

Legislative Council Panel on Transport

Staffing proposal for Transport Bureau to take forward the new railway projects recommended by Railway Development Strategy 2000

PURPOSE

This paper informs Members of Transport Bureau (TB)'s staffing proposal to take forward the new railway projects recommended by the Railway Development Strategy 2000. Pending the advice of the Standing Committee on Directorate Salaries and Conditions of Service, the proposal will be submitted to the Establishment Subcommittee of Finance Committee for consideration on 20 December 2000. Any comments on the proposal from Members are welcome before this item is put to the Establishment Sub-Committee.

STAFFING NEEDS

2. The Transport Bureau (TB) needs to maintain its directorate support at the present level to deal with –
 - (a) the long-term increase in workload arising from the new railway projects recommended by the Railway Development Strategy 2000 (RDS-2000);
 - (b) the continued workload arising from the current six railway projects; and
 - (c) other major initiatives which require input and steer from permanent directorate staff.

To cope better with the work in (a) to (c) above, there is a need to re-distribute duties and responsibilities among TB's directorate staff.

3. We propose to create -
 - (a) one permanent post of Administrative Officer Staff Grade B (AOSGB) (D3), to be offset by the deletion of one supernumerary post of AOSGB (D3), to continue to head Division (3) in TB to look after mainly transport management issues;
 - (b) one permanent post of Administrative Officer Staff Grade C (AOSGC) (D2), to be offset by the deletion of one supernumerary AOSGC (D2) post, to continue to monitor the transport policy and administrative matters concerning the operation of the Mass Transit

Railway Corporation (MTRC) and the implementation of the Tseung Kwan O Extension (TKE) and Quarry Bay Relief Works, to oversee the policy and implementation of Octopus, and to take on the additional responsibility of overseeing the implementation of the Ma On Shan to Tai Wai rail link (MOS Rail) and the Tsim Sha Tsui Extension (TST Extension);

- (c) one permanent post of Government Engineer (GE) (D2), to be offset by the deletion of one supernumerary AOSGC (D2) post, to take on the planning and implementation of the RDS-2000 projects, and to continue to oversee the Comprehensive Transport Study-3 (CTS-3) and Second Railway Development Study (RDS-2) model updates, and to provide input on transport matters to the Hong Kong and Mainland Cross-Boundary Major Infrastructure Co-ordinating Committee (ICC); and
- (d) one permanent post of AOSGC (D2), to be offset by the deletion of one permanent GE (D2) post, to continue to provide policy input into various strategic planning studies and the planning of the Disney Theme Park, and to be responsible for the overall transport policy co-ordination and the Hong Kong/Guangdong Joint Conference.

4. We also propose to re-distribute the duties and responsibilities among TB's directorate staff.

JUSTIFICATION

5. In May 2000, based on the findings of the RDS-2, the Government formulated the RDS-2000 which maps out the next phase of railway network development for Hong Kong up to the year 2016. Specifically, RDS-2000 has recommended the implementation of six new railway projects (costing about \$80 to \$100 billion in 1998 prices) to serve the development needs of the community. They are the Island Line Extensions (ISL), Shatin to Central Link (SCL), Kowloon Southern Link (KSL), Northern Link (NOL), Regional Express Line (REL) and Port Rail Link (PRL). The Railway Development Strategy 2000 was presented to Members at the Transport Panel Meeting on 25 May 2000.

6. Apart from the railway expansion under RDS-2000, works relating to the current priority railway projects (namely, KCR West Rail (WR), Tseung Kwan O Extension (TKE) and Quarry Bay Relief Works, Ma On Shan to Tai Wai rail link (MOS Rail), Tsim Sha Tsui Extension (TST Extension)) recommended by the Railway Development Strategy (RDS) in 1994, the Sheung Shui to Lok Ma Chau Spur Line (Spur Line) and the Penny's Bay Rail Link (PBRL) due to open in time for the Disney Theme Park, have to continue. These current railway projects, costing over \$100 billion in money-of-the-day prices, are at different

stages of implementation and are scheduled for completion between 2002 and 2005.

