

For discussion on  
16 January 2012

## **Legislative Council Panel on Development**

### **Proposed Creation of an Administrative Officer Staff Grade C Post in Planning and Lands Branch of Development Bureau**

#### **PURPOSE**

This paper seeks Members' support for the proposed creation of an Administrative Officer Staff Grade C (AOSGC) (D2) post to strengthen support at the directorate level in the Planning and Lands Branch (PLB) of the Development Bureau (DEVB).

#### **JUSTIFICATIONS**

##### **Creation of an AOSGC Post**

##### Discontinuation of the Development Opportunities Office

2. As part of the Government's response to a slowdown in private sector investment in land development projects in the aftermath of the financial tsunami in late 2008, the Development Opportunities Office (DOO) was established under DEVB on 1 July 2009 on a time-limited basis for an initial period of three years to provide one-stop consultation and co-ordination services to land development proposals that would bring broader social and economic merits to Hong Kong. DOO is headed by a supernumerary post of Administrative Officer Staff Grade B (AOSGB) (D3), designated as Head/DOO, which will lapse after 30 June 2012.

3. At the time of establishment of DOO, we undertook to carry out a review on the effectiveness and continued need of DOO before deciding on the long-term arrangements, scope of work and organisation set-up in future. DEVB has completed the review and the details of the outcome are set out in another paper entitled "Review of Development Opportunities Office under the Development Bureau" issued to this Panel in January 2012.

4. In short, having taken into account the changing economic situations and work priorities of DEVB, in particular the need for a separate dedicated office to advocate and facilitate the transformation of Kowloon East into a premier business district, and engage the community in the planning of the new business district, we have decided to cease the operation of the present DOO after 30 June 2012. Facilitation of the implementation of meritorious land development proposals relating to the Government's new initiative on Energising Kowloon East will fall under the purview of work of the proposed Kowloon East Development Office, while the relevant departments and policy units in DEVB, after the cessation of DOO, will assist in other meritorious land development projects within their respective purviews where required and appropriate.

#### DOO's Ongoing Duties and Responsibilities

5. With the discontinuation of DOO, a number of key on-going or emerging policy matters on planning and land use currently shouldered by DOO will need to be taken over. They include –

- (a) formulating and overseeing implementation of measures to encourage revitalisation of older industrial buildings;
- (b) co-ordinating policy measures to promote district-based regeneration of former industrial areas;
- (c) providing secretariat support to the Land and Development Advisory Committee (LDAC); and
- (d) providing secretariat support to the Steering Committee on Housing Land Supply (the Steering Committee) chaired by the Financial Secretary (FS) and co-ordinating the follow-up actions arising from the Steering Committee by the relevant bureaux / departments (B/Ds).

6. The measures to encourage revitalisation of older industrial buildings were announced by the Chief Executive (CE) in his 2009-10 Policy Address. As we have reported to this Panel, a mid-term review on the measures was completed in September 2010, following which a number of refinements to the existing measures have been introduced and the application period for them have been extended by three years to 31 March 2016. Successful implementation of the package of measures to facilitate the redevelopment and wholesale conversion of eligible industrial buildings, including the refinements introduced following the mid-term review, requires

close liaison with other B/Ds. It is important that the relevant work continues to be well co-ordinated and monitored. There is also a need to continue to co-ordinate the efforts relating to the promotion of district-based regeneration of former industrial areas for residential, commercial and other uses to meet Hong Kong's changing social and economic needs.

7. Furthermore, DOO is providing secretariat support to LDAC and the Steering Committee. LDAC is a long-established advisory body, which terms of reference include advising the Government, through the Secretary for Development, on policies and procedures in relation to planning, land and buildings matters, and specific development proposals and projects initiated by non-Government or private proponents carrying a broader economic or social value<sup>1</sup>. DOO is also serving as the Secretariat of the Steering Committee<sup>2</sup> chaired by FS and helping to coordinate the follow-up work of the relevant B/Ds to speed up housing land supply, review the existing land uses and explore new land resources. The working target of the Steering Committee is to make available housing land for some 20 000 private residential flats a year and build up a sufficiently large land reserve over a period of time so that the Government will have greater capacity to respond to market changes and ensure a stable and adequate housing land supply. All the secretariat and co-ordination work arising from the two committees will continue to require the dedicated effort of DEVB at the directorate level.

