

**For discussion
on 17 May 2007**

**Legislative Council Panel
on Information Technology and Broadcasting**

**Follow-up on the Report on
Review of Public Service Broadcasting**

PURPOSE

This paper informs Members of the Government's plan to follow up the report submitted by the independent Committee on Review of Public Service Broadcasting (the Committee), and invites Members' views on the proposed creation of a supernumerary post of Administrative Officer Staff Grade C (AOSGC) (D2) for a period of 12 months to assist in the follow-up work.

BACKGROUND

2. In view of the lack of a clear policy on public service broadcasting (PSB) in Hong Kong and the phenomenal changes to the broadcasting market in the light of technological development, the Chief Executive (CE) appointed an independent committee on 17 January 2006 to study in depth and comprehensively the development of PSB in Hong Kong. The Committee was tasked to recommend an appropriate arrangement for the provision of PSB in Hong Kong and implementation plans for the short, medium and long terms. The Committee submitted its report to the CE on 28 March 2007.

WAY FORWARD

Follow-up by the Administration

3. The Administration is studying the recommendations of the Committee and plans to issue a public consultation document in the second half of 2007. The consultation document will set out the Administration's views on the way forward, covering all the major issues involved including the policy and role of PSB, as well as the arrangements on governance, accountability, funding, programming and performance evaluation. We will widely engage all stakeholders and the community at large and allow

them sufficient time to deliberate the issues and express their views on the development of PSB.

4. Subject to the outcome of the consultation, the Administration will decide on the future of PSB and its implementation details.

Proposed Enhancement of Administrative Support

5. We consider it necessary to have dedicated support at directorate level to take the lead in the Administration's follow-up action in paragraphs 3 and 4 above. The officer should possess a high level of analytical and intellectual capability as well as rich experience in public policy formulation and implementation. For this purpose, we propose to create a supernumerary post of AOSGC (D2), designated as the Principal Assistant Secretary for Commerce, Industry and Technology (Communications and Technology) (Special Duties) (PAS(CT)(SD)).

6. Specifically, PAS(CT)(SD) will be responsible for analysing the findings and recommendations in the Committee's report, assessing their validity and implications on the broadcasting field and the community at large, as well as the resource requirements. In the light of his assessment, he would help draw up proposals for inclusion in the public consultation document and draft the document. During the consultation, he would engage the stakeholders, attend forums and meetings to explain the proposals in the consultation document and gather public views. Upon completion of the consultation exercise, PAS(CT)(SD) will analyse the comments received in the light of which he would formulate proposals for future arrangements for PSB and the related implementation plans. The detailed job description of PAS(CT)(SD) is at **Annex A**.

A

7. An Administrative Officer will be redeployed internally to provide support to PAS(CT)(SD) on a part-time basis to perform research and other fact finding duties. As and when required, existing staff within the Communications and Technology Branch (CTB) of the Commerce, Industry and Technology Bureau would provide logistic support to PAS(CT)(SD), e.g., when the consultation exercise commences at the later stage. The organisation chart showing the proposed PAS(CT)(SD) post within the CTB is at **Annex B**.

B

8. In view of the need to consult the public in the second half of the year and allowing sufficient time for the consultation exercise and analysis of public views, we propose to create the supernumerary AOSGC post for a period of 12 months with effect from 9 July 2007. Depending

on the outcome of the consultation and the Administration's final decision on the matter, we will review the need for extending the supernumerary post beyond the 12-month period to undertake further follow-up work.

