

For Discussion on
5 December 2017

Legislative Council
Panel on Security

**Proposal to Turn a Supernumerary Post
of Administrative Officer Staff Grade C
in the Narcotics Division of the Security Bureau
into a Permanent Post**

PURPOSE

This paper seeks Members' views on a proposal to turn a supernumerary post of Administrative Officer Staff Grade C (AOSGC) (D2) in the Narcotics Division (ND) of the Security Bureau (SB) into a permanent post to provide the Commissioner for Narcotics (C for N) with the necessary support at the directorate level to sustain the efforts to combat the drug problem, in particular in respect of treatment and rehabilitation (T&R) services for drug abusers and anti-drug preventive education in secondary schools in Hong Kong.

JUSTIFICATION

Responsibilities of ND

2. To tackle the complex drug abuse problem in a comprehensive and holistic manner, we adopt a five-pronged approach, comprising anti-drug preventive education and publicity (PE&P), T&R, legislation and law enforcement, external cooperation and research. PE&P, coupled with T&R and research, aim at reducing the demand for illicit drugs. Efforts at legislation and law enforcement as well as external cooperation focus on combating the supply of illicit drugs.

3. With the benefit of the advice of the Action Committee Against Narcotics (ACAN), ND as headed by C for N is responsible for formulating, coordinating and implementing anti-drug policies and measures across the public sector, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the community under five-pronged approach as mentioned in paragraph 2 above.

Meanwhile, ND also takes forward anti-money laundering/counter-financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) measures pursuant to the relevant recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

4. C for N is ranked at the Administrative Officer Staff Grade B (D3) level and is supported by two AOSGC posts. One post, designated as Principal Assistant Secretary (Narcotics) 1 (PAS(N)1), was first created as a supernumerary post in February 2009 and turned permanent in February 2012 vide EC(2011-12)11. PAS(N)1 is mainly responsible for overseeing general PE&P measures, managing the operation of the Beat Drugs Fund (BDF) and related matters, monitoring drug trends and emerging drugs, and taking forward relevant AML/CFT measures. The other post, designated as Principal Assistant Secretary (Narcotics) 2 (PAS(N)2), is currently a supernumerary post first created for three years from 17 February 2010 to 16 February 2013 vide EC(2009-10)11 to provide directorate support to combat the drug abuse problem, and extended for two years up to 16 February 2015 vide EC(2012-13)11. As approved by the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council (LegCo) in March 2015 vide EC(2014-15)14, the post has been further extended for three years up to 16 February 2018 to sustain the efforts at the directorate level in the anti-drug work.

Main Duties of PAS(N)2

5. The PAS(N)2 post is primarily responsible for the policy and programmes concerning T&R services and anti-drug preventive education in secondary schools. Indeed, since the post was first created in 2010, we have continued to spearhead and implement relevant initiatives, including setting up more counselling centres for psychotropic substance abusers (CCPSAs); increasing the number of clinic sessions of substance abuse clinics; introducing enhanced probation service to provide more intensive supervision and counselling for young drug offenders; assisting drug treatment and rehabilitation centres (DTRCs) in carrying upgrading or re-provisioning projects to meet the statutory licensing requirements; and stepping up efforts of preventive education in secondary schools.

6. The drug scene as evolving internationally and locally is presenting changing challenges. The statistics of the Central Registry of Drug Abuse (CRDA) have revealed the prevalence of psychotropic substances particularly methamphetamine (commonly known as “Ice”), the problem of hidden drug abuse, and a relatively high proportion of newly reported abusers being young adults aged between 21 and 35. These trends

suggest that the fight against drugs is a long-term haul, hence the necessity for continuous efforts to map out and coordinate the provision of appropriate T&R services for drug abusers and efficacious preventive education for youngsters especially secondary school students.

7. Having critically examined the developments of the drug situation and the importance of responsive anti-drug endeavours, we consider that there is a genuine need to turn the PAS(N)2 post permanent to ensure ongoing dedicated directorate steer and policy input for sustaining T&R measures and anti-drug preventive education initiatives in secondary schools. The main responsibilities of the post are set out in the ensuing paragraphs.

