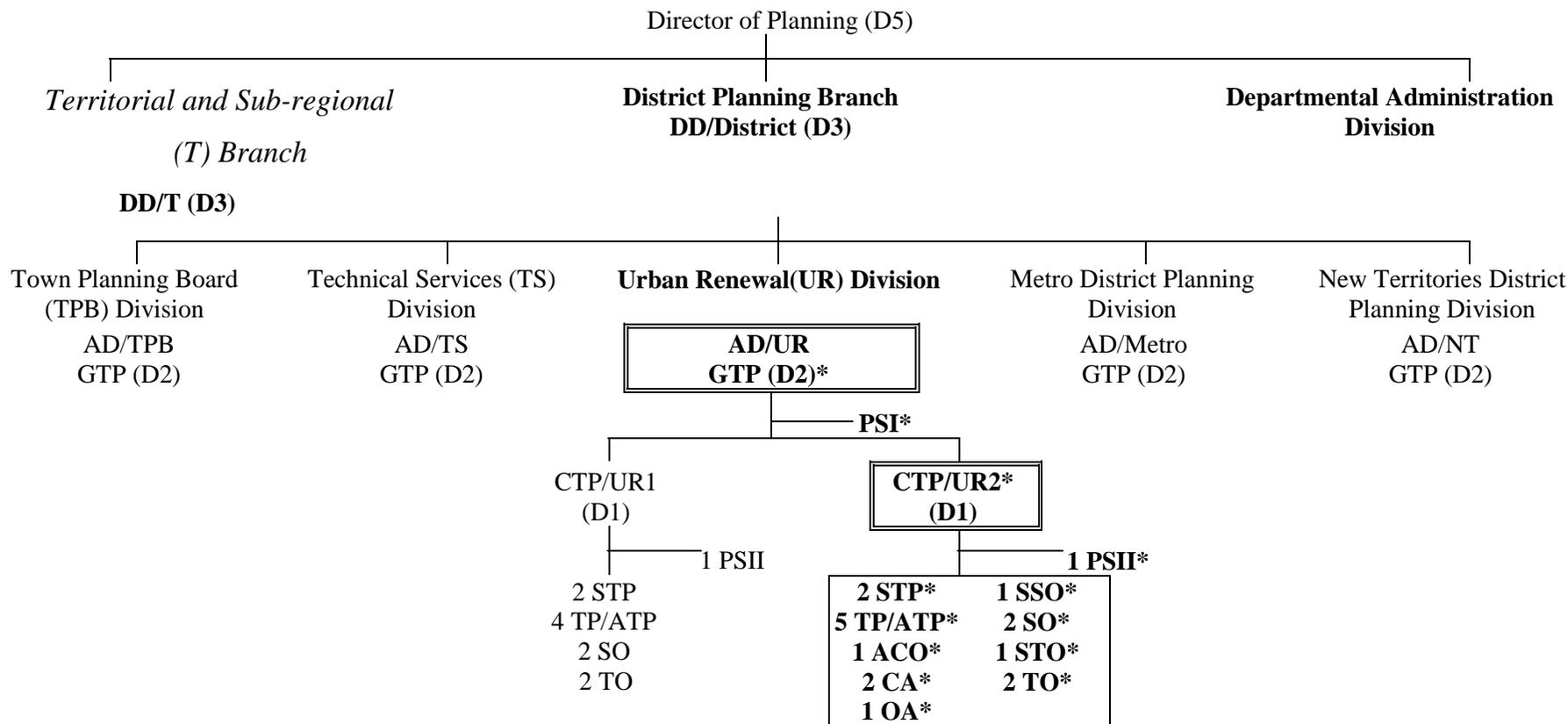
Organisation Chart of the Urban Renewal Section, Lands Department



Legend :

DD	Deputy Director	PSO(E)	Principal Survey Officer (Estate)	CO	Clerical Officer
AD	Assistant Director	SSO(E)	Senior Survey Officer (Estate)	ACO	Assistant Clerical Officer
PGLA	Principal Government Land Agent	SO/SO(T)(E)	Survey Officer/Survey Officer Trainee (Estate)	OA	Office Assistant
GLA	Government Land Agent	CLE	Chief Land Executive	EO	Executive Officer
CES	Chief Estate Surveyor	SLE	Senior Land Executive		Proposed post for retention
SES	Senior Estate Surveyor	LE	Land Executive	*	Posts funded by URA
ES	Estate Surveyor	LI/I	Land Inspector I		

Organisation Chart of the Urban Renewal Division, Planning Department



Legend:

- DD - Deputy Director of Planning
- AD - Assistant Director of Planning
- GTP - Government Town Planner
- CTP - Chief Town Planner
- STP - Senior Town Planner
- TP/ATP - Town Planner/Assistant Town Planner

- SSO - Senior Survey Officer
- SO - Survey Officer
- STO - Senior Technical Officer
- TO - Technical Officer
- ACO - Assistant Clerical Officer
- CA - Clerical Assistant

- OA - Office Assistant
- PS - Personal Secretary
- Proposed posts for retention
- * Posts currently funded by URA

**Job Description of
the Administrative Officer Staff Grade C
in the Planning and Lands Bureau**

Major Duties and Responsibilities

Responsible for urban renewal policies as well as the urban renewal programme relating to the Urban Renewal Authority (URA). Duties include –

