

ITEM FOR ESTABLISHMENT SUBCOMMITTEE OF FINANCE COMMITTEE

HEAD 82 - BUILDINGS DEPARTMENT Subhead 000 Operational expenses

Members are invited to recommend to Finance Committee the creation of the following permanent posts in Buildings Department –

2 Government Building Surveyor/
Government Structural Engineer
(D2) (\$110,000 - \$116,800)

to be offset by the deletion of the following permanent posts –

2 Government Building Surveyor
(D2) (\$110,000 - \$116,800)

PROBLEM

The existing senior directorate set-up of the Buildings Department (BD) at the Assistant Director (AD) (D2) level is not flexible enough to enable the department to deploy its manpower resources at the senior management level in an efficient and effective manner to enhance regulatory control of existing buildings.

PROPOSAL

2. We propose to convert two Government Building Surveyor (GBS) posts (D2) of the Existing Buildings (EB) Divisions designated as AD/EB1 and AD/EB2 from single-disciplinary posts open to officers of the Building Surveyor (BS) grade to bi-disciplinary posts open to the BS or Structural Engineer (SE) grades of BD. We propose to replace the two GBS posts with two GBS/Government Structural Engineer (GSE) posts (D2).

/JUSTIFICATION

JUSTIFICATION

Existing Operational Structure of BD

3. The Director of Buildings (DB) (D5) is the Building Authority charged with the responsibilities for administering and enforcing the Buildings Ordinance to ensure compliance with statutory standards of safety and health in private buildings and building works. He is underpinned by the Deputy Director of Buildings (DDB) (D3) and five D2 officers, departmentally designated as ADs. The core services of BD are provided by officers of two professional grades, namely the BS grade and the SE grade.

4. Operationally, BD is divided into five divisions each headed by an AD. The five AD posts comprise four posts pitched at GBS and one post pitched at GSE. In each division, there are two to six sections each headed by a chief professional officer (D1) of either the BS grade or SE grade. The responsibilities of these five divisions are –

- (a) New Buildings (NB) Division 1 – Comprising predominantly BS grade officers, the division is responsible for ensuring that all private building developments are carried out in accordance with the Buildings Ordinance and regulations and that the general building design and construction comply with the required standards.
- (b) New Buildings (NB) Division 2 – The division comprises predominantly SE grade officers and is responsible for processing all structural engineering aspects of new building proposals.
- (c) Existing Buildings (EB) Division 1 – The division is made up of three district sections responsible for duties related to the control of unauthorised building works (UBW) and safety of existing buildings; one special task section (dealing with canopies and building inspections, etc.) and one functional section (the Slope Safety Section) and the Building Safety Loan Scheme Unit.
- (d) Existing Buildings (EB) Division 2 – The Division comprises three district sections responsible for duties related to the control of UBW and safety of existing buildings, one special task section (dealing with illegal rooftop structures and unauthorised works-in-progress, etc.) and one functional section (the Fire Safety Section).

/(e)

- (e) Support Division – It has two sections, namely, the Technical Support Section and the Legal Section. The Technical Support Section is responsible for providing technical support to the department including automation and information technology, registration systems, training and development, emergency service, corporate service as well as consultancy and contract management. The Legal Section is responsible for litigation and legislative matters relating to building development and building control.

- Encl. 1 5. The current organisation chart of BD is at Enclosure 1. The job
Encl. 2 descriptions of the five AD posts are at Enclosures 2(a) to 2(e).

Review on the Opening-up of AD Posts

- Encl. 3 6. The existing organisation structure was first introduced in July 2000 following the 1998 Organisation and Management (O&M) Study conducted by the former Management Services Agency. One of the recommendations of the Study was opening-up of the professional posts to both the BS and SE grades initially at AD level to enhance the flexible use of manpower resources of BD. This recommendation was set aside in the reorganisation of BD in 2000 because it was then considered not practical to do so in the context of the reorganisation (details of the reorganisation is at Enclosure 3). Instead, the management decided that the proposed opening-up of AD posts would be reviewed one year after the full implementation of the reorganisation.

7. In September 2003, DB decided to revisit the issue and appointed DDB to head a Review Group to conduct a study with a view to examining whether or not any of the five existing AD posts could be converted from single-disciplinary to bi-disciplinary posts having regard to the professional knowledge, competence, specific technical expertise required and the business demands of individual posts as well as operational needs, effectiveness and efficiency of the department. The Review Group comprised AD/NB2, the grade manager of the SE grade; AD/Support, the grade manager of the BS grade; and an AD from the Efficiency Unit (EU) of the Chief Secretary for Administration's Office. Staff and staff associations of the department were invited to provide input and to give their views for the consideration of the Review Group.

8. The Review Group conducted its study by examining and analysing the “job competence requirements” of each of the five AD posts as well as the “grade competence” of the SE grade and BS grade officers in discharging the duties and responsibilities of individual AD posts. In May 2004, the findings of the Review Group were published for staff consultation. A total of five submissions were received during the one-month consultation, including two submissions from staff members and three from staff associations. The departmental management held separate meetings with the Buildings Department Local Building Surveyors’ Association (BDLBSA) and the Buildings Department Structural Engineers’ Association (BDSEA) in July 2004 to enable them to elaborate or supplement their views expressed in their written submission.

9. In the ensuing deliberation, the departmental management carefully examined the submissions received including the criticisms and queries on some of the statements and findings made in the Review Group’s report. Generally, there was no objection against retaining the posts of AD/NB1 and AD/NB2 as single-disciplinary posts and filling them by a GBS and a GSE respectively. However, there were diverse views on whether the three remaining AD posts, namely the AD/EB1, the AD/EB2 and the AD/Support posts should be changed to bi-disciplinary posts.

10. In November 2004, DB arrived at his views on the issue. He accepted the two recommendations agreeable to all parties i.e. for both AD/NB1 and AD/NB2 posts to remain as single-disciplinary posts and be filled by a GBS and a GSE respectively based on the Review Group’s analysis of the job competence requirements of each of the five AD posts and the grade competence of the BS and the SE grades. For the remaining three AD posts, DB had the following views –

- (a) The AD/EB1 post should become a bi-disciplinary post and can be filled by a GBS or GSE.
 - (i) The main duties of the post are to supervise and oversee the control of UBW and to enforce the Buildings Ordinance to ensure the safety and hygiene of existing buildings. The job competence requirements of the AD/EB1 post are largely administrative and managerial in nature and the possession of basic professional knowledge in building would be sufficient for the incumbent to discharge his duties.
 - (ii) Since the reorganisation in 2000, officers of both SE and BS grades have been engaged in the control of UBW and the safety of existing buildings from the basic professional to the chief professional levels.

