

**For discussion
on 12 December 2007**

EC(2007-08)14

ITEM FOR ESTABLISHMENT SUBCOMMITTEE OF FINANCE COMMITTEE

**HEAD 141 – GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT :
LABOUR AND WELFARE BUREAU
Subhead 000 Operational expenses**

Members are invited to recommend to Finance Committee the creation of the following supernumerary post in the Labour and Welfare Bureau for a period of three years with effect from 10 March 2008 –

1 Administrative Officer Staff Grade C
(D2) (\$115,450 - \$122,600)

PROBLEM

We need dedicated directorate support to take forward the work on poverty alleviation.

PROPOSAL

2. The Secretary for Labour and Welfare (SLW) proposes to create one supernumerary post of Administrative Officer Staff Grade C (AOSGC) (D2) in the Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB) for a period of three years with effect from 10 March 2008 to support the work on poverty alleviation.

/JUSTIFICATION

JUSTIFICATION

Policy Commitment

3. Poverty alleviation is a priority of the Government in the next five years, as stated in the Policy Address delivered by the Chief Executive (CE) on 10 October 2007. Since 1 July 2007, LWB has been responsible for overseeing and co-ordinating poverty alleviation matters. With the conclusion of the work of the Commission of Poverty (CoP), CE announced the establishment of an inter-bureau/departmental Task Force on Poverty (the Task Force), headed by SLW with senior officials from relevant bureaux/departments as members, to co-ordinate efforts across the Government in poverty alleviation and monitor their overall progress, including taking forward the recommendations of CoP.

Terms of reference of the Task Force

4. The terms of reference of the Task Force are as follows –
- (a) to monitor the progress on implementing the recommendations of CoP;
 - (b) to co-ordinate the Government's efforts in tackling poverty, in particular poverty-related issues which have cross policy implications;
 - (c) to promote community engagement to tackle poverty and promote self-reliance; and
 - (d) to consider studies, researches and analyses for enhancing the understanding of poverty, assessing the impact of poverty alleviation measures and providing input for policy formulation.

5. One of the key tasks of the Task Force is to co-ordinate the Government's efforts in implementing the 53 recommendations made by CoP and monitor the progress of implementation. In particular, the Task Force will focus its efforts on facilitating employment in a holistic manner, strengthening training and retraining, and stepping up efforts to assist the hidden elderly and other elders in need as well as disadvantaged children and youth. Bureaux/departments on the Task Force will consult stakeholders in implementing the recommendations under their auspices. The Task Force will report regularly to the Chief Secretary for Administration. LWB will also make regular reports to the Legislative Council on the work of the Task Force and organise, where necessary, targeted seminars/forums/focus groups to solicit views on various poverty alleviation issues.

/Need

Need for an AOSGC Post

6. Given the complexity and multi-faceted nature of poverty alleviation work and the need to co-ordinate efforts across the Government, a dedicated directorate officer at AOSGC level with extensive administrative experience in various bureaux/departments is required. To provide timely support to the work on poverty alleviation before the longer-term staffing arrangement (i.e. the proposal set out in this paper) is put in place, we have set up a Poverty Team (PT) in LWB and created under delegated authority one supernumerary post of AOSGC, designated as Principal Assistant Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Poverty) (PAS(P)), for six months with effect from 10 September 2007. This supernumerary post will lapse on 10 March 2008. To provide continuous support to the work on poverty alleviation, we propose to retain this supernumerary post for three years with effect from 10 March 2008. We will review the continued need for this post in the light of the progress of the work on poverty alleviation.

7. The proposed PAS(P), serving as the secretary to the Task Force, is responsible for preparing policy papers, liaising with relevant bureaux/departments, preparing reports on the work of the Task Force and so on. Apart from providing support to the work of the Task Force, the proposed PAS(P) also plays a key role in overseeing the following areas of work –

- (a) the establishment and implementation of the Child Development Fund (CDF), which is a key new initiative on poverty alleviation. A total of \$300 million has been earmarked in the 2007-08 Budget for the establishment of CDF, which seeks to encourage children from a disadvantaged background to plan for the future and cultivate positive attitudes with a view to reducing inter-generational poverty; and
- (b) the study on how best to put in place a “one-stop” employment service through streamlining, integrating and enhancing existing employment and training/retraining services of the Labour Department, Social Welfare Department and Employees Retraining Board and the pilot to try out the “one-stop” model. The aim is to better assist the unemployed and realise the objective of “from welfare to self-reliance”.

Encl. 1 8. The job description of the proposed PAS(P) post is at Enclosure 1.

/Non-directorate

Non-directorate Support

9. The proposed PAS(P) will be supported by four non-directorate staff, comprising one Administrative Officer, one Executive Officer I, one Personal Secretary I and one Assistant Clerical Officer.

Encls. 10. The proposed organisation charts of PT and LWB showing the
2 & 3 proposed PAS(P) post are at Enclosures 2 and 3 respectively.