Alternatives Considered

9. Given the importance, complexity and scale of the PSB policy and related matters, we consider that a dedicated, full-time AOSGC officer is required to follow up the whole exercise. We have critically reviewed the current directorate establishment of the CTB, and consider that there is no scope for redeployment of existing resources to take up the job. Principal Assistant Secretary (Communications and Technology)(A) (PAS(CT)(A)), who is responsible for policies on broadcasting, film and control of obscene and indecent articles, is heavily tied up with a number of priority issues in the coming year, such as implementation of digital terrestrial television broadcasting, introduction of mobile television framework, and establishment of the Communications Authority, etc. Principal Assistant Secretary (Communications and Technology)(B) (PAS(CT)(B)) who is responsible for policy matters on telecommunications will be fully occupied with setting up a spectrum pricing framework and spectrum auction rules arising from the spectrum policy review, as well as implementation matters of the Unsolicited Electronic Messages Bill, scheduled for resumption of Second Reading within May 2007, such as mounting a public education programme on the legal provisions and preparation of subsidiary legislation. The detailed job descriptions of PAS(CT)(A) and PAS(CT)(B) are at **Annex C**. Creating a supernumerary AOSGC post is the only feasible option to provide administrative support to follow up on the review of PSB.

Financial Implications

10. The additional notional annual salary cost of the proposed supernumerary AOSGC (D2) post at mid-point is \$1,360,800; and its full annual average staff cost, including salaries and staff on-cost, is \$2,018,000. We have sufficient provision in the 2007-08 Estimates to meet the cost of this proposal.

ADVICE SOUGHT

11. Members are invited to note the follow-up plan reported in this paper and advise on the staffing proposal. Subject to Members' views, we will submit the staffing proposal to the Establishment

Subcommittee for consideration on 13 June 2007 and the Finance Committee for approval on 6 July 2007.

Communications and Technology Branch
Commerce, Industry and Technology Bureau
May 2007

Job Description

**Principal Assistant Secretary for Commerce, Industry and Technology
(Communications and Technology) (Special Duties)**

Post Title : Principal Assistant Secretary for Commerce, Industry and Technology (Communications and Technology) (Special Duties)

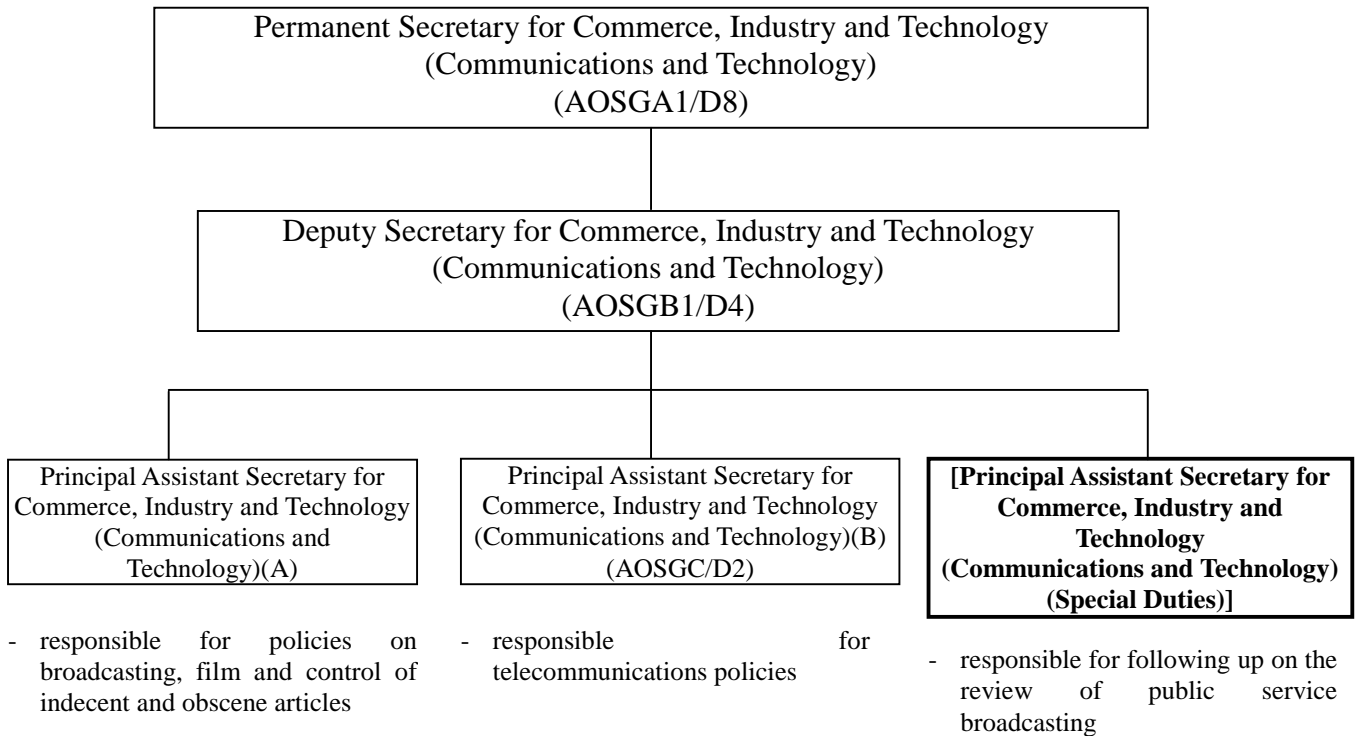
Rank : Administrative Officer Staff Grade C (D2)