/(b)

- (b) The AD/EB2 post should become a bi-disciplinary post and can be filled by a GBS or GSE.
 - (i) The main duties of the post are to supervise and oversee the control of UBW and to enforce the Buildings Ordinance to ensure the safety and hygiene of existing buildings. The job competence requirements of the AD/EB2 post are largely administrative and managerial in nature, and the possession of basic professional knowledge in building would be sufficient for the incumbent to discharge his duties.
 - (ii) AD/EB2 is tasked to take up the chairmanship of the Fire Safety Committee (FSC) which considers the fire safety design of buildings based on fire engineering approach. There are views from the BS grade that the Chairman of FSC should be a GBS and therefore the AD/EB2 post should not be opened up. After examining the roles and functions of the chairman of the FSC, the nature of work involved and the multi-professional membership of the committee, it is considered that there are no cogent and compelling needs to confine the chairmanship to a GBS. Either a GBS or a GSE should have the competence to do the job. Therefore, the chairmanship should not be a factor affecting the opening-up of the AD/EB2 post.
- (c) The AD/Support post should remain as a single-disciplinary post and be filled by a GBS. The opening-up of the AD/Support post should be reviewed in three years.
 - (i) Due to inadequate hands-on experience and exposure in the application of the laws relating to general design and planning standards of buildings, SE grade officers have not acquired the full capability and competence to perform AD/Support's duties in the areas of legislation and litigation at the present time.
 - (ii) From the human resource management point of view, it would be advisable for SE grade officers to be given the opportunity to gain practical experience in building laws, litigation and legislation work so that the grade competence could be enhanced in these areas.

/Independent

Independent Consultancy Study

11. After the release of DB's recommendations, the BDLBSA and BDSEA have requested meetings with the Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau (HPLB) to express their disagreement with the review findings and recommendations. The BDLBSA was of the view that all the existing GBS posts should remain as GBS posts. On the other hand, the BDSEA supported the recommendation for the AD/EB1 and the AD/EB2 posts to be converted to bi-disciplinary posts, but considered that the AD/Support post should also be opened up. In view of the staunch position adopted by the two professional staff associations, both HPLB and the BD management considered that a careful examination of the views advanced by the two staff associations by an independent third party consultant was warranted to facilitate a decision by the departmental management on the validity of the comments made by the staff associations. EU was hence invited to assist. In June 2005, EU commissioned an independent consultancy study to critically examine the opening-up of the three AD posts in question as well as the views expressed by the staff associations. The independent consultancy study was concluded in August 2005.

12. The consultancy findings affirmed the recommendations made by DB earlier and concluded that both the BS and SE grade officers have the required competencies, professional qualification and experience in performing the duties of the AD/EB1 and AD/EB2 posts, and that these two posts can be opened up immediately to the two professional grades of BD. The consultant also confirmed that the chairmanship of the FSC can either be a GBS or GSE and should not be a factor affecting the opening-up of the AD/EB2 post.

13. Furthermore, the consultant recommended that professional qualification in building and construction and at least 15 years of industry experience at the professional level, including ten years in BD, are required for the two AD/EB posts. In addition, two years' experience in existing buildings related functions in BD is preferred. For the AD/Support post, the consultant considered that SE grade officers may not currently have the required experience in handling legislative and litigation matters. However, given the recent deployment of SE grade officers to the Support Division to handle legislative and litigation work, they should in time gain the necessary experience. The opening-up of the AD/Support post can therefore be reconsidered after three years. Copies of the 2004 Review Group Report and 2005 Consultancy Study Report are deposited with the Clerk to ESC with additional copies available for Members' information.

/14.

14. Upon the release of the Consultancy Study Report, the management had received a letter from the BDLBSA and various e-mails from BS grade officers raising objections to the findings of the Consultancy Study Report. The BD management met with the Chief Building Surveyors in the department and the BDLBSA to listen to their views. Separate presentation sessions were organised by the management for the Consultant to explain the findings of the Consultancy Study Report to the BS and the SE grade officers to facilitate a clear understanding of the rationale and deliberations of the findings. BS grade officers who attended the presentation session maintained their objection to the Report and expressed their disagreement to the findings. On the other hand, SE grade officers who attended the presentation session supported the findings. They also sent in a letter to DB indicating their full support to the findings.

15. A summary of views expressed by staff and staff associations on the opening-up of the AD/EB1, AD/EB2 and AD/Support posts, which includes the views received upon the release of the Consultancy Study Report, and departmental management's explanation and response is at Enclosure 4.

Encl. 4

Proposal

16. On the strength of the consistent findings of the O&M Study (1998), the Review Group (2004) and the Consultancy Study (2005), and having carefully considered the views of the staff associations and all relevant factors, we propose to open up the AD/EB1 and AD/EB2 posts to become bi-disciplinary posts. We remain of the view that the posts concerned should be converted from single-disciplinary to bi-disciplinary posts based on the job requirements of the AD/EB1 and AD/EB2 posts and the competencies of the BS and the SE grades while fully appreciating staff's views/concerns. The proposed conversion, if implemented, would change the current situation where SE grade officers can only take up the control and enforcement responsibilities in the two EB Divisions up to the chief professional officer level; provide a level-playing field for the meritorious and competent SE grade officers to compete with their BS counterparts for advancement to the senior directorate level; and above all, enable BD to enlarge its trawl for competent and deserving officers to the senior directorate level.

17. We consider that the AD/Support post should remain as a single-disciplinary post as at present and would review the opening-up of this post after three years.

18. The new organisation structure with the proposed conversion of the AD/EB1 and AD/EB2 posts from single-disciplinary posts to bi-disciplinary posts is at Enclosure 1. The job descriptions of the two AD posts will remain unchanged, as at Enclosures 2(a) and 2(b), except that they can be filled by a GBS or GSE.

/ALTERNATIVES

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

19. Having considered the management skills, professional expertise and exposure required for the two AD posts in the EB Divisions to meet the challenges ahead, we consider that the proposed conversion of the two AD posts from single-disciplinary to bi-disciplinary posts is the only viable alternative to ensure the best utilisation of the human resources of the department. These two posts are not suitable for opening-up to other professional disciplines and similar grades in other departments because of the required ten years' experience in BD as recommended in the Consultancy Study Report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

20. The proposed conversion of the existing permanent AD/EB1 and AD/EB2 posts from single-disciplinary to bi-disciplinary posts is cost-neutral to Government and has no financial implications.

