

**For discussion
on 5 November 2007**

**Legislative Council
Panel on Financial Affairs**

**Re-grading of the Rating Adviser Post in the
Rating and Valuation Department**

PURPOSE

This paper seeks Members' support for the proposed re-grading of the Rating Adviser (RA)(D2) of the Rating and Valuation Department (RVD) from a one-rank grade specialist post to a mainstream Valuation Surveyor (VS) grade post to allow greater flexibility for deployment of manpower resources.

PROPOSAL

2. We propose to create a permanent Assistant Commissioner of Rating and Valuation (ACRV)(D2) post, to be offset by the deletion of the permanent RA post with effect from a current date. As a consequential arrangement of this proposal, it is also proposed that the grade and rank of RA be deleted.

JUSTIFICATIONS

Creation and Development of the RA post

3. The existing RA post is a one-rank grade specialist post created in 1979 to provide specialist advice to the Commissioner of Rating and Valuation on modern techniques and methods (notably the computer-assisted mass appraisal techniques) pertaining to the mass appraisal of properties for rating and other taxation purposes, such as stamp duty and estate duty. This specialist post was considered necessary then because RVD did not possess such expertise in-house. Over the years, the role of RA has been expanded to oversee RVD's overall information technology development and the strategic direction of mass appraisal for the modernisation of valuation practice and business processes. He also supervises the General Revaluation exercise

involving more than 2.3 million assessments each year. The expanded responsibilities of the RA post have become largely comparable to those of ACRVs. The main responsibilities of ACRVs are at Enclosure 1.

4. As the RA is a one-rank grade specialist post and the directly-recruited specialist filling the post cannot be cross-posted to other mainstream professional positions held by VS grade officers, there is a lack of flexibility in manpower deployment on the part of the department and a lack of promotion prospect for the post holder. The Public Service Commission has suggested that RVD should review the career structure of this one-rank specialist post and consider if it is more appropriate to re-grade the post to be a mainstream ACRV post since its entry requirement is the same as the VS grade and its duties fall within the grade's mainstream work.

Readiness of VS Grade Staff in Taking up the Specialist Post

5. Over the years, the computer-assisted mass appraisal techniques have been successfully introduced and extensively applied in RVD's core business. The practical experience, awareness and competence of the VS grade in respect of these techniques have improved as a result of training and development. Given the availability of in-house expertise, RVD has tested the feasibility of regrading the RA post by filling it with an VS grade officer on acting basis after the departure of the previous specialist post holder in 2004, and the results have been encouraging. The VS grade RA has continued to steer the information system strategy of the Department and various geographical information systems and administrative systems to enhance the effectiveness of valuation process and overall efficiency of the Department have been developed. RVD is therefore confident of formalising the re-grading of the RA post.

Same Establishment More Flexibility

6. The proposed re-grading of the RA post will be implemented through the creation of a permanent ACRV(D2) post to be filled by a mainstream VS grade officer. The creation of such a post would be offset by the deletion of the permanent RA post, and hence RVD's current establishment would remain unchanged. However, the proposal would enable RVD to enjoy more flexibility in planning professional staff's career development and the Department's succession policy.

7. Subject to the approval for this staffing proposal, the proposed post will be designated as Assistant Commissioner (Corporate and Technology Services) (AC(CTS)). The job description of the proposed AC(CTS) post and the

proposed organisation chart of RVD are at Enclosures 2 and 3 respectively.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

8. RVD has examined the possibility of absorbing the duties of the RA post by existing directorate posts, but considered such an alternative infeasible as existing directorate officers are already fully occupied by their responsibilities in rating and valuation and departmental administration.

ADVICE SOUGHT

9. Subject to Members' views, we will seek the endorsement of the Establishment Subcommittee on 12 December and the approval of Finance Committee on 11 January 2008.

Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau
October 2007

**Main Duties and Responsibilities of the
Assistant Commissioners of Rating and Valuation
in the Rating and Valuation Department**

Rank : Assistant Commissioner of Rating and Valuation (D2)

Responsible to : Deputy Commissioner of Rating and Valuation

Main Duties and Responsibilities –

1. Overseeing and Administering Core Functions

To oversee and administer various core functions of the Department, including rating and Government rent assessments, general revaluation, landlord and tenant matters, property tax and stamp duty valuations, billing and collection of rates and Government rent, building numbering and enforcement actions.

2. Reviews and Policy Formulation

To carry out management reviews on policies, procedures and legislative measures under respective ordinances; and formulate and review operational policies and strategies of the Department for improvement and development.

3. Managing Customer Service

To formulate and implement strategies to manage customer relationships; and develop and promote a customer service culture in the Department.

4. Managing Human Resources and Administration

To oversee and manage human and financial resources; supervise divisional management; and formulate strategies on staff training, deployment and development.

Enclosure 2

Proposed Job Description Assistant Commissioner of Rating and Valuation (Corporate and Technology Services)

Rank : Assistant Commissioner of Rating and Valuation (D2)

Responsible to : Deputy Commissioner of Rating and Valuation

Main Duties and Responsibilities -

1. Providing Advice on Strategic Direction of the Department

To advise the Commissioner of Rating and Valuation (CRV) on the Department's business strategy; promote and sustain innovation in core business practices; provide direction on long-term objectives; define strategies to improve productivity and work quality through information technology (IT) and otherwise; and identify and develop new services and their delivery, including e-billing.