T&R Services

8. For T&R services, a multi-modality approach has been adopted to cater for drug abusers from varying backgrounds and under the changing drug trends. Voluntary T&R services include residential programmes implemented by NGOs in 38 DTRCs with diverse backgrounds and modus operandi, more than 10 community-based counselling centres run by NGOs with varied service foci and clientele, outpatient methadone treatment programme administered by the Department of Health (DH), and substance abuse clinics in all seven hospital clusters of the Hospital Authority (HA).

9. PAS(N)2 will continue to oversee, coordinate and re-engineer the wide range of T&R programmes and initiatives to respond to the needs of different drug abusers. An array of complex tasks will need to be undertaken, including closely liaising with the anti-drug sector (covering various NGO service operators as mentioned above, and public or government bodies such as HA, DH and the Social Welfare Department with individual considerations and operational requirements) to understand the frontline situation and collate views on drug issues; identifying, assessing and coordinating service needs; proposing feasible service adjustment, enhancement and/or cross-sector collaboration as well as resource deployment in consultation with the parties involved; and streamlining and/or rationalising procedures concerned, with a view to ensuring that the T&R process and resources available are addressing help-seekers' needs. As the provision of a continuum of suitable T&R services constitutes a core part of the anti-drug work and is required in an ongoing manner, steer and support of an officer at the AOSGC level is vital.

10. As an essential means to ensure that various T&R services are responding to the latest drug scene on a continuous basis, we have been

publicising the Three-year Plan on Drug Treatment and Rehabilitation Services in Hong Kong (the Three-year Plan) on a triennial basis, as prepared in consultation with anti-drug service providers and stakeholders mentioned above. The purpose is to provide for an ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of existing T&R programmes, so as to identify areas for adjustment and enhancement, and advise on the strategic directions for T&R services in an upcoming three-year period. PAS(N)2 is responsible for managing this exercise which involves the delivery of substantial tasks in a structured timeframe, encompassing the formulation of the Plan outline and extensive consultation arrangements, consensus building with anti-drug service providers and stakeholders, consolidation of views and suggestions received, setting out the identified strategies and priorities, and seeking advice from advisory committees concerned (e.g. ACAN). Close monitoring and intensive follow-up is also required for the implementation of the strategic directions identified in a Three-year Plan and the preparation of the next Plan.

11. Publicising the Three-year Plans regularly represents an important rolling measure to ensure the adequacy and efficacy of T&R services in collaboration with the anti-drug sector. Continuous support from the PAS(N)2 post is needed for formulating the Plans and administering their operation on a long-term and recurrent basis. For instance, based on the prevailing Three-year Plan for 2015 to 2017, follow-up work has been taken for the major aspects below to establish the basis for the next Plan for 2018 to 2020 –

- (a) Prevalence of “Ice” abuse - Since 2012, the number of reported “Ice” abusers in Hong Kong has been continually increasing (from 1 683 in 2012 to 2 414 in 2016, or an increase of 43%). “Ice” can induce various psychotic symptoms which may lead to violent or self-destructive behaviour. Counselling and drug treatment for “Ice” abusers would be difficult before their “Ice”-induced psychotic symptoms are put under control. PAS(N)2 is responsible for discussing with anti-drug service providers (e.g. DTRCs, CCPSAs and HA) and exploring measures to strengthen collaboration among sectors involved to address “Ice” abusers’ T&R needs;
- (b) Hidden drug abuse - In 2016, the median drug history of newly reported drug abusers was 4.6 years, and the majority of the abusers took drugs at home or friends’ homes. This calls for continuous attention to the problem of hidden drug abuse. As prolonged psychotropic substance abuse can lead to long-term

and irreversible health damages, PAS(N)2 has been mobilising and facilitating anti-drug service providers to explore and implement new measures for the early identification of hidden abusers. Ongoing efforts to promote and encourage the adoption of more innovative and effectual means are required; and