ESTABLISHMENT CHANGES

21. The current proposal will not result in any changes in the establishment of BD. For Members' reference, the establishment position of BD for the last two years is as follows –

Establishment (Note)	Number of posts			
	Existing (as at 1 November 2005)	As at 1 April 2005	As at 1 April 2004	As at 1 April 2003
A	30#	30	30	30
B	321	321	328	333
C	504	505	517	524
Total	855	856	875	887

Note:

- A - ranks in the directorate pay scale or equivalent
- B - non-directorate ranks, the maximum pay point of which is above MPS Point 33 or equivalent
- C - non-directorate ranks, the maximum pay point of which is at or below MPS Point 33 or equivalent
- # - there is one unfilled post

/CONSULTATION

CONSULTATION WITH LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PANEL

22. We consulted the Legislative Council Panel on Planning, Lands and Works on 25 October 2005 on the proposal. The BDLBSA and BDSEA were invited to give their views at the Panel meeting. Members of the Panel raised no objection to the proposal to convert the AD/EB1 and AD/EB2 posts from single-disciplinary posts to bi-disciplinary posts, and to maintain the AD/Support post as a single-disciplinary post as at present pending a review of the opening-up of this post after three years.

CIVIL SERVICE BUREAU COMMENTS

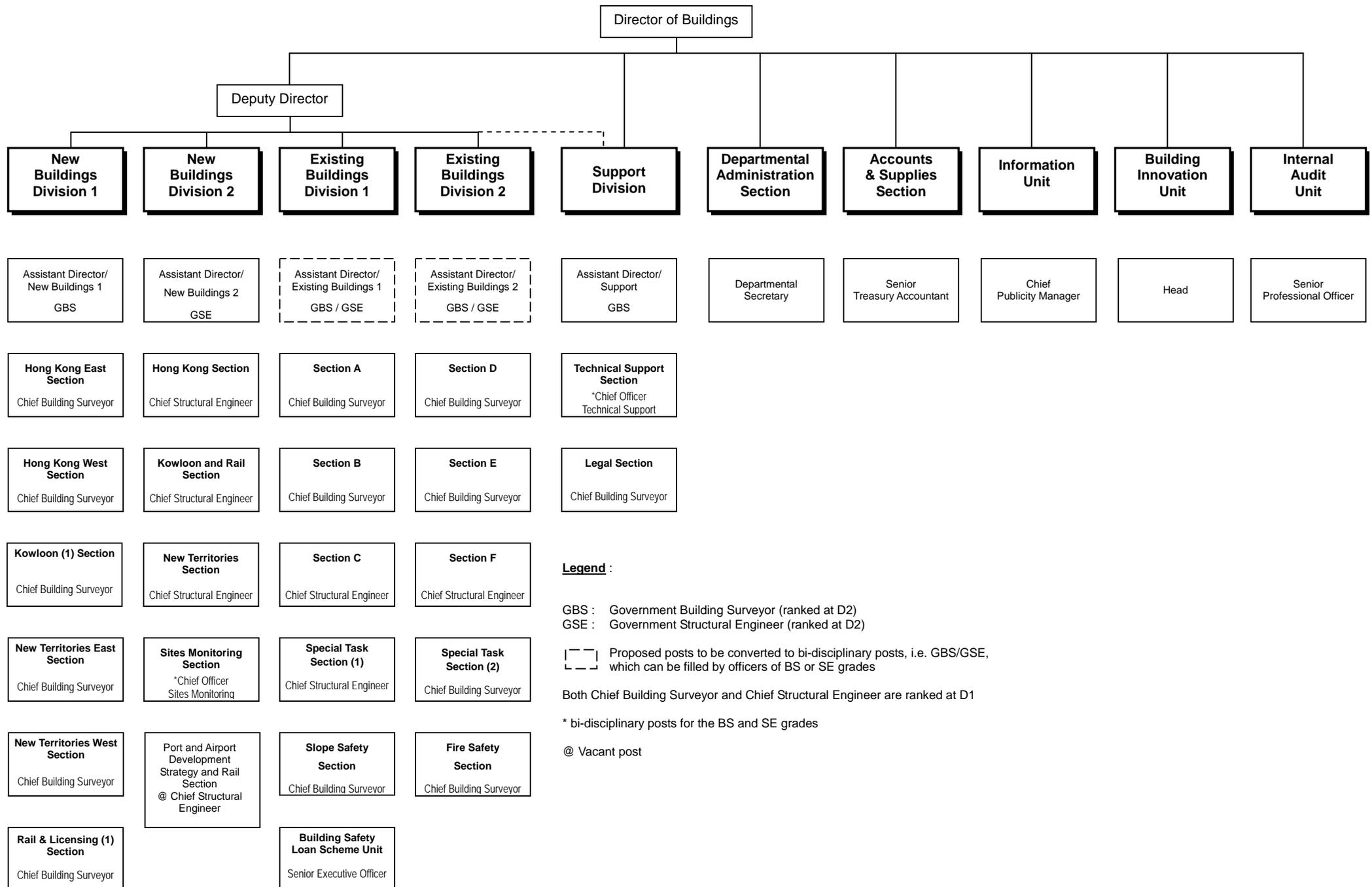
23. The Civil Service Bureau supports the proposed conversion of the two AD posts from single-disciplinary to bi-disciplinary posts, having regard to the scope of responsibilities and professional input required.

ADVICE OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON DIRECTORATE SALARIES AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

24. The Standing Committee on Directorate Salaries and Conditions of Service has advised that the grading proposed for the posts would be appropriate if the proposal were to be implemented.

Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau
November 2005

Existing (as at 1 October 2005) and New Organisation Chart of the Buildings Department



Legend :

GBS : Government Building Surveyor (ranked at D2)
 GSE : Government Structural Engineer (ranked at D2)

[] Proposed posts to be converted to bi-disciplinary posts, i.e. GBS/GSE,
 [] which can be filled by officers of BS or SE grades

Both Chief Building Surveyor and Chief Structural Engineer are ranked at D1

* bi-disciplinary posts for the BS and SE grades

@ Vacant post

**Existing and Proposed Job Description
Assistant Director/Existing Buildings 1**

Rank : Government Building Surveyor / [Government Structural Engineer] (D2)

Responsible to : Deputy Director of Buildings

Main Duties and Responsibilities -

1. to manage the core functions of Existing Buildings Division 1 including managing three District Sections, one Special Task Section, the Slope Safety Section and the Building Safety Loan Scheme Unit by providing supervision and guidance to Section Heads, monitoring work progress and performance targets, reviewing enforcement actions, responding to problematic cases and complaints, conducting divisional meetings to discuss and address issues, and making major operational decisions;
2. to work with AD/EB2 to review and formulate policies and strategies for enforcement against UBW;
3. to handle matters raised by Legislative Council (LegCo), District Councils, Ombudsman, media, Government departments etc., including vetting replies and representing BD in relevant meetings to explain policies and present cases; and working with the Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau;
4. to administer divisional management, including human resource management and bridging gaps between management and staff by passing on information from senior management and solicit inputs from staff;
5. to participate in Senior Directorate meetings and departmental management, including reporting divisional work and participating in making decisions on departmental matters; and
6. to coordinate with professional bodies and participating in committee work, such as attending Authorised Persons Registration Committee on a rotation basis.

