

Legislative Council Panel on Public Service

**Staffing Proposal for Protocol Division
under the Chief Secretary for Administration's Office**

PURPOSE

This paper briefs Members on the Administration's proposal to create one permanent directorate post in the Protocol Division of the Chief Secretary for Administration's Office in order to maintain sufficient directorate support in the Division after the lapse of the existing supernumerary post of Deputy Director of Protocol (DD of P) on 1 March 2001.

BACKGROUND

2. In view of the significant increase in the scope and complexity of the work undertaken by the Protocol Division since the reunification on 1 July 1997, the Finance Committee approved in February 1998, among other proposals, the creation of a DD of P post at D1 level on a supernumerary basis for three years pending a review on the permanent need of the post. The post will lapse on 1 March 2001. We consider that there is a continued need for a D1 post to underpin the Director of Protocol (D of P) (D2).

PROPOSAL

3. We propose to create a Principal Executive Officer (PEO) post (D1) in the Protocol Division to serve as the DD of P on a permanent basis with effect from 1

March 2001. As a consequential arrangement of this proposal, we also propose to delete the rank of the DD of P which is no longer necessary.

JUSTIFICATION

4. In the light of operational experience in the past three years, and having regard to the wide spectrum of functions and activities for which the Protocol Division is responsible, we consider that there is a permanent need for a deputy head at D1 level in the Protocol Division. The following paragraphs set out the case for retaining a D1 post in the Protocol Division on a permanent basis.

Administration of Consular Corps Affairs

5. Administration and servicing of the Consular Corps (CC) and personnel of International Organisations (IO) in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) is one of the main functions of the Protocol Division. This includes liaison with and the provision of host government services to the local CC and IO representatives; administration of consular/diplomatic privileges and immunities in accordance with international agreements and local legislation; gazettal of Head of Post appointments approved by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; maintaining a database of foreign representatives and members of their families stationed in Hong Kong; and publication of a Consular List on a quarterly basis.

6. We have in the HKSAR a large and active foreign representation, with over 100 Consular posts and missions of IO. Many of them are headed by very senior diplomats and some are even at ambassadorial level. Given our frequent interface with the diplomatic sector on a daily basis, sufficient directorate presence in the Protocol Division is essential to ensure the provision of an efficient and

responsive protocol service by the Government of HKSAR. The nature of work of the D of P is such that she is often engaged in duties and activities and not physically present in the office. The presence of a directorate deputy enables us to give timely attention to matters of the CC that always requires personal input and discretion of officers at directorate level.

7. The Protocol Division also assumes a heavy role in representing the Government of HKSAR in attending the various events and functions organised by the CC, such as National Day Receptions, CC Luncheons, and dinners/receptions hosted in honour of visiting VIPs. There is a strong need for another directorate officer to deputise the D of P in her representational role.

Other Responsibilities of the Protocol Division

8. The Protocol Division is also responsible for a wide spectrum of other duties requiring substantial directorate input. These include -

(A) *Official Visits*

9. Since the reunification, the Protocol Division has assumed the new and important duty to plan and co-ordinate visit programmes and reception arrangements for visits of national leaders and official visits of foreign heads of states/heads of governments to Hong Kong. The D of P and DD of P have to work closely with the CC, the Chief Executive's Office, senior government officials, the Information Services Department, the Police, the Airport Authority Hong Kong and other non-government organisations in lining up the visit programmes and in ensuring their smooth delivery. Many aspects of such a high profile visit require the most careful planning and meticulous co-ordination of officers at directorate level, such as airport reception, accommodation and transport, official entertainment, media arrangement, and escort and servicing of the official delegation, etc. The D of P and DD of P are

each responsible for separate elements of the visits which often require concurrent attention. Since July 1997, the Protocol Division has co-ordinated over 40 such visits.

(B) *Reception of Visiting Dignitaries*

10. Apart from official visits, the Protocol Division has to ensure that national and international dignitaries visiting or transiting Hong Kong are accorded appropriate courtesies. It is necessary for the D of P and DD of P to greet and see-off the most senior of the visiting dignitaries (heads or deputy heads of state/government and foreign ministers), and co-ordinate with the relevant parties e.g. the Police and the Immigration Department etc. for proper facilitation and suitable security coverage for the visitors. The Protocol Division also assists in putting together a visit programme and in scheduling appointments for the visitors on request. In 2000 alone, we facilitated over 100 such inbound VIP visits to Hong Kong.

