

**For discussion
on 19 November 2012**

Legislative Council Panel on Public Service

**Creation of One Supernumerary Post of
Administrative Officer Staff Grade C
in the Secretariat to the Commission on Strategic Development**

PURPOSE

This paper seeks Members' views on the proposal to create a supernumerary post of Administrative Officer Staff Grade C (AOSGC) (D2) as Assistant Secretary to the Commission on Strategic Development (AS(CSD)) with effect from 1 April 2013 to 30 June 2017 in the CSD Secretariat within the Central Policy Unit (CPU).

BACKGROUND

Role and Operation of the CSD

2. First established in 1998, the CSD is an important advisory body to the Government. It provides a platform for members from various sectors of the community to explore with senior Government officials including the Chief Executive (CE), the Chief Secretary for Administration and the Financial Secretary major issues pertaining to the long-term development of Hong Kong.

3. We plan to enhance the role of the CSD with a new set of terms of reference for the new term of the CSD, focusing on the macro, long-term development strategy of Hong Kong and promoting in-depth discussion of relevant issues within the community.

4. The CSD holds regular meetings to discuss important issues relevant to the long-term development of Hong Kong. It has provided a useful forum for the Government to canvass views on strategic issues straddling

different policy areas. It also helps forge consensus on long-term development issues within the community. Ideas and suggestions from CSD members are channelled to the relevant policy bureaux and departments (B/Ds) for follow up. During the last term from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2012, the CSD has held eight meetings, three informal consultative meetings, and seven focused discussions. Issues discussed include Hong Kong and regional cooperation in East Asia, Hong Kong's role in the development of the Mainland, complementing the National Twelfth Five-Year Plan, subsidising home ownership, progress of key initiatives in the "Policy Framework for the Management of Municipal Solid Waste (2005-2014)", airport development as well as regular consultations on the Policy Address and the Budget.

Need for a Supernumerary Post of Assistant Secretary to the CSD

5. All secretariat service and support to the CSD are currently provided by the CSD Secretariat led by the Secretary to the CSD at the rank of Administrative Officer Staff Grade B (AOSGB) (D3). In order to provide the CSD with effective and efficient support, the CSD Secretariat has been strengthened at the directorate level with the provision of one supernumerary post of AOSGC as AS(CSD) since May 2006 (vide EC(2006-07)2) which was extended twice, in July 2007 (vide EC(2007-08)3) and in July 2009 (vide EC(2009-10)7) respectively. This supernumerary post expired on 30 June 2012 together with the tenure of the last term CSD.

6. The Administration has critically reviewed the work of the CSD Secretariat in the light of actual operational experience. In anticipation of the complexity and the substantial workload of the CSD in the coming years, the Administration considers it essential to create the supernumerary post again in order to maintain a high quality service to the CSD.

JUSTIFICATIONS

Focus and Meeting Arrangement of the CSD

7. While the CSD will continue to be an important advisory body to the CE and a platform for the Government and various sectors of the community to discuss long-term strategic issues from a macro perspective, we consider that some changes to its focus and discussion arrangement will help enhance the CSD's performance in serving its role and responsibilities. Two of the major changes are -

- (a) placing a much greater focus on discussing strategic, macro and long-term issues related to social, economic and political developments of Hong Kong. Its discussion will be interactive, in-depth and analytical, and will be supported by thorough and high quality research and analysis; and
- (b) having more direct and efficient communication with B/Ds in order to facilitate the follow-up of the initiatives and policy suggestions raised by CSD members during meetings, by having more liaison with senior officials in the relevant B/Ds.

8. We plan to conduct four regular CSD meetings each year, with each meeting discussing a specific subject. The CSD Secretariat will conduct various researches and provide background information for CSD members' reference.

9. To complement or follow up the deliberations at regular CSD meetings, focussed discussions may be convened to carry out more in-depth deliberation on specific policy issues. Representatives from relevant policy bureaux, academics and experts in relevant fields will be invited to participate in the focussed discussions where necessary.

Tasks Undertaken by the CSD Secretariat

10. The focus and meeting arrangements of the CSD will extend the responsibilities of the CSD Secretariat beyond providing normal secretariat support. The CSD Secretariat will have to strengthen its capabilities in conducting policy researches, analysing the research findings and presenting them to the CSD for discussion. In the past, the CSD Secretariat has, from time to time, undertaken in-house policy studies, or engaged and supervised external consultants to conduct studies on specific subjects. Nevertheless, in the coming term, the required quantity and quality of these researches will be much more significant, and the time frame allowed for the completion of these researches will also be much shorter.

11. Adequate directorate support in the CSD Secretariat is crucial in overseeing and guiding these activities in order to ensure that they are performed at a high standard, particularly when they involve complex policy analysis and liaison with senior officials in the relevant B/Ds.