[] under the proposal, the post can be filled by a GBS or GSE

**Existing and Proposed Job Description
Assistant Director/Existing Buildings 2**

Rank : Government Building Surveyor / [Government Structural Engineer] (D2)

Responsible to : Deputy Director of Buildings

Main Duties and Responsibilities -

1. to manage the core functions of Existing Buildings Division 2 including managing three District Sections and one Special Task Section by providing supervision and guidance to Section Heads, monitoring work progress and performance targets, reviewing enforcement actions, responding to problematic cases and complaints, conducting divisional meetings to discuss and address issues, and making major operational decisions;
2. to manage the Fire Safety Section, including formulating fire safety standards for enforcement in existing buildings and improving fire safety provisions for commercial buildings completed before 1987, prescribed commercial premises, old composite and domestic buildings; and chairing the Fire Safety Committee, including facilitating meeting, pinpointing crucial matters and centre of issues for discussion, and scrutinising and deciding on fire safety submissions for new developments;
3. to review major policies, procedures and legislative measures to exercise effective control over UBW and fire safety problems, to formulate operational policies and strategies for UBW, fire safety and other issues arising from operation, to monitor consultancy studies;
4. to handle matters raised by LegCo, District Councils, Ombudsman, media, Government departments etc., including vetting replies and representing BD in relevant meetings to explain policies and present cases; and working with the Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau;
5. to administer divisional management, including human resource management, bridging gaps between management and staff by passing on information from senior management and soliciting inputs from staff; and Survey Officer (Building) grade management; and
6. to participate in Senior Directorate meetings and departmental management, including reporting divisional work and participating in making decisions on departmental matters.

[] under the proposal, the post can be filled by a GBS or GSE

Job Description
Assistant Director/Support

Rank : Government Building Surveyor (D2)

Responsible to : Deputy Director of Buildings

Main Duties and Responsibilities -

1. to manage the Support Division in proposing and reviewing building legislation, in directing and reviewing technical standards on design and planning, health and fire safety, in directing cases for prosecution and disciplinary action and actions to be taken in response to appeal cases against the decision of the Building Authority and other litigation matters;
2. to administer the implementation of IT development, the plan retrieval system, performance of the activities of the department against set targets and objectives, professional training and development for staff, emergency duty system, management of contracts and consultancy agreements, and the registration system for Authorised Persons/Registered Structural Engineers and registered contractors;
3. to participate in Senior Directorate meetings and departmental management, including reporting divisional work and participating in making decisions on departmental matters;
4. to handle matters raised by LegCo, District Councils, Ombudsman, media, Government departments etc., including vetting replies and representing BD in relevant meetings to explain policies and present cases, and working with the Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau;
5. to attend LegCo Panel and Bills Committee Meetings, and to be Chairman of the BD Computerisation Committee, BD Service Standards Committee, Mid-Managers Meeting (BS grade), Consultants/Contractors Assessment Panels, Contractors Performance Reporting Review Committee, Consultants Review Committee and Steering Committee on Consultancy Study on Fire Safety in Buildings; and
6. to manage all staff in the Building Surveyor Grade (as grade manager).

**Job Description
Assistant Director/New Buildings 1**

Rank : Government Building Surveyor (D2)

Responsible to : Deputy Director of Buildings

Main Duties and Responsibilities -

1. to manage the development sections which administer the Buildings Ordinance to regulate private developments in the territory, to provide advice, instructions and take decisions in individual cases of new building development, to chair the Building Committees I & II and Advisory Committee on Barrier Free Access in considering issues pertaining to the processing of private developments;
 2. to manage the Licensing Unit which provides advice to the licensing authorities on the suitability of premises for licensing purposes, to take decision on policy matters and provide advice on major issues concerning licensing matters;
 3. to review Buildings Regulations, policies, procedures, staff instructions, codes of practice and practice notes for authorised persons, registered structural engineers and registered contractors to ensure effective and efficient control of private building development;
 4. to manage consultancy studies and reviews, e.g. consultancy study on review of drainage requirements; consultancy study on review of facilities for persons with a disability and provisions for elderly; consultancy study on Comprehensive Environmental Performance Assessment Scheme; Working Group on Review of Building (Planning) Regulations; and reengineering of the plan processing system;
 5. to respond to enquiries to Ombudsman, LegCo and individual members of the public, to provide advice and comments to the Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau and other government departments/bureaux on matters relating to the work of the division including attending LegCo Panels; and
 6. to provide advice and assistance generally to the Director and Deputy Director of Buildings as and when required.
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Job Description
Assistant Director/New Buildings 2

Rank : Government Structural Engineer (D2)

Responsible to : Deputy Director of Buildings

Main Duties and Responsibilities -

1. to assist the Director and the Deputy Director of Buildings in the setting of policy and strategies on building control and management of the Buildings Department by offering advice in the Senior Directorate Meetings, Staff Development Panel and other ad hoc meetings and discussions;
2. to manage the New Buildings Division 2 to ensure optimum efficiency in discharging the duties of the Division;
3. to review policies, procedures and technical standards for the effective control of structural design, materials and construction and safe carrying out of building works;
4. to respond to enquiries and complaints and engage in liaison and consultation on policy matters relating to structural engineering aspects of building control and site safety;
5. to chair the Standing Advisory Committee on Oil Storage Installations, and the BD Structural Engineering Committee, to attend the Structural Engineers Registration Committee, the Authorised Persons Registration Committee, the Building Sub-Committee of the Land and Building Advisory Committee, the Authorised Persons and Registered Structural Engineers Committee, and other committees as directed by DB; and
6. to manage all staff in the Structural Engineer Grade (as grade manager) and the Technical Officer (Structural) Grade (as head of grade).