(C) *Airport VIP Service*

11. The Government VIP service at the old Kai Tak Airport was provided by the Civil Aviation Department. The Protocol Division has taken over such duty since the relocation of the Hong Kong International Airport to Chek Lap Kok. Directorate attention is required in liaising with the airport management in ensuring the quality of the service, vetting some 4,000 applications for use of the facility each year, and handling appeals or disputes relating to rejected requests. We served 4,000 parties and 14,000 VIPs at the Government VIP Lounge in 2000.

(D) *Honours and Awards*

12. After the reunification, a local honours and awards system has been put in place. The Protocol Division is responsible for administering the system. The

D of P personally serves as the Secretary to the Honours Committee and the two Minor Honours Sub-committees which consider all nominations for honours and awards for recommendation to the Chief Executive. The number of nominations has risen from 322 in 1998 to 474 in 2000. The processing of nominations, the submission to the Chief Executive, the preparation of citations of awardees, the organisation of the Honours and Awards Presentation Ceremony and the requirement of policy input to further enrich and develop the present system all demand substantial directorate attention that is beyond the capacity of the D of P alone.

(E) Protocol Matters and Major International Events

13. The Protocol Division is responsible for advising government bureaux/departments on matters such as protocol for official funerals. The Division also lends support to other government bureaux/departments in the planning and implementation of major international events. For example, in the recent ITU TELECOM 2000 event held in Hong Kong in December 2000 which was co-ordinated by the Information Technology and Broadcasting Bureau, the D of P and DD of P were heavily involved in various aspects of the events including airport reception of VIPs, opening ceremony, Vice-Premier Wu Bangguo's visit and the ministers' dinner hosted by the Government of HKSAR.

(F) Training and Development

14. Apart from the above routine assignments, the Protocol Division is required to continue updating and upgrading its services so that they continue to be in line with changing international practices. Given the rather specialised nature of our work, we need also to arrange relevant training for officers in the Division. Substantial directorate input is required in this area of work.

15. The job description for the post of the DD of P is at Annex I.

Re-ranking of the DD of P Post

16. In February 1998, the Finance Committee approved the creation of a supernumerary DD of P post for a period of three years and the creation of the rank of DD of P (D1) as a departmental rank. We propose to re-rank the post to a general grade post to be filled by a PEO (D1), for the following reasons -

(a) The post requires extensive contact with bureaux and departments. Members of the Executive Grade who are rotated to different departments will help enrich the DD of P post with their experience and connections established in other jobs.

(b) Much of the work of the post involves event management duties e.g. the preparation of large-scale ceremonies and programme co-ordination for foreign visitors. Members of the Executive Grade can provide such experience. In fact, eight of the ten core posts in the Protocol Division are filled by Executive Officers.

(c) Re-ranking the post to PEO will provide more candidates for the job, and will facilitate career development and succession planning.

Restructuring of the Protocol Division

17. The Protocol Division has undergone restructuring in the past three years by rationalising its deployment of duties with a view to developing a lean and dynamic core team that can best achieve its service objectives. The existing organisation chart of the Division is at Annex II. In parallel with the present staffing proposal, we propose to delete one Chief Executive Officer (CEO) post and one Personal Secretary II (PS II) post as part of our plan to restructure the Division. With regard to the CEO post proposed to be deleted, its responsibility for consular

matters will be absorbed by the proposed PEO post and the remaining CEO in the Division. This arrangement has been put on trial with the departure of the incumbent of the CEO post proposed to be deleted. Feedback suggests that greater directorate attention in consular matters that this arrangement provides has enabled the delivery of a more efficient and responsive service which is well appreciated by CC. At times of extraordinary service demand on the Protocol Division such as in relation to major visits or major events, we will continue to seek temporary reinforcement to meet the sudden upsurge in workload.

18. The existing supernumerary DD of P post is filled by a Principal Trade Officer on secondment to Protocol Division on agreement terms. The incumbent will be transferred back to her original grade upon the expiry of her agreement. We propose the deletion of the rank of DD of P which is no longer necessary when the incumbent is transferred. The organisation chart of the Division after the restructuring proposal is at Annex III.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

19. Taking into account the deletion of the CEO and PSII posts, the net additional notional annual mid-point salary cost and the full annual average staff cost of this proposal are \$46,020 and \$12 respectively. We have included sufficient provision in the 2000-01 Estimate to meet the cost of the proposal.

