

ITEM FOR ESTABLISHMENT SUBCOMMITTEE OF FINANCE COMMITTEE

HEAD 142 – GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT : OFFICES OF THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATION AND THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY

Members are invited to recommend to Finance Committee the creation of the following supernumerary posts in the Financial Secretary's Office for a period of two years, from 1 September 2005 to 31 August 2007 –

1 Administrative Officer Staff Grade B1
(D4) (\$145,150 - \$149,600)

1 Administrative Officer Staff Grade C
(D2) (\$110,000 - \$116,800)

PROBLEM

We need to provide directorate support to the work of the Commission on Poverty (the Commission).

PROPOSAL

2. The Director of Administration proposes to create one supernumerary post of Administrative Officer Staff Grade B1 (AOSGB1) (D4) and one supernumerary post of Administrative Officer Staff Grade C (AOSGC) (D2) for two years, from 1 September 2005 to 31 August 2007, in the recently established Secretariat to the Commission (the Secretariat) in the Financial Secretary's Office (FSO).

/JUSTIFICATION

JUSTIFICATION

Policy Commitment

3. Helping the poor is an important theme in the Policy Address delivered by the Chief Executive on 12 January 2005. As poverty alleviation involves many policy areas, the Chief Executive announced the decision to establish a Commission to alleviate poverty to be chaired by the Financial Secretary (FS).

4. The membership of the Commission was announced on 27 January 2005. Besides the official members including the FS, Head of the Central Policy Unit and four Principal Officials responsible for health and welfare, home affairs, employment and education, the membership of the Commission also comprises Legislative Councillors, business people, community leaders, representatives from non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and academics. The Administration attaches great importance to the work of the Commission, and considers it necessary to set up a dedicated Secretariat in order to provide the Commission with the necessary support.

5. The Legislative Council (the LegCo) is similarly very concerned about the subject of poverty alleviation. The House Committee decided on 12 November 2004 to set up a subcommittee to study the subject of combating poverty. The LegCo also passed a motion on 2 March 2005 setting out its expectations of the work of the Commission.

Terms of Reference and Work Programme of the Commission

6. The terms of reference (ToR) of the Commission are –

- (a) to study and identify the needs of the poor;
- (b) to make policy recommendations to prevent and alleviate poverty and promote self-reliance; and
- (c) to encourage community engagement; delineate responsibility between the government, social welfare sector and community organisations; foster public-private partnerships and mobilise social capital in alleviating poverty.

7. At its second meeting held on 11 April 2005, the Commission agreed to focus its work on four key areas, namely, children/youth (preventing and

/tackling

tackling intergenerational poverty), working people (covering employment and welfare-to-work initiatives), the elderly (provision and delivery of various services) and the community (district-based approach and community engagement). During the coming six to nine months, the Commission would first focus on children/youth and employment, and a task force on children would be set up to follow up on the issues concerning children/youth. The Commission would continue to conduct district visits and encourage community engagement. The experience in implementing the district-based approach in alleviating poverty would be reviewed later in the year.

8. Besides the short-term work programme outlined above, Members agreed that the Commission should also consider the longer term review of the architecture of key services/support programmes, and an examination of the delivery of various services to see if greater streamlining, rationalisation and efficiency is possible^{Note}.

Need for an Administrative Officer Staff Grade B1 (D4) post

9. We propose to create a supernumerary post of AOSGB1 (D4) to serve as the Secretary to the Commission and to lead the Secretariat taking into account the ToR and work programme of the Commission and the duties required of the Secretariat.

10. The ToR of the Commission envisages a broad ambit. Most of the elements of the work programme (paragraphs 6 to 8 above) involve a multifaceted and inter-disciplinary approach to integrating the resources and delivery capacity of the Government, private sector, and NGOs as well as the community at large in a purposeful manner. Given the breadth, depth and complexity of the issues involved, the Commission merits the support of an experienced directorate officer to head its Secretariat. We therefore propose to rank the post equivalent to that of a Senior Deputy Secretary in policy bureaux to ensure that the post-holder is at a sufficiently senior level within the Government to assist the Commission to conduct its work according to its ToR and to liaise with relevant bureaux, departments, the private sector, NGOs and various community groups. The schedule of duties of the Secretary to the Commission is set out at Enclosure 1.

Encl. 1

/Need

^{Note} Please refer to Commission on Poverty Paper 11/2005 setting out the background and framework of the work programme of the Commission (available at <http://www.cop.gov.hk/>).

Need for an Administrative Officer Staff Grade C (D2) post

11. We propose to create a supernumerary post of AOSGC (D2) as Assistant Secretary to the Commission to provide adequate support to the Commission and its Secretary.

