

**For discussion  
on 10 November 2003**

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
PANEL ON COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY**

**Hong Kong Guangdong Cooperation Coordination Unit –  
Proposed creation of a permanent post of  
Administrative Officer Staff Grade B**

**Purpose**

This paper briefs Members on the Administration's plan to put the supernumerary post of Administrative Officer Staff Grade B (AOSGB) (D3), heading the Hong Kong Guangdong Cooperation Coordination Unit (HKGCCU), on a permanent basis as soon as possible. This is in recognition of the rapidly growing volume and complexity as well as the continuing nature of work in fostering closer Hong Kong Guangdong relations. The importance of the work has been underlined by the upgrading and expansion of the Hong Kong Guangdong Cooperation Joint Conference (Joint Conference) which is headed by the Chief Executive and the Governor of Guangdong personally. The conclusion of the Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement (CEPA) has added urgency to the work, coordinated by the HKGCCU. It is inappropriate to underpin this work on a supernumerary basis.

**Background**

2. The HKGCCU was established on 1 August 2001 and we created under delegated authority a supernumerary post of AOSGB to head the HKGCCU. The post was sanctioned by Finance Committee on 7 December 2001 on a supernumerary basis for two years from 1 February 2002. We undertook to conduct a review around mid 2003 to assess the need for the continued operation of the HKGCCU.

3. Reporting directly to the Chief Secretary for Administration (CS) and the Financial Secretary, the HKGCCU was set up to tackle three main tasks:

- (a) to perform as a multi-disciplinary team to review the current cross-boundary policies and arrangements for passengers and freight on different transport modes and to explore short, medium and long-term measures targeted at raising the levels of throughput at these crossings;
- (b) to coordinate and expedite efforts by different Bureaux and Departments in the implementation of agreements reached at the Joint Conference; and
- (c) to map out a long-term action agenda at both policy and operational levels for Hong Kong and the Pearl River Delta (PRD) to cooperate with each other.

4. We have reached significant milestones in respect of each of the above tasks. The HKGCCU has achieved the following over the past two years :

- (a) Established the Steering Committee on Facilitation of People and Cargo Flows at Boundary Control Points chaired by the CS to coordinate interdepartmental discussions on cross-boundary traffic. The HKGCCU serves as the secretariat and to date seven meetings have been held. This forum has proved to be very effective in resolving cross Bureaux' and Departments' issues concerning people and cargo flows across the land and sea boundaries.
- (b) Established in the 2003 Policy Address the working targets of completing normal clearance procedures on both sides of the land boundary within 30 minutes for passengers, and 60 minutes for goods vehicles.
- (c) Conducted two consecutive annual surveys on time required by goods vehicles to pass through the Huanggang/Lok Ma Chau Boundary Control Point. We have noted that the percentage of goods vehicles which requires one hour or less to cross the two control points has increased from 79% in 2002 to 97% in 2003 for northbound direction and from 67% in 2002 to 84% in 2003 for southbound direction. Following close coordination with the Mainland side, significant improvements

have been observed in the processing of goods vehicles during the period 2200 hours to 0700 hours.

- (d) Worked alongside the Immigration Department to upgrade the level of passenger service, both in terms of efficiency and customer service. The main area that warrants closer attention is the processing of Mainland group tours and foreign passport holders. With further streamlining of procedures and the introduction of the Automated Passenger Clearance and Automated Vehicle Clearance technology, the efficiency of handling these categories of passengers will be enhanced in the near future.
- (e) Introduced 24-hour passenger clearance at Lok Ma Chau Control Point on 27 January 2003. This marks the history of cross-boundary passenger travel. The service has been proved to be popular since its introduction. On average, about 7 500 travellers use the service every night during midnight to 0630 hours. On peak days, the figure goes up to some 12 000.
- (f) Built on the strength of the existing 24-hour passenger clearance scheme and allowed private cars which possess Closed Road Permits for Man Kam To or Sha Tau Kok Control Point to access the Lok Ma Chau/Huanggang Control Point after midnight since 8 October 2003.
- (g) Introduced a pilot scheme of pre-arrival clearance for river trade vessels over 700 tons. This scheme has proved to be successful and has been made permanent and its coverage widened to cover vessels under 700 tons as well.
- (h) Increased the frequency of through-trains plying between Hong Kong and Guangzhou from eight scheduled services to ten per day. There is an on-going dialogue with the Mainland side to further increase the frequency to 12 daily.
- (i) Set in train the projects to install four extra pairs of kiosks at the Lok Ma Chau Control Point to facilitate clearance of private cars.