7. In connection with the planning and implementation of the 12 railway projects, dedicated policy input at senior level is required in TB. This includes, for the new railway projects, until their authorisation, continuous assessment of the community needs for rail transport in different districts and a careful balancing act as between the claims of the different districts and the financial and social impact of the railway projects. TB is also closely involved in consultation with the community, in particular the residents' groups, the railway corporations, the Government departments, such as Highways Department, Transport Department, Lands Department, Environmental Protection Department, Department of Justice, Police, Housing Department, and Territory Development Department on the detailed interface between the railway projects and the existing and planned infrastructure and development along the alignment of the new railways. Careful planning is required in the choice of alignments to minimise traffic disruption during construction and to reduce the need for resumption and clearance. TB also oversees the work on and resolves any difficulties with the environmental impact assessment and financing aspects of the railway projects. As the Secretary for Transport is the statutory authority in the gazetting of proposed railway schemes, TB has to co-ordinate and ensure accurate and comprehensive input from the railway corporations, the Government departments concerned in the authorisation process of the railway scheme, and undertakes the handling of objections in an open and fair manner. For projects which may be awarded through competitive proposals, TB will have to ensure a level playing field as between the two railway corporations and if appropriate among other eligible competitors.

8. Following authorisation, TB will be closely involved in the project implementation to ensure that the railway projects are delivered in time. TB has to see to it that the respective railway corporations have the appropriate set up to deal with the disturbance on the community arising from the implementation of the project. TB also ensures that the corporations react quickly to any incidents which may arise and irons out any unforeseen problems. In order to minimise traffic and environmental impact on residents, close liaison is maintained by TB with the corporations and the relevant Government Departments. TB also coordinates the implementation of any necessary essential public infrastructure works connected with railway projects to ensure timely completion.

9. To meet the tight implementation plans of the various RDS-2000 projects, we will invite in early 2001 the MTRC and Kowloon Canton Railway Corporation (KCRC) to submit implementation proposals for the ISL and the KSL respectively. We will also need to work with the two railway corporations in early 2001 on the bid package for the SCL. Furthermore, the planning and

implementation of the Spur Line and PBRL will be at a critical stage in early 2001 and continued senior level staff support in TB will be required to oversee these projects.

10. For the coming years, in addition to the various new and current railway projects referred to above, TB will also embark on other major initiatives as follows –

- (a) On strategic planning, we will review the need for and the timing of transport infrastructure proposals set out in the CTS-3, and plan for the implementation of the other RDS-2000 projects and the timely provision of cross-boundary transport infrastructure and major highway projects.
- (b) For better transport services, we will encourage franchised bus companies and ferry operators to provide better passenger services through the application of information technology, implement more bus-bus interchange schemes and improve the management and air quality of public transport interchanges.
- (c) To manage road use, promote road safety, and support environmental improvement measures in transport-related areas, we will provide off-street terminal facilities for cross-boundary coach services, address the traffic congestion in the Central Business District, promote safe driving and enhance vehicle safety, investigate into the feasibility of extending the use of low-noise surfacing materials to local roads, implement pedestrian schemes and improve the environmental performance of franchised buses; and
- (d) To promote the application of information technology in transport, we will develop a comprehensive Intelligent Transport System, upgrade all existing parking meters to accept reloadable smart cards, replace and expand the Area Traffic Control Systems on the Hong Kong Island.

11. In order to enable TB to take forward the new initiatives recommended in RDS-2000, to ensure a timely delivery of the committed and new railway projects, and to take on other major initiatives as indicated in paragraph 9, we consider it necessary to maintain the directorate support at the present level for the foreseeable future, having regard to the fact that the implementation of the RDS-2000 railway projects will last well into the 2010s. We therefore need to retain the continued support of the present level of directorate staff on a permanent basis. A re-distribution of responsibilities and workload among TB's directorate staff is also necessary. The existing and proposed organisation charts of the bureau are at Enclosures 1 and 2 respectively.

