

**LegCo Panel on Public Service
Meeting on 20 November 2000
3- year Training and Development Programme**

This paper briefs members on a proposed 3-year Training and Development (T&D) Programme to be launched from 2001/02 to 2003/04 to enhance training for civil servants.

BACKGROUND

2. Training and development play an important part to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the Civil Service. Through training and development, civil servants are nurtured to maximise their performance for the effective functioning of departments, leading eventually to quality service for the public, and fulfilling the mission of the Government. To meet common departmental needs, the Civil Service Training and Development Institute (CSTDI) provides centrally-organised management, information technology (IT), China Studies, languages and communication courses as well as customised training programmes for departments. In 1999/2000, CSTDI spent about \$130 million to provide classroom training and self-learning packages to 200,000 trainees. Vocational, technical and professional training are arranged by departments. There are both full-time and part-time courses provided, either locally or overseas, for staff to obtain recognised qualifications or specialist knowledge that enable them to enhance performance in their professional duties. In 1998/99, 330,000 trainees benefited from the training programmes offered by departments.

3. Following the implementation of the Civil Service Reform initiatives, it has become even more important to introduce suitable training and development programmes to support the reform initiatives to facilitate attitude change and to foster a continuously learning culture to enable civil servants to be better equipped to meet the needs of a civil service which is undergoing continuous transformation in the face of new challenges in the external environment.

4. With the objective to improving the quality of the Civil Service through training so that better service can be provided to the community, we intend to seek \$50 million from the Finance Committee to launch a three-year T&D Programme from 2001/02 to 2003/04. The programme will include multi-faceted learning opportunities to enable civil servants to be more dynamic, resilient and motivated to handle the changes they are facing in the external and internal environment. Particular attention will be given to junior staff and staff groups who are most affected by changes in the civil service environment.

FOCUS OF THE PROGRAMME

5. The 3-year Programme will focus on three major areas :

(a) *Training for the affected staff in the Voluntary Retirement (VR) grades*

We are committed to providing sufficient training to staff of VR grades who choose to remain in the service so that they can acquire the necessary skills to adapt to the new working environment and to pursue further in their career. Four main categories of staff will be given priority in receiving training –

- (i) Staff who will be re-deployed to other positions and whose job nature will change as a consequence

We propose to provide financial assistance to Heads of Departments and Heads of Grades to commission vocational or skills training to help staff bridge over to their new duties in the same or another grade. CSTDI will also organise seminars, exhibitions and workshops on change management to help them handle changes positively and be more resilient.

- (ii) Clerical and secretarial staff

They constitute a significant portion of the VR grade staff and some of them will be posted to another department performing different job functions. CSTDI will organise general training for them to improve their language and IT skills. It will also organise culture and mindset change programmes to develop their personal effectiveness and assist them to be more positive, proactive and responsive to changes in the new environment.

- (iii) Staff of the obsolescent grades

Departments will organise training for staff of obsolescent grades, e.g. Calligraphist, Data Processor, Telephone Operator, so that they may acquire new skills for career development. This will enhance their job competence and career mobility.

- (iv) Staff managers and supervisors of the VR Grades

We propose to provide special training to help them manage and handle staff in job transition. This includes training in managing re-training programmes, staff relations and communication, counselling skills and handling emotion and stress.

The CSTDI is currently liaising with HoDs/HoGs to identify and develop specific training programmes for the departments. Training programmes will start progressively early next year to tie in with the departure date of VR-takers and the redeployment plan of departments.

(b) *Training in relation to the Civil Service Reform Initiatives*

The Civil Service Reform Consultative Document sets out changes in four major areas for managing the civil service, namely entry and exit mechanism, pay and fringe benefits, disciplinary procedures and performance management, professional training and personal development.

Many of the reform initiatives have been implemented progressively since April 2000. Staff's understanding and buy-in to the reform initiatives are critical to success. In the past few months, CSTDI have organised some programmes to acquaint staff with the new Civil Service systems. We will keep up the effort and introduce more new programmes to enable staff and departments to take forward the implementation of the reform initiatives and to roll out the new Civil Service system.

We will develop a full range of programmes to enable departmental management and staff to focus on the civil service reform direction, the new civil service systems and HR best practices. Proposed programmes will include seminars on Mandatory Provident Fund, workshops on handling staff discipline and improving performance, and managing a diversified workforce under a mixed staff situations. Training in managing change, counselling, handling work stress and emotion, staff relations and communication, which are common concerns of staff, will also be organised.

We will also provide training to help management staff lead staff to better understand and support the various reform initiatives and new civil service systems.

(c) *Promotion of continuous learning culture*

It is important that a learning culture be developed in the Civil Service so that civil servants are more aware of the importance of continuous learning and improvement. Staff should be encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning to meet present and future challenges and be acclimatised with the new service culture and working environment created under the Civil Service Reform initiatives. Encouragement of learning would help the Civil Service move towards the IT and knowledge management era, and bring about a better workforce with higher resilience and flexibility. Like our citizens, civil servants should also be part of the life-long learning culture for Hong Kong.

6. To promote the self-learning culture in the Civil Service, we propose to enhance staff's access to training and learning opportunities through the following avenues -

Expansion of CSTDI's Cyber Learning Centre (CLC)

CSTDI will enhance the existing capacity of the CLC through up-grading its system and developing a central e-learning platform for access by all departments to build a gate-way of learning for the Civil Service. More learning packages and job aids will be offered by the CLC and linkage with web sites of tertiary institutions and e-learning providers will be established. We will also be subscribing to electronic journals and on-line learning packages that are relevant to staff's continuous development. A service-wide CLC registration drive will be conducted next year to attract more civil servants to make use of the CLC.

Training Incentive Scheme

We propose to establish a Training Incentive Scheme to allocate funds to departments to encourage staff to undertake employment-related short courses or study programmes. These courses should upgrade the officer's qualification for career mobility but may not be directly related to their current job. The aim is to encourage civil servants to cultivate a continuous learning mindset and to keep on improving themselves. Details of the Scheme will be worked out shortly.

Development and acquisition of more self learning resources

We propose to provide more self-learning training resources in the form of cyber, CD-ROM or paper-based learning packages. Currently these include mainly language training, IT training and management skill programmes. We propose to expand the range of subjects covered to include China Studies and government practices. The target users will be extended from current staff group of MPS Point 26 & above to all staff. The aim is to provide more variety of learning modes to suit different training needs, pace of learning and personal circumstances.

Enhancing resources in departments

Apart from programmes and training resources provided at the central level, we will assist departments in strengthening their learning infrastructure and enhancing their own learning resources and training facilities. We will help departments set up departmental learning booths, self learning courseware and resources for effecting computer or web-based training. Where departmental intranets exist, we will replicate the CLC on the intranets.

We will organize experience sharing workshops and best practices seminars for officers in charge of departmental learning resources to support them in implementing learning initiatives in departments.

7. We recognize that staff release may be a concern to both departments and staff. We will impress upon departments the importance of training which help bring about a better and more dynamic workforce which can respond to the rapidly changing needs of the community. We will also provide more variety of learning modes including use of external part-time and evening programmes, self-study programmes and e-learning to help solve the release problem.

WAY FORWARD

8. In the next two months, we will work closely with departments and consult the Staff Sides in drawing up the detailed training programmes and implementation plan. We will seek necessary funding from the Finance Committee early next year.

Civil Service Bureau

November 2000