- (j) Ensured smooth progress of the construction of the Shenzhen Western Corridor. The Administration will continue to see through the implementation of co-location of immigration and customs clearance which will be located at the control point there.
- (k) Introduced the ferry service connecting the Hong Kong International Airport to different ports in the PRD and Macao Special Administrative Region.
- (l) Formally embarked on the two new projects governing the building of two new cross-boundary bridges at Lok Ma Chau and Sha Tau Kok Control Points.
- (m) Established the Mainland/Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Conference on the Coordination of Major Infrastructure Projects to oversee key projects including Guangzhou – Shenzhen - Hong Kong Express Rail Line and Mainland-Hong Kong logistics cooperation.
- (n) Commenced advance work of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge.

The above accomplishments have successfully laid the foundation for further cooperation between Hong Kong and Guangdong to take place in the years to come. The public at large and the local business community, while generally welcoming the achievements on facilitation of the cross-boundary people and cargo flows, have demanded more comprehensive cooperation on other fronts. We have come to realise that Hong Kong Guangdong cooperation should not be pursued as an ad hoc programme, but rather as a strategic economic initiative encompassing various policy portfolios such as trade and investment, professional services, intellectual property, technology, tourism and sustainable development etc. Besides, continual improvements on cross-boundary travel through infrastructure upgrading and coordination are expected.

## **Sixth Plenary of the Joint Conference**

5. Starting from the Sixth Plenary of the Joint Conference, the meeting is to be chaired by the heads of the two administrations, i.e. the Chief Executive and the Governor of Guangdong. The Executive Vice-Governor of Guangdong and the CS are responsible for steering and taking forward the agreed items for cooperation. There are 15 Expert Groups set up to oversee various cooperation initiatives. They cover CEPA implementation, control point operation, infrastructure, investment promotion, tourism, notification mechanism on infectious diseases, innovation and technology, education, intellectual property rights and environmental protection, etc.

6. The HKGCCU, in discharging its coordination function, liaises with relevant Bureaux, Departments as well as heads of Expert Groups to oversee work progress of various initiatives. When there are signs that certain work programmes are not proceeding as originally envisaged, the HKGCCU alerts the CS and recommends remedial actions. Apart from monitoring progress, the HKGCCU will coordinate with the Guangdong side to map out a rolling cooperation programme for agreement at the Plenary of the Joint Conference. Besides, the HKGCCU has to service the regular Working Meetings held between the CS and the Executive Vice-Governor of Guangdong. These Working Meetings serve as a platform for both sides to confirm progress, to agree redress measures and to exchange views on new initiatives at a high level.

7. Alongside the 15 Expert Groups, there will be two complementary bodies to the Joint Conference which are responsible for research and liaison with the business sector respectively. Hong Kong and Guangdong will each set up a “Hong Kong Guangdong Strategic Development Research Group” (Research Group), respectively headed by the Central Policy Unit (CPU) of the Hong Kong side and the Development Planning Commission of Guangdong Province to research into subjects which have a significant bearing on Hong Kong Guangdong cooperation. Depending on the topics, the Research Groups can either conduct studies independently or in a collaborated manner. It is expected that the research studies will focus on long-term cooperation strategy and policy implementation aspects. The key interface between the HKGCCU and the Hong Kong side's Research Group will be characterised by the provision of high level policy steer on strategic subjects and the coordination of interdepartmental input to such studies.

The HKGCCU will also help coordinate the submission of such study results to the Joint Conference for deliberation.

