

**For Discussion on  
25 October 2005**

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
PANEL ON PLANNING, LANDS AND WORKS**

**Conversion of Two Assistant Director Posts in  
the Buildings Department from Single-discipline to Bi-discipline**

**PURPOSE**

This paper informs Members of the proposal to convert two Assistant Director posts (ranked at D2) of the Existing Buildings (EB) Divisions from single-disciplinary posts currently filled by officers of the Building Surveyor (BS) grade to bi-disciplinary posts which can be filled either by officers of the BS grade or the Structural Engineer (SE) grade of the Buildings Department (BD). We plan to submit the proposal to the Establishment Subcommittee of the Finance Committee for consideration after Members have considered the proposals.

**JUSTIFICATION**

2. To cope with changing business challenges and to allow flexible deployment of human resources, there is a need to rationalise the directorate composition of the department. As a result of a careful and thorough review, BD proposes to convert the AD/EB1 and AD/EB2 posts from single discipline of the BS grade to bi-discipline for both the BS and the SE grades.

**Background**

3. The Director of Buildings (DB) (ranked at 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 a Deputy Director (DDB) (ranked at D3) and five D2 officers, departmentally designated as Assistant Directors (AD). 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 Government Building Surveyor (GBS) and one post pitched at Government Structural Engineer (GSE). In each division, there are two to six sections each headed by a chief professional officer (ranked at 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 unauthorized building works (UBW) and safety of existing buildings; one special task section 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 and one functional section (the Fire Safety Section).
- (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.

5. An organization chart of BD is at Appendix I.

### **Organizational Reform**

6. The directorate establishment of BD, which was approved by ESC in 1993 upon the setting up of the department, was revised in 1995 when ESC's approval was sought for the creation of a DD post (D3 rank) [EC(95-96)63]. In BD's re-organization of its set up in July 2000, which was implemented on a trial basis with the main objective of making the department a more customer-focused and process-based organization, there was no major change in the structure and responsibilities of the directorate posts.

7. In 2001, due to the need for meeting the department's operational commitments, and the need for additional support at the directorate level to implement the recommendations of the Task Force on Building Safety and Preventive Maintenance, BD proposed further re-organization of the department and the creation of additional directorate posts in order to cope with the increase in workload and responsibilities in relation to the safety and maintenance of buildings. The proposal was discussed at the meeting of the LegCo Panel on Planning, Lands and Works on 4 June 2001. While the LegCo Panel on Planning, Lands and Works was supportive of BD's determination to ensure the delivery of the implementation plan on building safety and timely maintenance and supported the proposals, the proposed creation of additional directorate posts was not pursued as a result of a further review.

### **Review on the Opening-up of AD Posts**

8. The issue on the opening-up of AD posts to both BS and SE grades originated in the 1998 Organization and Management (O&M) Study. The O&M study was necessitated by the growing demand placed upon the department to improve its operational efficiency and optimise the use of resources. It was conducted by the former Management Services Agency. The majority of the 28 recommendations on ways and measures to improve BD's organizational structure was implemented in the re-organization commencing in July 2000.

9. The controversial recommendation on the opening-up of the

professional posts to both the BS and SE grades initially at AD level was set aside temporarily because it was then considered not practical to do so in the context of re-organization. However, in order to assess the effectiveness of the 2000 re-organization and also to address staff concerns of the BS and SE grades in the opening-up issue, the management decided that the proposed opening-up of AD posts would be reviewed one year after the full implementation of the re-organization.

10. In September 2003, DB considered it appropriate 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 discipline to bi-discipline 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. Membership of the Review Group comprised AD/NB2, the grade manager of SE grade; AD/Support, the grade manager of BS grade; and an AD from the Efficiency Unit (EU). Staff and staff associations of the department were invited to provide input and to give their views for the consideration of the Review Group.

11. The Review Group conducted its study by examining and analyzing the “job competence requirements” for each of the five AD posts as well as the “grade competence” of respective grade officers in discharging the duties and responsibilities of individual AD posts. In May 2004, the review 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 facilitate them to elaborate or supplement their views expressed in their written submission.