8. The existing Head/DOO is pitched at D3 level, which reflects the level of policy and practical experience required to lead DOO in handling wide-ranging project proposals and the related liaison and negotiation within and outside the Government. Upon cessation of the operation of DOO on 30 June 2012, directorate inputs are still required to oversee policy matters on planning and land use and provide support to LDAC and the Steering Committee. In the light of the significance, complexity and volume of the policy matters set out in paragraphs 5 to 7 above, an AOSGC post (D2), to be designated as Principal Assistant Secretary (Planning and Lands) 7 (PAS(PL)7), is proposed to be created in PLB under the supervision of Deputy Secretary (Planning and Lands)1 (DS(PL)1) to take over these responsibilities. While the proposed post will no longer handle highly complicated and sensitive development proposals, pitching the post at AOSGC (D2) rank is considered appropriate and commensurate with the level of responsibilities of a typical PAS post at the bureau level.

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<sup>1</sup> The LDAC membership includes representatives nominated by the professional institutes and trade associations most relevant to land development, as well as academics, experts and professionals appointed from a wide spectrum of economic sectors and community service background.

<sup>2</sup> The membership of the Steering Committee includes heads of the relevant bureaux and departments.

## **Rationalisation of Duties between PAS(PL)1 and the proposed PAS(PL)7**

### Existing Duties and Responsibilities of PAS(PL)1

9. At present, PAS(PL)1 heads the existing Lands Unit that handles all policy matters relating to land administration and the housekeeping of Lands Department (the existing job description of PAS(PL)1 is at **Annex A**). Specifically, she is responsible for formulating land supply policy and strategy as well as implementing various land supply initiatives. As mentioned by CE in his last two Policy Addresses, the Government is working towards ensuring sufficient land supply to maintain a stable environment for the healthy and sustainable development of the property market. It is now our established policy to create a land reserve. In particular, CE has set a working target that in the next ten years, on average land needs to be made available annually for some 20 000 private residential flats. As increasing housing land supply tops the policy agenda of the Government, the workload of PAS(PL)1 has significantly surged in recent years.

10. One of PAS(PL)1's major tasks is to secure the readiness of sites for future land supply, and compile the annual Land Sale Programme (including the Application List). Before a piece of government land is included in the Land Sale Programme and made available for sale, very often issues cutting across different B/Ds have to be resolved. For instance, potential sale sites of a considerable size require planning and engineering studies, statutory planning and infrastructural works (e.g. site formation and road works) which need to be closely co-ordinated and overseen at the bureau level. For sites with existing users, relocation of these users will require the joint efforts of the concerned B/Ds. In some cases, the conduct of relevant impact assessments, such as traffic, drainage and sewerage as well as environmental, is a pre-requisite. PAS(PL)1 is required to handle these site-specific issues with all relevant B/Ds and resolve inter-bureau/departmental differences to ensure their timely availability for sale. Taking forward the outstanding West Rail property development projects, which will continue to be an important source of housing land supply in the coming years, is another key task falling within PAS(PL)1's work purview. The significance and priority of land supply issues coupled with upsurged workload warrants a full-time dedicated directorate at PAS level.

11. Meanwhile, the land administration portfolio of PAS(PL)1 continues to grow, including the policy on the provision of public open space

in private development (POSPD), squatter control and land resumption, as well as other policy and site-specific matters relating to private treaty grants, lease modification, short term tenancies, land control, lease enforcement, etc. The existing workload of PAS(PL)1 has become too heavy for her effective discharge of the duties. To sustain the smooth operation of the Lands Unit, directorate support has to be enhanced. We consider that sharing out the current PAS(PL)1's land administration portfolio as mentioned in this paragraph to the proposed PAS(PL)7 post can achieve a more rational distribution of work, so that PAS(PL)1 can focus on formulating land supply policy and strategy as well as implementing various land supply initiatives, while PAS(PL)7 will handle all policy matters in relation to land administration as well as housekeeping of the Lands Department.