- (c) Needs of specific drug abuser groups – In recent years, the proportion of newly reported young adult drug abusers (aged between 21 and 35) has been relatively high (55% among newly reported abusers in 2016). They are commonly pressurised by problems in various aspects, straddling work, finance, and relationships with family members. In consultation with the anti-drug sector, PAS(N)2 is responsible for fostering adjustments and deepening of T&R services to meet the abusers' needs, and facilitating closer collaboration between the anti-drug and other service units to render apposite support to the abusers as well as their families.

Licensing and Service Enhancement of DTRCs

12. Another major area under PAS(N)2's schedule is to provide assistance to DTRCs in fulfilling the licensing requirements under the Drug Dependent Persons Treatment and Rehabilitation Centres (Licensing) Ordinance (Cap. 566). At present, 12 out of the existing 38 DTRCs have yet to be licensed under the Ordinance, and are operating on certificates of exemption. For these 12 DTRCs, some are operating in facilities in dilapidated conditions and need to undertake in-situ upgrading projects. Some are located on sites unsuitable for long-term operations and need to be reprovisioned to new sites.

13. In carrying out upgrading or reprovisioning projects to meet the statutory licensing standards, it is common for DTRCs, which are usually operated with tight resources and insufficient technical expertise, to be confronted with considerable difficulties of different types. PAS(N)2 has been leading a team to provide practical assistance to DTRCs concerned to undertake and accomplish the processes, including searching for suitable sites; assessing preliminary feasibility; resolving land, planning and other technical issues; coordinating with government departments concerned; and consulting the local communities. The experience has affirmed that the complicated and long-winded tasks incurred have to be supervised and taken forward at the directorate level.

14. As regards financial assistance, PAS(N)2 oversees the BDF Special Funding Scheme (SFS) which provides funding support for DTRCs to carry out upgrading or reprovisioning projects. Taking into account DTRCs' views and the SFS' operational experience, PAS(N)2 conducted two rounds of review of the SFS in 2011 and 2016 respectively, and initiated improvement measures. Specifically, the SFS has been, among others, expanded to provide financial assistance to DTRCs to carry out works projects not only for meeting the statutory licensing requirements, but also for enhancing service capacity or sophistication. The maximum funding for each project has also been increased from \$50 million to \$67 million to respond to practical needs. Given the sizable public money to be expended, processing funding applications and subsequent monitoring to ensure a proper use of the SFS funding involves an accurate grasp of the main issues and milestones, thorough scrutiny of the works processes and possible obstacles, suitable intervention and coordination, and close liaison with both the DTRCs and relevant government departments. PAS(N)2's continual work in this regard is essential.

Anti-drug Preventive Education in Secondary Schools

15. Sustained anti-drug preventive education in schools enhances youngsters' awareness of drug harms and their resolve to refuse drug temptations. In this respect, PAS(N)2 is responsible for promoting and overseeing the Healthy School Programme with a Drug Testing Component (HSP(DT)) launched since the 2011/12 school year under the BDF as a school-based anti-drug preventive education initiative for secondary schools. The HSP(DT) comprises two major components, namely diversified activities to strengthen students' knowledge of drugs and anti-drug ability, and voluntary drug testing. From the 2011/12 school year to the 2017/18 school year, the number of participating schools has increased from 43 to 135.

16. The BDF Association commissioned a professional research organisation to conduct an independent evaluation research on the HSP(DT) in the 2015/16 school year. The findings have affirmed the effectiveness of the programme as an anti-drug preventive education initiative. For the participating schools, the findings showed that more than 90% of the principals and teachers considered that the HSP(DT) could help students develop positive values, enhance their understanding of the harmful effects of drugs and foster a drug-free school culture. About 80% of the schools and partnering NGOs reflected that the implementation of the HSP(DT) was smooth. As for students, more than 60% considered that the drug testing component and anti-drug preventive activities under the HSP(DT)

could help reinforce their resolve to stay away from drugs. More than 70% of the students who completed the drug testing in the 2015/16 school year believed that their personal information was well protected and were satisfied with the operation of the drug testing. Over 80% of the parents expressed their support for the schools' implementation of the HSP(DT). For the schools not participating in the HSP(DT), the findings showed that the principals and teachers generally agreed on the positive impacts of the HSP(DT). Over 60% of the teachers, 60% of the students and 80% of the parents indicated support for the schools' implementation of the HSP(DT).