8. To facilitate discussion and exchanges between Hong Kong and Guangdong enterprises, trade and business associations, both Hong Kong and Guangdong have agreed to each set up its own Business Committee under the Joint Conference. The Business Committees' mission is to complement the government efforts in identifying new investment opportunities and further improving the business environment in both Hong Kong and Guangdong. The Guangdong side's Business Committee will be represented by the Guangdong Sub-council of the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT) and the Hong Kong side's Business Committee will comprise leading members from the business and professional communities. The HKGCCU will be responsible for servicing the Hong Kong side's Business Committee, mapping out discussion agenda and liaising with Guangdong side's CCPIT. In formulating the discussion agenda, the HKGCCU will have to work with various chambers of commerce in Hong Kong and to outreach different sectors in the community. Apart from serving as the secretariat to the Business Committee, the HKGCCU will need to ensure coherence of action between the Business Committee and different Expert Groups such as the one on trade and investment promotion of "Greater Pearl River Delta" and another on the implementation of CEPA.

9. The new framework of the Joint Conference is at Annex A.

### **Hong Kong Guangdong Cooperation Coordination Unit**

10. Fostering closer relations between Hong Kong and Guangdong is the common goal of both the HKSAR Government and the Guangdong Provincial Government. Our shared vision is to turn the region into one of the world's most vibrant economic hubs within the next 20 years. In this regard, Guangdong will focus on developing itself into a global manufacturing base, while Hong Kong will strive to upgrade its international services centre role. To ride on the success of the Sixth Plenary of the Joint Conference and to ensure a synergistic partnership with Guangdong, and in particular the PRD, we need more focused coordination in order to produce concrete results. We need the HKGCCU to act as a dedicated body to coordinate and expedite efforts by different Bureaux and Departments in the implementation of agreements reached at the Joint Conference, to oversee the work of the 15

Expert Groups, to provide input to the Research Group and the Business Committee under the Joint Conference and to map out strategies targeting at further enhancement of ties with Guangdong. This is a continuing commitment which cannot be performed on an ad hoc, supernumerary basis.

### **Upcoming Priorities of the HKGCCU**

11. The priority tasks of the HKGCCU are as follows:
- (a) to oversee the work progress of 15 Expert Groups and to ensure lateral communication among Expert Group leaders;
  - (b) to keep in view cross-departmental issues such as those concerning infrastructure planning and construction as well as CEPA implementation to ensure smooth coordination is taking place;
  - (c) to coordinate policy steer for the CPU's Research Group;
  - (d) to provide secretariat, planning and liaison support to the Hong Kong side's Business Committee with a view to mapping out a work programme for submission to the Joint Conference;
  - (e) to assist the CS in formulating an overarching strategy on Hong Kong Guangdong cooperation; and
  - (f) to mastermind a continuous programme of visits by the CS to PRD cities and townships in enhancing direct bilateral relationship; monitoring implementation of cooperation projects on the ground; and reviewing continually the effectiveness of government-to-government cooperation. Where necessary, the HKGCCU will also propose new areas of cooperation and spearhead their implementation.

### **Establishment of the HKGCCU**

12. We propose to establish the HKGCCU on a permanent basis under the CS' Office to see through the evolving development of Hong Kong Guangdong cooperation in the years to come and to replace the existing supernumerary post of the Head, HKGCCU pitched at AOSGB by a permanent post of the same rank.

### *Creation of a Permanent Post of AOSGB*

13. As fostering closer Hong Kong Guangdong relations is a long-term strategy for Hong Kong and the tasks and initiatives arising from this strategy are on-going in nature, there is an operational need to make the post permanent. The Head, HKGCCU is to provide senior directorate input in assisting the CS in overseeing the development of various policies on Hong Kong Guangdong cooperation. The post-holder will function as the CS' senior staff officer acting as the one-stop contact within the Government on Hong Kong Guangdong cooperation matters. The Head, HKGCCU will maintain close liaison with the office of the Executive Vice-Governor of Guangdong and other senior government officials of Guangdong Province and its cities. Given the level and the range of responsibilities, as well as the complexity of the tasks involved, we believe that the post should ideally be pitched at AOSGA with additional directorate underpinning. In the interests of economy, however, we propose that the ranking of the Head, HKGCCU should continue to rank at AOSGB level for the time being. The job description for the post of the Head, HKGCCU is at Annex B. To assure our Guangdong colleagues that our cooperation is not a temporary arrangement, this change in status of the post should be effected as soon as possible. The term of the existing supernumerary post at AOSGB will lapse on 1 February 2004.

