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Panel on Public Service
Meeting on 19 November 2012

Background brief
on the proposal to create a supernumerary directorate post in the Secretariat to the Commission on Strategic Development

Purpose

This paper gives a brief account of the directorate staffing proposals put forward by the Administration for providing secretariat support to the Commission on Strategic Development ("CSD") since its establishment in 1998, and summarizes the major views and concerns expressed by Members when the staffing proposals were deliberated at meetings of the committees of the Legislative Council ("LegCo").

Background

2. On 16 January 1998, the Administration announced the appointment of CSD to advise the Chief Executive ("CE") on Hong Kong's long term development strategies[1]. At that time, CSD consisted of 14 members, including CE, the Chief Secretary for Administration ("CS"), the Financial Secretary ("FS"), and 11 persons from the private sector. It was tasked to conduct reviews and studies on a wide range of issues to ensure that Hong Kong's resources were well-used, and that Hong Kong kept up with world trends in competitive terms, and to maintain the vitality of Hong Kong's economic development. The secretariat and research support for CSD has been undertaken by the Central Policy Unit ("CPU").

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[1] CE announced in his 1997 Policy Address that he would appoint a Commission on Strategic Development, which he would personally chair and would comprise senior government officials as well as prominent private sector figures from different fields to advise on Hong Kong's long term development needs and goals.

Staffing proposals for the creation of directorate posts for providing secretariat support to CSD

Staffing proposal in 1998

3. In early 1998, the Administration proposed to create the following two supernumerary directorate posts for a period of three years up to 28 February 2001 under CPU to provide secretariat support to CSD –

(a) a supernumerary Administrative Officer Staff Grade B ("AOSGB") (D3) post designated as Secretary to CSD to head the Commission's secretariat; and

(b) a supernumerary Government Town Planner ("GTP") (D2) post to facilitate and monitor the progress of various consultancy studies to be initiated by CSD.

The organization chart of the CSD's secretariat under the proposal is at **Appendix I**.

4. During the discussions at the Panel on Public Service ("PS Panel") on 26 January 1998 and the Establishment Subcommittee ("ESC") on 6 February 1998, Members mainly enquired about the work of CSD and no Member raised objection to the staffing proposal. The staffing proposal was endorsed by ESC and subsequently approved by the Finance Committee ("FC") on 27 February 1998.

Staffing proposal in 2001

5. In early 2001, the Administration proposed to create two permanent posts of Secretary to CSD (D3) and GTP (D2) to continue to provide secretariat support for CSD upon the lapse of the two relevant supernumerary posts on 1 March 2001. The Administration explained that given its mandate to deliberate on the future development of Hong Kong, CSD would exist on a long-term basis and would continue to monitor Hong Kong's changing needs and fine-tune Hong Kong's development strategies. CSD's Secretariat would provide an interface for exchange between the Commission and the rest of the Government as well as the general public.

6. When the staffing proposal was deliberated at the PS Panel meeting on 15 January 2001 and the ESC meeting on 17 January 2001, some Members considered that given the continued need to provide secretariat services to CSD, the Administration's proposal to convert the two supernumerary directorate posts to permanent establishment was justified. However, some other Members had strong reservations on the proposal and expressed the following concerns and views -

(a) whether it was justified to create the D3 and D2 posts on a permanent basis to provide secretariat support to CSD;

(b) whether the studies conducted by CSD would overlap with those conducted by other government departments;

(c) CSD's work lacked transparency, and the public had very little knowledge about its work since its establishment; and

(d) the long-term strategic planning and coordinating functions of CSD should more appropriately be undertaken by the relevant government bureaux and departments.

7. The staffing proposals were endorsed by ESC and subsequently approved by FC on 9 February 2001.

Staffing proposal in 2006

8. In his Policy Address in 2005, CE announced that he would look upon CSD as the most important advisory body, and would substantially expand its membership by inviting talent from different fields. Thereafter, the Administration announced the appointment of 152 non-official members and four official members[2] to serve on CSD's four committees[3] up to 30 June 2007. To provide the necessary support to the expanded CSD, the Administration proposed to create one permanent Administrative Officer Staff Grade C ("AOSGC") (D2) post designated as Assistant

[2] The 152 non-official members were drawn from a broad cross section of the community comprising mainly professionals, academics, businessmen, politicians and prominent labour and media personalities. The four official members were CS, FS, the Head, CPU, and the Director of CE's office.