12. 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 the posts of AD/NB1 and AD/NB2 remaining single-discipline and being filled 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 bi-discipline.

13. In November 2004, DB arrived at his views on the issue. In addition to the two recommendations agreeable to all parties i.e. that both AD/NB1 and AD/NB2 posts should remain single discipline 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, DB finalized the following three recommendations :

- (a) The AD/EB1 post should be bi-disciplinary and can be filled by a GBS or GSE.

Justification

- 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 and the possession of basic professional knowledge in building would be sufficient for the incumbent to discharge his duties.
- Since the re-organization 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) The AD/EB2 post should be bi-disciplinary and can be filled by a GBS or GSE.

Justification

- 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 and the possession of basic professional knowledge in building would be sufficient for the incumbent to discharge his duties.
- 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 competency to do the job. Therefore, the chairmanship should not be a factor affecting the opening up of the AD/EB2 post; and

- (c) The AD/Support post should continue to be single-disciplinary and be filled by a GBS. The opening-up of the AD/Support post should be reviewed in three years.

#### Justification

- 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.
- 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 Consultancy Study**

14. After the release of DB's recommendations, the BDLBSA and BDSEA have requested for 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 be opened up in the same way as the AD/EB1 and the AD/EB2 posts. 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. As a result, EU was 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.

15. 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.

16. Furthermore, the consultant recommends that professional qualification in building and construction and at least 15 years of industry experience at the professional level, including 10 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 each of the 2004 Review Group Report and 2005 Consultancy Study Report is deposited with the Clerk to Panel with additional copies available for Members' information.

17. Upon the release of the Consultancy 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 Report. The BD management met with the Chief Building Surveyors and the BDLBSA and listened to their views. Separate presentation sessions were organized by the management for the

Consultant to explain the findings of the Consultancy 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.

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

## **PROPOSAL**

19. 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.

20. 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 Existing Buildings 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 most important of all, enable BD to enlarge its trawl for competent and deserving officers to the senior directorate level. It should be noted that these two posts are not suitable for opening-up to other professional disciplines and similar grades in other departments because of the required 10 years' experience in BD as recommended in the consultancy study report.

