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Panel on Security

**Background brief prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat
for the meeting on 4 November 2014**

**Proposed extension for three years of a supernumerary Administrative
Officer Staff Grade C Post in the Narcotics Division of the Security Bureau**

Purpose

This paper provides background information on the Administration's proposal of extending a supernumerary post of Administrative Officer Staff Grade C ("AOSGC") (D2) in the Narcotics Division ("ND") of the Security Bureau for three years, and summarizes the past discussions of the Legislative Council ("LegCo") committees relating to the subject.

Background

2. Headed by the Commissioner for Narcotics ("C for N"), ND is tasked with coordinating anti-drug policies and measures across the public sector, non-governmental organizations ("NGOs") and the community. ND also assists in the fight against money laundering and terrorist financing.

3. C for N is ranked at the Administrative Officer Staff Grade B (D3) level and is supported by two posts of AOSGC. One of them, designated as Principal Assistant Secretary (Narcotics) 1 ("PAS(N)1"), is a post first created on a supernumerary basis in February 2009 and subsequently made permanent in February 2012. The other one, designated as Principal Assistant Secretary (Narcotics) 2 ("PAS(N)2"), is a supernumerary post created on 17 February 2010 for three years up to 16 February 2013. The Finance Committee approved on 11 January 2013 the retention of the PAS(N)2 post for two years to 16 February 2015 to provide C for N with the continuous support for the anti-drug work, particularly in respect of the treatment and rehabilitation services as well as drug testing policies and programme.

Members' deliberations

4. When members were first consulted on the proposed creation of an additional supernumerary post of PAS(N)2 in ND, some members expressed the view that the Under Secretary for Security ("US for S") should take up the duties having regard to the level of responsibility, experience and political awareness required for the post. According to the Administration, while US for S might provide his inputs to the anti-drug cause from the policy perspectives, there remained a substantial amount of work relating to the detailed planning and implementation of the some 70 recommendations made by the Task Force on Youth Drug Abuse¹ covering the five prongs of the enhanced anti-drug strategies, which had to be shouldered by PAS(N)2. The holder of the PAS(N)2 post would assist C for N in the anti-drug work relating to drug testing, treatment and rehabilitation, and taking forward the major measures in these domains.

5. Some members also raised concern as to whether there was still a need for the post in the event that the pilot scheme for voluntary school drug testing was not effective and hence would not be expanded to other districts and schools after the review. The Administration explained that the creation of the supernumerary PAS(N)2 post was necessary for ND to deal with the additional work arising from the escalated and expedited anti-drug campaign, which involved a number of initiatives to facilitate early intervention to help drug abusing youngsters. The holder of the post had to assist in taking forward initiatives on the provision of downstream support services for drug treatment and rehabilitation, in addition to voluntary school drug testing and consultation on the mandatory drug testing.

6. There was a view that more resources should be allocated to frontline anti-drug work, instead of merely providing additional directorate support for ND. The Administration advised that the comprehensive anti-drug programme would include initiatives to enhance the provision of support services, and additional resources would be allocated for the purpose. ND would play a central role in coordinating efforts of bureaux, departments, public agencies and NGOs in the anti-drug work. In the provision of downstream support services, the majority of the manpower resources lay with different NGOs and the relevant departments. ND collaborated with the Home Affairs Department in providing resources and enabling the provision of services for the youth in need in various districts.

¹ The Task Force on Youth Drug Abuse, led by the Secretary for Justice, released its report in November 2008 with over 70 recommendations on initiatives in respect of a five pronged anti-drug strategy (namely community mobilization, community support, drug testing, treatment and rehabilitation, and law enforcement).

7. The Panel on Security ("the Panel") was consulted on the proposal to retain the supernumerary post for a period of two years at its meeting on 6 November 2012 and members raised no objection to the proposal. When the staffing proposal was considered by the Establishment Subcommittee on 5 December 2012, some members expressed concern as to whether the supernumerary post should be made permanent given the major duties of PAS(N)2 including treatment and rehabilitation services and drug testing programmes involved on-going tasks.