[3] The four committees were Executive Committee chaired by CE, Committee on Governance and Political Development chaired by CE, Committee on Social Development and Quality of Life chaired by CS and Committee on Economic Development and Economic Cooperation with the Mainland chaired by FS.

Secretary to CSD. The organization chart of CSD's secretariat under the proposal is at **Appendix II**.

9. The proposal was discussed at the PS Panel on 16 January 2006 and ESC on 8 February 2006. Members in general were not supportive of the proposal. Some Members agreed with the need to strengthen the directorate support in CSD's secretariat but considered that a supernumerary post was more appropriate given the uncertain status of CSD beyond June 2007. Some other Members considered that as CSD was not involved in actual decision-making or policy formulation, its secretariat should be able to cope with the increased workload with its existing directorate staff and some additional non-directorate staff. These Members were also of the view that given the uncertainty over the status of CSD in the long run, it was not justified to create at this stage additional posts on a permanent basis.

10. In view of Members' concerns, the Administration withdrew the proposal at the ESC meeting on 8 February 2006, and submitted a revised proposal to ESC on 3 May 2006 for creation of a supernumerary AOSGC (D2) post up to 30 June 2007. Some Members maintained their view that it was not justified to create an additional directorate post in CSD's secretariat. The proposal was endorsed by ESC and subsequently approved by FC on 19 May 2006.

Staffing proposal in 2007

11. In April 2007, the Administration proposed to extend the supernumerary AOSGC (D2) post for two years from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2009. The Administration explained that having reviewed the operation of CSD, the Administration was of the view that during the Third Term Government, CSD should continue to operate and serve as the most important advisory body to CE and the platform for the Government and various sectors of the community to explore and interact with each other on major strategic issues pertaining to Hong Kong's long-term development. It was therefore necessary to retain the AOSGC (D2) post to maintain a high quality service to CSD[4].

12. Members had divided views on the staffing proposal when it was discussed at the PS Panel on 16 April 2007 and ESC on 22 May 2007. Some Members supported the proposal and considered that CSD provided

[4] On 27 June 2007, CE announced the appointment of 67 non-official members and four official members (i.e. CS, FS, Director, CE's office and Head/CPU) to CSD.

a platform and avenue for different sectors of the community to offer advice to the Government. However, some other Members queried the functions, status and effectiveness of CSD, and considered that the operation of CSD lacked transparency and its members were not representative of the public. These Members did not support the proposal.

13. The staffing proposal was endorsed by ESC and subsequently approved by FC on 22 June 2007.

Staffing proposal in 2009

14. In April 2009, the Administration proposed to retain the supernumerary AOSGC (D2) post for a period of three years, from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2012. According to the Administration, after the expiry of the current term of CSD on 30 June 2009, CSD would continue to operate in its existing structural format with a membership size broadly comparable to the current level[5]. It would also remain an important advisory body to CE and a platform for the Government and various sectors of the community to jointly discuss various long-term strategic issues from a macro perspective. In anticipation of the increasing complexity and volume of CSD's work, the Administration considered it necessary to retain the AOSGC (D2) post for three years to sustain the efficient and effective operation of CSD.

15. Members expressed divergent views when the staffing proposal was considered at the PS Panel meeting on 20 April 2009. Members opposing the proposal considered that entrusting CSD with the function of studying long-term strategic issues was sidelining the functions of LegCo. The role of CSD also overlapped with various policy bureaux and advisory bodies which were performing similar tasks, and CSD had not been effective in delivering solutions to various problems facing Hong Kong. Members in support of the proposal considered that as CSD was chaired by CE and attended by senior government officials, it provided a good opportunity for CE as well as the government representatives to listen to different community views as relayed by CSD members. The Panel decided by a vote that it did not support the staffing proposal.