Alternatives Considered

11. We have critically examined the possible redeployment of existing directorate officers within LWB to take on the work of the proposed PAS(P) post. As all the other directorate officers are fully engaged in their own schedule of duties relating to welfare, manpower development, rehabilitation, etc., it is operationally not possible for them to take up the tasks without adversely affecting the discharge of their current duties.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

12. The additional notional annual salary cost of the proposed AOSGC post at mid-point is \$1,428,000. The full annual average staff cost, including salaries and staff on-cost, is \$2,038,000. Based on the proposed set-up of the dedicated team in paragraph 9, the notional annual salary cost of the non-directorate supporting staff at mid-point is \$1,625,040, and the additional full annual average staff cost, including salaries and staff on-cost, is \$1,889,000.

13. We will absorb the additional expenditure from within the existing provision in 2007-08 and will include the necessary provision in the draft Estimates of 2008-09 and other relevant years to meet the cost of this proposal.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

14. We consulted the Legislative Council Panel on Welfare Services (the Panel) on 12 November 2007. Members in general supported the proposed creation of the supernumerary directorate post, but requested the Administration to devote more staffing resources to support poverty alleviation work. We have agreed to keep the matter in view and revert to the Panel early should additional resources be required to take forward the work on poverty alleviation.

/ESTABLISHMENT

ESTABLISHMENT CHANGES

15. The establishment changes in LWB since the establishment of the bureau on 1 July 2007 are as follows –

Establishment (Note)	Number of posts	
	Existing (as at 1 December 2007)	As at 1 July 2007
A	10 + (1)#	10 + (1)
B	23	23
C	52	52
Total	85 + (1)	85 + (1)

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

– The supernumerary post created under delegated authority mentioned in paragraph 6 above is not included. As at 1 December 2007, there was no unfilled directorate post in LWB.

CIVIL SERVICE BUREAU COMMENTS

16. The Civil Service Bureau supports the proposed creation of the supernumerary post for three years to provide dedicated directorate support to take forward the work on poverty alleviation. The grading and ranking of the post proposed to be created are considered appropriate having regard to the level and scope of the responsibilities required.

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

17. As the post is proposed on a supernumerary basis, its creation, if approved, will be reported to the Standing Committee on Directorate Salaries and Conditions of Service in accordance with the agreed procedure.

Job Description
Principal Assistant Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Poverty)

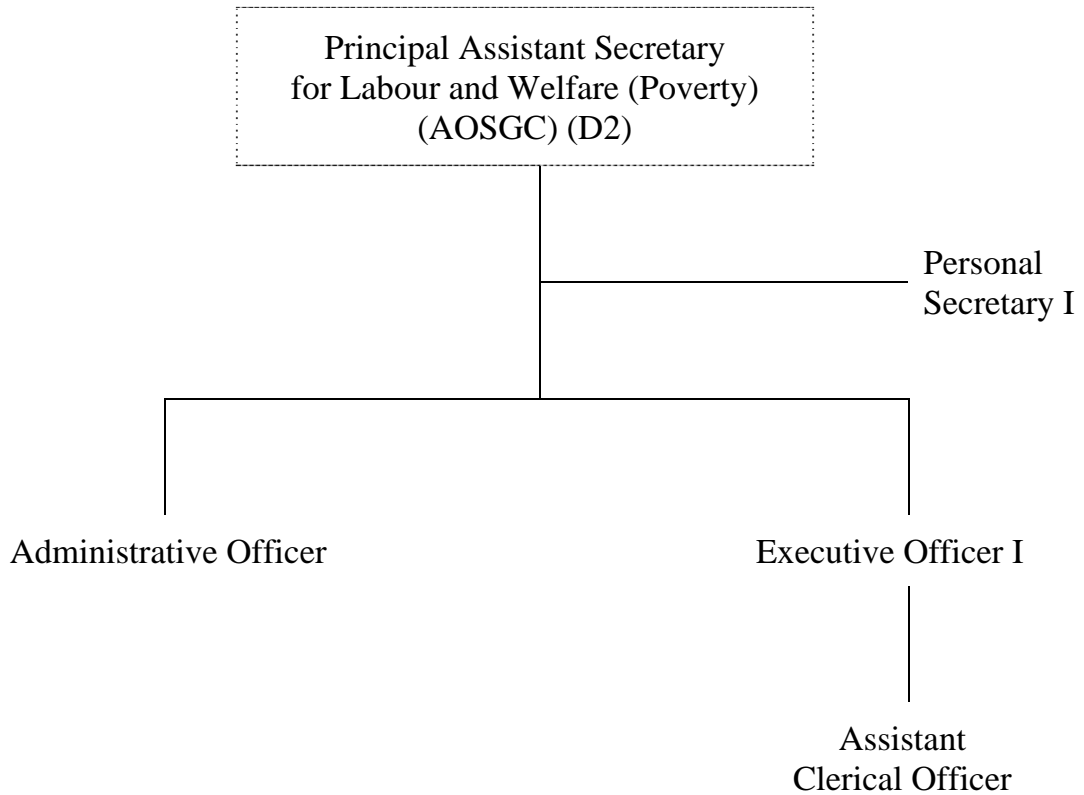
Rank : Administrative Officer Staff Grade C (D2)

