



Report on Further Development of the Political Appointment System

Highlights

October 2007

Background

The Report on Further Development of the Political Appointment System sets out the views received by the Government during the consultation period and the proposed way forward after taking into account these views.

The Case for Further Development of the Political Appointment System

In overall terms, many views share the need for further development of the Political Appointment System through creating two additional layers of political appointees, in order to

- complement constitutional development and pave the way for universal suffrage;
- attract wider spectrum of expertise for better governance;
- provide stronger support for political work to meet the demands of people-based governance;
- better delineate the responsibilities between political appointees and civil servants to preserve a politically impartial civil service.

Creation of New Positions

(I) Titles and Number of New Positions in Bureaux

To create in each Policy Bureau (except the Civil Service Bureau):

- One Deputy Director of Bureau*
- One Political Assistant to Director of Bureau (Political Assistant)

(II) Job Descriptions

- Deputy Directors of Bureau: To assist Directors of Bureau in undertaking the full range of political work (including LegCo business), and to deputise for the Directors of Bureau during the latter's temporary absence.
- Political Assistants: To provide political support and input to the Directors and Deputy Directors of Bureau, and to conduct the necessary political liaison.
- The job descriptions have been refined to underline the political nature of the duties of the new political positions, so as to provide a clearer delineation with the roles of the civil service.

(III) Appointment

- The Chief Executive (CE) will chair an Appointment Committee, which comprises the Secretaries of Department, the relevant Director(s) of Bureau and the Director of the CE's Office, to consider nominations and appointments of

* "Deputy Director of Bureau" is the rank title. The post title will be "Under Secretary".

potential candidates to fill the new political positions, and assess and consider the suitability of these candidates for the positions.

- Appointment and removal will be made by CE on the advice of the Committee.

(IV) Code for Political Appointees

- "Code for Officials under the Political Appointment System", adapted from the existing one for Principal Officials, will cover all politically appointed officials.

(V) Remuneration

- Deputy Directors of Bureau: Within a range equivalent to 65% to 75% of the remuneration package for a Director of Bureau.
- Political Assistants: Within a range equivalent to 35% to 55% of the remuneration package for a Director of Bureau.

Private Offices of the Secretaries of Department

- One position each of Political Assistant to Chief Secretary for Administration and Political Assistant to Financial Secretary, both at the rank of Political Assistant to Director of Bureau, should be created.

Civil Service under the Political Appointment System

- Role of Civil Servants: Civil servants will continue to uphold the principle of political neutrality. In time, their roles in policy research, analysis and formulation of options will become more prominent. The new political positions will not be created at the expense of the civil service establishment.
- No "revolving door": Serving civil servants have to leave the civil service before taking up political appointment.
- The Secretary for the Civil Service (SCS): Given his unique role, SCS can continue to retain his civil service status, and will not be provided with a politically appointed Deputy Director of Bureau or a Political Assistant.
- Administrative Assistant and Press Secretary serving the Principal Officials: They should be filled by civil servants on posting.

Implementation

- We will seek the approval of the LegCo Finance Committee for the creation of the proposed positions. The filling of these positions can be implemented in phases if necessary.

Copies of the Report are available at District Offices. The Report has also been uploaded on the website of the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau (<http://www.cmab.gov.hk>).