17. In light of the positive findings and views collected from stakeholders in the evaluation research, we will continue to implement the HSP(DT). PAS(N)2 has drawn up improvement measures for implementation from the 2017/18 school year onwards, including enhancing operational flexibility as well as resource and administrative support for the participating schools and NGOs. PAS(N)2's continuous work will be needed to strategise the promotion and evaluate the contents of the HSP(DT), with a view to encouraging more schools to participate in the programme for the benefit of students. PAS(N)2 will also continue to supervise the processing of applications under the HSP(DT) and monitor their implementation to ensure a proper use of the BDF funding.

18. PAS(N)2 has also been exploring other initiatives to broaden the dissemination of anti-drug messages to secondary schools, one of which being a new trial programme "Participate in Sports, Stay Away from Drugs" launched in the 2017/18 school year. This programme, which promotes healthy lifestyles and an anti-drug culture in secondary schools through students' participation in the organisation of sports-related and/or health-related activities, and in supporting student athletes taking part in sports competitions, has received encouraging responses with 110 participating schools. PAS(N)2 will review its effectiveness to facilitate further consideration of reinforcing anti-drug preventive education in secondary schools.

19. In relation to drug testing, ACAN announced the consultation conclusion on the RESCUE Drug Testing Scheme in July 2014, recommending that the Government should continue to engage stakeholders, professional bodies and the public in discussion, explore ways to address their concerns, and develop a follow-up mechanism which could effectively balance giving a chance to drug abusers while providing counselling and treatment, for a second-stage public consultation. We do not have any timetable for this consultation at present, which if conducted would need PAS(N)2's assistance.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

20. We have reviewed the current level of manpower in ND and conclude that the workload of PAS(N)2 cannot be absorbed by PAS(N)1, the other AOSGC officer.

21. PAS(N)1's schedule covers anti-drug PE&P strategies and initiatives for the general public and local communities; policy, management and operation of the BDF, including supervising the annual funding exercises and processing of funding applications, ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the implementation and effectiveness of the funded projects, and identifying areas for improvement; monitoring drug trends through the CRDA and other surveys; and monitoring and formulating necessary responses, including proposed legislative control, to the threats posed by emerging drugs.

22. PAS(N)1 is also responsible for taking forward AML/CFT measures pursuant to the relevant recommendations of the FATF. Specifically, PAS(N)1 needs to prepare for the FATF's Mutual Evaluation on Hong Kong in 2018, which will cover the assessment of the implementation of the FATF's Recommendation 32 on the establishment of a statutory declaration/disclosure system for the cross-boundary movement of physical currency and bearer negotiable instruments. In this respect, LegCo already passed the Cross-boundary Movement of Physical Currency and Bearer Negotiable Instruments Ordinance in June 2017 to deliver Hong Kong's international obligation to establish the system. PAS(N)1 is currently making active preparation in coordination with the Customs and Excise Department as the major law enforcement agency for commencing the Ordinance in the second half of 2018. With a full schedule as outlined above, PAS(N)1 has no spare capacity to take up the work now being undertaken by PAS(N)2.

23. For other AOSGC officers in SB, they are already fully committed to duties on different subject areas. We consider that redeployment is not operationally feasible without adversely affecting the discharge of their schedule of duties. The duties and existing work priorities of the six Principal Assistant Secretaries in SB are at Enclosure 1.