8. The Administration advised that in drawing up the proposal to retain the supernumerary PAS(N)2 post for two years, it had reviewed the existing and anticipated workload of both PAS(N)1 and PAS(N)2. PAS(N)1 was heavily involved in the implementation of the recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force² ("FATF") for combating money laundering and terrorist financing in order to better align Hong Kong's regime with the relevant standards and requirements. The duties of PAS(N)2, on the other hand, covered three major aspects, namely enhancement in the treatment and rehabilitation services, launching a public consultation on the community-based drug testing ("CDT") scheme, and promoting the Healthy School Programme with a drug testing component. According to the Administration, one of the major tasks relating to the treatment and rehabilitation services was to assist the existing drug treatment and rehabilitation centres to meet the licensing requirements under the Drug Dependent Persons Treatment and Rehabilitation Centres (Licensing) Ordinance (Cap. 566), with a view to identifying a viable solution to address the varying land issues and/or inherent technical difficulties of each treatment and rehabilitation centre during the two years of extension of the PAS(N)2 post. In addition, as the future direction of whether to implement CDT, and if so, how, would become clearer after the consultation exercise, the Administration considered that it would be more prudent and appropriate to assess the future need of the supernumerary PAS(N)2 post taking into account the workload of both PAS(N)1 and PAS(N)2 towards the expiry of the latter post in February 2015. The Administration was requested to critically review the need for retaining the supernumerary post before it lapsed in February 2015.

9. The Administration will consult the Panel on the proposal of further extending the supernumerary PAS(N)2 post for three years at the meeting on 4 November 2014.

² FATF is an inter-governmental body established in 1989 to develop and promote national and international policies to combat money laundering and terrorist financing. Hong Kong has been a member of FATF since 1991 and fully subscribes to the FATF's recommendations in combating money laundering and terrorist financing.

Relevant papers

10. A list of the relevant papers on the LegCo website is in the **Appendix**.

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
30 October 2014

Appendix

Relevant papers on the proposed extension of a supernumerary Administrative Officer Staff Grade C Post in the Narcotics Division of the Security Bureau

| Committee | Date of meeting | Paper |
|--|--|---|
| Panel on Security | 2.12.2008 (Item IV) | <u>Agenda</u> <u>Minutes</u> |
| Establishment Subcommittee of the Finance Committee | 14.1.2009 (Item No. EC(2008-09)14) | <u>Agenda</u> <u>Minutes</u> |
| Finance Committee | 13.2.2009 (Item No. FCR(2008-09)60) | <u>Agenda</u> <u>Minutes</u> |
| Panel on Security | 3.11.2009 (Item IV) | <u>Agenda</u> <u>Minutes</u> |
| Establishment Subcommittee of the Finance Committee | 9.12.2009 (Item No. EC(2009-10)11) | <u>Agenda</u> <u>Minutes</u> |
| Finance Committee | 22.1.2010 (Item No. FCR(2009-10)46) | <u>Agenda</u> <u>Minutes</u> |
| Panel on Security | 7.11.2011 (Item VI) | <u>Agenda</u> <u>Minutes</u> |
| Establishment Subcommittee of the Finance Committee | 7.12.2011 (Item No. EC(2011-12)11) | <u>Agenda</u> <u>Minutes</u> |
| Finance Committee | 6.1.2012 (Item No. FCR(2011-12)62) | <u>Agenda</u> <u>Minutes</u> |
| Panel on Security | 6.11.2012 (Item VI) | <u>Agenda</u> <u>Minutes</u> |
| Establishment Subcommittee of the Finance Committee | 5.12.2012 (Item No. EC(2012-13)11) | <u>Agenda</u> <u>Minutes</u> |

| Committee | Date of meeting | Paper |
|-------------------|--|---|
| Finance Committee | 11.1.2013 (Item No. FCR(2012-13)63) | Agenda Minutes |

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