Proposed Creation of a Supernumerary AOSGC Post

12. The existing directorate establishment of CSD Secretariat consists of one AOSGB post and a Government Town Planner (GTP) (D2) post. In the light of the operational experience of the CSD Secretariat in the past years, and having regard to the complexity and volume of the CSD's work in the coming years, we consider it crucial to create a supernumerary AOSGC (D2) post as AS(CSD) to provide support to the Secretary to the CSD.

13. The proposed AS(CSD) will be responsible for providing directorate support in mapping out the direction and topics of discussions for CSD with a view to enhancing the long-term international competitiveness and socio-economic development of Hong Kong, undertaking and coordinating cross-sector policy research and analyses and preparing a wide range of important discussion papers on strategic issues. He/she also proposes issues and prepares papers for discussion by the CSD, prepares briefs and speeches for the Chairman of the CSD, handles publicity arrangements, provides support to CSD members, oversees the logistical support for CSD meetings and focussed discussions, and oversees the administration of the CSD Secretariat. The GTP, on the other hand, provides the Secretary to the CSD as well as the Head/CPU with professional and technical support in studying the global, regional and Mainland development trends which have significant impact on Hong Kong. He also undertakes policy research and analyses in relation to city planning and other strategic development issues.

14. In the past years, the CSD Secretariat has conducted a number of researches in relation to economic and social development. The research findings have enriched the discussion papers by providing more comprehensive and evidence-based information. The AS(CSD) has played an important role in providing directorate guidance for these researches. As explained in paragraphs 7, 10 and 11 above, with the CSD's greater focus on discussing strategic and long-term issues, the CSD Secretariat's workload in conducting policy researches and analyses will increase in the coming term. Consequently, the AS(CSD)'s workload in overseeing and guiding these policy researches will also increase. Besides, as explained in paragraph 7 above, the CSD Secretariat will have to conduct more direct and efficient communication with B/Ds in order to facilitate the follow-up of the initiatives and policy suggestions raised by CSD members during the meetings. As this will involve more liaison with senior officials in the relevant B/Ds, the role and workload of the AS(CSD) in conducting such communication will be more significant.

Encl.1
& 2

15. The job description of the proposed post is at Enclosure 1. The organisation chart of the CSD Secretariat showing the proposed post is at Enclosure 2.

Alternatives Considered

16. We have critically reviewed whether the other directorate staff at D2 level within the CPU, i.e. the Research Director (RD) and the GTP, can absorb the duties of the proposed AS(CSD) post. The RD is responsible for assisting the Deputy Head of CPU in preparing the Policy Address by gathering inputs for the Policy Address from parties inside and outside of the Government and undertaking supportive research and administrative duties. He coordinates and provides input into research work in the CPU, and is also responsible for the overall administration of the CPU as well as the CPU's Part-time Members' Programme. As regards the GTP, he is also responsible for providing professional input to development trends and demographic issues, and assisting in the work of the CPU from a professional perspective. As both are already fully occupied with their existing duties and responsibilities, we consider it operationally not possible for them to take up the duties of the proposed AS(CSD) post without adversely affecting the effective discharge of their own duties. In addition, the work of the CSD Secretariat is expected to remain complex and heavy in view of the many challenges ahead. Hence, the creation of the proposed supernumerary post from 1 April 2013 to 30 June 2017 is crucial to the CSD Secretariat in discharging its duties satisfactorily.

17. Without the proposed post, the quality of the secretarial and research support provided to the CSD will be adversely affected. This is particularly undesirable when the new term CSD will place a greater focus on policy research and communication with other B/Ds. In case directorate input to the CSD Secretariat is reduced, the effectiveness of the CSD as an advisory body to provide timely advice to the CE will also be seriously affected if the CSD is unable to meet in a timely manner or CSD members are not provided with adequate and quality information in the discussions.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

18. The proposed creation of one supernumerary AOSGC post will bring about an additional notional annual salary cost at mid-point of \$1,696,200. The full annual average staff cost, including salaries and staff