Responsible to : Deputy Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Welfare) 2

Main Duties and Responsibilities –

1. To liaise with relevant bureaux and departments on policies and measures that address the needs of the poor, in particular on areas which cut across different policy bureaux, and identify areas for improving interface and efficiency.
2. To oversee and provide policy input for the establishment of the Child Development Fund, and consider the longer-term model to promote development of children from a disadvantaged background taking into account experience in implementing the pilot projects.
3. To oversee the study on how best to put in place a “one-stop” employment service and the pilot to try out the “one-stop” model.
4. To monitor the overall progress in implementing the recommendations of the Commission on Poverty.
5. To serve as the secretary to the Task Force on Poverty.

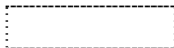
**Proposed Organisation Chart of the
Poverty Team**



Legend

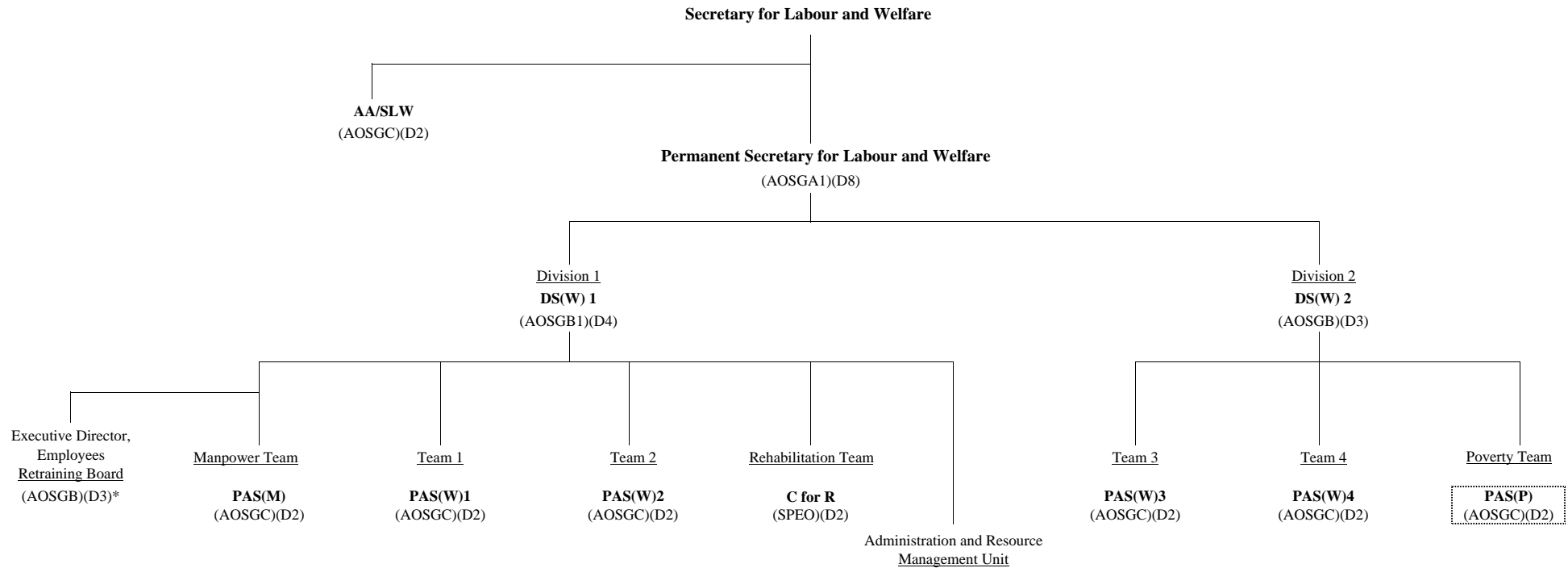
AOSGC

Administrative Officer Staff Grade C



Supernumerary directorate post proposed to be created

Proposed Organisation Chart of the Labour and Welfare Bureau



Legend

AA Administrative Assistant
 C for R Commissioner for Rehabilitation
 DS Deputy Secretary
 PAS Principal Assistant Secretary
 AOSGA1 Administrative Officer Staff Grade A1
 AOSGB1 Administrative Officer Staff Grade B1
 AOSGB Administrative Officer Staff Grade B
 AOSGC Administrative Officer Staff Grade C
 SPEO Senior Principal Executive Officer

M Manpower
 P Poverty
 W Welfare

* Supernumerary post created with Finance Committee's approval to enable the secondment of a civil servant to the Employees Retraining Board

 Supernumerary AOSGC post proposed to be created for three years from 10 March 2008