#### Rationalising Duties and Responsibilities between PAS(PL)1 and the proposed PAS(PL)7

12. With the discontinuation of DOO, policy matters on planning and land use currently shouldered by DOO will be taken up by the proposed PAS(PL)7. We have also taken the opportunity to review the existing directorate support heading the Lands Unit and consider it necessary to revamp the existing Lands Unit and rationalise the work schedule of PAS(PL)1 to ensure that adequate directorate support is provided to the senior management in the full range of land supply and land administration policies. We propose the following division of responsibilities between the proposed PAS(PL)7 and PAS(PL)1—

##### *PAS(PL)1 to oversee land supply*

13. PAS(PL)1 will head a dedicated land supply team under the Lands Unit and will be responsible for formulating and implementing policies and initiative relating to increasing land supply for housing and office uses. Apart from formulating land supply policy and strategy, securing the readiness of sites for future land supply, handling site-specific issues to ensure timely availability of sites for sale, providing land policy input for a number of planning studies or railway/infrastructural studies relating to increasing land supply, taking forward West Rail property development projects, etc., PAS(PL)1 will take over from Head/DOO the duties to serve the Steering Committee chaired by FS and assist DS(PL)1, who will be the Secretary of the Steering Committee; and take follow-up actions on the Committee's decisions with the relevant B/Ds. In addition, PAS(PL)1 will continue to take forward and oversee projects or initiatives with wider socio-economic impact, for example, the Hong Kong Housing Society's projects in Tin Shui Wai and the Ma Wan Park development. The revised

job description of PAS(PL)1 is at **Annex B**.

14. PAS(PL)1 will be underpinned by a Senior Administrative Officer (SAO), an Administrative Officer (AO) and a Senior Estate Surveyor (SES), currently designated as Assistant Secretary (Lands)2 (AS(L)2), AS(L)3 and AS(L)4 in the existing Lands Unit respectively. We will consequently rationalise their duties to form a dedicated land supply team under PAS(PL)1.

*PAS(PL)7 to look after land administration*

15. PAS(PL)7 will inherit from Head/DOO the duties relating to revitalisation of older industrial buildings and promotion of district based regeneration of former industrial areas, as well as providing secretariat support to LDAC. Since PAS(PL)7 will not be required to deal with co-ordination and facilitation works of individual land development proposals, there is room for the incumbent to share out some of the policy responsibilities currently under PAS(PL)1's portfolio. PAS(PL)7 will take over from PAS(PL)1 policy matters relating to land administration, including providing policy inputs relating to private treaty grants, lease modification, short term tenancies; land control and lease enforcement; other land matters including the squatter control policy; policy on the provision of POSPD; land survey and mapping matters, etc. The team will also provide land policy input to proposals from other B/Ds as well as undertaking housekeeping duties of the Lands Department. The proposed job description of PAS(PL)7 is at **Annex C**.

16. PAS(PL)7 will be underpinned by an SAO<sup>3</sup> and an AO to be transferred from DOO upon its discontinuation. Another SAO and an Executive Officer I (EOI), currently designated as AS(L)1 and EO(L) respectively, will be internally redeployed from PAS(PL)1's team to PAS(PL)7's team.

17. As for secretarial and clerical support, at present, a time-limited Personal Secretary I (PSI) post has been created to support Head/DOO and two agency staff have been engaged to provide DOO with secretarial and clerical support. It is thus necessary to create one PSI and one Assistant Clerical Officer (ACO) posts to support PAS(PL)7, and one PSII post will be internally redeployed from PAS(PL)1's team to PAS(PL)7's team to support

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<sup>3</sup> A supernumerary SAO post was created in DOO by holding against another SAO post in PLB in December 2010 for 12 months to provide support to the work of the Steering Committee. The post was re-created in December 2011 for another six months up to the cessation of DOO on 30 June 2012. Thereafter, it is proposed that the SAO post be redeployed to support PAS(PL)7's team.

the three AOs under PAS(PL)7. To maintain support to both PAS(PL)1 and PAS(PL)7's teams at the executive and clerical level, EO(L) and the newly created ACO post will serve both teams subsequent to the reshuffling. Such a provision of executive, secretariat and clerical support is considered the bare minimum for the two policy units.

18. The existing and proposed organisation charts of PLB and the Lands Unit are at **Annexes D and E** respectively.

### **Alternatives Considered**

19. There are currently six AOSGC posts in PLB underpinning DS(PL)1 and DS(PL)2 respectively. We have critically examined to see if any of these AOSGC posts can be redeployed to take up the on-going duties and responsibilities of DOO and to share out the existing overloaded duties and responsibilities of PAS(PL)1. However, as all of them are fully committed to their existing work schedules, it is operationally not possible for them to effectively take up the whole or part of the duties and responsibilities concerned.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

20. The proposed creation of the PAS(PL)7 post will require an additional notional annual salary cost at mid-point of \$1,611,600. The full annual average staff cost, including salaries and on-costs, for the post is \$2,285,000.

21. As for the two additional non-directorate civil service posts mentioned in paragraph 17 above, the notional annual salary cost at mid-point is \$526,620 and the full annual average staff cost, including salaries and staff on-cost, is \$796,000.