Re-distribution of duties and responsibilities in TB

12. The duties and responsibilities are proposed to be shared out among TB's three existing Divisions as follows -

Division (1)

13. Division (1) will continue to be headed by Deputy Secretary (1) (DS(1)) (AOSGB1) (D4) who will take on the additional responsibility of undertaking the planning of the implementation of the priority railway projects recommended by RDS-2000, in addition to overseeing the Bureau's overall legislative programme and policy commitments, long-term and strategic infrastructure planning development and reviews. He will continue to be assisted by three Principal Assistant Secretaries (PASs) (AOSGC) (D2), designated as PAS(T)5, PAS(T)7 and PAS(T)8, Principal Executive Officer (Resource Management) (PEO(RM)) and Chief Treasury Accountant (Transport) (CTA(T)) –

- (a) PAS(T)5 will continue to deal with policy work on road transport projects and take up duties related to cross-boundary links and pedestrian bridges and subways (major ones include the completion of the detailed design of the Deep Bay Link, Chok Ko Wan Link Road and the walkway system in Tsuen Wan between 2002 and 2003), secure resources for highway infrastructure improvements, administer the Roads (Works, Use and Compensation) Ordinance and provide input on transport matters to the Steering Committee on Land Supply for Housing.
- (b) PAS(T)7 will take on the implementation of RDS-2000, will continue to oversee the CTS-3 and RDS-2 model updates, and formulate transport and railway development strategies. He will also provide input on transport matters to the ICC, and be responsible for servicing the Railway Panel and the Lok Ma Chau (LMC) Crossing Working Group of the ICC.
- (c) PAS(T)8 will provide policy input into various strategic and regional planning studies, including 'Hong Kong 2030: Planning Vision and Strategy' which aims to provide a land use-transport-environmental planning framework to guide Hong Kong's development in the next few decades. She will continue to see through the completion of the South East Kowloon Development Study and oversee the transport planning input to all major development studies such as those on North East New Territories, North West New Territories, and Northshore Lantau. Apart from co-ordinating the Bureau's inputs to the Roads and Bridges Panel of

the ICC, she will also provide policy input on the planning of Disney Theme Park and oversee the planning of the construction of the PBRL. She will continue to assist in overall transport policy and co-ordination within the Bureau.

- (d) PEO(RM) and CTA(T) will continue to deal with resource management and bureau administration, and financial monitoring of public transport operators and tunnel companies respectively.

14. PAS(T)7 is a supernumerary AOSGC post created for a period of two years up to 4 February 2001 involving duties to oversee the RDS-2000. The early stage of the job which required strategic planning and policy input has now evolved to an advanced stage which now requires detailed planning and implementation of railway projects. The work nature has become more project management related, e.g. technical assessment of the bid package for SCL, monitoring the RDS-2 and CTS-3 model update. We therefore propose it to be replaced by a permanent GE post. PAS(T)8 is a permanent GE post. An AOSGC has filled the post (through creation of a supernumerary AOSGC post held against the GE post) to undertake the required duties which are related to transport planning as an integral part of the overall long-term strategic planning in Hong Kong. We foresee that there is a continued need for this arrangement and hence recommend to convert the GE post to a permanent AOSGC post.

Division (2)

15. Division (2) will continue to be headed by Deputy Secretary (2) (DS(2)) (AOSGB) (D3) who will continue to be responsible for the policy and overall co-ordination of land and waterborne transport services. She will take on the additional responsibilities of overseeing and monitoring the implementation of new railway projects of MTRC and KCRC, monitoring of all matters relating to day-to-day railway operations and services, and overseeing the overall policy on railway safety and the administrative issues related to the Hong Kong Railway Inspectorate. She will be assisted by three PASs, designated as PAS(T)1, PAS(T)3 and PAS(T)4 –

- (a) PAS(T)1 will oversee the transport policy for franchised buses, ferries, public light buses (PLB), taxis, trams and peak tram, including franchise renewals and fare increase applications. He will also oversee the studies on bus fare setting process and integration of public transport services with the new railway services. He will provide transport policy input for cross-boundary coach and ferry services.
- (b) PAS(T)3 will continue to monitor the planning and implementation of the TKE and Quarry Bay Relief Works, and to be responsible for overseeing and monitoring the operation of MTRC, and the policy

and implementation of Octopus. He will also monitor the planning and implementation of the TST Extension and MOS Rail.

- (c) PAS(T)4 will monitor the planning and implementation of the WR and the Spur Line. He will oversee and monitor the transport policy and administrative matters concerning the operation of KCRC, such as fares, operational issues, property developments and improvement programmes. He will also oversee the policy on railway safety and the administrative issues on the Hong Kong Railway Inspectorate (HKRI). The overseeing and monitoring of the policy and implementation on the park and ride scheme and transport's competition policy will also be under PAS(T)4's purview.

