

**For discussion
On 19 November 2012**

Legislative Council Panel on Public Service

**Creation of a Non-civil Service Position
of Full-time Member in the Central Policy Unit**

PURPOSE

This paper seeks Members' views on the proposal to create a non-civil service (NCS) position of Full-time Member at the equivalent rank of D3 as Full-time Member (4) in the Central Policy Unit (CPU) with effect from 1 April 2013.

BACKGROUND

Role and Structure of the CPU

2. CPU was established in April 1989 to supplement the Government Secretariat's work by examining specific policy issues as directed by top Government officials. Its duties included undertaking in-depth examinations of complex and long-term policy issues, particularly those that straddled policy bureaux, analysing options and recommending solutions.

3. CPU was provided with four directorate posts/positions in 1989, namely the Head/CPU (a NCS position equivalent to the rank of D8), the Deputy Head/CPU (an Administrative Staff Grade B1 (AOSGB1) (D4) post) and two Full-time Members (NCS positions equivalent to the rank of D3). One additional Full-time Member post was created in 1990 to enable CPU to achieve its primary objective as well as to respond to ad hoc requests.

4. Throughout the years, the work dimension of the CPU has further expanded and is now responsible for conducting policy research, drafting the annual Policy Address, providing secretariat support to the Commission on Strategic Development¹, analysing major and important policy issues, with a view to providing the Chief Executive (CE), the Chief Secretary for Administration (CS) and the Financial Secretary (FS) with policy advice, analysing and assessing community concerns and public opinions, encouraging community discussion and participation in public policy formulation, and undertaking work for the Hong Kong Guangdong Strategic Development Research Group under the Hong Kong/ Guangdong Co-operation Joint Conference.

5. To enhance taking forward initiatives of the Fourth Term Government, it is necessary to create one additional permanent NCS position of Full-time Member in CPU. Justifications are provided in the ensuing paragraphs.

JUSTIFICATIONS

Main Focus Areas of Full-time Members

6. Prior to the establishment of the Fourth Term Government, the three Full-time Members of CPU focused on the following three main areas:

- (i) Hong Kong's political development and Mainland related issues;
- (ii) Hong Kong's social and welfare issues, such as poverty, social security and welfare as well as community concerns and public opinions; and
- (iii) drafting of the CE's major speeches, briefs and the annual Policy Address.

¹ In 1998, the role and function of CPU were further expanded upon the setting up of the Commission on Strategic Development (CSD). Its staffing was also strengthened by the establishment of the CSD Secretariat which comprised one Administrative Staff Grade B (AOSGB) (D3) post and one Government Town Planner (D2) post at directorate level.

Main Focus Areas of Full-time Members in the Fourth Term Government

7. The Fourth Term Government will accord high priority to policy research. CPU will play a more significant role in policy formulation and will be involved in a wider spectrum of political, social and economic issues and be responsible for policy research in the following four areas.

(a) Strengthening Research on Social and Welfare Issues

8. CPU will continue to conduct researches on social issues including the family, elderly, and underprivileged, etc. The Fourth Term Government will encourage the work for alleviating poverty and CPU will provide full support to the Government in formulating policies relating to poverty, including conducting policy research in co-operation with the Commission on Poverty.

9. Other social issues, including population policies and youth policies, are also among the top concerns of the public. CPU will strengthen its policy research on these topics and will produce think pieces and reports, conduct surveys, as well as hold seminars, focused group discussions and forums to support the Government in formulating relevant policies.

(b) Research on Hong Kong's Economic Development

10. The Fourth Term Government will strengthen Hong Kong's role as an international financial centre and promote sustained and robust economic development. CPU will provide policy research support in such areas as economic diversification, financial services development, industry policy, and economic co-operation with the Mainland.

(c) Cultivation of a Reserve of Talents

11. The Fourth Term Government considers it important to build up a reserve of talents in support of Hong Kong's future development. To this end, it is necessary to recruit more talents from different backgrounds who aspire to serve Hong Kong to be involved in public policy

formulation, so as to enhance transparency of the process and to forge closer links among the Government and different stakeholders in the community. CPU is responsible for assisting the CE in achieving this goal by conducting research and providing recommendations in relation to cultivating and building a reserve of talents in support of Hong Kong's future development.

(d) Research in relation to Public Opinion

12. Public opinion and the new media are playing an increasing role in public policy formulation. It is necessary for the Government to keep track of the latest development, to listen to people's views, to understand public opinions, so as to assess public views and opinions and keep our finger on the community's pulse for providing reference to policy formulation. CPU has been collecting public opinions through opinion surveys and will strengthen its capability in policy research in relation to public opinion and the new media. The aim is to support the Government's policy formulation process by taking into account public opinions and sentiments in a timely manner.

Need for One Additional Full-time Member

13. Since the Fourth Term Government will strengthen policy research, the role and functions of CPU have to be expanded. Four Full-time Members are required to accord due attention to each of the above four areas. Given the need for additional manpower since 1 July 2012, CPU created a six-month non-civil service position of Full-time Member in October 2012 as an interim measure.

14. To cope with the increasing workload of CPU in the long run, we propose to create an additional NCS position of Full-time Member, designated as Full-time Member (4), in CPU with effect from 1 April 2013. We will then reshuffle the duties of the existing three Full-time Members.

Encls. 1-2 15. The revised major duties of the existing three Full-time Members and the job description of the proposed Full-time Member (4) are at
Encl. 3 Enclosures 1-2. The existing and proposed organisation chart of CPU is at Enclosure 3.