### **ADVICE SOUGHT**

22. Members are invited to comment on the proposal. Subject to Members' support, we will seek the recommendation from the Establishment Subcommittee and approval from the Finance Committee.

**Development Bureau**  
**January 2012**

**Existing Job Description**  
**Principal Assistant Secretary (Planning and Lands)1**

**Rank** : Administrative Officer Staff Grade C (D2)

**Responsible to** : Deputy Secretary (Planning and Lands)1 (D4)

**Major Duties and Responsibilities –**

1. To formulate and implement policies/strategies relating to land supply and land disposal, including the compilation of annual land sale programmes, handling site-specific issues in relation to increase of housing land supply, providing land policy input and overseeing the implementation of a number of studies relating to the increase of housing land supply.
2. To facilitate the implementation of railway property development projects of West Rail.
3. To handle policy matters and issues relating to land administration, land control and lease enforcement, including providing policy input to proposals in relation to private treaty grants, lease modifications, short- term tenancies; and handling petitions against re-entry of land.
4. To formulate and implement policies relating to rural land matters, including the Small House Policy, squatter control policy, land resumption, zonal compensation system, and serve the Secretary for Development-Heung Yee Kuk Liaison Committee as well as chair the Compensation Review Committee.
5. To oversee the implementation of the guidelines on management of the public open space in private developments (POSPD), and handle problematic cases relating to the refined arrangements for the provision of POSPD.
6. To take forward specific projects, including the two Hong Kong Housing Society projects in Tin Shui Wai to promote social and



economic development, and the Ma Wan Park development.

7. To service the Co-ordinating Committee on Potentially Hazardous Installations (PHIs), handle development applications as well as manage a register of PHIs.
8. To handle policy and related matters relating to survey and mapping such as determination of land boundaries, Land Surveyors Registration Committee and disciplinary board, and hydrographic matters.
9. To undertake housekeeping duties relating to the Lands Department, as well as the Hydrographic Office of Marine Department.

**Proposed Job Description  
Principal Assistant Secretary (Planning and Lands)1**

**Rank** : Administrative Officer Staff Grade C (D2)

**Responsible to** : Deputy Secretary (Planning and Lands)1 (D4)

**Major Duties and Responsibilities –**

1. To provide secretariat support to the Steering Committee on Housing Land Supply chaired by the Financial Secretary and co-ordinate follow-up actions by the relevant bureaux and departments.
2. To formulate and implement policies/strategies relating to land supply and land disposal, including the compilation of annual land sale programmes, and to handle site-specific issues in relation to increase of housing land supply.
3. To facilitate the implementation of railway property development projects of West Rail.
4. To provide policy input and oversee the implementation of a number of studies relating to the increase of housing land supply.
5. To take forward and oversee projects or initiatives with wider socio-economic impact.
6. To service the Co-ordinating Committee on Potentially Hazardous Installations (PHIs), handle development applications as well as manage a register of PHIs.

