

**立法會**  
**Legislative Council**

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**Establishment Subcommittee of the Finance Committee**

**Minutes of the 2nd meeting**  
**held at the Legislative Council Chamber**  
**on Wednesday, 10 December 2003, at 10:45 am**

**Members present:**

Hon CHAN Kwok-keung, JP (Chairman)  
Hon NG Leung-sing, JP (Deputy Chairman)  
Hon James TIEN Pei-chun, GBS, JP  
Dr Hon David LI Kwok-po, GBS, JP  
Hon Margaret NG  
Hon HUI Cheung-ching, JP  
Hon Jasper TSANG Yok-sing, GBS, JP  
Hon Howard YOUNG, SBS, JP  
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP  
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, JP  
Hon LI Fung-ying, JP  
Hon Henry WU King-cheong, BBS, JP  
Hon Michael MAK Kwok-fung  
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip  
Hon LEUNG Fu-wah, MH, JP  
Hon MA Fung-kwok, JP

**Members absent:**

Hon Albert HO Chun-yan  
Dr Hon Eric LI Ka-cheung, GBS, JP  
Hon CHEUNG Man-kwong  
Hon Andrew WONG Wang-fat, JP  
Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP  
Hon SZETO Wah  
Dr Hon LO Wing-lok, JP  
Hon LAU Ping-cheung

**Public Officers attending:**

Miss Elizabeth TSE, JP	Deputy Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury)
Miss Jennifer MAK, JP	Deputy Secretary for the Civil Service
Mr K K LAM	Principal Executive Officer (General), Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau (Treasury)
Mr Patrick NIP, JP	Deputy Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food
Mr Andrew H Y WONG, JP	Director of Administration
Ms CHANG King-yiu, JP	Deputy Director of Administration
Ms Kitty CHOI, JP	Head, Hong Kong Guangdong Cooperation Coordination Unit

**Clerk in attendance:**

Miss Becky YU	Chief Assistant Secretary (1)1
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**Staff in attendance:**

Ms Pauline NG	Assistant Secretary General 1
Mr S C TSANG	Senior Assistant Secretary (1)7
Ms Caris CHAN	Senior Legislative Assistant 1
Mr Frankie WOO	Legislative Assistant 2

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Action

**EC(2003-04)12 Proposed deletion of one permanent post of Senior Principal Executive Officer (D2) in the Health, Welfare and Food Bureau of Government Secretariat and re-distribution of duties among the directorate posts in the Elderly Services Division for better efficiency and economy**

Members noted that an information paper on the proposal was circulated to the Panel on Welfare Services on 9 June 2003.

2. While supporting the proposal, Mr Henry WU considered that the post of Senior Principal Executive Officer (SPEO) (D2) could have been deleted earlier following the internal re-organization of the Elderly Services (ES) Division in early 2001 in order to save cost. The Deputy Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food explained that consequent upon the internal re-organization, the SPEO post was left vacant and frozen on a trial basis and the duties and responsibilities had been redistributed among the remaining two Principal Assistant Secretaries. It would take time for the Administration to review the arrangement taking into account the actual operational experience before deciding on the deletion of the SPEO post. He agreed that the deletion could have been made earlier, but in the light of the implementation of the accountability system in July 2002 and the outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome in early 2003, the Administration considered it prudent to take more time to assess the effectiveness of re-organization. Given that the re-distribution of duties among the directorate posts in the ES Division had worked well, the Administration concluded that the redeployment could be formalized, and that the SPEO post could be deleted. The proposal was then put forward to the Panel on Welfare Services for consideration in June 2003.

3. Mr TAM Yiu-chung declared interest as the Chairman of the Elderly Commission (EC). He said that one of the duties of the SPEO post was to provide secretariat support services to EC, which was now taken up by a Principal Assistant Secretary as a result of re-distribution of duties. As the deletion could achieve the purpose of streamlining the directorate structure of the ES Division without compromising its services, Mr TAM indicated support for the proposal.

