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Deputy Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury  
Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau  
The Treasury Branch  
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### **Finance Committee**

#### **Suggested approach in scrutinizing future staffing proposals put to the Finance Committee**

You may wish to note that at the Finance Committee (FC) meeting on 25 February 2005, members raised concern on the offsetting arrangements agreed earlier among Members from cross parties on proposals for creation of directorate posts. An informal discussion session was subsequently held on 15 April 2005 for members to exchange views on the approach to be adopted in scrutinizing future proposals put to FC. During the discussion session, members came up with the following preliminary suggestions –

- (a) The permanent directorate establishment in the civil service should be capped at the level of 1 488 posts (inclusive of civil servants, ICAC and judicial officers);
- (b) Any staffing proposals for the creation of permanent directorate posts should be offset by the deletion of posts in comparable ranks such that no additional staff costs would be incurred;
- (c) Where the offsetting of posts would involve more than one bureau/department, there should be detailed information on the source of funding in the bureau/department where the posts were to be created, and how the savings in the bureau/department where posts were to be deleted would be utilized;

- (d) Information on changes to the overall permanent directorate establishment should be included in every staffing proposal; and
- (e) Staffing proposals involving the creation or retention of supernumerary posts should be considered case by case on their own merits.

The Chairman has instructed that the subject will be included in the agenda of the FC meeting on 27 May 2005 under “Any other business”, and that the Administration should be invited to attend for discussion of the subject. To facilitate deliberation, I should be grateful if you could coordinate the Administration’s bilingual response to these preliminary suggestions.

With best regards,

(Ms Pauline NG)  
Clerk to the Finance Committee

cc Hon Emily LAU, JP, Chairman of the Finance Committee