**Proposed Job Description  
Principal Assistant Secretary (Planning and Lands)7**

**Rank** : Administrative Officer Staff Grade C (D2)

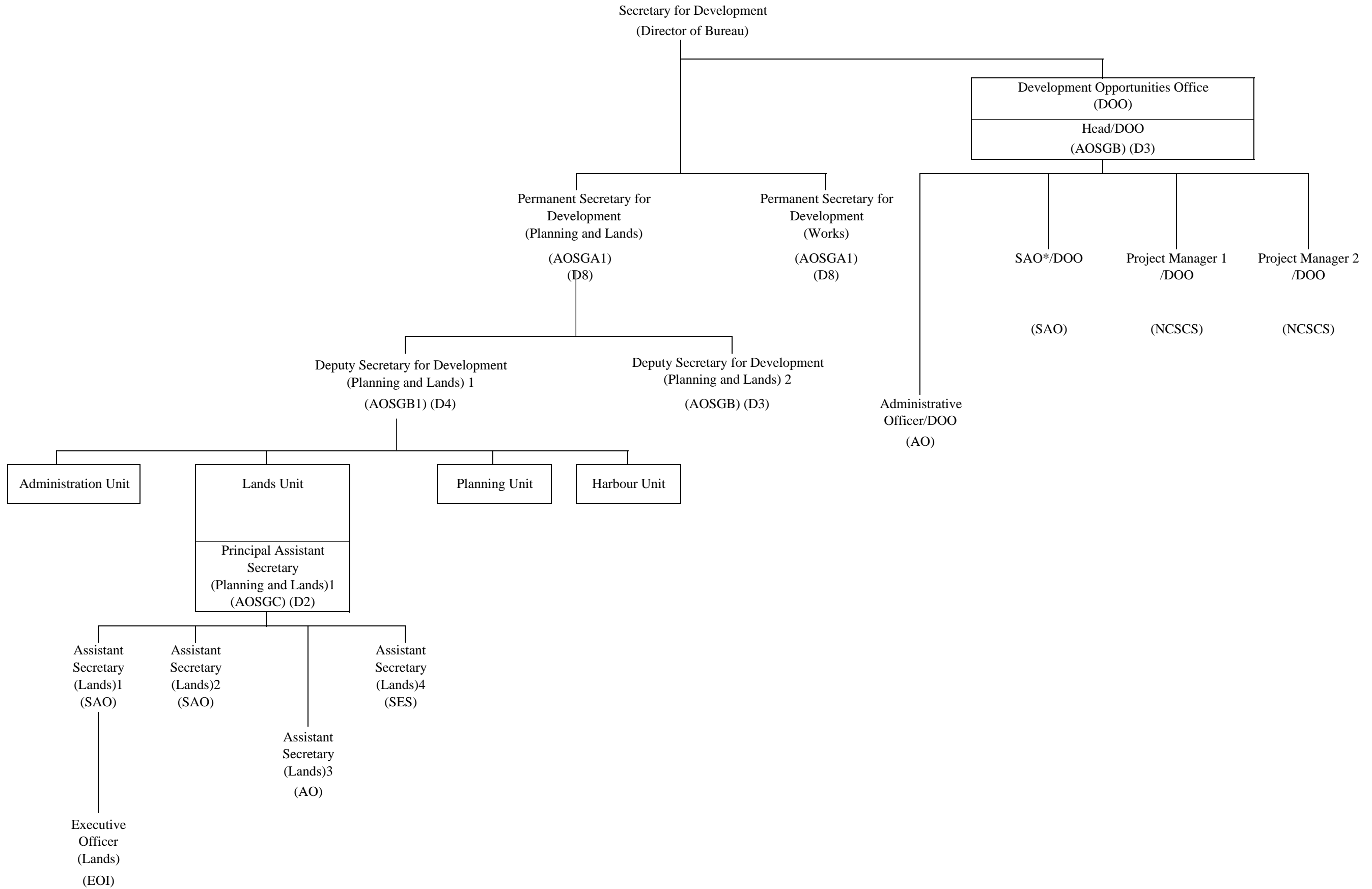
**Responsible to** : Deputy Secretary (Planning and Lands)1 (D4)

**Major Duties and Responsibilities –**

1. To formulate and implement policies relating to rural land matters, including the small house policy, squatter control policy, land resumption, zonal compensation system, as well as provide secretariat support to the Secretary for Development-Heung Yee Kuk Liaison Committee as well as chair the Compensation Review Committee.
2. To handle policy matters relating to land administration and lease enforcement, including providing policy input to proposals in relation to private treaty grants, lease modifications, short term tenancies; handling related complaints; and handling petitions against re-entry of land.
3. To oversee implementation of measures to encourage revitalisation of older industrial buildings and co-ordinate policy measures to promote district-based regeneration of former industrial areas.
4. To oversee the implementation of the guidelines on management of the public open space in private developments (POSPD); and to handle problematic cases relating to the refined arrangements for the provision of POSPD.
5. To provide secretariat support to the Land and Development Advisory Committee.
6. To handle policy and related matters relating to survey and mapping such as determination of land boundaries, land survey registration committee and disciplinary board, and hydrographic matters.

7. To undertake housekeeping duties relating to the Lands Department, as well as the Hydrographic Office of Marine Department.