Reorganisation of BD in 2000

The directorate establishment of BD, which was approved by the Establishment Subcommittee/Finance Committee (ESC/FC) in 1993 upon the setting up of the department, was revised in 1995 when ESC/FC approved the creation of the Deputy Director of Buildings post (D3) vide [EC(95-96)63].

2. The existing organisation structure was first introduced in July 2000 following the recommendations of the 1998 Organisation and Management (O&M) Study. The O&M Study was conducted in the light of the increasing demand placed upon the department to improve its operational efficiency and optimise the use of resources to deal with the growing problems of unauthorised building works (UBW) and poor maintenance in existing buildings.

3. The reorganisation reconstituted the work of BD for controlling existing buildings to become a more process-based and customer-focused organisation. More manpower has been redeployed, on a trial basis, to tackle the problems of rapid deterioration of existing buildings, which, if unchecked, would pose dangers to people and properties. The two divisions responsible for processing proposals of new buildings have been retitled from "Development Division" and "Structural Engineering Division" to "New Buildings Division 1" and "New Buildings Division 2" respectively. The two divisions dealing with regulatory control of existing buildings have been renamed from "Specialist Division" and "Control & Enforcement Division" to "Existing Buildings Division 1" and "Existing Buildings Division 2" respectively. The "Legal & Management Division" has been redesignated as "Support Division" to reflect its technical and management functions.

4. Following the change of the title of the divisions concerned, 16 of the 30 directorate posts retained their post titles and scope of duties while six have been redesignated, as follows –

- (a) from Assistant Director/Development to Assistant Director/New Buildings 1 (AD/NB1);
- (b) from Assistant Director/Structural Engineering to Assistant Director/New Buildings 2 (AD/NB2);
- (c) from Assistant Director/Specialist to Assistant Director/Existing Buildings 1 (AD/EB1);
- (d) from Assistant Director/Control & Enforcement to Assistant Director/Existing Buildings 2 (AD/EB2);
- (e) from Assistant Director/Legal & Management to Assistant Director/Support (AD/Support); and
- (f) from Chief Officer/Management to Chief Officer/Technical Support.

/Through

Annexes

Through refocusing of work priorities and reshuffling of duties, BD also redeployed from the Development Division, Structural Engineering Division, Specialist Division and Control & Enforcement Division five Chief Building Surveyor (CBS) and three Chief Structural Engineer (CSE) posts from specialised functional duties such as control of dangerous buildings, control of UBW and enforcement of repair and UBW removal orders, to all aspects of building control duties including dangerous buildings and UBW relating to existing buildings on a geographical basis in the two EB divisions. Details on the designations of these CBS and CSE posts after the reorganisation are given in the job descriptions at Annexes (a) – (f). The reorganised structure has enabled BD to streamline its work procedures to deal with the increasing workload in existing buildings resulting in enhanced operational efficiency and effectiveness.

5. The reorganisation did not entail any increase, deletion or regrading of directorate posts. It involved only internal reshuffling of duties within the department and was cost-neutral to the Government.

6. The Legislative Council Panel on Planning, Lands and Works was informed of BD's reorganisation at its meeting on 4 June 2001 when BD proposed to create additional supernumerary directorate posts for implementation of the recommendations of the Task Force on Building Safety and Preventive Maintenance. Following a further review in the wake of the then stringent policy on creation of posts and the overall economical situation, the proposed creation of additional supernumerary directorate posts was not pursued. In view of its effectiveness, BD has since operated with the revised organisational structure.

**Job Description
Chief Building Surveyor/ A and Chief Building Surveyor/B**

Rank : Chief Building Surveyor (D1)

Responsible to : Assistant Director/ Existing Buildings 1

Main Duties and Responsibilities -

1. to manage the work of the Section in response to community reports on dangerous buildings and unauthorised building works (UBW);
 2. to supervise the following special operations:
 - (a) Blitz UBW Clearance (BUC) to clear external UBW and repair of external building/ drainage defects;
 - (b) Coordinated Maintenance of Buildings Scheme for comprehensive repairs of and removal of UBW in target buildings;
 - (c) planned survey of advertising signs and enhanced removal of dangerous/ abandoned signs; and
 - (d) Team Clean for defective drainage repairs and clearance of environmental black-spots;
 3. to direct or recommend actions relating to closure/demolition/investigation of dangerous buildings and complicated UBW cases, and to monitor enforcement actions or default cases;
 4. to consider applications for approval of investigation reports and remedial proposals submitted by Authorised Persons/Registered Structural Engineers for compliance with orders;
 5. to represent BD on District Councils and to respond to cases referred by the LegCo, Ombudsman, District Council, media, etc.; and
 6. to keep under review the working procedures/instructions in the Existing Buildings Division Manual within the Chief Professional Officer's policy area and to undertake various ad hoc tasks to be assigned by the AD/EB.
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**Job Description
Chief Structural Engineer/ C**

Rank : Chief Structural Engineer (D1)

Responsible to : Assistant Director/ Existing Buildings 1

Main Duties and Responsibilities –

1. to manage the work of the Section in response to community reports on dangerous buildings and unauthorised building works (UBW);
 2. to supervise the following special operations:
 - (a) Blitz UBW Clearance (BUC) to clear external UBW and repair of external building/ drainage defects;
 - (b) Coordinated Maintenance of Buildings Scheme for comprehensive repairs of and removal of UBW in target buildings;
 - (c) planned survey of advertising signs and enhanced removal of dangerous/ abandoned signs; and
 - (d) Team Clean for defective drainage repairs and clearance of environmental black-spots;
 3. to direct or recommend actions relating to closure/demolition/investigation of dangerous buildings and complicated UBW cases, and to monitor enforcement actions or default cases;
 4. to consider applications for approval of investigation reports and remedial proposals submitted by Authorised Persons/Registered Structural Engineers for compliance with orders;
 5. to represent BD on District Councils and to respond to cases referred by the LegCo, Ombudsman, District Council, media, etc.; and
 6. to keep under review the working procedures/instructions in the Existing Buildings Division Manual within the Chief Professional Officer's policy area and to undertake various ad hoc tasks to be assigned by the AD/EB.
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Job Description
Chief Building Surveyor/ D and Chief Building Surveyor/E

Rank : Chief Building Surveyor (D1)

