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12 May 2014

Ms Connie SZETO
Clerk to the Establishment Subcommittee
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Ms SEZTO,

Establishment Subcommittee

Follow-up to meeting on 30 April 2014

At the Establishment Subcommittee meeting held on 30 April 2014, Members requested the Administration to provide supplementary information on the proposed retention of a supernumerary post of Administrative Officer Staff Grade B in Radio Television Hong Kong. We submit the requested information at the Annex and would be grateful if you could circulate it to Members for their reference.


(Aaron Liu)
for Secretary for
Commerce and Economic Development

c.c. Director of Broadcasting
Secretary for Financial Services & the Treasury (Attn: Curtis Lo)

Establishment Subcommittee

Follow-up to meeting on 30 April 2014

**Proposed Retention of One Supernumerary Post of
Administrative Officer Staff Grade B (D3) in
Radio Television Hong Kong for Five Years**

Purpose

At the meeting held on 30 April 2014, Members requested the Administration to provide supplementary information on the proposed retention of one existing supernumerary post of Administrative Officer Staff Grade B (D3) (designated as Deputy Director of Broadcasting (Developments) (DD of B (Developments)) in Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) for five years. This note provides the information requested.

Progress of the New Broadcasting House Project

2. The funding proposal of the New Broadcasting House (New BH) was not supported by the Public Works Subcommittee (PWSC) at its meeting on 3 January 2014. The Administration's subsequent efforts to address PWSC Members' concerns by reducing the project estimate by \$750 million was unable to secure sufficient support from the PWSC Members. The Administration therefore decided not to re-submit the revised funding application to the PSWC at this stage. In order to address the concerns¹ of PWSC Members, RTHK and the Architectural Services Department (ArchSD) are currently re-planning the New BH project with a view to seeking the commencement of the project in the first instance. The re-planning work includes re-assessment of the facilities required in the New BH to explore whether the project scope could be revised or facilities to be procured in a different manner to reduce the project cost; it is also necessary to review the mode of delivery of the project, i.e. whether we should continue with the "Design and Build" mode or to opt for the conventional but more time consuming "Consultancy" mode. We are mindful that PWSC Members were concerned about the overall project cost and the costs and benefits of the different approaches need to be analysed. Once the revised project scope has been agreed upon, ArchSD will need to complete a technical feasibility

¹ Concerns of the PWSC Members include the high project cost, the cost and benefit of "Design and Build" delivery mode, the efficiency in the use of floor areas and the building services design, the number and size of certain proposed facilities and the need for certain facilities to be conducted in-house or located at the New BH.

study for the project according to the revised scope. There are also a number of other government procedures to go through including the vetting of the revised project scope and accommodation requirements. At this juncture, we estimate that if we adopt the conventional “Consultancy” mode, we may be able to submit the funding proposal for partial upgrading the New BH project to Category A (for engagement of design consultant) for consideration by the PWSC / Finance Committee (FC) in 2015-16 at the earliest. If we continue with the “Design and Build” mode, we may need some more time than in the case of the “Consultancy mode to go back to PWSC / FC for full upgrading of the project to Category A for engagement of the contractor. The form and timing of the funding proposal would depend on the mode of delivery to be adopted for the project.

Grade of the Supernumerary Post and Details of the Liaison and Coordination Work

3. The DD of B (Developments) post should continue to be filled by an officer from the Administrative Officer grade. A core part of the duties of the DD of B (Developments) is to lead and coordinate the development of the New BH project as well as to coordinate the maintenance of the existing three RTHK buildings along Broadcast Drive, namely the Broadcasting House, the Television House and the Education Centre. It should be noted that the New BH project is more than a simple and straight forward Government building construction and relocation exercise. The role of RTHK as a public service broadcaster providing the new digital audio broadcasting and digital terrestrial television services was agreed in 2009. An essential part of that strategy was the planning and provision of new hardware to support RTHK in the performance of its public mission enshrined in the RTHK Charter. Hence, on top of the usual tasks of reconciling existing user requirements within the Department, it is incumbent upon the DD of B (Developments) to steer the programming, production and engineering units within the Department to derive forward looking user requirements that meet the demands of new services on one hand and maximizes the use of limited resources on the other. The re-planning of the New BH project reinforces the need for an officer with strong administrative skills who can resolve differences amongst different parties and devise pragmatic and efficient service delivery models, monitoring and contingency planning. Members of the Administrative Officer grade are better placed than departmental officers to take a macro view of the issues involved and to perform the tasks. They would also be more attuned to negotiating with policy bureaux and departments and other stakeholders for effective delivery of the services and implementation of the projects. The relevant

bureaux and departments include Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau and Civil Service Bureau on financial and human resources matters, Commerce and Economic Development Bureau on policy and RTHK housekeeping matters, Electrical and Mechanical Services Department and ArchSD on building works and technical engineering matters, Government Property Agency on accommodation requirements; Government Logistics Department and the Department of Justice on the preparation of tender documents and related issues. It is therefore more appropriate for an officer from the Administrative Officer grade who possesses strong background and capability in government administration to steer the projects.

4. We propose to retain the supernumerary DD of B (Developments) post for five years up to 26 May 2019 to continue to take forward and complete a number of new projects and services of RTHK in the coming years. These include the re-planning, and subject to the funding approval of the FC, re-tendering of the New BH project, monitoring of the construction of and installation of the critical broadcasting infrastructure and equipment at the New BH, preparation of the migration plans from RTHK's existing premises to the New BH, enhancement of RTHK's transmission network for digital terrestrial television (subject to the required funding approval by the FC) and digital audio broadcasting services, completion of the restoration and digitisation of the most valuable portion of RTHK archives, conducting a comprehensive review on the media asset management project and the relevant archive policy, and implementation of interim measures to maintain the existing RTHK premises. In discharging these duties, DD of B (Developments) would need to co-chair with the Deputy Director of Architectural Services the Working Group of the New BH Project, which would consider and decide on matters related to the re-design and construction of the New BH and monitor the project progress. The incumbent would also chair meetings within RTHK to steer and work out detailed design requirements of the New BH and RTHK's migration plans from the existing premises to the New BH. In addition, DD of B (Developments) will have to secure resources for necessary maintenance and improvement works to the existing premises of RTHK along Broadcast Drive and explore options for the reshuffle of space and renovation. By the proposed expiry date of this supernumerary post in May 2019, the above major services and projects of RTHK would have been completed or reached major milestones. This will be the appropriate time for the Administration to review the continued need for the post and re-assess the workload at senior directorate level in RTHK.