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Panel on Commerce and Industry

Meeting on 15 December 2015

**Background brief on the proposed retention of
one Administrative Officer Staff Grade C (D2) post
under the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau**

Purpose

This paper provides background information on the proposed retention of one Administrative Officer Staff Grade C ("AOSGC") (D2) post under the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau ("CMAB"). It also summarizes the views and concerns expressed by Members on the subject in previous discussions.

Background

2. CMAB is responsible for, among other things, promoting closer co-operation between the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region ("HKSAR") and the Mainland, the Macao Special Administrative Region and Taiwan. On Mainland affairs, CMAB acts as a focal point of contact between the HKSAR Government and the Mainland authorities. Through the HKSAR Government Offices in the Mainland ("the Mainland Offices"), CMAB strengthens liaison and communication with the Mainland authorities at the central, provincial and municipal levels, as well as with other ministries; represents and promotes Hong Kong's trade and commercial interests in the Mainland; and supports Hong Kong residents and enterprises in the Mainland, etc.

3. The Finance Committee approved in June 2010 the creation of the following two supernumerary posts under CMAB for a period of three years from July 2010 to June 2013 to strengthen the staff support at directorate level

to take forward various new co-operation initiatives with the Mainland and Taiwan –

- (a) one Administrative Officer Staff Grade B (D3) post, designated as Deputy Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs (3) ("DS(CMA)3"); and
- (b) one AOSGC (D2) post, designated as Principal Assistant Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs (8) ("PAS(CMA)8").

4. In the 2013 Policy Address, the Chief Executive announced a number of initiatives to strengthen "homeland relationship". These initiatives included –

- (a) to strengthen Government-to-Government co-operation and enhance Hong Kong's economic partnership with provinces and municipalities in the Mainland,
- (b) to step up support to Hong Kong residents and enterprises in the Mainland; and
- (c) to enhance communication and publicity targeted at different sectors in the Mainland with a view to fostering mutual understanding and respect between the Hong Kong and Mainland communities.

5. The Finance Committee approved in June 2013 the Administration's proposal to convert the DS(CMA)3 post into a permanent post and extend the PAS(CMA)8 for another three years until end of June 2016 to co-ordinate and implement the key initiatives of the 2013 Policy Address. Specific areas of responsibilities of the two posts included enhancing the functions of the Mainland Offices, setting up more Mainland Offices, and strengthening regional co-operation, etc. The job description of DS(CMA)3 and PAS(CMA)8 are set out in **Appendices I and II** respectively. The Administration undertook to review the arrangement for the post of PAS(CMA)8 at appropriate juncture before its expiry in end June 2016.

Previous discussions

6. The views and concerns expressed by Members during the relevant discussions at the meetings of the Panel on Commerce and Industry, the Establishment Subcommittee and the Finance Committee in respect of the staff establishment proposals, as well as the work of CMAB in strengthening co-operation between HKSAR and the Mainland are summarized in the ensuing paragraphs.

Enhancing the network and functions of the Mainland Offices

7. Members noted the setting up of the Wuhan Economic and Trade Office ("ETO") in April 2014 and generally supported the Government's initiatives on strengthening co-operation between HKSAR and major provinces and municipalities in the Mainland. The Administration was requested to set up more ETOs and liaison units in the Mainland, strengthen the manpower support of the Mainland Offices as and when appropriate, and step up publicity on the services provided by the Mainland Offices.

8. On enhancing the functions of the Mainland Offices, Members urged the Administration to consider setting up an Immigration Division in each of the Mainland Offices to step up support for Hong Kong residents and groups in the Mainland and disseminate information about changes in policies, rules, and laws that affect Hong Kong residents and enterprises in the Mainland. Some other Members suggested that the Mainland Offices should strengthen communication and publicity targeting different sectors in the Mainland with a view to promoting, apart from economic strengths, the soft sides of Hong Kong, including its social and cultural development so as to foster mutual understanding and respect between Hong Kong and the Mainland communities. The Administration advised that it was the longer term objective of the CMAB to set up an Immigration Division in each of the Mainland Offices.