16. A supernumerary AOSGC post was created for five years to take forward the current priority railway projects. The post which will lapse on 6 December 2001, now designated as PAS(T)3, is to assist DS(2) in duties related to railway projects planning and implementation work. This work has grown to an extent that we consider it necessary to share this partly with PAS(T)4. With further railway projects implementation work coming on stream between now and at least the beginning of 2010's, we propose to make the supernumerary AOSGC post permanent.

Division (3)

17. Division (3) will continue to be headed by Deputy Secretary (3) (DS(3)) (AOSGB) (D3) who will continue to be responsible for management of toll roads and tunnels and Build-Operate-Transfer franchises, formulating and monitoring the policies and strategies on traffic management and road safety, overseeing support for the Transport Advisory Committee and the operation of the Transport Complaints Unit. She will be tasked with the additional responsibilities of overseeing the Bureau's input on transport-related environmental and information technology issues. She will be assisted by two PASs, designated as PAS(T)2 and PAS(T)6 –

- (a) PAS(T)2 will continue to oversee matters relating to the Transport Advisory Committee and the Transport Complaints Unit. He will also oversee the transport policy for road safety and co-ordinate TB's input on transport-related environmental issues. The application of information technology in transport, including Intelligent Transport System, Transport information System, and Strategic Road Network Management, will also be added to his portfolio.
- (b) PAS(T)6 will continue to be responsible for overseeing policy on traffic management and monitoring the implementation of

recommendations of the Parking Demand and Freight Transport Studies, dealing with cross-boundary road transport matters, liaising with relevant departments on traffic management measures at boundary crossing points. She will also take up new duties related to licensing of vehicles and drivers and overseeing policy matters relating to toll roads, Build-Operate-Transfer tunnels and Government tunnels.

18. In December 1996, upon the redeployment of the then DS(Transport Management) (AOSGB1) post (now designated as DS(1)) to head a new Transport Infrastructure Division (now renamed as Division(1)) for five years to take forward the priority railway projects as recommended by RDS in 1994, a supernumerary AOSGB post (now designated as DS(3)) was created in TB for a period of five years to head the then Transport Management Division (now renamed as Division (3)) to take over the responsibilities on transport management matters. The AOSGB post will lapse on 6 December 2001. Given the long-term need of the DS(1) post to take forward the RDS-2000 projects which will take us into the next two decades, and as a result of which the DS(3) post will need to be retained to continue with the responsibilities on transport management matters, we propose to make the supernumerary AOSGB post (DS(3)) permanent.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

19. The Government formulated the first Railway Development Strategy (RDS) for Hong Kong in 1994 and accorded priority to the implementation of priority railway projects, namely, the KCR West Rail, the MTR TKE and the MOS Rail coupled with an extension of the KCR East Rail from Hung Hom to Tsim Sha Tsui. These rail projects are now at different stages of implementation. In 1999, Executive Council decided that we should proceed with the implementation of the Spur Line for an additional rail passenger boundary crossing to provide relief to Lo Wu. Executive Council also decided in late 1999 that the PBRL should be built and completed in time for the opening of the Theme Park. Thus a total of six new railway lines are scheduled for completion between 2002 and 2005.

