

**For discussion
on 8 May 2006**

**Legislative Council Panel
On Information Technology and Broadcasting**

**Retention of the supernumerary post of
Secretary to the Committee on Review of Public Service Broadcasting**

PURPOSE

This paper invites Members' views on the proposed retention of a supernumerary post of Administrative Officer Staff Grade B (AOSGB) (D3) for a period of six months to provide continued support to the Committee on Review of Public Service Broadcasting in Hong Kong (the Committee).

BACKGROUND

Independent Committee on Review of Public Service Broadcasting

2. At present, there is no clear policy on public service broadcasting (PSB) in Hong Kong. In practice, it is delivered through Radio Television Hong Kong and public interest programmes that commercial television and sound broadcasting licensees provide in accordance with the relevant conditions in their respective licences. Examples of such programmes are those for children and the elderly. We feel that a fundamental and critical review of public service broadcasting in Hong Kong and its future development is timely in the light of phenomenal technological and market developments in the broadcasting sector. Our objective is to arrive at a clear policy framework that provides both the vision and specific plans for future development. Against this background, the Chief Executive appointed the independent Committee on Review of PSB on 17 January 2006 to conduct a review on PSB in Hong Kong in a positive, impartial and professional manner, and a Legislative Council brief was issued on the same date to keep Members fully informed. After considering the recommendations of the Committee, the Government will map out a framework for the future development of PSB for public consultation. The terms of reference and membership of the Committee are at **Enclosures A and B** respectively.

The Supernumerary AOSGB (D3) Post

3. Following the establishment of the independent Committee, we need to provide secretariat support for the Committee to commence its work as soon as possible. The Permanent Secretary for Commerce, Industry and Technology (Communications and Technology) created, under delegated authority, a supernumerary post of AOSGB (D3) for a period of six months from 10 February 2006. The post is designated as the Secretary to the Committee, and the post-holder is responsible for providing general support to the Committee, undertaking researches on PSB, and assisting the Committee in collating views of the public and preparing the report on the review. The duty list of the supernumerary AOSGB post is at **Enclosure C**.

4. The issues to be examined by the Committee are complex, having far-reaching implications and requiring extensive researches and in-depth analyses. The Secretary to the Committee will have to coordinate and liaise with stakeholders and prepare research reports and discussion papers in order to facilitate the work of the Committee. All these require a high level of analytical and intellectual capability, rich experience in policy formulation and good communications skills. We thus consider it appropriate to pitch the post of the Secretary to the Committee at AOSGB level.

Non-directorate Establishment of the Secretariat of the Committee

5. The review being undertaken by the Committee also entails a lot of logistic and administrative work, including, for instance, organizing public consultation sessions, convening an international conference, and conducting research (both desktop and through direct liaison with overseas PSB organizations). To cope with the very heavy workload, one Executive Officer I and one Training Officer I are on loan from the Civil Service Bureau to the Committee to provide requisite administrative and logistic support. A non-civil service contract researcher has also been engaged through open recruitment to provide research support. The organization chart of the Secretariat to the Committee is at **Enclosure D**.

JUSTIFICATIONS

6. The supernumerary AOSGB post was created on 10 February 2006 to provide necessary support to the Committee so that it can

commence its work as soon as possible, and the post will lapse on 10 August 2006. Our original plan is for the independent Committee to complete the review by October 2006, and to seek an extension of the supernumerary post by submitting the staffing proposal to the Establishment Subcommittee and Finance Committee according to the progress of the review.

7. The Committee has already completed its first round of consultation with stakeholders and local academics, and has sent letters to some 400 organizations and individuals to offer meetings or invite written submissions. In the subsequent stages of the review, the Committee will convene an international conference with PSB experts from overseas, receive and analyze views from various sectors of the community, and conduct public consultation sessions. The Committee will make its best endeavour to complete the review by the end of 2006.

8. In the light of the review progress to date, and allowing time for the Secretary to the Committee to attend to necessary follow-up work after submission of the report in late 2006, we find it necessary to retain the post for six months up to 9 February 2007.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

9. Given the complexity and scale of the review, we consider that a dedicated, full-time AOSGB is required to support the Committee's work. We have critically reviewed the current directorate establishment of the Communications and Technology Branch of the Commerce, Industry and Technology Bureau and its departments, and consider that there is no scope for redeployment of existing resources to act as the Secretary to the Committee. Retaining the supernumerary AOSGB post for six months from 10 August 2006 to 9 February 2007 to support the Committee is the only feasible option.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10. The additional notional annual salary cost of the AOSGB (D3) at mid-point is \$1,580,400 and its full annual average staff cost, including salaries and staff on-cost, is \$2,250,420.

11. We have included sufficient provision in the 2006-07 Estimates to meet the cost of this proposal.

ADVICE SOUGHT

12. Members are invited to advise on the above proposal. Subject to Members' views, we plan to submit the staffing proposal to the Establishment Subcommittee and Finance Committee for approval in June 2006.