on-cost, is \$2,427,000. 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

Enclosure 1

Job description
Assistant Secretary to the Commission on Strategic Development

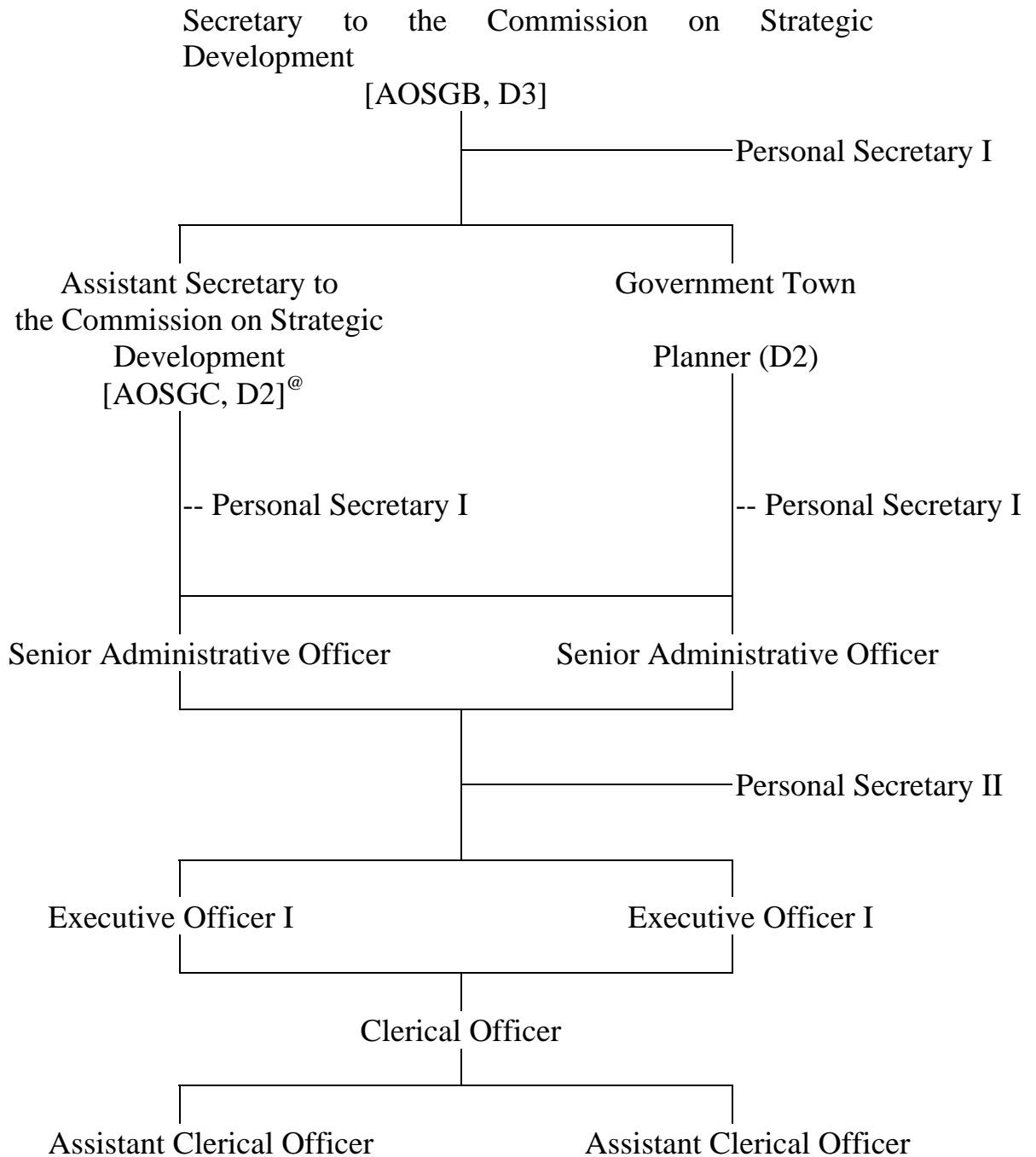
Rank : Administrative Officer Staff Grade C (D2)

Responsible to : Secretary to the Commission on Strategic Development (AOSGB)(D3)

Major duties and responsibilities

- (a) To support the Secretary to the Commission on Strategic Development (CSD) in steering the direction of discussions of the CSD with a view to enhancing the long term international competitiveness and socio-economic development of Hong Kong.
- (b) To coordinate and prepare papers for the CSD, follow up their advice and recommendations, and prepare reports on the work of the CSD.
- (c) To undertake and coordinate policy researches and analyses as directed by the CSD.
- (d) To provide secretariat and other support services to the CSD, including the logistics of meetings and record keeping, etc.
- (e) To prepare briefs and speeches for Chairman of the CSD.
- (f) To liaise and coordinate with government bureaux and departments and other organisations on issues for discussion by the CSD and follow up their advice and recommendations.
- (g) To handle publicity arrangements for the CSD and ensure transparency of the work of the CSD.
- (h) To assist the Secretary to the CSD in administering the Secretariat to the Commission.

Existing and Proposed Organisation Chart of the Secretariat to the Commission on Strategic Development



Legend

AOSGB Administrative Officer Staff Grade B

AOSGC Administrative Officer Staff Grade C

@ Proposed supernumerary post to be created