- (1) preparing the draft urban renewal strategy to provide policy guidelines to the URA on the urban renewal programme and updating the strategy (tentatively on a biennial basis) to take account of any change in circumstances and the changing needs of the community;
- (2) consulting the public on each updating exercise of the urban renewal strategy as required under the Urban Renewal Authority Ordinance;
- (3) scrutinising the draft five-year corporate plans and draft annual business plans submitted by the URA annually to ensure that proper priorities are set for the urban renewal projects and that there are proper compensation arrangements and adequate rehousing resources for the smooth implementation of the proposed projects;
- (4) advising on and monitoring the urban renewal programme relating to the URA, including processing land resumption applications and vetting individual urban renewal projects having regard to any objections raised against the projects under the statute;

- (5) formulating policies, and putting in place proper financial arrangements to enhance the financial viability of the urban renewal programme;
- (6) overseeing the operation of the URA, including liaising with its Board of Directors and offering necessary assistance to ensure the successful and smooth implementation of its urban renewal projects;
- (7) co-ordinating the efforts of the URA, various Government departments and public bodies, including the Housing Authority and the Housing Society, on urban renewal at the policy level;
- (8) providing policy guidance on the heritage preservation and rehabilitation aspects of the URA's work; and
- (9) attending meetings of the Executive Council, the Legislative Council, District Councils and press conferences as necessary and overseeing the handling of enquiries and complaints on URA's work at the policy level.

**Job Description of
the Chief Estate Surveyor
in the Lands Department**

Major Duties and Responsibilities

Responsible for all land matters relating to the Urban Renewal Authority (URA) and the implementation of resumption work of URA projects. Duties include –

- (1) formulating, monitoring and reviewing the implementation programme of URA projects which may require land resumption in consultation with the senior management of URA;
- (2) co-ordinating and liaising with various Government departments to identify and resolve clearance problems to ensure that the sites can be handed over to the URA for development on the scheduled dates;
- (3) carrying out resumption and clearance for URA projects if necessary in accordance with the Lands Resumption Ordinance;
- (4) monitoring expenditure of resumption funds, approving the release of statutory compensation and/or ex gratia allowances to property owners and tenants affected by land resumption for URA projects;
- (5) setting up an administrative mechanism to deal with appeals on ex gratia payments lodged by owners or tenants affected by URA projects;

- (6) providing professional advice in case of litigation and Lands Tribunal referrals on land resumption cases arising from URA projects; and
- (7) attending meetings of Executive Council, Legislative Council, District Councils and press conferences as necessary and overseeing the handling of enquiries and complaints on URA resumption matters.

**Job Description of
the Government Town Planner
in the Planning Department**

Main Duties and Responsibilities

Responsible for the Urban Renewal Division on urban renewal matters. Duties include –

- (1) undertaking planning study to provide the necessary planning input to the Planning and Lands Bureau (PLB) in preparing the draft urban renewal strategy;
- (2) assisting PLB in conducting the public consultation exercise as regards the draft urban renewal strategy;
- (3) providing planning advice to PLB in processing the draft corporate plans and the draft business plans to be submitted by the URA and in scrutinising individual URA projects which are set out in its corporate plans and business plans;
- (4) providing planning advice on preservation of buildings and areas of architectural, cultural and historical interests;
- (5) developing and maintaining a geographical information system for sharing of information on building conditions among various Government departments for building rehabilitation and the review of the urban renewal programme;

- (6) advising the Director of Planning in executing his statutory functions as a non-executive director of the URA Board;
- (7) taking a leading role in the urban re-structuring studies in collaboration with relevant Government departments; and
- (8) attending meetings of the Executive Council, the Legislative Council, the Antiquities Advisory Board and District Councils as necessary.

**Job Description of
the Chief Town Planner
in the Planning Department**

Main Duties and Responsibilities

Responsible for urban renewal matters related to the Urban Renewal Authority (URA). Duties include –

- (1) providing planning information to assist the Planning and Lands Bureau (PLB) in preparing the draft urban renewal strategy;
- (2) providing planning information to PLB in processing the draft corporate plans and the draft business plans of the URA;
- (3) formulating planning and development parameters and providing professional planning advice to facilitate the URA in preparing its proposed development projects and proposed development schemes in accordance with the Urban Renewal Authority Ordinance and the Town Planning Ordinance as appropriate so as to ensure the projects' compliance with the statutory planning requirements;
- (4) formulating planning procedure for processing proposed development schemes submitted by the URA and processing of the objections against the development schemes;
- (5) formulating guidelines for the provision of infrastructure, Government/Institution/Community facilities and public open space in URA projects and overseeing the application of the guidelines by co-ordinating the efforts of the URA and various Government bureaux/departments;

- (6) overseeing the incorporation of territorial and sub-regional planning objectives into URA projects;
- (7) identifying suitable sites to meet the rehousing requirements arising from URA projects and overseeing the reservation of the sites to ensure their timely delivery to the rehousing agencies; and
- (8) resolving land use, planning and design issues related to URA projects with the URA and various Government bureaux/departments at various stages of implementation of URA projects to ensure the smooth implementation of these projects.