### *Non-directorate Establishment of the HKGCCU*

14. When the HKGCCU was first established on 1 August 2001, the Head, HKGCCU was underpinned by one Senior Administrative Officer and four senior professionals, all being on loan to the Unit. The Finance Committee subsequently approved on 7 December 2001 the creation of the supernumerary directorate post. Focused on the immediate task of facilitating cross-boundary people and cargo flows, we first created through the Departmental Establishment Committee mechanism one Senior Administrative Officer post, two senior professional posts, viz. one Principal Immigration Officer and one Senior Superintendent of Customs & Excise, and a couple of supporting staff.

15. This main immediate task has now been completed. Looking into the future, we expect the work focus of the HKGCCU will be on policy coordination, strategic planning and project management. The volume of work will significantly increase as the 15 Expert Groups, the Research Group and the Business Committee start implementing



various initiatives. We need sufficient senior professional staff to help oversee and monitor the work progress of each of the 15 Expert Groups; to service the Business Committee and the Research Group; and to assist the Head, HKGCCU in performing other tasks on fostering Hong Kong Guangdong cooperation. In this regard, we consider that the non-directorate establishment should comprise one Senior Administrative Officer and four senior professionals. We will consider the mix of the senior professionals having regard to the service requirement arising from the work of the 15 Expert Groups, the Business Committee and the Research Group. We will adopt the same prudent approach when filling the posts and will critically review the staffing requirement and composition when the team progresses in order to ensure the best use of manpower resources. Apart from strengthening the professional support, we will only need to slightly enhance the secretarial/clerical complement.

———— A proposed organisation chart of the HKGCCU is at Annex C.

### **Financial Implications**

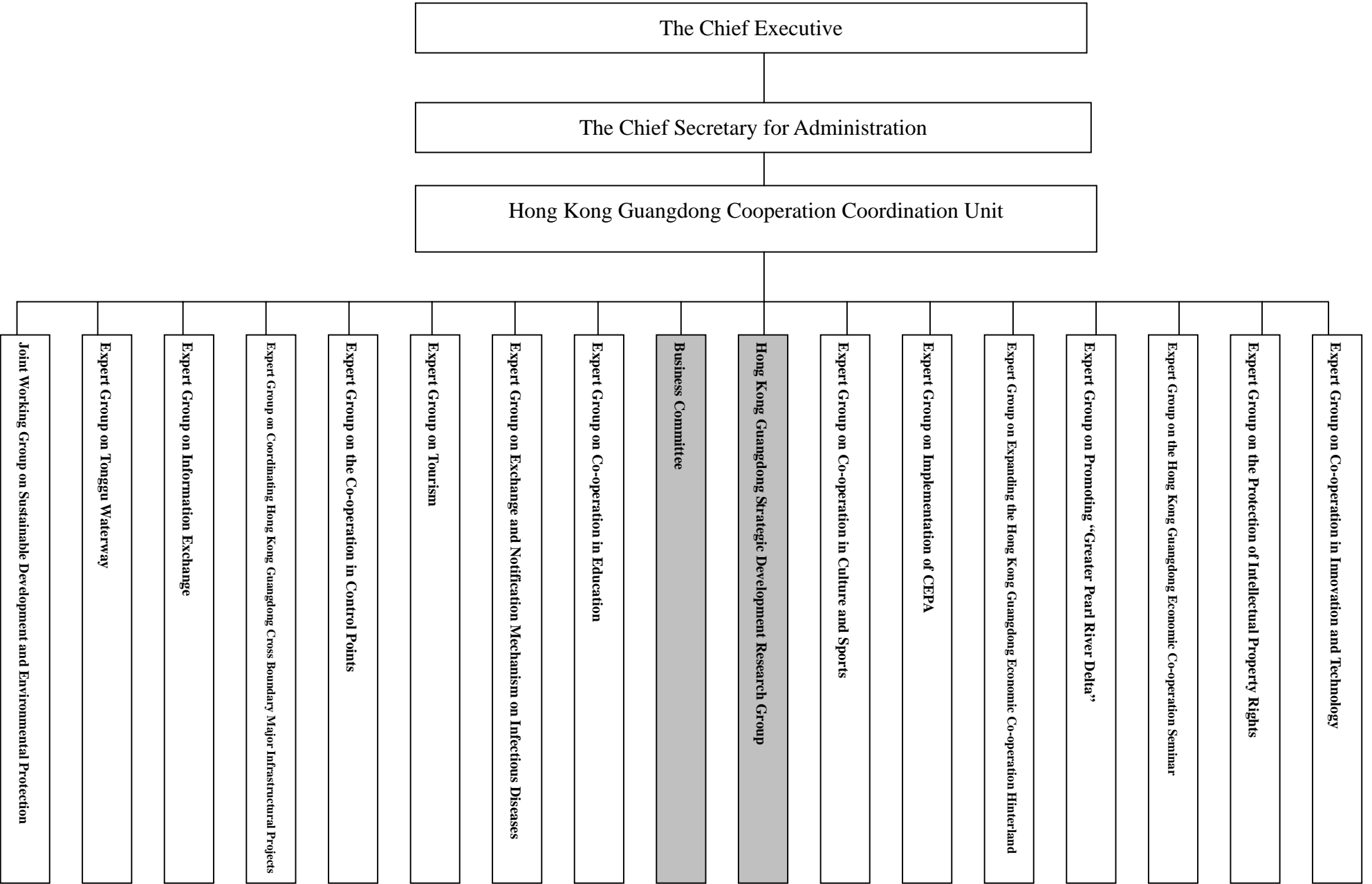
16. The notional annual salary cost at mid-point of the AOSGB (D3) post is \$1,585,680. The full annual average staff cost, including salary and staff on-cost, is \$2,609,000.