24. The scope of responsibilities of PAS(N)2 is at Enclosure 2. The proposed organisation charts of ND and SB with the PAS(N)2 post incorporated are at Enclosures 3 and 4 respectively.

CONSULTATION

25. ACAN has been consulted and supported the implementation of anti-drug measures on a sustained basis as well as the Government's efforts to strengthen collaboration among different parties in combating drug abuse.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

26. The proposal will bring about an additional notional annual salary cost at mid-point of \$2,094,600. The additional full annual average staff cost, including salaries and staff on-cost, is \$2,981,490. The relevant resources will be reflected in the Estimates of subsequent years.

ADVICE SOUGHT

27. Members are invited to comment on the proposal. Subject to Members' views, we will follow up according to established mechanism.

**Narcotics Division
Security Bureau
November 2017**

**Duties and Existing work Priorities of
Principal Assistant Secretaries in the Security Bureau**

Principal Assistant Secretary for Security (A) is responsible for policy matters relating to frontier closed area, counter-terrorism, surrender of fugitive offenders and mutual legal assistance in criminal matters. He oversees the liaison between the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government and the Garrison and handles matters with a Garrison dimension. He also deals with policy and resource matters relating to the Government Flying Service and certain security-related functions of the Customs and Excise Department, as well as matters concerning the Security and Guarding Services Industry Authority.

2. Principal Assistant Secretary for Security (B) is responsible for policies in respect of the emergency rescue services provided by the Fire Services Department, including matters relating to fire safety, fire prevention, fire-fighting, the emergency ambulance service, and the control of dangerous goods. He also oversees policies relating to the penal system maintained by the Correctional Services Department, covering such matters as rehabilitation of prisoners and the prison development programme. He deals with issues relating to the transfer of sentenced persons and supports the statutory boards on prison sentence review and prisoner supervision. In addition, he is responsible for the aviation security policies, including monitoring the effectiveness of the Hong Kong Aviation Security Programme.

3. Principal Assistant Secretary for Security (C) is responsible for immigration policies and strategies in respect of a wide range of matters. These include nationality and residency; travel convenience of Hong Kong residents; visa regime for foreign nationals and travel convenience for Taiwan residents; the Outbound Travel Alert system and assistance to Hong Kong residents in distress outside Hong Kong. He oversees immigration policy issues concerning entry into Hong Kong for study, employment, investment and settlement, as well as those relating to entry from the Mainland, including the operations of the One-way Permit and Two-way Permit Scheme. He is also responsible for the policy, resource and housekeeping matters of the Immigration Department.

4. Principal Assistant Secretary for Security (D) is responsible for handling policy issues concerning registration of persons, births, deaths and

marriages; the processing of detention and deportation cases under the Immigration Ordinance; the processing of immigration-related statutory and non-statutory petition cases; and housekeeping matters relating to the Immigration Tribunal, Registration of Persons Tribunal, HKSAR Passports Appeal Board, and Civil Celebrant of Marriages Appointment Appeal Board. He is also responsible for policy, legislation and resource matters relating to the operation of control points and related co-operation with the Mainland, including complementary immigration/enforcement measures on cross-boundary students. Furthermore, he is engaged in the planning for new boundary control points; and implementing various new information technology initiatives (including new information technology infrastructure, new immigration control system and the next generation smart Hong Kong Identity Card system) of the Immigration Department.

5. Principal Assistant Secretary for Security (E) is responsible for policy matters concerning internal security and law and order, as well as resources matters relating to the Hong Kong Police Force and the Hong Kong Auxiliary Police Force. He also oversees the implementation of the Interception of Communications and Surveillance Ordinance. He is the Secretary to the Fight Crime Committee and oversees the operation of the Committee and its Subcommittees.

6. Principal Assistant Secretary for Security (Review) is responsible for the review of the strategy of handling of non-refoulement claims, including measures in sustaining efforts in combatting the smuggling of non-ethnic Chinese illegal immigrants to Hong Kong and preventing arrival of potential claimants; measures to expedite the screening of non-refoulement claims and appeals, as well as the removal of rejected claimants; studying detention measures; and developing proposals for amending the Immigration Ordinance to improve the screening procedures for non-refoulement claims and related matters. He is also currently responsible for handling policy issues concerning combatting human smuggling and trafficking crimes.