**Communications and Technology Branch
Commerce, Industry and Technology Bureau
May 2006**

Committee on Review of Public Service Broadcasting

Terms of Reference

1. To examine the role of, and justifications and public purposes for, public service broadcasting (PSB) in the development of Hong Kong's broadcasting market, against the public financial and other resources required for such broadcasting.
2. To identify issues concerning public accountability for PSB in matters of editorial impartiality, programming policy and good governance.
3. To identify measures for the Administration to evaluate the effectiveness of PSB and arrangements through which the public can participate in such a process.
4. To recommend, in the light of the above, an appropriate arrangement for the provision of PSB in Hong Kong.
5. To recommend implementation plans for the short, medium and long terms.

Committee on Review of Public Service Broadcasting

Membership

Chairman

Mr Raymond Roy Wong, SBS, Council Member of both the Hong Kong Baptist University and Open University of Hong Kong

Members

Mr Chan King Cheung, Chief Editor, the Hong Kong Economic Journal

Ms May Fung May Gay, Member of the Council of the Hong Kong Baptist University

Professor Leung Tin Wai, Head, Department of Journalism and Communication, Hong Kong Shue Yan College

Mr Pao Wan Lung, a veteran newspaper publisher

Professor Judy Tsui, Dean, Faculty of Business, the Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Mr Mathias Woo, Creative Director, Zuni Icosahedron

**Duty List of
Secretary to the Committee on
Review of Public Service Broadcasting**

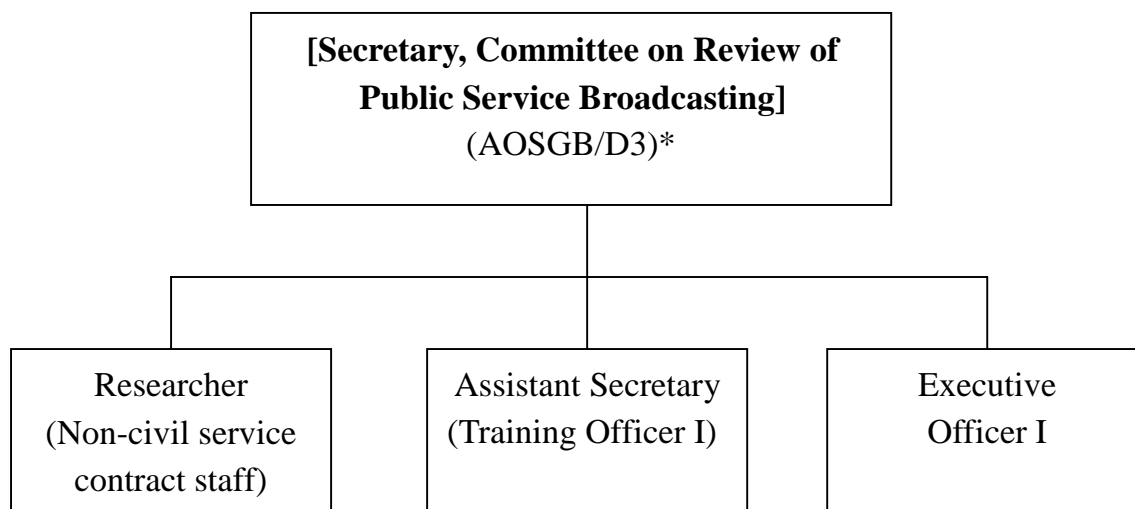
Post Title : Secretary to the Committee on Review of Public Service Broadcasting

Rank : Administrative Officer Staff Grade B (D3)

Major Duties and Responsibilities –

- (a) to conduct research and provide analysis on issues pertaining to public service broadcasting in Hong Kong and overseas economies;
- (b) to assist the Committee in the formulation and implementation of strategies in engaging and consulting the public for the purposes of the review and provide practical support and arrangements in this process of engagement and public consultation;
- (c) to provide secretariat support to the Committee, such as preparation of committee papers and reference materials, record of meetings with various stakeholders and community groups, liaison with stakeholders, community groups and relevant organizations in Hong Kong and overseas, coordination of public relations arrangements, commissioning of external studies, supervision of the support staff of the secretariat;
- (d) to assist the Committee in documenting and analyzing views put forward to it by stakeholders at meetings and public forums or through written submissions and in monitoring, collecting and analyzing views of the public expressed through the media;
- (e) to assist the Committee in the preparation of its report to the Government; and
- (f) to attend to necessary follow-up work after submission of the report of the Committee.

**Organisation Chart of the
Secretariat of the Committee on Review of Public Service Broadcasting**



Note:

[] Supernumerary directorate post proposed to be retained

* Supernumerary directorate post

AOSGB Administrative Officer Grade B