21. The job descriptions of the AD/EB1 and AD/EB2 posts are at Appendix III.



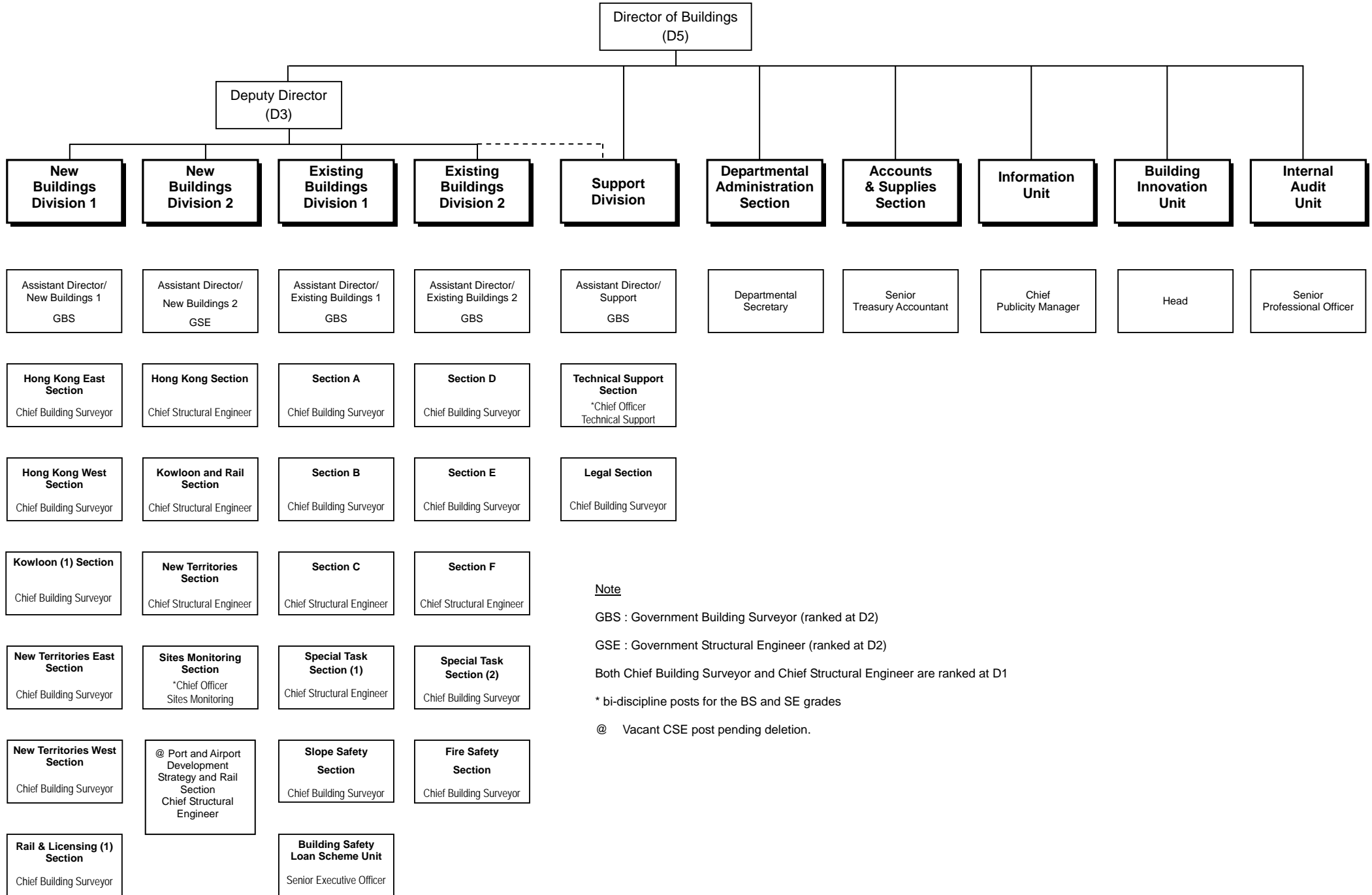
22. We also propose that the AD/Support post should remain single-disciplinary as at present and the opening-up of this post should be reviewed after three years.

### **ADVICE SOUGHT**

23. Members are invited to give their views on this paper and indicate support for the staffing proposal. Subject to Members' views, we would make a submission to the Establishment Sub-Committee in December 2005.

**Buildings Department**  
**Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau**  
**October 2005**

## Organization Chart of the Buildings Department (as at 1.9.2005)



**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**

<b>1. Views on Opening up of the AD/EB1 and AD/EB2 Posts</b>		
<b>Supporting Views</b>	<b>Dissenting Views</b>	<b>Management's explanation and response</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 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)</li> <li>● Opening up the post would enhance the department's operational efficiency and effectiveness in existing building matters. (TO(S)WG)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● It is wrong to say that the "job competence requirements" of the AD/EB posts are largely administrative and managerial. The analysis for 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)</li> <li>● A CSE cannot perform the jobs of AD/EB1 competently for lack of the relevant experience and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Since BD's re-organization 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.</li> <li>● 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.</li> <li>● This deployment arrangement also proves that SE grade officers are equally competent as BS grade officers in performing the core business of EBDs.</li> </ul>

<b>1. Views on Opening up of the AD/EB1 and AD/EB2 Posts</b>		
<b>Supporting Views</b>	<b>Dissenting Views</b>	<b>Management's explanation and response</b>
	<p>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)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● None of the EBD cases involved are complicated, controversial or exceptional structural engineering matters. (BDLBSA)</li> <li>● 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 overall co-ordinator in enforcing the Buildings Ordinance. (1 BS grade officer)</li> <li>● SEs' academic and on-job training are mainly in the administration of the Buildings (Construction)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The control and enforcement duties in existing buildings require staff to have sound knowledge of building design and maintenance. Officers of both BS and SE grades in Buildings Department through their work experience have the requisite building knowledge and competence in performing those duties.</li> <li>● 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 unauthorized building works.</li> <li>● 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.</li> </ul>