9. Some Members expressed concern whether the roles, operations and resources of the Mainland Offices might overlap with those of the representative offices of the Hong Kong Trade Development Council ("HKTDC") and the Hong Kong Tourism Board ("HKTB") in the Mainland, particularly in promoting Hong Kong's trade, tourism and commercial interests in the Mainland. The Administration explained that the roles and functions of the offices concerned complemented each other. The Mainland Offices primarily focused on enhancing Government-to-Government co-operation to broaden and deepen regional co-operation, providing essential services and assistance to Hong Kong residents and groups in the Mainland, and promoting the strengths and image of Hong Kong. While the offices of HKTB focused on promoting Hong Kong's tourism, the offices of HKTDC focused on trade promotion, liaison with enterprises and trade bodies and organizing trade missions and commercial promotional activities in the Mainland. The Administration would study ways to enhance the working relationship between the Mainland Offices, HKTDC and HKTB, with a view to optimizing their synergy and effectiveness.

Strengthening "homeland relationship"

10. On strengthening homeland relationship, some Members enquired whether an assessment of the impact of Hong Kong policies on Mainland

people would be made a standing requirement in policy formulation. While some Members considered it necessary and reasonable to assess possible reactions of the Mainland community during policy formulation, some Members were concerned whether it would jeopardize the "One Country, Two Systems" principle and the interests of Hong Kong people.

11. The Administration advised that in formulating policies, it was an established practice of the bureaux of the HKSAR Government to consider fully all relevant factors and assess implications, such as conformity with the Basic Law. Given the proximity of the two places, Hong Kong had strong ties with the Mainland and both sides had developed interdependent co-operation relationship in various areas. As the interaction between people of the two places increased, it was possible for policy measures of the HKSAR Government to have an impact on Mainland people. It was therefore a responsible practice for the HKSAR government to make a comprehensive assessment during the policy formulation process, including possible reaction in the Mainland arising from the policy concerned. In doing so, the policy bureaux would adhere strictly to the Basic Law and the "One Country, Two Systems" principle, and accord high priority to the interest of Hong Kong people.

Latest position

12. The Administration will brief the Panel on 15 December 2015 on the proposed retention of the PAS(CMA)8 post to continue to take forward the work in relation to stepping up co-operation between Hong Kong and the Mainland. The Administration plans to submit the staff establishment proposal to the Establishment Subcommittee in January 2016.

Relevant papers

13. A list of relevant papers is shown in **Appendix III**.

**Job Description of
Deputy Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs (3)**

Post Title : Deputy Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs (3)

Rank : Administrative Officer Staff Grade B (D3)

Responsible to : Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Main Duties and Responsibilities:

1. To lead the Mainland Offices to implement the 2013 Policy Address initiatives to enhance the functions of the Mainland Offices so as to better support Hong Kong residents and enterprises in the Mainland, and to supervise the implementation progress of various initiatives.
2. To carry out overall planning on the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region ("HKSAR")'s regional co-operation strategies with relevant provinces and municipalities in the Mainland and the Macao SAR, and to maintain close liaison with governments of the relevant provinces, municipalities and SAR.
3. To provide policy steer on the overall strategies on co-operation with Guangdong under the Hong Kong/Guangdong Co-operation Joint Conference, to provide strategic guidance on the implementation of the Framework Agreement on Hong Kong/Guangdong Co-operation and to co-ordinate and spearhead HKSAR's work in complementing the development of Nansha.
4. To provide policy input in and co-ordinate HKSAR Government's co-operation initiatives with Shenzhen under the frameworks of Hong Kong/Guangdong Co-operation Joint Conference and the Hong Kong/Shenzhen Co-operation Meeting, and to spearhead HKSAR Government's co-operation with Shenzhen on the development of modern service industries in Qianhai.
5. To provide policy steer on the overall strategies on co-operation with the Pan-Pearl River Delta ("PPRD") Region under the PPRD Region Co-operation and Development Forum.

6. To provide policy steer on the overall strategies on co-operation with the Municipalities of Shanghai and Beijing under the Hong Kong/Shanghai Economic and Trade Co-operation Conference and Hong Kong/Beijing Economic and Trade Co-operation Conference.
7. To provide policy input to the Hong Kong and Mainland Economic Co-operation Advisory Committee, and to reach out to various sectors to tap into their views on co-operation between Hong Kong and the Mainland.

(Source: Annex 1 to the Administration's paper for the meeting of the Panel on Commerce and Industry on 19 March 2013 ([LC Paper No. CB\(1\)696/12-13\(03\)](#)).