2. Providing Advice on the Application of Automated Valuation Systems

To advise CRV on the development and introduction of modern automated valuation systems and computer-assisted mass appraisal (CAMA), and on the development of network with overseas counterparts and professional bodies to keep up with new developments in applications of CAMA, Geographical Information Systems and other automated valuation systems.

3. Steering Strategic Computer Development

To oversee the strategic direction of computer and systems development to support the long-term business needs of the Department in accordance with the E-government vision and to enhance the provision of valuation and property information.

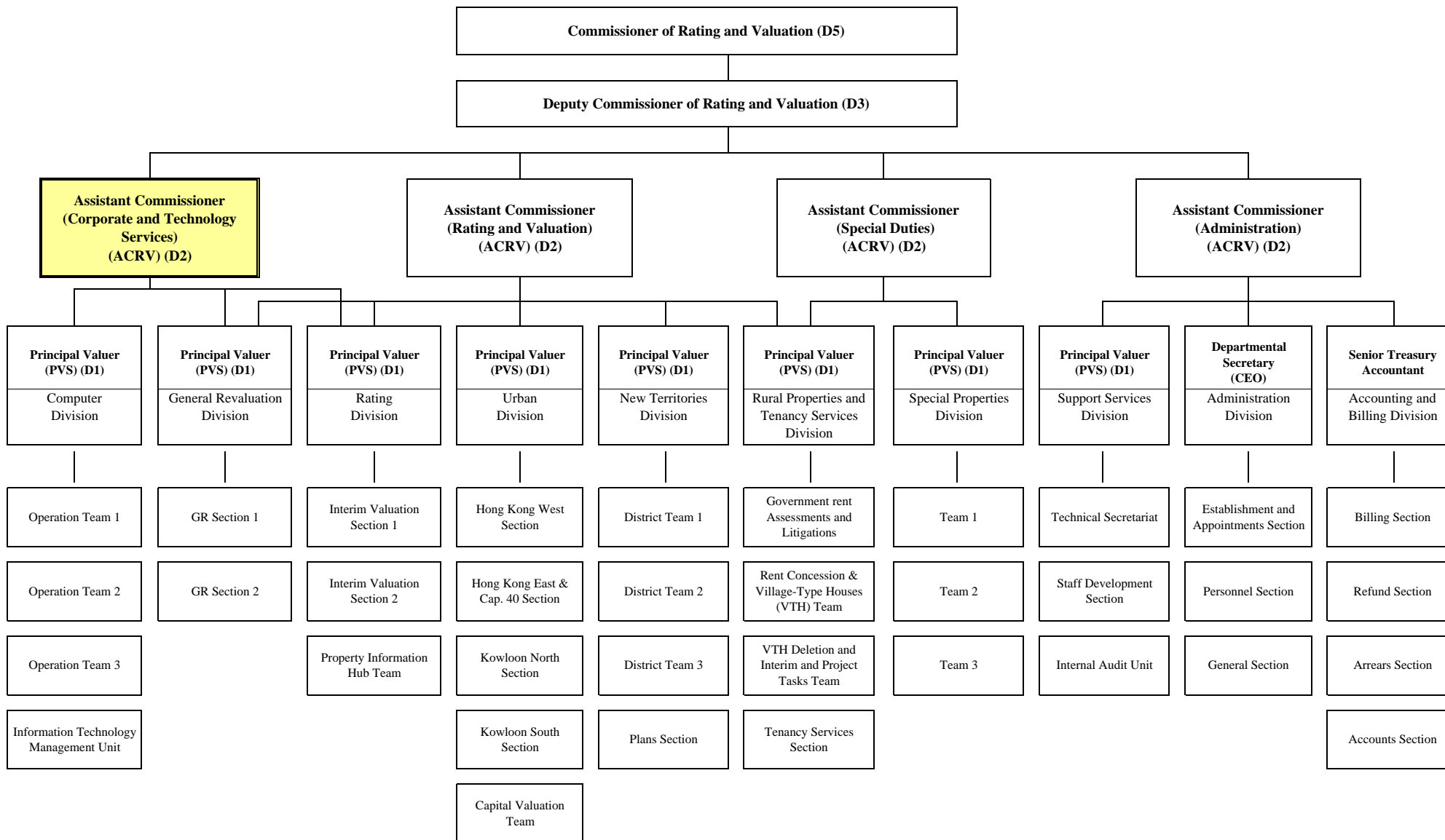
4. **Overseeing the General Revaluation (GR) exercise**

To oversee the annual GR exercise and the responsibilities of the GR Division; initiate further automation of the GR exercise through computer application and more frequent updating of valuation patterns; and introduce further mass appraisal initiatives and techniques to enhance the long-term accuracy and consistency of the GR.

5. **Developing Knowledge Management and Training of In-house IT Expertise**

To develop structured training programmes and strategies to ensure the continuous updating of knowledge and to keep staff in step with and optimise the benefits available from ongoing development in the application of IT to mass appraisal valuation methods; and ensure that such knowledge is sufficient within the Department to meet current and future business requirements at all times.

Organisation Chart of the Rating and Valuation Department



Legend:
 ACRV Assistant Commissioner of Rating and Valuation (D2)
 PVS Principal Valuation Surveyor (D1)
 CEO Chief Executive Officer

Proposed creation of one permanent ACRV (D2) post offset by the deletion of Rating Adviser (D2) post