16. The Administration submitted the staffing proposal to ESC for consideration on 27 May 2009. At the ESC meeting, members expressed divided views on the proposal. Members opposing the proposal queried

[5] At that time, CSD consisted of a total of 66 non-official members and four official members (i.e. CS, FS, Director, CE's Office and Head/CPU).

the role and achievements of CSD, and considered that the workload of CSD did not justify the staffing proposal. Members in support of the proposal considered that given LegCo's constitutional status, its role would not be sidelined by an advisory body like CSD, and CSD was an important advisory body and a platform for discussing various strategic issues through the pooling of expertise. These members also suggested that CSD should enhance the transparency of its work and consider ways to enhance the communication with LegCo. The staffing proposal was endorsed by ESC and subsequently approved by FC on 12 June 2009.

Recent Development

17. At the PS Panel meeting on 19 November 2012, the Administration will brief the Panel on the proposal to create a supernumerary AOSGC (D2) post, designated as Assistant Secretary to CSD, from 1 April 2013 to 30 June 2017.

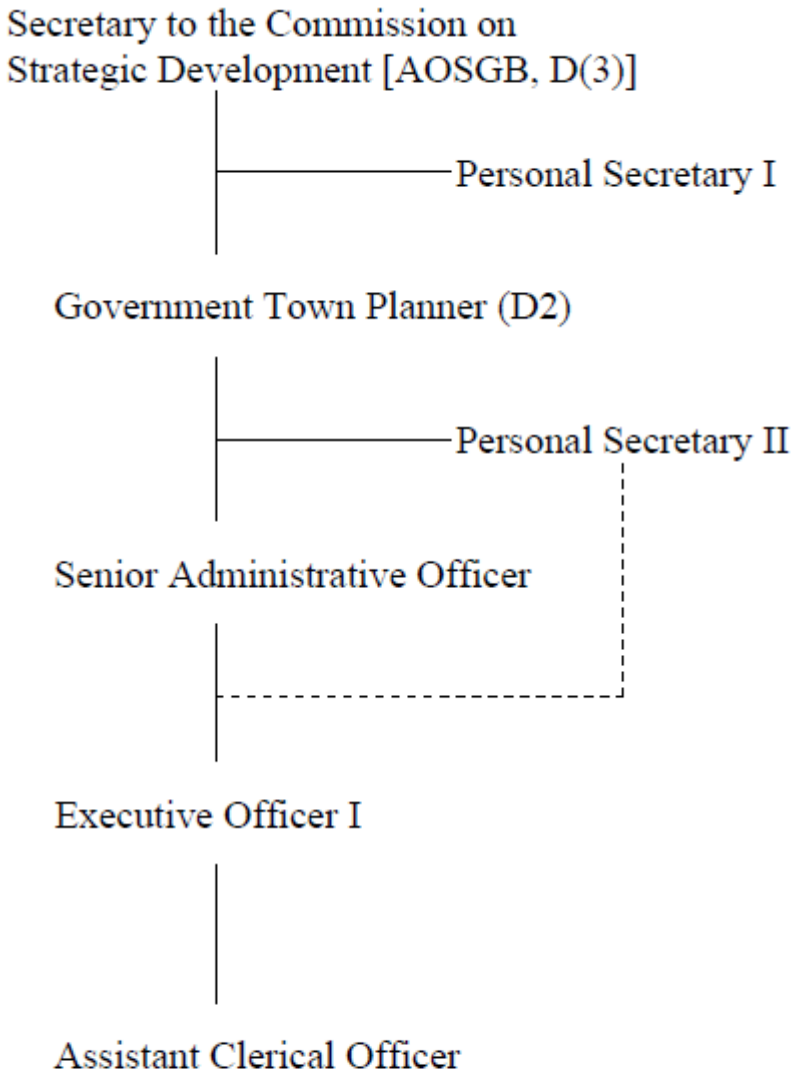
Relevant Papers

18. A list of relevant papers is in **Appendix III**.

Council Business Division 4
Legislative Council Secretariat
14 November 2012

Appendix I

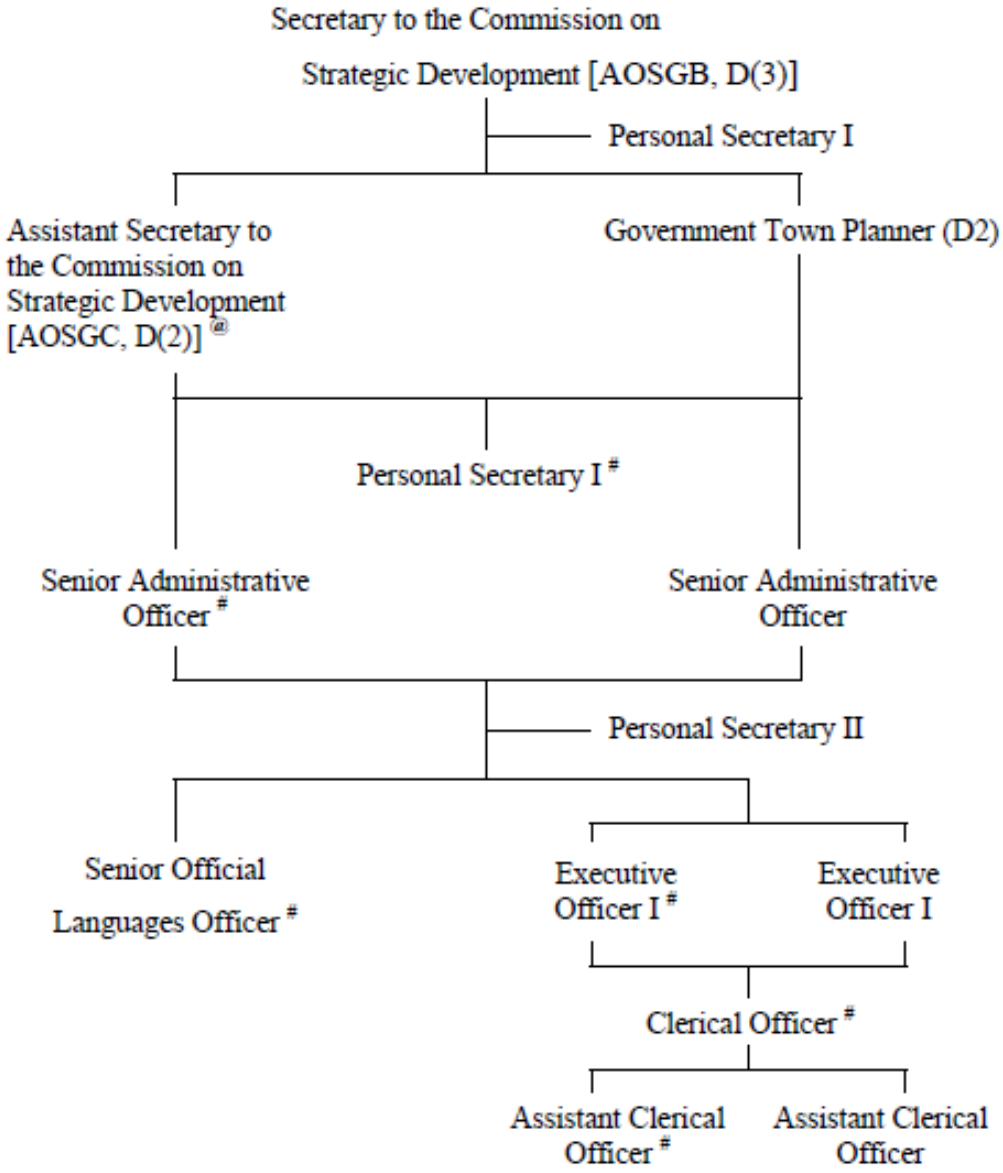
The organization chart of the Secretariat to the Commission on Strategic Development in 1998



(A total of 7 officers in CSD Secretariat)

Appendix II

The organization chart of the expanded Secretariat to the Commission on Strategic Development in 2006



(A total of 14 officers in CSD Secretariat)

@ Directorate post proposed for creation

Non-directorate posts proposed for creation

Appendix III

Proposal to create a post of Administrative Officer Staff Grade C in the Secretariat to the Commission on Strategic Development