4. The item was voted on and endorsed.

**EC(2003-04)13 Proposed retention of one supernumerary post of Administrative Officer Staff Grade B (D3) in the Offices of the Chief Secretary for Administration and the Financial Secretary of Government Secretariat for a period of three years from 1 February 2004 to 31 January 2007 to head the Hong Kong Guangdong Cooperation Coordination Unit**

5. Members noted that the Panel on Commerce and Industry was consulted on the proposal on 10 November 2003.

6. Mr James TIEN said that Members of the Liberal Party generally supported the proposal. He however pointed out that in addition to facilitating cross-boundary passenger and cargo flows, there was a need to expand the purview of the Hong Kong Cooperation Coordination Unit (HKGCCU) to foster more comprehensive cooperation between Hong Kong and Guangdong, particularly after the conclusion of the Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement. The Director of Administration (D of Admin) explained that when HKGCCU was first established,

its immediate task was to facilitate cross-boundary people and cargo flows. Now that this task had been completed, the focus of HKGCCU would be on coordinating and spearheading initiatives to forge closer links between Hong Kong and Guangdong as well as fostering the joint development of the region.

7. The Head, HKGCCU supplemented that with the shifting of focus of HKGCCU, issues relating to cross-boundary people and cargo flows were now put under the Security Bureau while matters concerning infrastructural developments were dealt with by the Environment, Transport and Works Bureau. As regards the upcoming priorities of HKGCCU, the Head, HKGCCU advised that it would play a proactive role in coordinating and expediting efforts by different bureaux and departments in the implementation of agreements reached at the Hong Kong Guangdong Cooperation Joint Conference (Joint Conference), overseeing the work of the 15 Expert Groups and providing input to the Research Group and Business Committee set up under the Joint Conference as well as mapping out strategies targeting at further enhancement of ties with Guangdong.

8. Miss Margaret NG sought elaboration on the 15 Expert Groups. The Head, HKGCCU advised that these Expert Groups were set up as agreed at the Sixth Plenary of the Joint Conference. Heads of Expert Groups from both Hong Kong and Guangdong would work out the programmes of cooperation initiatives for the year ahead. They would monitor the progress of implementation with the relevant authorities. Where there were signs that certain work programmes were not proceeding as originally anticipated, HKGCCU would alert the Chief Secretary (CS) who would hold regular Working Meetings with the Executive Vice-Governor of Guangdong to confirm progress, to agree redress measures and to exchange views on the effectiveness of the agreed items for cooperation put forward by the Expert Groups. Miss NG asked whether non-government officials would be involved in the Expert Groups. The Head, HKGCCU advised that it would depend on the nature of the Expert Groups and their target clients. To facilitate better understanding, the Administration undertook to provide the membership lists and modus operandi of the 15 Expert Groups for members' reference.

Admin

9. Ms LI Fung-ying expressed concern about the possible overlapping of duties between HKGCCU, the Economic and Trade Office in Guangdong (GDETO) and the office of the Government of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) in Beijing which were all aimed at promoting business opportunities in the Mainland. She also queried the need for HKGCCU to provide secretariat support to the Business Committee.

10. D of Admin explained that the main focus of HKGCCU was to foster closer Hong Kong Guangdong cooperation and to coordinate and expedite efforts by different bureaux and departments in the implementation of agreements reached at the Joint Conference, while the office of the Government of HKSAR in Beijing represented the overall interest of Hong Kong in the Mainland. The Head, HKGCCU also clarified that the Business Committee referred to had yet to be set up

by the Chief Executive. Its mission was to complement the government efforts in identifying new investment opportunities and further improving the business environment in both Hong Kong and Guangdong. As the Business Committee would also comprise leading members from local business, professional community and think tanks, there was a need for HKGCCU to provide the necessary secretariat services. She added that HKGCCU was not involved in the liaison work with individual Hong Kong businessmen in the Mainland which was the responsibility of GDETO. As such, there was no functional overlapping between HKGCCU and other government offices in the Mainland. In response to Mr James TIEN's question on whether HKGCCU would help resolve the problems and difficulties encountered by Hong Kong businessmen in Guangdong, the Head, HKGCCU advised that GDETO would provide assistance when there were commerce and trade related issues of common concern among Hong Kong businessmen.