<b>1. Views on Opening up of the AD/EB1 and AD/EB2 Posts</b>		
<b>Supporting Views</b>	<b>Dissenting Views</b>	<b>Management's explanation and response</b>
	<p>Regulations. It is insufficient for them to perform as qualified surveyors. There are many aspects in which SEs' ability in the administration of BO has not been tested. (1 BS grade officer)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● 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)</li><li>● If an AD/EB cannot perform his duties for lack of professional knowledge, he should seek advice from DD or DB instead of other ADs. (1 BS grade officer)</li></ul>	

<b>2. Views on Opening up of the AD/EB2 Post (On the Duty as Chairman of the Fire Safety Committee)</b>		
<b>Supporting Views</b>	<b>Dissenting Views</b>	<b>Management's explanation and response</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 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)</li> <li>● 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)</li> <li>● 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)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The role of AD/EB2 as the Chairman of FSC is not that of a co-ordinator 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)</li> <li>● 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)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 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 &amp; 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.</li> <li>● Chaired by AD/EB2, FSC comprises 2 CBS, 1 CSE, 1 representative from the Fire Services Department, and 2 to 3 fire safety and fire engineering experts from the academia and the private practice. This is a multi-discipline committee to examine submissions from Authorized 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</li> </ul>

<b>2. Views on Opening up of the AD/EB2 Post (On the Duty as Chairman of the Fire Safety Committee)</b>		
<b>Supporting Views</b>	<b>Dissenting Views</b>	<b>Management's explanation and response</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 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)</li> <li>● "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)</li> <li>● 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</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 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. (BDLBSA)</li> </ul>	<p>Department and the private sector to ensure that all fire safety requirements laid down in the Building Ordinance and related laws are adhered to.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 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.</li> <li>● 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 or 19%) involving structural plans.</li> <li>● 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 the Fire Safety Committee should not be a factor affecting the opening up of the AD/EB2 post.</li> </ul>

<b>2. Views on Opening up of the AD/EB2 Post (On the Duty as Chairman of the Fire Safety Committee)</b>		
<b>Supporting Views</b>	<b>Dissenting Views</b>	<b>Management's explanation and response</b>
<p>knowledge and perform the duties better. (BDSEA) (TO(S)WG)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● 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)</li></ul>		



<b>3. Views on Opening up of AD/Support Post (On Litigation and Legislative Duties)</b>		
<b>Supporting Views</b>	<b>Dissenting Views</b>	<b>Management's explanation and response</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● AD/Sup is merely a facilitator in legal and legislative matters pertaining to building and land affairs, review of the Buildings Ordinance 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)</li> <li>● 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 can the professional acquire such experience. (BDSEA)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The cores of the "job competence requirements" of AD/Sup post are professional, not administrative and managerial. (BDLBSA)</li> <li>● 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)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 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.</li> <li>● 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.</li> <li>● SE grade officers could develop the "grade competence" to perform litigation and legislative duties competently if they are</li> </ul>

<b>3. Views on Opening up of AD/Support Post (On Litigation and Legislative Duties)</b>		
<b>Supporting Views</b>	<b>Dissenting Views</b>	<b>Management's explanation and response</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 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)</li> <li>● 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)</li> <li>● One of the prime objectives of the Buildings Ordinance 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)</li> <li>● BS grade officers of architectural discipline do not</li> </ul>		<p>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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 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 3 years' time in the light of the outcome of the above proposed posting arrangements.</li> </ul>

<b>3. Views on Opening up of AD/Support Post (On Litigation and Legislative Duties)</b>		
<b>Supporting Views</b>	<b>Dissenting Views</b>	<b>Management's explanation and response</b>
<p>have superior law training than SE grade officers. (BDSEA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● 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)</li></ul>		