WAY FORWARD

20. The proposal will be submitted to the Establishment Subcommittee on 17 January 2001 for recommendation to the Finance Committee for approval.

Administration Wing

Chief Secretary for Administration's Office

January 2001

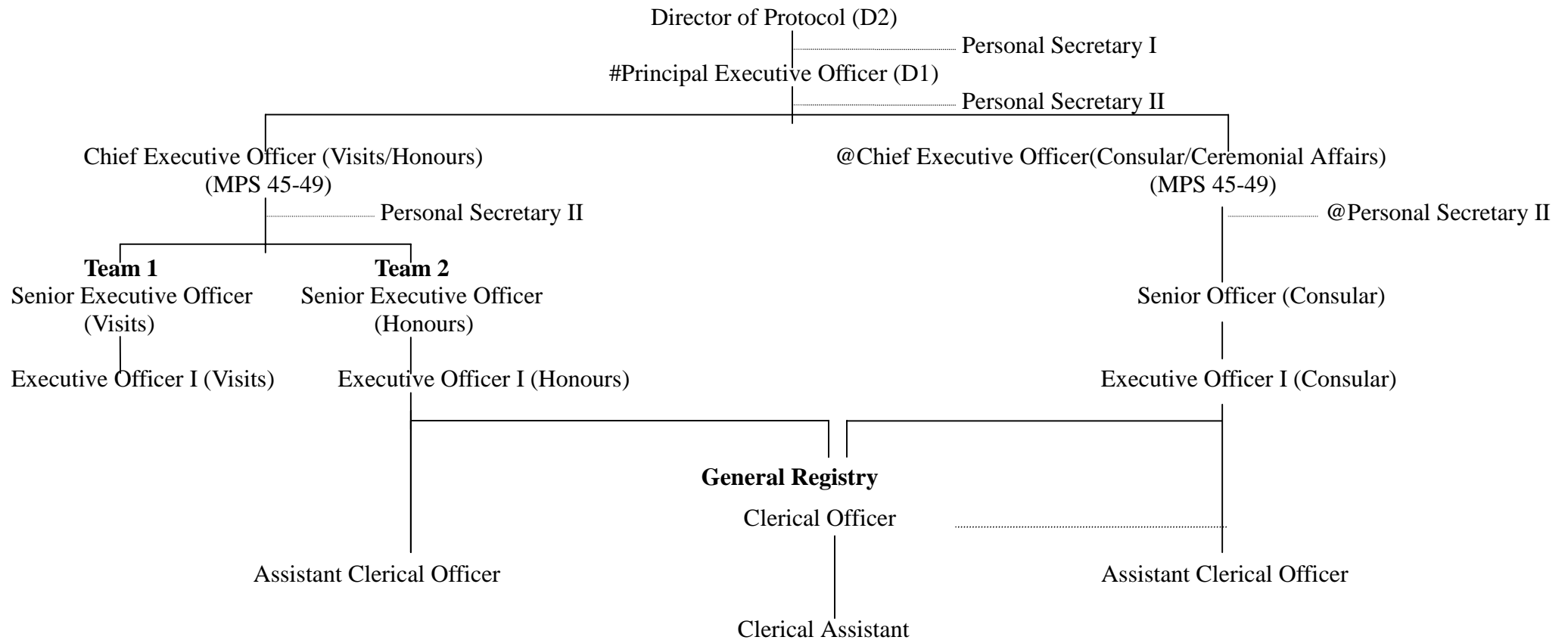
Job Description

Post Title : Deputy Director of Protocol
Proposed Rank : Principal Executive Officer (D1)
Accountable to : Director of Protocol

Main Duties and Responsibilities

1. To deputise for the Director of Protocol in receiving important visitors and in attending official and social functions as the representative of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.
2. To oversee the planning and co-ordination of visits by official visitors, Central People's Government leaders and other international dignitaries.
3. To assist the Director of Protocol in the liaison with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in respect of consular relations matters pertaining to the Consular Corps in Hong Kong.
4. To liaise with and to oversee the provision of host government services to the Consular Corps in Hong Kong.
5. To be responsible for training and development issues for the Protocol Division.
6. To monitor and ensure the smooth and efficient operation of the Government VIP facilities at the new airport and to ensure prudent resource management.
7. To supervise the organisation of various ceremonial events such as the annual Official Ceremony to Commemorate Those Who Died in the Defence of Hong Kong.
8. To assist the Director of Protocol in the administration of the new honours and awards system for the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.
9. To oversee the office administration of the Protocol Division.
10. To supervise the Visits Section and the Consular Section.

