

**For discussion
on 9 February 2001**

FCR(2000-01)71

ITEM FOR FINANCE COMMITTEE

HEAD 29 - CIVIL SERVICE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

Subhead 700 General other non-recurrent

New Item “Three-year Training and Development Programme to Enhance Training in the Civil Service”

Members are invited to approve the creation of a new commitment of \$50 million for launching a three-year Training and Development Programme from 2001-02 to 2003-04 to enhance training in the civil service.

PROBLEM

Training and development (T&D) programmes for civil servants need to be strengthened to support the Civil Service Reform initiatives and to promote a continuous learning culture in the civil service.

PROPOSAL

2. To help the civil service to provide better service to the community, the Secretary for the Civil Service proposes to create a new commitment of \$50 million under the control of the Director, Civil Service Training and Development Institute (D, CSTDI), to launch a three-year T&D Programme for the Civil Service from 2001-02 to 2003-04.

/JUSTIFICATION

JUSTIFICATION

3. T&D plays an important part in enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the civil service. At present, to meet service-wide training needs CSTDI, the Government's central training agency, provides centrally-organized management, information technology (IT), China studies, language and communication courses. Vocational, technical and professional training is provided by departments/grades to meet training needs specific to the individual department/grade. In 2001-02, CSTDI is estimated to spend \$155 million on service-wide training. The number of training places offered by CSTDI and departments will be around 420 000. These are in addition to the learning opportunities available through cyber learning and self-learning packages.

4. With the implementation of the Civil Service Reform initiatives, it has become even more important to step up T&D to bring about a more dynamic, resilient and motivated civil service. Accordingly, on top of the existing training programmes we propose to introduce new and enhanced T&D to provide an additional 90 000 training places in the next three years. We will give particular attention to the training needs of junior staff and a large part of the training places will be reserved for them.

Focus of the new T&D Programme

5. The proposed T&D Programme will focus on the three areas, namely training for the affected staff in the Voluntary Retirement (VR) grades, training in relation to the Civil Service Reform initiatives, and promotion of continuous learning culture. The main focus in each of these training areas is set out below.

Training for the affected staff in the VR grades

6. Training will be provided to staff affected by the VR exercise so that they can acquire the necessary skills to adapt to the new working environment and to further develop their career. Four main categories of staff will be given priority in receiving training –

- (a) for staff who will be redeployed to positions of a new job nature, training to help them bridge over to their new duties;

/(b)

- (b) for clerical and secretarial staff (who are among the VR grades) who will be posted to other departments, training on language, IT skills, and culture and mindset change, to develop their personal effectiveness and help them to be more positive and responsive to changes in the new environment;
- (c) for staff of the VR grades who need to acquire new skills for further career development, training to enhance their job competence and career mobility; and
- (d) for supervisors of staff affected by the VR, training on management of staff in job transition and redeployment, management of re-training programmes, staff relation and communication, counselling skills and handling emotion and stress.

7. The above training programmes include both CSTDI's central programmes and departmental programmes, together offering about 19 000 training places. The programmes will start in 2001-02 to tie in with the departure of VR-takers and the redeployment plans of departments.

Training in relation to Civil Service Reform initiatives

8. The Civil Service Reform Consultative Document published in 1999 sets out changes in managing the civil service, namely entry and exit mechanism, pay and fringe benefits, disciplinary procedures, performance management, etc. Many of the reform initiatives have been implemented progressively since April 2000. We need to increase staff understanding of these new initiatives and to help them to rise to the challenge of the Reform.

9. We propose to –

- (a) organise workshops on handling staff discipline and improving performance, and managing a diverse workforce under mixed staff situations;
- (b) organise programmes to increase staff's sense of responsibility and accountability and their motivation and commitment, and enhance their performance-based and service-oriented culture;

/(c)

- (c) provide training for managers to help their staff better understand and support various reform initiatives and the new civil service system; and
- (d) develop training resource packages on performance management and continuous service improvement.

The training under this programme area will offer 15 000 training places.