**Job Description of
Principal Assistant Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs (8)**

Post Title : Principal Assistant Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs (8)

Rank : Administrative Officer Staff Grade C (D2)

Responsible to: Deputy Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs (3)

Main Duties and Responsibilities:

1. To formulate strategies and plans to implement the 2013 Policy Address initiatives to enhance functions of the Mainland Offices so as to better support Hong Kong residents and enterprises in the Mainland, including drawing up work targets and guidelines, monitoring the work progress and effectiveness, and reviewing and refining the relevant work from time to time.
2. To take forward the preparatory work for setting up the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region ("HKSAR") Government Economic and Trade Office in Wuhan ("Wuhan ETO"), including liaising with the Central Government and provincial and municipal governments, and handling related administrative work such as application for and deployment of manpower and resources, and arranging for office accommodation, etc.
3. To supervise the operation of the Wuhan ETO, carry out study in and co-ordinate the implementation of the co-operation between Hong Kong and the Central Region.
4. To review the network of the HKSAR Government in the Mainland, study the feasibility of setting up of liaison units in other cities in the Mainland, and consult relevant stakeholders on related matters.
5. To carry out study in rationalizing the work of the offices of the HKSAR Government, the Hong Kong Trade Development Council and the Hong Kong Tourism Board in the Mainland, and to provide support to the forum for regular meetings among the three parties.

6. To co-ordinate relevant bureaux and departments to follow up on the co-operation projects in various areas with the Pan-Pearl River Delta ("PPRD") Region, provide support to HKSAR Government's participation in the annual PPRD Region Co-operation and Development Forum ("PPRD Forum"), and explore and make preliminary preparation for applying to host the 10th PPRD Forum.
7. To co-ordinate relevant bureaux and departments to follow up on the co-operation projects in various areas with the Municipalities of Shanghai and Beijing under the Hong Kong/Shanghai Economic and Trade Co-operation Conference and Hong Kong/Beijing Economic and Trade Co-operation Conference respectively, and support the convening of the said two Conferences.
8. To study and formulate co-operation plan with the Sichuan Province in the medium term taking into account existing bilateral co-operation in a number of areas, and co-ordinate the implementation of the relevant co-operation projects.
9. To study and formulate co-operation plan with the Municipality of Chongqing, and co-ordinate the implementation of the relevant co-operation projects.
10. To support the co-operation activities between Hong Kong and other provinces and municipalities in the Mainland, including planning and participating in high level meetings, visits and fora, etc.
11. To handle the follow up actions on cases of seeking assistance by Hong Kong residents in the Mainland.

(Source: Annex 2 to the Administration's paper for the meeting of the Panel on Commerce and Industry on 19 March 2013 ([LC Paper No. CB\(1\)696/12-13\(03\)](#)).

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List of relevant papers

Date of meeting	Meeting	Paper
20/4/2010	Panel on Commerce and Industry	<p>Administration's paper on "Manpower arrangement in taking forward cooperation with the Mainland and Taiwan" (LC Paper No. CB(1)1601/09-10(46))</p> <p>Minutes of meeting (LC Paper No. CB(1)2189/09-10)</p>
26/5/2010	Establishment Subcommittee	<p>Administration's paper on "Government Secretariat: Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau" (EC(2010-11)8)</p> <p>Minutes of meeting (LC Paper No. ESC34/09-10)</p>
11/6/2010	Finance Committee	<p>Administration's paper on "Recommendations of the Establishment Subcommittee" (FCR(2010-11)21)</p> <p>Minutes of meeting (LC Paper No. FC14/10-11)</p>
19/3/2013	Panel on Commerce and Industry	<p>Administration's paper on "Enhancing the Co-operation Relations between Hong Kong and the Mainland – Manpower Arrangement for the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau" (LC Paper No. CB(1)696/12-13(03))</p> <p>Minutes of meeting (LC Paper No. CB(1)1023/12-13)</p>

Date of meeting	Meeting	Paper
15/5/2013	Establishment Subcommittee	<p>Administration's paper on "Government Secretariat: Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau" (EC(2013-14)2)</p> <p>Minutes of meeting (LC Paper No. ESC42/12-13)</p> <p>Follow-up paper (LC Paper No. ESC41/12-13(01))</p>
7/6/2013	Finance Committee	<p>Administration's paper on "Recommendations of the Establishment Subcommittee" (FCR(2013-14)12)</p> <p>Minutes of meeting (LC Paper No. FC12/13-14)</p> <p>Follow-up paper (LC Paper No. FC159/12-13(01))</p>