12. The Assistant Secretary to the Commission will assist the Secretary to the Commission in preparing policy papers, liaising with relevant bureaux/departments, and in preparing reports on the work of the Commission. The post holder will also assist the Secretary to the Commission in reviewing the delivery of various services and support programmes as well as in identifying possible scope for greater streamlining, rationalisation and efficiency. Moreover, the post holder will oversee the Commission's work in community engagement and fostering public-private partnerships. The schedule of duties of the Assistant Secretary to the Commission is set out at Enclosure 2.

Encl. 2

Term of Office

13. The current term of the Commission will end on 31 January 2007. A review would be conducted nearer the time on how the work on poverty alleviation should further proceed. The proposed end date of the two supernumerary directorate posts (31 August 2007) will allow some time (seven months) to facilitate the transition to the long term way forward for poverty alleviation as well as following up any outstanding work of the Commission. Should such work be completed ahead of 31 August 2007, the posts will lapse earlier.

14. To enable the Secretariat to provide early support to the work of the Commission, we created under delegated authority two supernumerary posts at the level of AOSGB1 and AOSGC respectively for six months with effect from 1 March 2005. These two supernumerary posts will lapse on 1 September 2005.

Non-directorate Establishment of the Secretariat

15. The two directorate officers will be supported by a team of seven non-directorate posts comprising one Senior Administrative Officer, one Senior Executive Officer, one Senior Personal Secretary, one Personal Secretary I, one Personal Secretary II and two Clerical Officer posts, at a notional annual mid-point salary (NAMS) cost of \$2,975,160 and full annual average staff cost of \$4,587,000. We have included sufficient NAMS in the 2005-06 Estimates for the creation of these non-directorate posts to be created by the Administration in accordance with the established mechanism.

/16.

Encl. 3 16. The proposed organisation chart of the Secretariat is at Enclosure 3.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

17. The proposed creation of the two supernumerary directorate posts will bring about the following additional staff costs –

Rank	Notional Annual Salary Cost at Mid-point (\$)	Full Annual Average Staff Cost (\$)	No. of Posts
AOSGB1 (D4)	1,795,200	2,520,000	1
AOSGC (D2)	<u>1,360,800</u>	<u>2,058,000</u>	<u>1</u>
Total	<u>3,156,000</u>	<u>4,578,000</u>	<u>2</u>

18. The necessary provision for the staffing of the Secretariat in 2005-06 has been included in the 2005-06 Estimates and will be provided under the draft Estimates of the subsequent years concerned.

ESTABLISHMENT CHANGES

19. The establishment changes of Head 142 Government Secretariat: Offices of the Chief Secretary for Administration and the Financial Secretary for the last two years are as follows –

Establishment (Note)	Number of Posts		
	Existing (as at 1 April 2005)	As at 1 April 2004	As at 1 April 2003
A	32 + (3 [#])	26 + (2)	26 + (3)
B	93	80	81
C	360	347	366
Total	485 + (3)*	453 + (2)	473 + (3)

Note :

A – ranks in the directorate pay scale or equivalent

B – non-directorate ranks the maximum pay point of which is above MPS Point 33 or equivalent

C – non-directorate ranks the maximum pay point of which is at or below MPS Point 33 or equivalent

() – number of supernumerary directorate posts

Including the two supernumerary posts created under our delegated authority mentioned in paragraph 14

* The increase over 1 April 2004 is mainly due to the setting up of the Economic Analysis and Business Facilitation Unit under the FSO with effect 1 June 2004 pursuant to the transfer of responsibilities from Commerce, Industry and Technology Bureau and Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau.

/CONSULTATION

CONSULTATION WITH LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PANEL

20. The proposal was discussed at the meeting of the Subcommittee to Study the Subject of Combating Poverty on 28 April 2005. Members present were generally supportive of the proposal in order to provide directorate support to the work of the Commission. Given the composition of the Commission, and the complexities and multi-faceted nature of the issues involved, they noted that a small dedicated team led by an experienced directorate would be an appropriate set up. Some Members expressed that the Secretariat should review existing policies of relevant bureaux and conduct analysis in order to make policy recommendations. Some Members were of the view that a consultation mechanism should be set up under the Commission in order to gauge views from the wider community.

21. Since the issues involved were complex and the Commission might not be able to finish its tasks during its initial term of two years, the question of whether the posts should be made permanent was raised. Members noted that the Administration had no intention to circumvent the creation of permanent posts through extension of supernumerary directorate posts, and that the proposed supernumerary establishment provided flexibility pending the outcome of the review on how the work on poverty alleviation should further proceed near the time.

CIVIL SERVICE BUREAU COMMENTS

22. To enable the provision of sufficient support to the Commission, the Civil Service Bureau supports the proposed creation of the two supernumerary directorate posts, namely one AOSGB1 and one AOSGC.

ADVICE OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON DIRECTORATE SALARIES AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

23. As the two directorate posts are proposed on a supernumerary basis, their creation, if approved, will be reported to the Standing Committee on Directorate Salaries and Conditions of Service in accordance with the agreed procedure.

