

## A 'smooth system' needed for DBs

TO outgoing Southern District Officer, Mr Kwong Kichi, district administration is still in a developing stage.

"In doing something, it is often the human factor, not an established system, upon which the outcome depends," Mr Kwong said.

Not every government department, he explained, fully understood the concept and machinery of district administration.

He said some departments could exercise enough flexibility in handling certain issues.

If you are acquainted with the personnel, he said, you can get efficient response, otherwise, you run into red tape.

"It's all a matter of personal contact," Mr Kwong said.

Aware of this, the district officer said he was determined to accomplish his last mission before leaving the job next month.

He is paving a smooth way for district board members — all will be unofficials from next April — to acquire information about the district and government.

He said a system would be established to reinforce



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secretariat support to the members, by providing information, conducting paper research or site investigations for them.

These will enhance detail discussions at board and committee meetings.

Mr Kwong said the existing practice was an informal assistance to the members.

"To smoothen the machinery of the board, it is necessary to have a system.

"This is particularly important when all district

board members, including the district officer, will be unofficials from next April, and they will then have to show more initiative and respond to various government policies.

"We are working out procedural arrangements for the system which I hope it could be implemented later this year," Mr Kwong said.

Certain guidelines will also be set on what requests from board members will be allowed.

One obvious requirement, Mr Kwong noted, was that board members must specify the purpose of his request, which must be in the interest of the district.

"One thing we won't do is public opinion surveys — this should be left for the members who are supposed to take up the responsibility," he said.

Mr Kwong was optimistic that an official district board chairman, to be elected by the board from next April, could maintain a close link with the District Management Committee (DMC) comprising government officials.

At present, DMC advises and makes suggestions to the district board which is supposed to have the final say.

"DMC members from more important departments such as Transport, Housing and Education, will still attend board meetings to answer questions though they will have no voting rights," Mr Kwong said.

He added that it was still under consideration whether the unofficial board chairman should attend DMC meetings.

Mr Kwong joined the civil service in 1972. He became the then City District Officer in Southern in 1981, which was later called City District Commissioner in the following year.

He took up the present office as Southern District Officer in 1982 when the district administration scheme was launched.

Mr Kwong, 33, has been involved in district administration in Southern for four years.

"We were the first in the urban areas to have a Works Progress Committee, which is an inter-departmental body to coordinate development projects and clearances in the district," he said.