Promotion of continuous learning culture

10. It is important to continue to develop the learning culture in the civil service so that civil servants are more aware of the importance of continuous learning in building up their resilience and capability in an ever-changing society. Civil servants should also be encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning and be acclimatized with the new service culture and working environment under the Reform. We propose to enhance staff's access to learning opportunities through the following avenues –

- (a) Expansion of CSTDI's Cyber Learning Centre (CLC) – we propose to increase the capacity of the CLC from 10 000 registered users to 25 000 through upgrading its current system and developing a central e-learning platform. The contents of the programmes under the CLC will be enriched and a service-wide registration drive will be conducted to attract more civil servants to make use of the CLC;
- (b) Launching of a Training Incentive Scheme – we propose to allocate funds to departments to provide financial incentives to encourage civil servants to embark on self-initiated external study programmes or short courses that are employment-related and that suit their personal development needs, interests, and learning mode. This Scheme is an improvement over the existing arrangement under which staff are generally not reimbursed for external studies that are not directly related to their present work. The new scheme will, for example, allow a clerical officer to apply for reimbursement for management skill training run by an external institution. We propose to set the reimbursement at a maximum amount of \$1,000 or 75% of course fees, whichever is less. We expect that at least 18 000 training places will be offered through the Scheme;

/(c)

- (c) Expansion of self-learning resources – we propose to provide more self-learning training packages in the form of cyber, CD-ROM or paper-based learning packages on a wide range of subjects. The target users will be extended to all staff bringing about 10 000 training places;
- (d) Enhancing resources in departments – we propose to strengthen departments' learning infrastructure and training facilities by helping them to set up departmental learning booths and self-learning courseware for computer or web-based training. Where there is a departmental intranet, we will replicate the CLC on the intranet. We expect that this can provide 5 000 training places; and
- (e) Promotional and experience-sharing activities – we propose to organise promotional activities to encourage greater access to the e-learning platform and to support organisation-wide learning. These activities include experience sharing sessions, publicity and promotional activities and exhibitions on learning resources. We expect that this can provide 8 000 training places.

Staff Release

11. As most of the courses under the proposed T&D Programme will be short courses of one or two days and as different user-friendly learning modes will be provided, we envisage that staff release should not be a serious problem. We will reinforce the message to departments that they should maintain a balance between staff training and operational efficiency and release staff for training as far as possible. To assist departments, CSTDI will approach them to facilitate the development of departmental T&D plans to support the programme initiatives.

Effectiveness of the Programme

12. We will conduct surveys to assess participants' reaction to the programmes and collect feedback from departments and supervisors on skill enhancement and behavioural change after training and the impact on the departments' service delivery. The three-year T&D Programme aims at achieving long-term culture and mindset change of civil servants, and this will be measured against staff's commitment to continuous learning, performance at work and service to the public where applicable.

/FINANCIAL

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

13. We estimate that the three-year T&D Programme will incur a non-recurrent expenditure of \$50 million. The cashflow requirements for the three main focus programme areas are as follows –

	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
(a) Training for affected staff in the VR grades	5,200	4,400	4,400	14,000
(b) Training in relation to Civil Service Reform initiatives	2,100	1,950	1,950	6,000
(c) Promotion of continuous learning culture				
(i) Cyber Learning Centre	1,600	1,200	1,200	4,000
(ii) Training Incentive Scheme	9,000	4,500	4,500	18,000
(iii) Self-learning resources	1,000	250	250	1,500
(iv) Thematic training programmes	1,000	750	750	2,500
(v) Learning initiatives	2,100	950	950	4,000
Sub-total	14,700	7,650	7,650	30,000
Total	22,000	14,000	14,000	50,000

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

14. In his 2000 Policy Address, the Chief Executive announced the initiative to strengthen training and development programmes to support Civil Service Reform initiatives, including training of staff for redeployment through a three-year programme from 2001-02 to 2003-04 to help civil servants to develop a self-learning culture and the skills and knowledge to meet the latest service requirements, and to cope with the job changes.

15. We have consulted the Civil Service Training and Development Advisory Board¹, Staff Sides and departmental representatives on the proposed T&D Programme. All support the proposal in full. The Advisory Board welcomes in particular the emphasis on continuous learning in addition to training to enhance skills and work culture. The Staff Sides stress that equal training opportunities should be provided to all staff, and particular focus should be placed on junior staff. They also suggest that external resources should be used if existing training facilities cannot cope with the demand.

16. We briefed the Legislative Council Panel on Public Service on 20 November 2000 and 15 January 2001 on the details of the proposed three-year T&D Programme. Members in general support the proposal.

Civil Service Bureau
February 2001

¹ The Civil Service Training and Development Advisory Board advises the Civil Service Bureau on international training and development best practices and how such practices could be adopted in the Hong Kong civil service context. It is chaired by the Secretary for the Civil Service and comprises representatives from the private sector and government representatives.