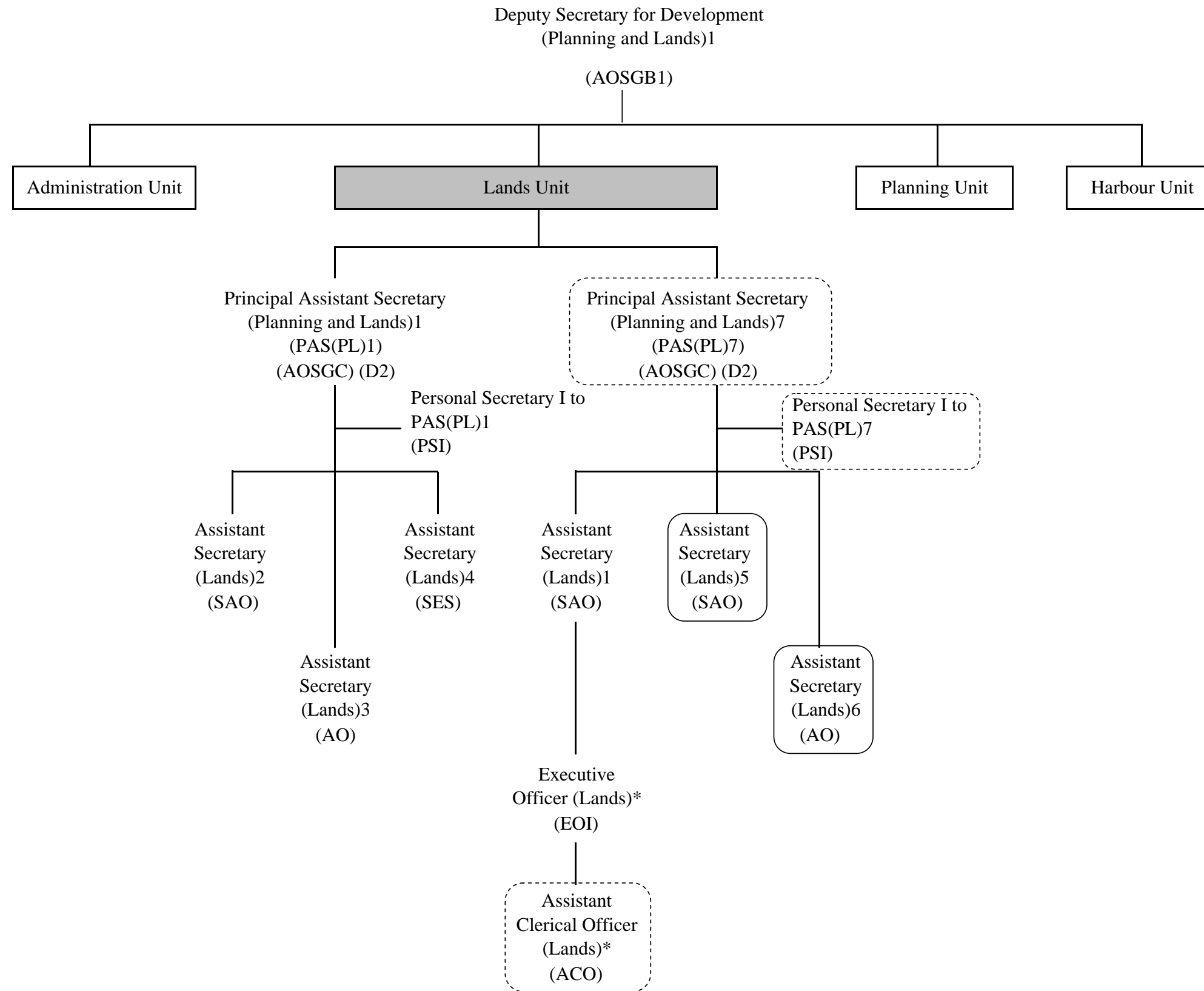
Existing Organisation Chart of the Planning and Lands Branch of the Development Bureau



**Legend**

AOSGA1	Administrative Officer Staff Grade A1	SAO	Senior Administrative Officer	NCSCS	Non-civil Service Contract Staff	*	Supernumerary SAO post held against an SAO post in Planning and Lands Branch
AOSGB1	Administrative Officer Staff Grade B1	SES	Senior Estate Surveyor				
AOSGB	Administrative Officer Staff Grade B	AO	Administrative Officer				
AOSGC	Administrative Officer Staff Grade C	EOI	Executive Officer I				

# Proposed Organisation Chart of Lands Unit



**Legend**

- Posts proposed for creation
- Posts redeployed from Development Opportunities Office
- AOSGB1 Administrative Officer Staff Grade B1
- AOSGC Administrative Officer Staff Grade C
- SAO Senior Administrative Officer
- SES Senior Estate Surveyor

- AO Administrative Officer
- EOI Executive Officer I
- PSI Personal Secretary I
- ACO Assistant Clerical Officer

\* The posts of EO(L) and ACO(L) will provide executive and clerical support to PAS(PL)1's and PAS(PL)7's teams after the reshuffling of duties.