ALTERNATIVE CONSIDERED

16. We have critically considered the possibility of tasking the three existing Full-time Members to take on the role expected of the proposed Full-time Member (4) but concluded that this is not feasible because of the workload involved in their respective policy research in various areas in paragraphs 8 to 11 above. Further, it is not feasible for other Full-time Members to take up the duties of the proposed position as it requires professional and expert knowledge as well as experience in the specific areas which the other Full-time Members do not possess.

17. Without Full-time Member (4), the quality and response time of the policy research in the relevant areas will be adversely affected. CPU may not be able to offer prompt advice to the CE, CS and FS.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

18. The total remuneration package for the proposed NCS Full-time Member post will not exceed the full annual average staff costs of \$2,802,000, inclusive of salaries and staff on-cost, for an Administrative Officer Staff Grade B officer (D3). We will include sufficient provision in the Draft Estimates of 2013-14 and subsequent years to meet the cost of this proposal.

ADVICE SOUGHT

19. Members are invited to comment on the proposal. We will seek the recommendation of the Establishment Subcommittee in January 2013 and approval from the Finance Committee afterwards.

Central Policy Unit
November 2012

**Revised Major Duties
of the Existing Full-time Members equivalent at D3 Level in the
Central Policy Unit (CPU)**

1. Full-time Member (1) is responsible for handling matters relating to the examination of policy issues on economic diversification, financial services development, industry policy and economic co-operation with the Mainland. He is also required to provide expertise advice and research support to the Government's effort to strengthen Hong Kong's role as an international financial centre and to promote sustained and robust economic development.
2. Full-time Member (2) is responsible for handling matters relating to the examination of policy issues on social and welfare issues including poverty, population policies, and youth policies. He is also required to provide expertise advice and research support to the Commission on Poverty.
3. Full-time Member (3) is responsible for handling matters relating to the examination of policy issues on cultivating and building a reserve of talents on public policy in support of Hong Kong's future development.

Job Description
Full-time Member (4), CPU

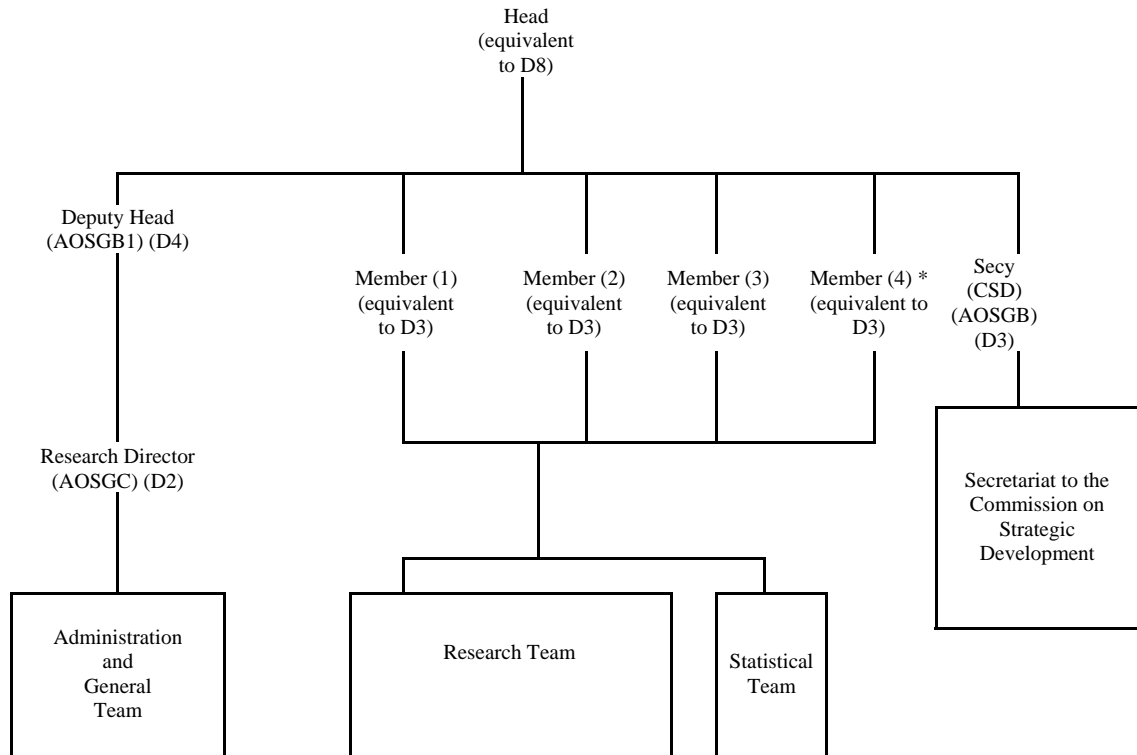
Rank : Equivalent to the rank of D3

Responsible to : Head, Central Policy Unit

Main duties and responsibilities:

1. Examination of policy issues including Hong Kong's political development, public opinion, and the new media and drafting of reports;
2. Drafting the Chief Executive's annual Policy Address and other major speeches;
3. Liaising with policy bureaux and departments, other Full and Part-time Members of the Central Policy Unit and individuals in the community; and
4. Other duties as may be directed by the Head, Central Policy Unit.

Organisation of the Central Policy Unit
showing the proposed Non-civil Service Position to be created



Legend

* Proposed new non-civil service position of Full-time Member equivalent to the rank of D3