List of relevant papers

Meeting / Date of meeting	Minutes / Paper	LC Paper No.
Panel on Public Service 26.1.1998	Paper provided by the Administration	CB(2)912(03) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr97-98/english/panels/ps/papers/ps2601-5.htm
	Minutes of meeting	CB(2)1190 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr97-98/english/panels/ps/minutes/ps260198.htm
Establishment Subcommittee 6.2.1998	Paper provided by the Administration	EC(97-98)66 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr97-98/english/fc/esc/papers/es060266.htm
	Minutes of ESC meeting	ESC65 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr97-98/english/fc/esc/minutes/esmn0602.htm
Finance Committee 27.2.1998	Minutes of meeting	FC152 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr97-98/english/fc/fc/minutes/fcmn2702.htm

Meeting / Date of meeting	Minutes / Paper	LC Paper No.
Panel on Public Service 15.1.2001	Paper provided by the Administration	CB(1)436/00-01(06) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr00-01/english/panels/ps/papers/a436e06.pdf
	Minutes of meeting	CB(1)1045/00-01 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr00-01/english/panels/ps/minutes/ps150101.pdf
Establishment Subcommittee 17.1.2001	Paper provided by the Administration	EC(2000-01)25 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr00-01/english/fc/esc/papers/e00-25e.pdf
	Minutes of meeting	ESC31/00-01 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr00-01/english/fc/esc/minutes/es170101.pdf
Finance Committee 9.2.2001	Minutes of meeting	FC53/00-01 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr00-01/english/fc/fc/minutes/fc090201.pdf

Meeting / Date of meeting	Minutes / Paper	LC Paper No.
Panel on Public Service 16.1.2006	Paper provided by the Administration	CB(1)675/05-06(05) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr05-06/english/panels/ps/papers/ps0116cb1-675-5e.pdf
	Background brief prepared by the LegCo Secretariat	CB(1)675/05-06(06) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr05-06/english/panels/ps/papers/ps0116cb1-675-6e.pdf
	Minutes of meeting	CB(1)957/05-06 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr05-06/english/panels/ps/minutes/ps060116.pdf
Establishment Subcommittee 8.2.2006	Paper provided by the Administration	EC(2005-06)13 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr05-06/english/fc/esc/papers/e05-13e.pdf
	Minutes of meeting	ESC19/05-06 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr05-06/english/fc/esc/minutes/es060208.pdf
Establishment Subcommittee 3.5.2006	Paper provided by the Administration	EC(2006-07)2 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr05-06/english/fc/esc/papers/e06-02e.pdf
	Minutes of meeting	ESC23/05-06 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr05-06/english/fc/esc/minutes/es060503.pdf

Meeting / Date of meeting	**Minutes / Paper**	**LC Paper No.**
Finance Committee 19.5.2006	Minutes of meeting	FC5/06-07 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr05-06/english/fc/fc/minutes/fc060519.pdf
Panel on Public Service 16.4.2007	Paper provided by the Administration Minutes of meeting	CB(1)1255/06-07(03) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/panels/ps/papers/ps0416cb1-1255-3-e.pdf CB(1)1588/06-07 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/panels/ps/minutes/ps070416.pdf
Establishment Subcommittee 22.5.2007	Paper provided by the Administration Minutes of meeting	EC(2007-08)3 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/fc/esc/papers/e07-03e.pdf ESC27/06-07 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/fc/esc/minutes/es070522.pdf
Finance Committee 22.6.2007	Minutes of meeting	FC18/07-08 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/fc/fc/minutes/fc070622.pdf

Meeting / Date of meeting	Minutes / Paper	LC Paper No.
Panel on Public Service 20.4.2009	Paper provided by the Administration	CB(1)1260/08-09(03) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/ps/papers/ps0420cb1-1260-3-e.pdf
	Minutes of meeting	CB(1)1690/08-09 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/ps/minutes/ps20090420.pdf
Establishment Subcommittee 27.5.2009	Paper provided by the Administration	EC(2009-10)7 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/fc/esc/papers/e09-07e.pdf
	Minutes of meeting	ESC43/08-09 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/fc/esc/minutes/esc20090527.pdf
Finance Committee 12.6.2009	Minutes of meeting	FC5/09-10 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/fc/fc/minutes/fc20090612.pdf