### **Way Forward**

17. We plan to submit the proposal to the Establishment Subcommittee on 10 December 2003 for recommendation to the Finance Committee for approval on 16 January 2004.

Chief Secretary for Administration's Office  
November 2003

# New Framework of the Hong Kong Guangdong Cooperation Joint Conference



**Job Description**

**Post Title :** Head, Hong Kong Guangdong Cooperation Coordination Unit

**Proposed Rank :** Administrative Officer Staff Grade B (D3)

**Main Duties and Responsibilities :**

1. To assist the Chief Secretary for Administration (CS) in planning, formulating and coordinating overall policy strategies for fostering Hong Kong Guangdong cooperation.
2. To help oversee and provide secretariat support to the plenary meetings of the Hong Kong Guangdong Cooperation Joint Conference (Joint Conference); and to coordinate and expedite efforts by different Bureaux and Departments in the implementation of agreements reached at the Joint Conference.
3. To assist the CS in coordinating and steering the work of the 15 Expert Groups as well as the Hong Kong Guangdong Strategic Development Research Group (Research Group) and the Hong Kong side's Business Committee under the Joint Conference.
4. To provide secretariat and management support to the Hong Kong side's Business Committee and to liaise with its Guangdong counterpart to discuss business cooperation matters.
5. To coordinate and process the study reports produced by the Research Group and to arrange for discussion by the Joint Conference or otherwise follow up as appropriate.
6. To maintain close liaison with the office of the Executive Vice-Governor of Guangdong; other senior government officials of the Guangdong province and its cities; and HKSARG's Economic and Trade Office in Guangdong so as to strengthen communication at working level.

7. To organize and coordinate visits for the CS to cities of the Guangdong Province so as to cultivate better mutual understanding with the high level Guangdong officials for achieving more coordinated and harmonized regional development.
8. To participate in the meetings or work of individual expert groups as and when necessary.
9. To provide secretariat support to the Mainland/Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Conference on the Coordination of Major Infrastructure Projects and to follow up on the work of individual expert groups set up hereunder.
10. To provide secretariat support to the Steering Committee on Facilitation of People and Cargo Flows at Boundary Control Points chaired by the CS.
11. To outreach to different sectors in both Hong Kong and Mainland to tap their views on Hong Kong Guangdong cooperation.

**Proposed Organisation Chart of the  
Hong Kong Guangdong Cooperation Coordination Unit**