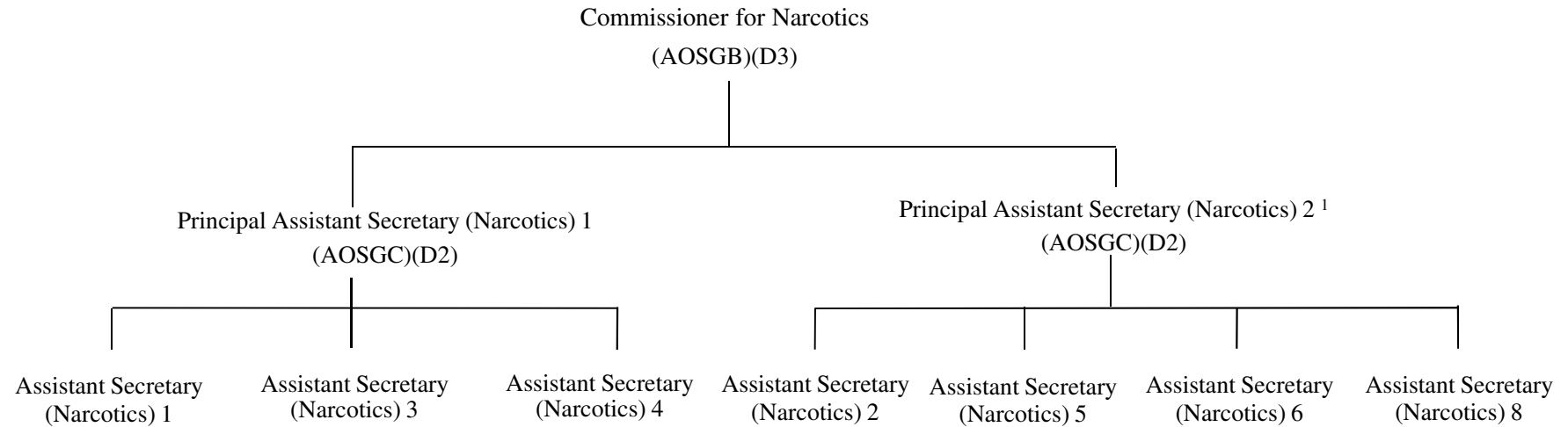
**Proposed Duty List of
Principal Assistant Secretary (Narcotics)2**

Rank : Administrative Officer Staff Grade C

Responsible to : Commissioner for Narcotics

- To continue re-engineering existing treatment and rehabilitation (T&R) services to cope with the latest drug trends.
- To promote collaboration between different sectors and modalities to ensure a continuum of services for drug abusers and promote new and effective ways for the provision of T&R services to meeting prevailing needs.
- To consolidate and enhance T&R services in the context of the implementation of the launched Three-year Plan on Drug Treatment and Rehabilitation Services in Hong Kong and map out the strategic directions for the next Three-year Plans.
- To render assistance to existing drug treatment and rehabilitation centres in seeking upgrading and relocation to fulfill the statutory licensing requirements or to enhance service capacity or sophistication, to address issues in land use planning, land administration, etc. and to assist in local consultation exercises.
- To oversee and promote initiatives of anti-drug preventive education in secondary schools, including implementing the Healthy School Programme with a Drug Testing Component, reviewing and considering the way forward of the programme “Participate in Sports, Stay Away from Drugs”, and coordinating with relevant bureaux/departments to strengthen anti-drug preventive education in schools.
- To assist in mapping out the way forward of the RESCUE Drug Testing Scheme.