Responsible to : Deputy Secretary for Commerce, Industry and Technology (Communications and Technology)

Major Duties and Responsibilities –

- (a) to study and analyse the findings and recommendations in the report of the independent Committee on Review of Public Service Broadcasting and to conduct further researches and studies as and when necessary, with a view to assisting the Administration in reaching its own views on all major issues including the policy and role of public service broadcasting, as well as the arrangements for governance, accountability, funding, programming and performance evaluation;
- (b) based on (a) above, to draft a consultation paper on the proposed way forward for public service broadcasting and to prepare for the consultation and engagement of the public, including coordinating public relations arrangements and liaising with stakeholders, community groups and relevant organisations;
- (c) to collect, document and analyse the views from the public expressed through different channels during the consultation and engage the stakeholders in this process;
- (d) in the light of the outcome of the consultation, to assist the Administration in formulating the policy and arrangements for future public service broadcasting; and
- (e) subject to (d) above, to draw up implementation plans on the Administration's decisions on the policy and arrangements for public service broadcasting, including, where appropriate and applicable, preparing the necessary legislation as well as other necessary follow-up work.

**Organisation Chart of Communications and Technology Branch,
Commerce, Industry and Technology Bureau**



Note:

[] - Supernumerary post proposed to be created

Legend

AOSGA1 - Administrative Officer Staff Grade A1

AOSGB1 - Administrative Officer Staff Grade B1

AOSGC - Administrative Officer Staff Grade C

Job Description

**Principal Assistant Secretary for Commerce, Industry and Technology
(Communications and Technology) (A)**

Post Title : Principal Assistant Secretary for Commerce, Industry and Technology (Communications and Technology) (A)

Rank : Administrative Officer Staff Grade C (D2)

Responsible to : Deputy Secretary for Commerce, Industry and Technology (Communications and Technology)

Major Duties and Responsibilities –

- (a) to formulate and review policies on broadcasting, including policy options to facilitate technology convergence and market liberalisation;
- (b) to formulate policies on digital broadcasting;
- (c) to handle broadcasting regulatory matters that require the approval of the Chief Executive in Council;
- (d) to promote the development of the broadcasting and film industries in Hong Kong;
- (e) to formulate and review policies on film services and the control of obscene and indecent materials; and
- (f) to house-keep the Radio Television Hong Kong and the Television and Entertainment Licensing Authority.

Job Description

Principal Assistant Secretary for Commerce, Industry and Technology (Communications and Technology) (B)

Post Title : Principal Assistant Secretary for Commerce, Industry and Technology (Communications and Technology) (B)

Rank : Administrative Officer Staff Grade C (D2)

Responsible to : Deputy Secretary for Commerce, Industry and Technology (Communications and Technology)

Major Duties and Responsibilities –

- (a) to formulate policies on the development of telecommunications, including in particular policy options to promote competition, and to respond to technological changes and convergence;
- (b) to monitor the regulatory regime in telecommunications to develop it further in keeping with an open and competitive telecommunications market;
- (c) to formulate policies to tackle the problem of unsolicited electronic messages; and
- (d) to house-keep the Office of the Telecommunications Authority.