

研究背景

高官問責制推行至今已達15年。雖然問責制的實施及擴展，確實回應了某些管治問題，但在各種因素的影響下，此制度似乎譏多於譽。作為特區政府高層次的政治架構之一，問責制的成效不但影響政府的民望，更影響各項主要政策的制訂和執行。隨著政治和社會環境的改變，政制發展必然朝向政治化和民主化，不能再返回官僚治港的體制。因此，問責制應該如何走下去，是必須正視的管治問題。

問責制的核心問題

問責制未能回應公眾對於「官員問責」的關注

特區政府一直未有明確區分官員的個人責任和管治團隊的整體責任，令公眾傾向以「有沒有官員下台」判斷問責精神是否彰顯。

管治團隊欠缺共同的政治理念

在沒有共同的政治背景以及制度誘因下，主要官員難免會欠缺互相支持的誘因。雖然行政會議是集體決策機關，但其「集體負責」原則欠缺明確的定義，行會的內閣化亦未有經歷長時間的發展。

副局長及政治助理未能充分發揮支援局長的功能

礙於政策制訂程序和經驗所限，副局長和政治助理未能充分發揮他們的價值和重要性。加上政助的地位和權力並未能夠得到各個持分者的認可，所收集的意見亦過於零散，難以轉化為實質的政策建議。

未有完整的政治人才培訓和晉升機制

在沒有成熟的政黨和議會體制輔助下，香港一直欠缺穩定的政治人才供應。政助與副局長的資歷、工作要求和年齡也有明顯差距，兩者之間欠缺銜接崗位，令政助容易流失。

政策建議

建議一： 將副局長的聘用及培訓制度化

政府應改變現時副局長的遴選程序和機制，在聘用副局長時，透過加入「入職條件」、「招聘考試」、「面試」和「培訓」四個步驟，為副局長的聘用建立一套有系統的機制。

建議二： 調整局長薪酬，增加常秘晉升局長的誘因

我們建議特區政府將各司局長的薪酬，與首長級第8薪點（D8）維持一定比例，以增加高級公務員成為局長的誘因。

建議三： 政治助理改為特別顧問，彈性支援局長

我們建議政府從政治委任層中取消政治助理一職，將現時屬於政治助理的資源，交由各司局長自行彈性調配。如司局長希望繼續聘用副局長以外的政治官員協助施政，我們建議政府改以「特別顧問」取代原來「政治助理」的角色。特別顧問須為特定範疇的專家，屬於司局長個人的智囊。

建議四： 主要官員須定期主持社區居民大會

我們建議下屆政府的主要官員須要定期到地區主持「公眾答問大會」，向市民交代施政和面對市民質詢，以增強官民溝通，並提高官員的政治才能。

建議五： 將行政會議改組為政府內閣，落實集體負責

我們建議政府將行政會議內非官守成員的數目限制至不多於5人，並不設非官守議員召集人一職。在由行政長官和主要官員佔多數的組成下，行政會議將改組為政府內閣。主要官員將以內閣成員身份提出意見，並進行集體決策，內閣所有決議將均屬集體決議。



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Background

The Principal Officials Accountability System (the Accountability System) has been implemented for 15 years. Although the implementation and expansion of the Accountability System is a response to certain governance problems, the accountability system seems to receive more negative comments than positive ones. As one of the high-level political structures of the SAR Government, the effectiveness of the Accountability System does not only affect the government's poll ratings, but also the formulation and implementation of major policies. With the changes in political and social environment, politicization and democratization are the inevitable trends of Hong Kong's political development, and Hong Kong cannot take a back track to bureaucratic governance. Therefore, how the accountability system should continue is a matter of governance that must be addressed.

Core issues of the Accountability System

(1) The Accountability System fails to respond to public concerns about the "accountability of officials"

The SAR Government fails to clearly distinguish between the personal responsibility of officials and the overall responsibility of the whole governance team, which inclines the public to use "whether there is any official who can step down" as a rubric for judging whether the spirit of accountability has been honored.

2) The governance team lacks common political ideas

Principal Officials have neither common background nor incentive to support each other. Though the Executive Council is an organ for the officials to make collective judgments, the concept of "collective responsibility" of the Executive Council also lacks a clear definition, nor has the "Cabinetization" of the Executive Council gone through a long period of development.

(3) Under Secretaries and Political Assistants are unable to fully fulfil their functions to support Secretaries

The Under Secretaries and Political Assistants failed to fully demonstrate their value and importance in enhancing the capacity of the Secretaries owing to their limited experience and procedural limitations. Moreover, the status and power of Political Assistants have not been recognized by the various stakeholders, and the views they collect are too fragmented and difficult to translate into substantive policy recommendations.

(4) There is no complete political personnel training and promotion mechanism

Without the aid of a mature political party and a fully-developed legislature, it is difficult to ensure the supply and promotion of political talents from within the political structure. The differences in qualifications, job requirements and age between Under Secretaries and Political Assistants are obvious, and the two positions lack transitional posts, which makes it easy for Political Assistants to leave the government.

Policy Recommendations

(1) Institutionalize the appointment and training of the Under Secretaries

We propose that the SAR Government should change the selection mechanism and procedures for the Under Secretaries. When hiring an Under Secretary, the government should add four procedures, namely "Entry Requirements", "Recruitment Examination", "Interview" and "Training", so as to establish a systematic appointment mechanism.

(2) Adjust the remuneration of Secretaries to increase the incentive for Permanent Secretaries to take up positions as Principal Officials

We propose that the SAR Government should maintain a certain percentage difference between the pay of the Secretaries and Point 8 of the Directorate Pay Scale (D8) to increase the incentive for Permanent Secretaries to take up positions as Principal Officials.

(3) Change the role of Political Assistants to Special Advisors to provide flexible support to Secretaries

We propose that the government should remove the post of Political Assistants from the political appointment system and transfer the existing resources that currently belong to the Political Assistants to the corresponding Secretaries for their flexible arrangement.

If the Secretary wishes to continue to employ political appointees (on top of Under Secretary) to help in the administration, we propose that the government should replace the original "Political Assistant" position with one for a "Special Advisor". The Special Advisor should be an expert in a particular area and act as a personal assistant or a staff member for the Secretary.

(4) Require Principal Officials to hold community residents' meetings on a regular basis

We recommend that the Principal Officials of the next administration should conduct "public question and answer sessions" regularly in different districts to explain policies to the public and to face public inquiries so as to enhance communication and strengthen the political skills of the officials.

(5) Reorganize the Executive Council into a government cabinet and exercise collective responsibility

We recommend that the government should limit the number of unofficial members of the Executive Council to no more than five persons and cancel the position of Convenor of the Executive Council Non-official Members. When the majority of the Executive Council consists of the Chief Executive and the Principal Officials, the Executive Council will be reorganized into the Government Cabinet. The Principal Officials will express their views as cabinet members and make collective decisions. All cabinet resolutions will be collectively resolved.




培育政治人才 發展內閣制度

檢討高官問責制及行政會議

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