11. Given the increased number of cross-boundary people flow, Ms LI Fung-ying asked whether the purview of HKGCCU should be expanded to cover the people aspect in addition to business environment. The Head, HKGCCU advised that the role of HKGCCU was expected to evolve with regard to changing circumstances. The Administration would regularly review the situations in both Hong Kong and Guangdong to ascertain whether there was a need to broaden the purview of HKGCCU and whether new items should be included for discussion by the Joint Conference.

12. Mr LEUNG Fu-wah enquired about the work which the Head, HKGCCU had been involved in over the past six months. The Head, HKGCCU advised that apart from planning and attending the Joint Conference in August 2003, she was also responsible for servicing the regular Working Meetings between CS and the Executive Vice-Governor of Guangdong to monitor the work progress of the 15 Expert Groups. Where necessary, she would also attend meetings of different working groups, including the one on development of mountain areas in Guangdong. She was liaising with the Trade Development Council with a view to opening up more investment opportunities, particularly for small and medium enterprises in Hong Kong, in developing the mountain areas.

13. Mr LEUNG Fu-wah further enquired about the difficulties, such as those arising from cultural difference, which the Head, HKGCCU had encountered in taking forward cooperation initiatives between Hong Kong and Guangdong. The Head, HKGCCU advised that as fostering closer cooperation was a policy direction endorsed by both the HKSAR Government and the Guangdong Provincial Government, HKGCCU did not encounter much difficulty in discharging its function. She nevertheless agreed that suitable adjustment or adaptation had to be made to narrow the differences, such as working styles, between both sides. By way of illustration, the Administration had managed to make use of scientific surveys to convince the Guangdong authorities on the need for improvement in border clearance procedures. She was confident that with a more open attitude, the working relationship between Hong Kong and Guangdong authorities would become

better and better over time.

14. Having regard to the important role of HKGCCU in fostering closer Hong Kong Guangdong cooperation, Mr HUI Cheung-ching considered it desirable to make the post of Head, HKGCCU permanent in the long term provided that the Administration could identify a directorate post to offset the proposed supernumerary post of Head, HKGCCU in accordance with the zero growth policy for directorate establishment advocated by Members of the Legislature. D of Admin advised that since the Offices of the Chief Secretary for Administration and the Financial Secretary only had a small establishment with a few directorate posts, the Administration encountered difficulty at the present stage to identify a suitable directorate post to offset the creation of a permanent post for the Head of the HKGCCU. Nevertheless, the Administration would review the work of HKGCCU in the coming two to three years before deciding whether HKGCCU should continue its work and whether a directorate post could be identified for offsetting purpose. Mr HUI said that the Administration should notify ESC once a directorate post was identified. This would save the Administration's time and effort to resubmit the funding proposal for retaining the supernumerary post of Head, HKGCCU after a certain period of time. His views were shared by Mr LEUNG Fu-wah.

15. Mr TAM Yiu-chung sought clarification on the proposed establishment of HKGCCU in Enclosure 3 of the paper. D of Admin explained that apart from the Head of HKGCCU, there would be at most ten staff under the proposed establishment, including the four senior professional posts which would be filled by departmental officers taking into account the service requirement at a particular time. These professionals would be on loan from operational departments on a need basis and would return to their original departments upon completion of specific tasks.

16. Referring to paragraph 13 of the paper, Mr Henry WU enquired about the number of staff required and the estimated staff cost in order to enhance the secretarial/clerical complement under HKGCCU. D of Admin advised that according to the proposed establishment, four supporting staff would be required to provide the executive, secretarial and clerical services for HKGCCU. The Deputy Director of Administration supplemented that in order to contain the size of civil service, supporting staff would be employed with non-civil service contract terms especially for the temporary appointments.

17. The item was voted on and endorsed.

18. The Subcommittee was adjourned at 11:20 am.