



Paul Zimmerman

18/05/2012 10:10

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Subject Submission on Government Re-organisation 19 May 2012  
(revised)

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From: Paul Zimmerman

Sent: 18 May 2012 10:08

To: 'panel\_ca@legco.gov.hk'

Subject: Submission on Government Re-organisation 19 May 2012

Designing Hong Kong supports the restructuring proposals put forward by the Chief Executive - Elect.

They are generally in line with recommendations made by many people during many discussions over enhancing governance we have participated over the last decade.

In 2004, Designing Hong Kong recommended that a Deputy Chief Secretary would overseas cross cutting policy issues in its report on Designing Hong Kong Harbour District.

With our work for the Harbourfront Enhancement Committee and Harbourfront Commission, and the District Council, we are acutely aware of the need to increase resources at policy level.

As for the speed of implementation, we are glad we are finally moving ahead after years of frustration with a lack of capacity, with a lack of innovation.

As we are entering a stage of large staff turnover in the civil service, we feel comfortable with an expansion at buro level.

Our only concern is that the Deputies of the Financial Secretary and Chief Secretary have a direct report from several buros each. This unnecessarily complicates the organisation structure.

When we envisaged the Deputies, we would see them responsible for 'change management programs', responsible for the development and implementation of new policies across buros and departments, responsible for redirecting existing resources and budgets behind new common short term or long term goals under different themes.

Some of my favourite themes are "Readying the city for an aging population, Readying the aging population for Hong Kong", "Harbourfront Enhancement", "Vibrant streets: making it enjoyable for people to walk further and longer", and others designed to break through departmental inertia, and deliver a Better Hong Kong for All.

In our view, the Deputies would be tasked to coordinate the Administration's resources behind such themes and campaigns, to rally the troops to deliver, to identify administrative, legislative and funding amendments required, to pursue implementation and then to move on to the next theme and campaign.

Core to the Deputies' responsibility is to enable cooperation among all bureaus and departments, to interfere when blockages occur and to "knock officials over the head" when they get petty minded and insist on their own established procedures and guidelines.

Deputies should be seen as neutral, and not beholden to, favoured by, and limited to, a few buros for which they have been assigned direct oversight. Doing so would frustrate their change management capability, and create unnecessary layers and obstacles.

Paul Zimmerman  
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