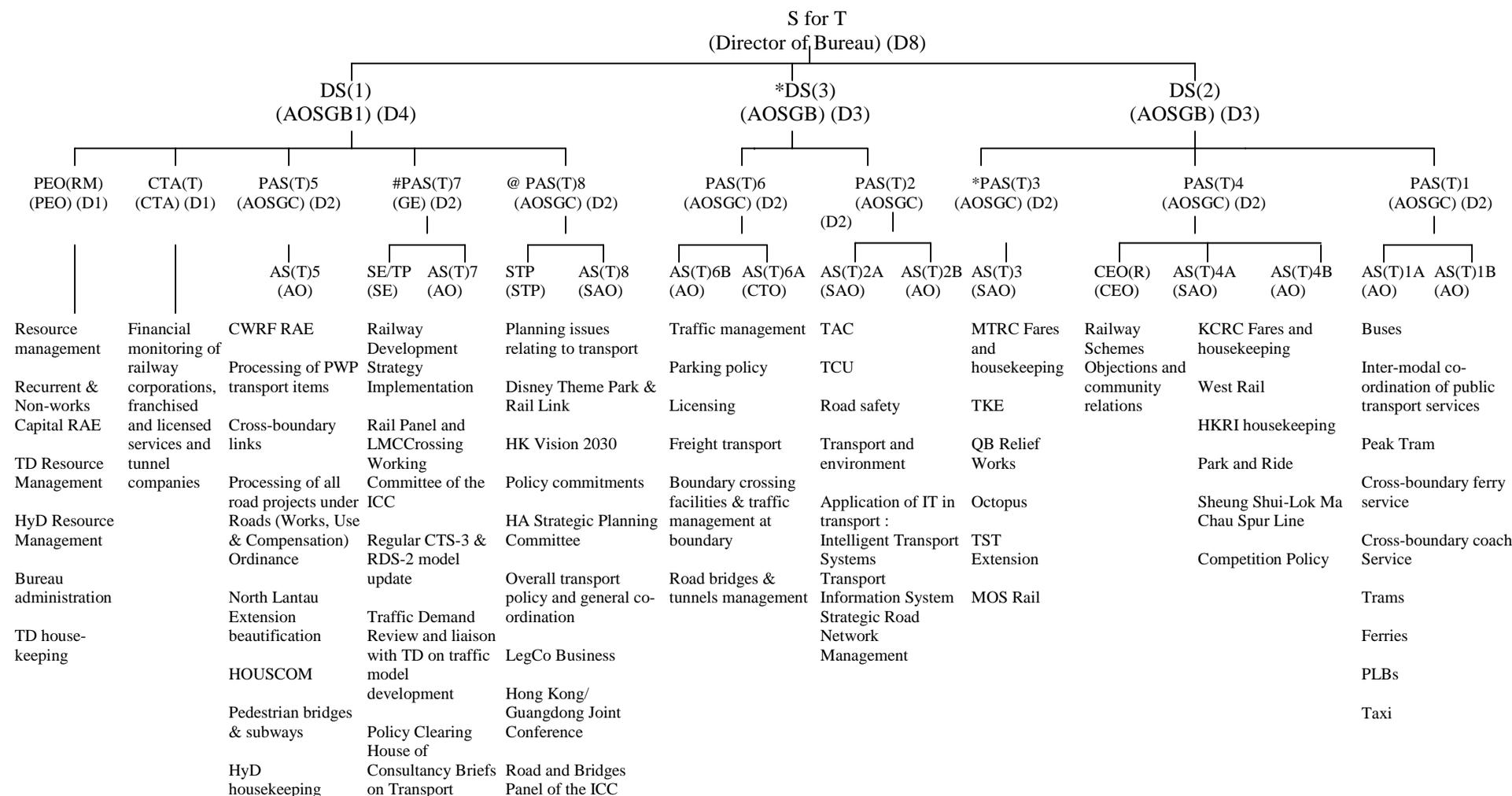
20. In March 1998, the Government commissioned the RDS-2 to examine how best to further expand the rail network in Hong Kong in order to meet the rail transport needs arising from population growth and increase in cross-boundary activities for the next two decades. RDS-2 is now completed and based on its findings, the Government formulated RDS-2000 which underlines Government's policy on railway development and indicates which rail schemes should be included in the next phase of railway network development for Hong Kong.

21. On 6 December 1996, vide EC (96-97)46, Finance Committee (FC) approved the creation of supernumerary posts of one AOSGB and one AOSGC for five years to provide TB with additional staff resources for planning of the three priority railway projects recommended by RDS. These posts will lapse on 6 December 2001.

22. On 5 February 1999, vide EC (98-99)17, FC approved the creation of one permanent AOSGC post in TB to monitor the implementation of West Rail Phase I, MOS Rail, TST Extension, Light Rail Transit extensions and other capital projects undertaken by KCRC, and to oversee KCRC's day-to-day operations and services, operation of the Hong Kong Railway Inspectorate and overall policy on railway safety and park and ride schemes. Members also approved the creation of one supernumerary AOSGC post in TB for a period of two years to provide input and monitor the progress of CTS-3 and RDS-2, and to oversee the planning of the construction of the Spur Line. The post will lapse on 5 February 2001.

Transport Bureau
December 2000

Proposed Organisation Chart of Transport Bureau



#Supernumerary AOSGC post proposed to be converted to permanent GE post

@ Permanent GE post proposed to be converted to permanent AOSGC post

* Supernumerary posts proposed to be converted to permanent post