

**Subcommittee to Study the Proposed
Accountability System for Principal Officials and Related Issues**

**Administration's response to
issues raised at the meeting on 31 May 2002**

This paper sets out the Administration's response to the list of issues raised at the meeting on 31 May 2002 as set out in LC Paper No. CB(2)2149/01-02 (01).

- (1) Issue raised: Regarding the proposal to merge the Economic Development portfolio with the Manpower portfolio, to explain how tourism and logistics industries would provide a lot of employment opportunities.

Administration's response: Tourism and logistics industries now directly or indirectly employ over 10% of the workforce in Hong Kong. As the Financial Secretary mentioned in his Budget Speech 2002, the two industries are among the four important high-value-added economic sectors in Hong Kong that can foster the other sectors and give impetus to our economy.

- (2) Issue raised: To provide the number and name of department(s) under each bureau.

Administration's response: An organisation chart showing all bureaux and departments will be provided separately.

- (3) Issue raised: To provide the number of Permanent Secretary under each Director of Bureau.

Administration's response: Please refer to LC Paper No. CB(2)2147/01-02(01) issued on 31 May 2002.

- (4) Issue raised: To report the outcome of consultation with civil servants on the proposed civil service circular.

Administration's response: We will inform the Subcommittee the outcome of consultation with civil servants on the proposed civil service circular.

- (5) Issue raised: To consider members' views on the paper to be submitted to the Establishment Subcommittee -.

- (a) regarding the 16 posts of Permanent Secretary, to consider whether approval should be sought for the creation/redeployment of these posts, to provide detailed job description of these posts, the criteria and justifications for pitching the number of posts at 16 instead of 11 to tie in with the number of bureaux;
- (b) to explain the working relationship between the administrative assistant (D2) in support of each Director of Bureau and civil servants; and
- (c) to provide justifications for the special status of the post of Director of Chief Executive's Office, i.e. a political appointee but not a principal official under accountability system.

Administration's response: On (a), a supplementary note has been provided.

On (b), the duties and responsibilities of the administrative assistants are as set out in their duty list at Annex. While they are supervisors of their support staff, e.g. personal secretaries or other staff in the private office as appropriate, they do not have supervisory responsibilities over other civil servants in the policy bureaux or departments. Staff holding the administrative assistant posts are subject to the same civil service regulations on conduct.

On (c), the Director of Chief Executive's Office is not a principal official. As such, he is not part of the "principal officials accountability system". However, as part of the senior team of the HKSAR Government, there are three elements in the job description of the Director of Chief Executive's Office which have "political content". Firstly, the Director has to ensure that the meeting of the agenda of the Executive Council reflects the priorities of the overall policy agenda of the Government. The Government's overall policy agenda is determined by the Chief Executive, with the assistance of the Chief Secretary for Administration and the Financial Secretary. The decision on the timing for putting an issue in the public arena for discussion often involves political judgement. Secondly, the work on information coordination involves formulating the public relations strategy for handling major issues and policies to secure support from among the public and the community. Such work often involves political judgement and content. Thirdly, the Director of Chief Executive's Office will assist the Chief Executive in overseeing the running of the Office. He will liaise with different sectors of the community and make arrangements for the Chief Executive to listen to the views of different

occupational groups, trade bodies and different sectors. Such work may also involve political content. Accordingly, our view is that it is more appropriate for a non-civil servant to fill this position. Our appointment arrangements for the Director is very close to that for similar positions in other jurisdictions around the world.

Constitutional Affairs Bureau
5 June 2002

**Duties and responsibilities of
Administrative Assistants to Directors of Bureau**

Responsible to the Director of Bureau for –

- (1) providing general administrative support to the Director of Bureau;
- (2) coordinating submissions to the Director of Bureau;
- (3) coordinating and handling replies to correspondence, including complaints, addressed to the Director of Bureau;
- (4) in co-ordination with the Press Secretary to the Director of Bureau, preparing speeches and statements to be delivered by the Director of Bureau;
- (5) planning the Director of Bureau's programme of official visits, and duty trips, both locally and overseas, co-ordinating the preparation of briefs for such visits and the follow-up action as is required;
- (6) planning meetings on various subjects, preparing briefs, and servicing the meetings; and
- (7) performing such other administrative duties as the Director of Bureau may from time to time direct.