Responsible to : Assistant Director/ Existing Buildings 2

Main Duties and Responsibilities –

1. to manage the work of the Section in response to community reports on dangerous buildings and unauthorised building works (UBW);
 2. to supervise the following special operations:
 - (a) Blitz UBW Clearance (BUC) to clear external UBW and repair of external building/ drainage defects;
 - (b) Coordinated Maintenance of Buildings Scheme for comprehensive repairs of and removal of UBW in target buildings;
 - (c) planned survey of advertising signs and enhanced removal of dangerous/ abandoned signs; and
 - (d) Team Clean for defective drainage repairs and clearance of environmental black-spots;
 3. to direct or recommend actions relating to closure/demolition/investigation of dangerous buildings and complicated UBW cases, and to monitor enforcement actions or default cases;
 4. to consider applications for approval of investigation reports and remedial proposals submitted by Authorised Persons/Registered Structural Engineers for compliance with orders;
 5. to represent BD on District Councils and to respond to cases referred by the LegCo, Ombudsman, District Council, media, etc.; and
 6. to keep under review the working procedures/instructions in the Existing Buildings Division Manual within the Chief Professional Officer's policy area and to undertake various ad hoc tasks to be assigned by the AD/EB.
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**Job Description
Chief Structural Engineer/ F**

Rank : Chief Structural Engineer (D1)

Responsible to : Assistant Director/ Existing Buildings 2

Main Duties and Responsibilities –

1. to manage the work of the Section in response to community reports on dangerous buildings and unauthorised building works (UBW);
 2. to supervise the following special operations:
 - (a) Blitz UBW Clearance (BUC) to clear external UBW and repair of external building/ drainage defects;
 - (b) Coordinated Maintenance of Buildings Scheme for comprehensive repairs of and removal of UBW in target buildings;
 - (c) planned survey of advertising signs and enhanced removal of dangerous/ abandoned signs; and
 - (d) Team Clean for defective drainage repairs and clearance of environmental black-spots;
 3. to direct or recommend actions relating to closure/demolition/investigation of dangerous buildings and complicated UBW cases, and to monitor enforcement actions or default cases;
 4. to consider applications for approval of investigation reports and remedial proposals submitted by Authorised Persons/Registered Structural Engineers for compliance with orders;
 5. to represent BD on District Councils and to respond to cases referred by the LegCo, Ombudsman, District Council, media, etc.; and
 6. to keep under review the working procedures/instructions in the Existing Buildings Division Manual within the Chief Professional Officer's policy area and to undertake various ad hoc tasks to be assigned by the AD/EB.
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**Job Description
Chief Structural Engineer/ Special Task 1**

Rank : Chief Structural Engineer (D1)

Responsible to : Assistant Director/ Existing Buildings 1

Main Duties and Responsibilities –

1. to manage the Special Task Teams, to control work-in-progress unauthorised building works and handle such complaints;
 2. to supervise the following operations:
 - (a) clearing backlog s24 orders;
 - (b) structural investigation of approved slab canopies;
 - (c) removing canopy related unauthorised building works and illegal projections; and
 - (d) devising and supervising two consultancy studies on cantilevered slab balcony, one regarding safety issues, the other about stock taking of such buildings with cantilevered slab balcony;
 3. to direct or recommend actions relating to closure/demolition/investigation of dangerous buildings and complicated UBW cases, and to monitor enforcement actions or default cases;
 4. to consider applications for approval of investigation reports and remedial proposals submitted by Authorised Persons/Registered Structural Engineers for compliance with orders;
 5. to manage outsourced consultants serving EBD Sections; and
 6. to keep under review the working procedures/instructions in the Existing Buildings Division Manual within the Chief Professional Officer's policy area and to undertake various ad hoc tasks to be assigned by the AD/EB.
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**Job Description
Chief Building Surveyor/ Special Task 2**

Rank : Chief Building Surveyor (D1)

Responsible to : Assistant Director/ Existing Buildings 2

Main Duties and Responsibilities -

1. to manage the Special Task Teams; to control work-in-progress unauthorised building works and handle such complaints;
2. to supervise the following operations:
 - (a) clearing illegal rooftop structures (IRS) on single staircase buildings;
 - (b) clearing backlog s24 orders;
 - (c) enforcing underground drainage orders; and
 - (d) performing Operation Check Walk for rectification of illegal alterations and misuse of the facilities for disabled people in commercial buildings;
3. to direct or recommend actions relating to closure/demolition/investigation of dangerous buildings and complicated UBW cases, and to monitor enforcement actions or default cases;
4. to consider applications for approval of investigation reports and remedial proposals submitted by Authorised Persons/Registered Structural Engineers for compliance with orders;
5. to manage outsourced consultants serving Existing Buildings Division Sections; and
6. to keep under review the working procedures/instructions in the Existing Buildings Division Manual within the Chief Professional Officer's policy area and to undertake various ad hoc tasks to be assigned by the AD/EB.

**Summary of Views on the Opening-up of the AD/EB1, AD/EB2 and AD/Support Posts
Put Forward by Staff Associations/Individual Staff
and Explanation/Response of the Departmental Management**

1. Views on the Opening-up of the AD/EB1 and AD/EB2 Posts		
Supporting Views	Dissenting Views	Management's explanation and response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The great majority of the cases handled by AD/EB1 involve professional knowledge in both general building design as well as specialist knowledge in structural engineering and fire safety aspects. The involvement in land and building development is small. The BS grade AD is handicapped in engineering related knowledge. (BDSEA) ● Opening-up the post would enhance the department's operational efficiency and effectiveness in existing building matters. (TO(S)WG) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It is wrong to say that the "job competence requirements" of the AD/EB posts are largely administrative and managerial. The analysis of job competence was over-simplified. The core of the duties is professional and the post-holder needs in-depth knowledge and experience in all aspects of building development and maintenance to discharge such duties. Possession of basic knowledge is not good enough to discharge the duties effectively and efficiently. Nor can he rely upon his Chief Professional Officer for professional advice. (BDLBSA) (2 BS grade officers) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Since BD's reorganisation in 2000, both BS and SE grades officers have been deployed to perform building control and enforcement duties in the two Existing Buildings Divisions (EBD). Of the six District Sections of EBDs, four are led by BS grade officers and the remaining two by SE grade officers. All six sections are performing the same duties. ● This deployment arrangement has strengthened BD's capability in achieving its objective and targets by having more customer-focused processes and provision of one-stop-shop service in relation to existing buildings. ● This deployment arrangement also proves that SE grade officers are equally competent as BS grade officers in performing the core business of EBDs.