Organisation Chart of Narcotics Division

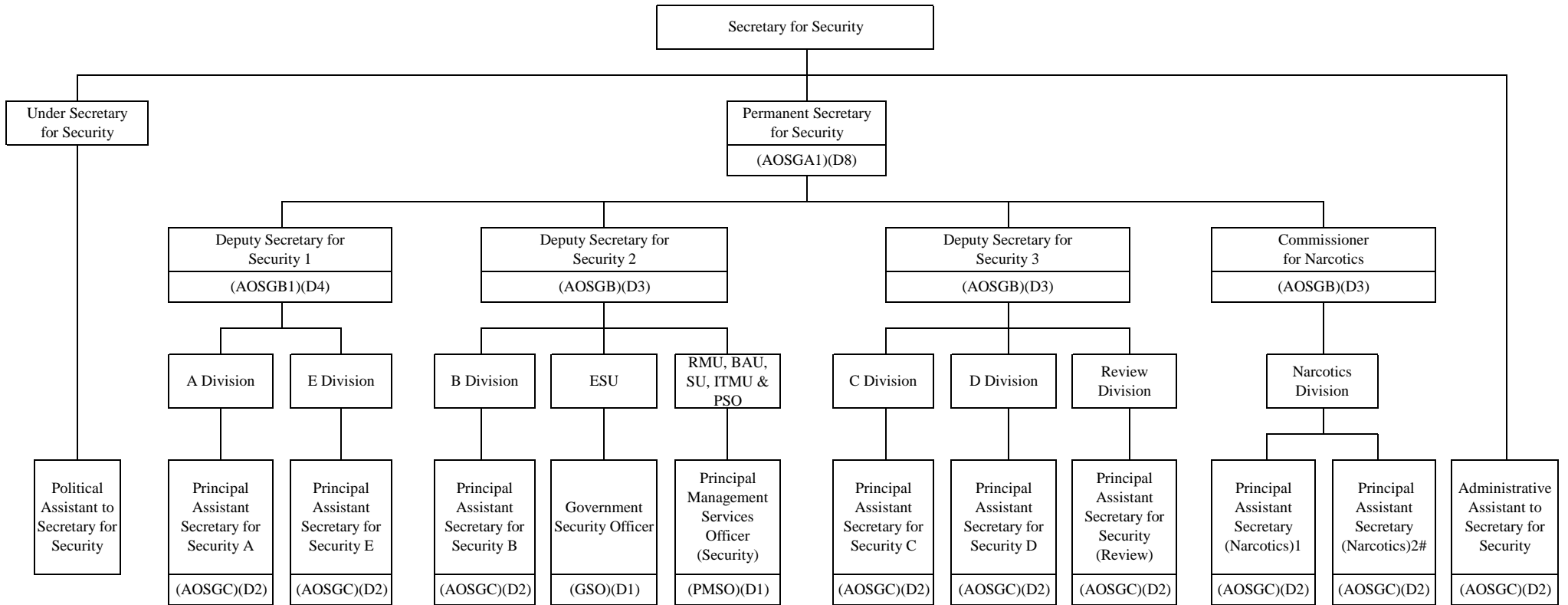


Legend

AOSGB : Administrative Officer Staff Grade B
AOSGC : Administrative Officer Staff Grade C

¹ Supernumerary AOSGC post proposed to be turned permanent

Organisation Chart of Security Bureau



Note: *Position as at 28.11.2017

- Legend**
- AOSGA1: Administrative Officer Staff Grade A1
 - AOSGB: Administrative Officer Staff Grade B
 - AOSGB1: Administrative Officer Staff Grade B1
 - AOSGC: Administrative Officer Staff Grade C
 - BAU: Bureau Administration Unit
 - ESU: Emergency Support Unit
 - GSO: Government Security Officer
 - ITMU: Information Technology Management Unit
 - PMSO: Principal Management Services Officer
 - PSO: Pilot Scheme Office for Provision of Publicly-funded Legal Assistance for Non-refoulement Claimants
 - RMU: Resource Management Unit
 - SU: Statistics Unit

Supernumerary AOSGC post proposed to be turned permanent