<b>4. Views on the Consultancy Report on Review of Opening-up of AD Posts in BD</b>		
<b>Supporting Views</b>	<b>Dissenting Views</b>	<b>Management's explanation and response</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The BDSEA fully supports the findings of the Consultancy Report. They submitted supporting letters with the signatures of 128 SE grade officers. (BDSEA)</li> <li>● The reasons for suggesting that the review on the opening-up of the AD/Support post after 3 years should be made known. (SE grade officers)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 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 staff. (BDLBSA)</li> <li>● 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)</li> <li>● The composition of the Expert Panel was criticized 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)</li> <li>● Since there are plenty of eligible candidates in the BS grade who can take up the AD duties, there</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Upon commencement of the Consultancy 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.</li> <li>● The Consultancy Study was independent and took three months to complete. Upon the release of the Consultancy Report, the BD management organized 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.</li> <li>● The Expert Panel consisted of 7 members : 3 Panel members were academia from local universities with background in building surveying, engineering and other building related studies; 3 members were local practitioners and Authorized Persons/Registered Structural Engineers (AP/RSE) with background in architecture,</li> </ul>

<b>4. Views on the Consultancy Report on Review of Opening-up of AD Posts in BD</b>		
<b>Supporting Views</b>	<b>Dissenting Views</b>	<b>Management's explanation and response</b>
	<p>are no operational need nor urgency to open up the AD posts. (BS grade officers)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 3 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/Support post. The recommendation for a review of the opening-up of the AD/Support post be considered after 3 years is not justified. (BS grade officers)</li> </ul>	<p>building surveying and engineering; and 1 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"> <li>● The opening-up proposal is made with a view to allowing flexible deployment of human resources in BD by rationalizing 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.</li> <li>● 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.</li> <li>● The arrangement for posting SE grade</li> </ul>

<b>4. Views on the Consultancy Report on Review of Opening-up of AD Posts in BD</b>		
<b>Supporting Views</b>	<b>Dissenting Views</b>	<b>Management's explanation and response</b>
		<p>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 3 years. Therefore, the recommendation of BD's management is that the AD/Support post should continue to be filled by a GBS for the time being, while the opening-up issue should be reviewed in 3 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.</p>

The abbreviation shown in parenthesis at the end of each viewpoint represents the source of the viewpoint.

BDLBSA : Buildings Department Local Building Surveyors' Association

BDSEA : Buildings Department Structural Engineers' Association

TO(S)WG : Technical Officers (Structural) Working Group

**Job Description of Assistant Director/Existing Buildings 1  
Buildings Department**

---

Rank: Government Building Surveyor (D2)

Responsible to: Deputy Director of Buildings

Main Duties and Responsibilities -

- (a) To manage the core functions of EB1 Division 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 certain complaints, conducting divisional meetings to discuss and address issues, and making major operational decisions;
- (b) To work with AD/EB2 to review and formulate policies and strategies for enforcement against UBW;
- (c) 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 (HPLB);
- (d) 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;
- (e) To participate in Senior Directorate meetings and departmental management, including reporting divisional work and participating in making decisions on departmental matters; and
- (f) To coordinate with professional bodies and participating in committee work, such as attending Authorised Persons Registration Committee on a rotation basis.

**Job Description of Assistant Director/Existing Buildings 2**  
**Buildings Department**

---

Rank: Government Building Surveyor (D2)

Responsible to: Deputy Director of Buildings

Main Duties and Responsibilities -

- (a) To manage the core functions of EB2 Division 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;
- (b) 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 meetings, pinpointing crucial matters and centre of issues for discussion, and scrutinising and deciding on fire safety submissions for new developments;
- (c) 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;
- (d) 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 HPLB;
- (e) 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
- (f) To participate in Senior Directorate meetings and departmental management, including reporting divisional work and participating in making decisions on departmental matters.