1. Views on the Opening-up of the AD/EB1 and AD/EB2 Posts		
Supporting Views	Dissenting Views	Management's explanation and response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A CSE cannot perform the jobs of AD/EB1 competently for lack of the relevant experience and expertise. The standard of service to the public will suffer as a result of the opening-up of the post. (BDLBSA) (1 BS grade officer) ● None of the EBD cases involved are complicated, controversial or exceptional structural engineering matters. (BDLBSA) ● SE grade staff could only gain knowledge in building laws and building control system through practical experience. Recruiting SE to perform BS duty is a waste of public money. The need to maintain the consultation mechanism implied that SE grade officers are indeed not competent in performing as the overall coordinator in enforcing the Buildings Ordinance. (1 BS grade officer) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The control and enforcement duties in respect of existing buildings require staff to have sound knowledge of building design and maintenance. Officers of both BS and SE grades in BD through their work experience have the requisite building knowledge and competence in performing those duties. ● The duty and responsibility lists of both AD/EB1 and AD/EB2 reveal that both officers are largely involved in the formulation and implementation of operational policies and strategies on the safety of existing buildings, supervision and overseeing the control of unauthorised building works. ● In this connection, the AD/EB1 and AD/EB2 posts can be filled by professional officers of appropriate rank of either grade who have sufficient experience in building design, maintenance and control, and enforcement work.

1. Views on the Opening-up of the AD/EB1 and AD/EB2 Posts		
Supporting Views	Dissenting Views	Management's explanation and response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● SEs' academic and on-job training are mainly in the administration of the Buildings (Construction) Regulations. It is insufficient for them to perform as qualified surveyors. There are many aspects in which SEs' ability in the administration of the Buildings Ordinance (BO) has not been tested. (1 BS grade officer)● It would reduce efficiency and waste resources for an AD/EB, who is not a BS grade officer, to consult another AD who is a BS grade officer for professional advice. (1 BS grade officer)● If an AD/EB cannot perform his duties for lack of professional knowledge, he should seek advice from DDB or DB instead of other ADs. (1 BS grade officer)	

2. Views on the Opening-up of the AD/EB2 Post (On the Duty as the Chairman of the Fire Safety Committee)		
Supporting Views	Dissenting Views	Management's explanation and response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Fire Safety Committee (FSC) should be co-chaired by AD/NB1 and AD/NB2 as most of the submissions to the Committee are related to new developments. (BDSEA) ● SE grade officers, by their academic and professional training and working experience, have the requisite "grade competence" to assume the Chairmanship of FSC. (BDSEA) (TO(S)WG) ● As there are experts of different fields serving on FSC, the qualities required of its chairman would be open-mindedness pragmatics, common sense, integrity, maturity, logical thinking, political sensitivity and being science-oriented. (BDSEA) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The role of AD/EB2 as the Chairman of FSC is not that of a coordinator or moderator. He must understand the basic principles in fire safety and the prescriptive requirements in the codes before he can understand the alternatives proposed in the Fire Engineering Reports submitted to the Committee. (BDLBSA) ● It is misleading and unjustified to say that SE grade officers possess professional knowledge in fire engineering. No serving SE grade officers have attended the elective course on fire engineering (which is the only course available for the degree courses in building engineering in the universities of Hong Kong) in their university years. Also, elective courses are no substitute for professional knowledge. (BDLBSA) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● FSC is established to consider and advise the Building Authority on matters relating to the Fire Safety (Commercial Premises) Ordinance; fire engineering approach proposals in connection with the design and construction of new buildings, alterations & additions, and upgrading of fire safety provisions in existing buildings; interpretation and implementation of the Buildings Ordinance and allied legislations and codes of practice in respect of fire safety in buildings. ● Chaired by AD/EB2, FSC comprises two CBS, one CSE, one representative from the Fire Services Department, and two to three fire safety and fire engineering experts from the academia and the private practice. This is a multi-discipline committee to examine submissions from Authorised Persons and fire engineering consultants. The primary role of the chairman should in this case be that of a professional facilitator who leads the deliberation, collates, coordinates and consolidates the professional views and opinions of the meeting to arrive at a decision on matters put before them. The composition of FSC reveals that there are adequate professional experts from both the

2. Views on the Opening-up of the AD/EB2 Post (On the Duty as the Chairman of the Fire Safety Committee)		
Supporting Views	Dissenting Views	Management's explanation and response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chairmanship of FSC only constitutes 5% of AD/EB2's duties. It does not make good sense to exclude the talents of SE solely because they may not be competent for that 5% duty. The chairing of FSC by a BS grade officer should not be an excuse for not opening-up the post. (BDSEA) (TO(S)WG) ● "Fire engineering" is a new concept. Both BS and SE grades officers have to enhance and update knowledge in this area through Continuous Professional Development courses. (BDSEA) ● The term "fire engineering" contains the word "engineering", SE grade officers with engineering training in undergraduate studies should be in a better position to pick up the knowledge and perform the duties better. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It is not reasonable to take out the chairmanship of FSC from the duty list of AD/EB2 just for the sake of opening-up the post. (BDLBSA) 	<p>Department and the private sector to ensure that all fire safety requirements laid down in the BO and related laws are adhered to.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The chairmanship constitutes less than 10% of AD/EB2's duties. Apart from this responsibility, AD/EB2 is performing the same scope of work as AD/EB1. ● Of the 133 cases vetted by FSC for the period between January 2000 and August 2004, 117 cases (88%) were related to new building developments, and 16 cases (12%) were related to existing buildings. The majority of the submissions were related to general building plans. The FSC also processed a number of cases (25 cases or 19%) involving structural plans. ● It is considered that a D2 officer of either the BS or SE grade should be capable to assume the chairmanship of FSC. It is also considered that the chairmanship of FSC should not be a factor affecting the opening-up of the AD/EB2 post.