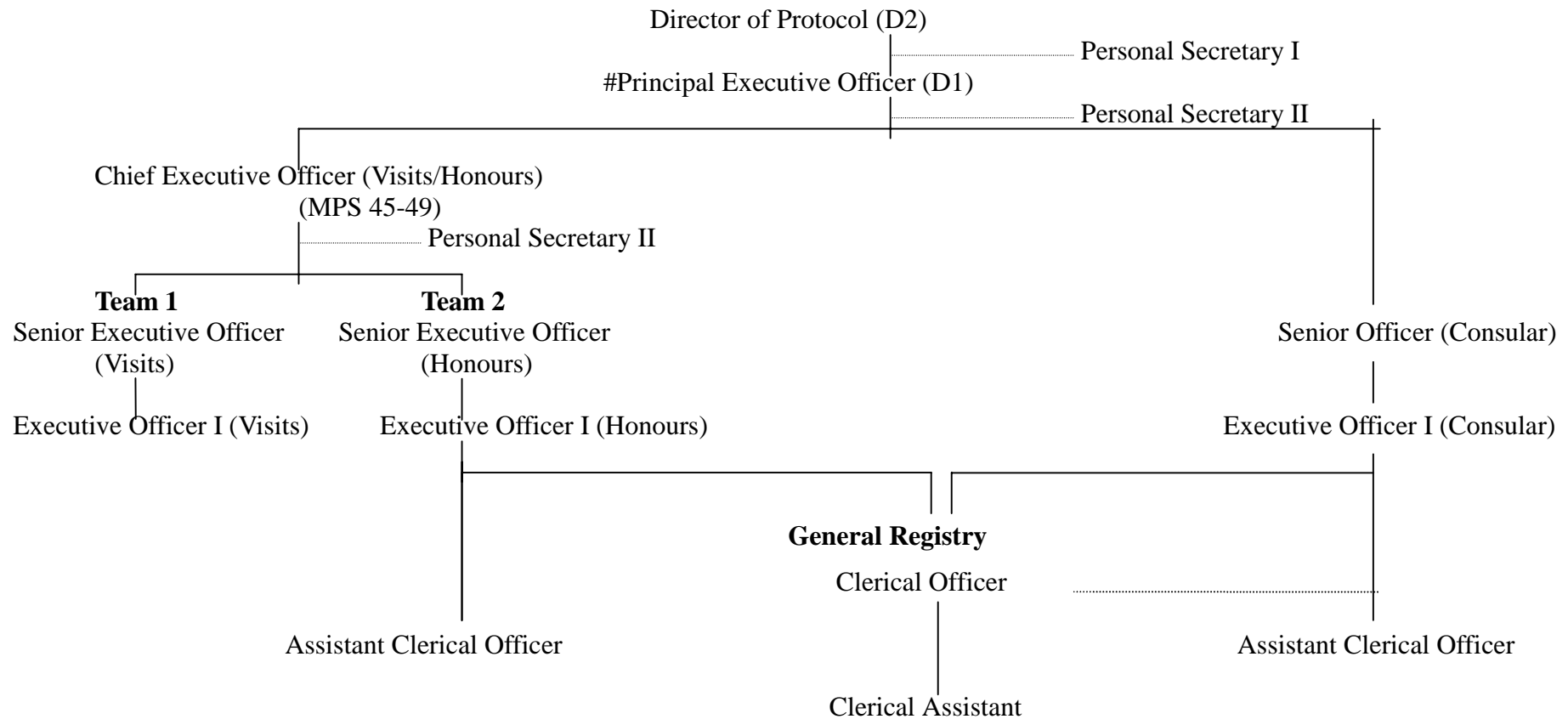
Protocol Division Organisation Chart as at 1 December 2000



#Post proposed to be created upon the lapse of the existing supernumerary post of Deputy Director of Protocol

@Posts proposed to be deleted

Protocol Division Organisation Chart after the restructuring proposal



#Post proposed to be created upon the lapse of the existing supernumerary post of Deputy Director of Protocol