Schedule of Duties of Secretary to the Commission on Poverty

Post Title : Secretary to the Commission on Poverty

Rank : Administrative Officer Staff Grade B1 (D4)

Major Duties and Responsibilities –

The duty of the Secretary to the Commission on Poverty is to support the Commission in implementing its work programme, in particular –

- (a) to assist the Commission in its study of the needs of the poor and formulation of policy recommendations to prevent and alleviate poverty and promote self-reliance as well as to follow up on the recommendations of the Commission;
- (b) to liaise with bureaux/departments on policies and measures that address the needs of the poor with a view to achieving greater streamlining, rationalisation and efficiency;
- (c) to assist the Commission in formulating strategies in community engagement and fostering public-private partnerships;
- (d) to maintain liaison with the Legislative Council and its relevant panels and subcommittees, relevant non-governmental organisations and the public;
- (e) to maintain liaison with international counterparts and represent the Commission at relevant international fora; and
- (f) to conduct a review on how the Commission should function after 31 January 2007, taking into account the work of other relevant advisory committees and agencies.

**Schedule of Duties of Assistant Secretary
to the Commission on Poverty**

Post Title : Assistant Secretary to the Commission on Poverty

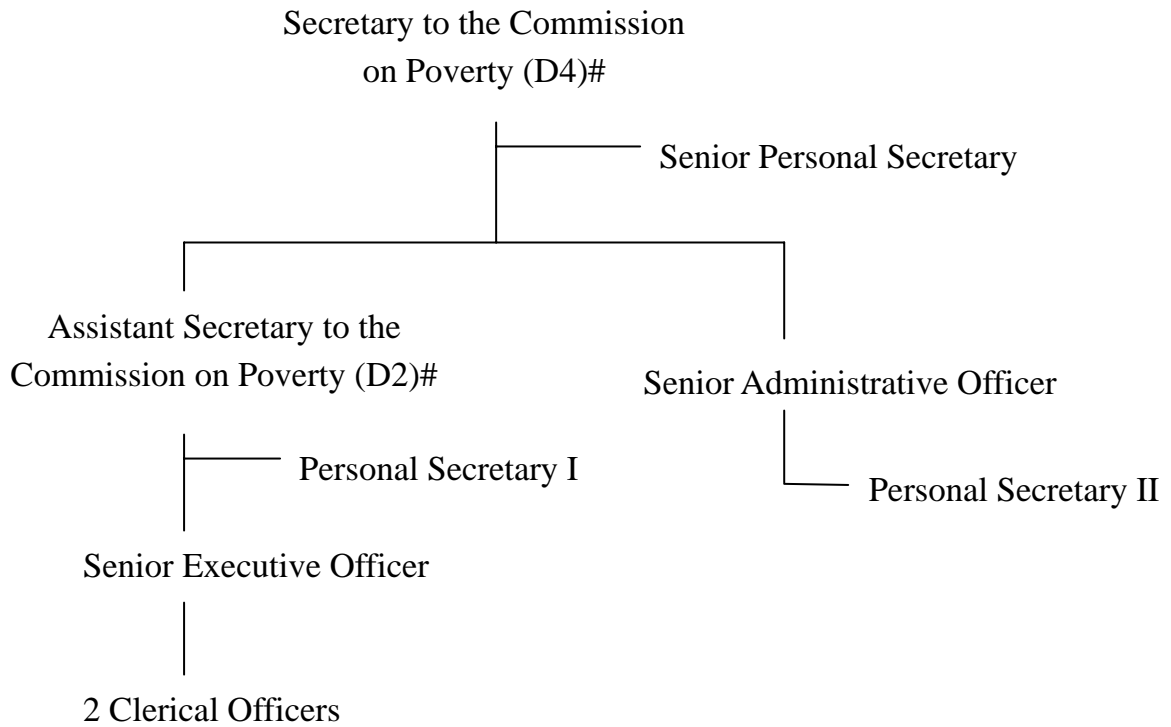
Rank : Administrative Officer Staff Grade C (D2)

Major Duties and Responsibilities –

The duty of the Assistant Secretary to the Commission on Poverty is to assist the Secretary to the Commission, in particular –

- (a) to co-ordinate and prepare policy papers for the Commission, follow-up on the advice and recommendations of the Commission, and to prepare reports on the work of the Commission;
- (b) to review the delivery of various services and support relevant to poverty alleviation/prevention, and to identify scope for greater streamlining, rationalisation and efficiency;
- (c) to assist the Commission in its community engagement work in liaison with local district offices, district councils, district social welfare offices etc.;
- (d) to assist the Commission in its work to foster public-private partnerships in liaison with the business community and other relevant parties;
- (e) to monitor research, surveys and projects initiated by the Commission, and keep in view relevant researches and other development in poverty alleviation, both locally and internationally; and
- (f) to contribute and participate in relevant discussions in international fora.

**Proposed Organisation Chart
of the Secretariat to the Commission on Poverty**



Post proposed for creation