2. Views on the Opening-up of the AD/EB2 Post (On the Duty as the Chairman of the Fire Safety Committee)		
Supporting Views	Dissenting Views	Management's explanation and response
(BDSEA) (TO(S)WG) ● Experience in hotel/ guesthouse licensing duties shows that both BS and SE grades officers are equally competent to carry out general building design work. (BDSEA)		

3. Views on Opening-up of AD/Support Post (On Litigation and Legislative Duties)		
Supporting Views	Dissenting Views	Management's explanation and response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● AD/Sup is merely a facilitator in legal and legislative matters pertaining to building and land affairs, review of the BO and its subsidiary regulations, review of statutory standards and related codes of practice, and technical knowledge on buildings and land matters. There is no evidence to suggest that AD/Sup needs the pre-requisite qualifications as a legal expert. (BDSEA) ● The duties of AD/Sup cover a very broad area. No building professionals can claim to be an all rounder in all these areas. Professional experience will play a critical part in developing one's competence in particular aspects of building control and related duties. It is only by opening-up the post can the professional acquire such experience. (BDSEA) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The cores of the "job competence requirements" of AD/Sup post are professional, not administrative and managerial duties. (BDLBSA) ● It is not whether SE grade officers have included legal aspects in their training, it is the depth of the training and the subsequent orientation of the professional mind that matters. (BDLBSA) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● BS grade officers possess the "grade competence" for legal and legislative duties by their professional training and conventional deployment of duties. They are well conversant with the principles and application of the design and planning standards of buildings and building developments as well as the building laws and its interface with other allied legislations and regulations. ● Though SE grade officers have taken legal subjects in their tertiary education, they do not have adequate hand-on experience and exposure in the application of the laws relating to the general design and planning standards of buildings and interface with the other allied ordinances at work under the present job arrangements. As such, SE grade officers have not yet acquired the full capability and competence to perform the main trunk of AD/Sup's duties in the legal and legislative fields at the present time.

3. Views on Opening-up of AD/Support Post (On Litigation and Legislative Duties)		
Supporting Views	Dissenting Views	Management’s explanation and response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Most of AD/Sup’s duties are administrative and managerial, so the post can be opened up to both professional grades. (BDSEA) (TO(S)WG) ● Competent SE grade officers possess extensive and in-depth legal knowledge and practical experience in the building and development control system and design and planning standards. Therefore, they are competent to discharge the duties of the AD/Sup post. (BDSEA) (TO(S)WG) ● One of the prime objectives of the BO is to ensure public safety which is largely directly related to the structural aspects of a building. SE grade officers are expert in these aspects. (BDSEA) ● BS grade officers of architectural discipline do not have superior law training than SE grade officers. (BDSEA) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SE grade officers could develop the “grade competence” to perform litigation and legislative duties competently if they are given the opportunity and relevant exposure at work. To this end, it is more appropriate to provide suitable exposure for SE grade officers to gain the hand-on experience in relevant legal work so that in the not-too-distant future, they could acquire adequate relevant legal experience and knowledge to perform the litigation and legislative duties in the department. ● Until the SE grade has attained the grade competence in this aspect, AD/Sup post should continue to be filled by a GBS. This issue should be reviewed in three years’ time in the light of the outcome of the above proposed posting arrangements.

3. Views on Opening-up of AD/Support Post (On Litigation and Legislative Duties)		
Supporting Views	Dissenting Views	Management's explanation and response
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● The existing set up in the Legal Section has effectively barred SE grade officers from moving up from the basic to senior professional ranks. It is a waste of resources and talents. If SE grade officers are given fair opportunities to work in the Section, more competent CSEs would be able to take up the duties of the AD/Sup post. (BDSEA) (TO(S)WG)		

4. Views on the Consultancy Report on Review of the Opening-up of AD Posts in BD		
Supporting Views	Dissenting Views	Management's explanation and response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The BDSEA fully supports the findings of the Consultancy Report. They submitted supporting letters with the signatures of 128 SE grade officers. (BDSEA) ● The reasons for suggesting that the review on the opening-up of the AD/Sup post after three years should be made known. (SE grade officers) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The BDLBSA objected to the findings of the Consultancy Report and considered that the recommendations should not be implemented without the support of the majority of the staff. (BDLBSA) ● The Consultancy Study only repeats what was said in BD's in-house Review Group's Report. The report was done in haste and without consultation. (BS grade officers) ● The composition of the Expert Panel was criticised in that the BS grade officers asked why there was no representative from the professional institutes in the Panel. The BS grade officers also asked what criteria were adopted in the selection of panel members. (BS grade officers) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Upon commencement of the Consultancy Study in June 2005, the Consultant prepared the draft Inception Report and presented it to the staff associations in separate meetings. Views and concerns of the staff associations were collected. However, representatives of the BDLBSA came to the meeting venue and expressed their objection to conducting the Consultancy Study. ● The Consultancy Study was independent and took three months to complete. Upon the release of the Consultancy Report, the BD management organised separate presentation sessions for the Consultant to explain the findings of the Consultancy Report to the BS and SE grade officers to facilitate a clear understanding of the rationale and deliberations of the findings. ● The Expert Panel consisted of seven members : three Panel members were academia from local universities with background in building surveying, engineering and other building related studies; three members were local practitioners and Authorised Persons/Registered Structural Engineers (AP/RSE) with background in architecture,

4. Views on the Consultancy Report on Review of the Opening-up of AD Posts in BD		
Supporting Views	Dissenting Views	Management's explanation and response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Since there are plenty of eligible candidates in the BS grade who can take up the AD duties, there are no operational need nor urgency to open up the AD posts. (BS grade officers) ● Three years' experience in litigation and legislative matters is not sufficient for equipping an SE grade officer with the required expertise and knowledge to take up the duties of the AD/Sup post. The recommendation for a review of the opening-up of the AD/Sup post be considered after three years is not justified. (BS grade officers) 	<p>building surveying and engineering; and one member with over 20 years of experience in various aspects of the building industry was from the United Kingdom. The Panel members were selected based on their experience, knowledge and expertise required for the consultancy study.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The opening-up proposal is made with a view to allowing flexible deployment of human resources in BD by rationalising the directorate composition of the department. The proposal will enable BD to enlarge its pool of competent and deserving officers with potential to rise to the senior directorate level. It provides a level-playing field for both BS and SE grade officers because both have been performing the control and enforcement duties in the Existing Buildings Divisions. ● While the management appreciates the views of all staff concerned on the issue, it has taken into account the objective of the proposed opening-up and all other relevant factors in making the recommendation.

4. Views on the Consultancy Report on Review of the Opening-up of AD Posts in BD		
Supporting Views	Dissenting Views	Management's explanation and response
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The arrangement for posting SE grade officers to the Legal Section of the Support Division is to provide exposure for SE grade officers to legislation and litigation work, and to assess the “grade competence” of the SE grade officers for taking up these types of jobs in three years. Therefore, the recommendation of BD’s management is that the AD/Sup post should continue to be filled by a GBS for the time being, while the opening-up issue should be reviewed in three years’ time in the light of the outcome of the arrangement of posting SE grade officers to work in the Legal Section of the Support Division.

The descriptions in parenthesis at the end of each viewpoint represent the source of the viewpoint.

Legend :

- BDLBSA : Buildings Department Local Building Surveyors’ Association
 BDSEA : Buildings Department Structural Engineers’ Association
 TO(S)WG : Technical Officers (Structural) Working Group