

Management of the Civil Service

Policy Objective and Key Result Areas

MANAGEMENT OF THE CIVIL SERVICE

Our Policy Objective is to ensure that the Civil Service is honest, trustworthy, efficient and provides high quality service to the public.

Overall Targets

Our targets this year in pursuing this Policy Objective are –

- that the Civil Service remains and is seen by the public to be honest and trustworthy
- that the Civil Service meets community needs for quality service in an efficient manner

Progress

In 2000-2001, we have taken forward further initiatives to modernise the management of the Civil Service in line with proposals set out in the Civil Service Reform Consultation Document. We completed Stage 1 of the consultancy study on the design of a Civil Service Provident Fund Scheme which provides a sound base for development of the details of the scheme for civil servants recruited under the new terms with effect from June 2000. We have set aside \$50 million for a three-year training and development programme to promote self-development and continuous learning in the Civil Service, as well as to provide tailor-made programmes for the remaining staff of the 59 Voluntary Retirement grades to facilitate their redeployment and job transition. We have also launched a team-based performance rewards scheme in selected voluntary departments to test the feasibility and viability of introducing performance-based pay elements into our system. For the first phase of the scheme, we have focused on six departments. We shall consider the way forward in the light of the experience gained from the first phase.

We achieved the following progress in five Key Result Areas (KRAs).

1 Modernise the policy and practice applicable to the management of the Civil Service

We completed Stage 1 consultancy study on the proposal to set up the Civil Service Provident Fund scheme and conducted a public consultation exercise on the proposed design options in early 2001. Having regard to suggestions and views received during the consultation exercise and our established objectives of setting up the scheme, we finalised the broad design principles of the scheme in July 2001. We shall embark on Stage 2 of the study to work out the implementation details of the scheme. Our target is to have the scheme in place in 2003.

As part of our efforts to modernise the civil service allowance policies, we have reviewed the overtime and related allowances and implemented changes.

About 9 000 applications for retirement under the Voluntary Retirement (VR) Scheme for 59 designated grades where there is identified or anticipated staff surplus were approved. The successful applicants are being released progressively between 2001 and 2003. A general recruitment freeze will be imposed on the VR grades for five years.

2 Equip staff with the skill, knowledge and ability to deliver an efficient service to the community

The Cyber Learning Centre (CLC) launched in March 2000 provides civil servants with anywhere-anytime access to a wide variety of learning resources through the Internet. Within the year, we registered 14 000 CLC users. The content and capacity of the CLC will be upgraded, with the aim of becoming a Learning Portal for the provision of enhanced e-learning facilities for an increasing number of users.

Apart from promoting cyber learning, we also have been actively promoting a life-long learning culture. The promotion of continuous learning is one of the main themes of the three-year Training and Development Programme which we launched for civil servants in April 2001. An additional 90 000 training places will be provided through the Programme, with particular attention being given to the needs of junior civil servants. The Programme will also provide learning opportunities for staff in support of various Civil Service

Reform initiatives and in relation to the implementation of the VR exercise. Schemes to encourage self-learning and to strengthen learning resources have also been launched.

We continued to promote the exchange of ideas and experiences with the private sector and other governments through seminars, conferences and meetings. In April 2001, we organised a service-wide Learning Symposium cum Exhibition to launch the three-year Training and Development Programme and to promote a continuous learning culture. Through regular visits and training courses, our civil servants gained a better understanding of various aspects of the Mainland systems. The third Advanced China Studies programme was organised in collaboration with the National School of Administration in September 2001.

We also continued to enhance leadership development and change management training for civil servants at all levels. This includes the Leadership in Public Sector Programme and the Leadership Enhancement and Development Programme conducted by the John F Kennedy School of Government of Harvard University.

In parallel, the Official Languages Agency (OLA) has continued to work with bureaux/departments to facilitate the use of official languages. The OLA has developed an Internet version of the Electronic English-Chinese Glossary of Terms Commonly Used in Government Departments for use by civil servants and the public.

3 Promote a culture focused on achieving results

Over 8 500 staff attended customer service training courses during the 12 months from October 2000 to September 2001. We allocated \$3 million to assist departments with their initiatives aimed at enhancing a customer focused culture. We launched a service-wide Customer Service Award Scheme in 2000 to recognise staff achievements in customer service and further promote this culture in the Civil Service. The Efficiency Unit also organised a series of facilitated workshops to assist departments to put in place relevant performance measurement frameworks as published in their Step-by-Step Guide to Performance Measurement.

We continued to provide support to departments conducting Human Resource Management (HRM) reviews and initiatives. We met the senior management in departments regularly to discuss HRM

initiatives. Our aim is to help develop and promote a customer-based service culture in the public sector and achieve greater openness and accountability in the Government.

4 Uphold the integrity of the Civil Service

We worked closely with the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) and Heads of Departments to promote anti-corruption practices. In October 2000, we issued a handbook on “Ethical Leadership in Action” providing handy reference for senior managers to strengthen ethical values among their staff and to guard against corruption in their organisations.

Seminars and training sessions were organised to raise awareness of the integrity standards expected of civil servants. Since early 1999, we have arranged about 1 500 training sessions on integrity for over 40 000 civil servants.

We also reviewed central guidelines on acceptance of advantages and conflict of interest and would update them in the light of present-day circumstances. Through outreaching visits to 67 government departments in 1999 to 2001, we provided assistance to departmental management in reviewing and developing departmental guidelines on integrity management.

We have plans to launch, in November 2001, experience-sharing workshops for departmental managers on implementation of departmental integrity programmes. To enable departmental managers to have ready access to ethics development materials and to facilitate sharing of information and experience amongst government departments, an electronic information and resource centre on integrity management will be set up by the end of 2001.

Following the implementation of streamlined disciplinary procedures and the setting up of the Secretariat on Civil Service Discipline in April 2000, the processing time of disciplinary cases has been shortened by up to three months. We will continue to explore ways to further shorten the processing time.

5 Promote staff well-being

We are committed to consulting staff on any major changes which affect their conditions of service. We met regularly with the four

Central Consultative Councils to ensure effective communication with staff. We also promoted direct communication with the senior management of departments through regular gatherings. The Secretary for the Civil Service has a weekly programme of visiting departments where he meets with departmental management as well as staff representatives.

We continued to promote occupational safety and health in the Civil Service. We organised a series of promotional activities on a quarterly basis in 2001, including nine experience-sharing seminars on driving safety, two talks on violence at work, and one seminar on Safety Management System. Continuous effort will be made to organise similar activities to strengthen awareness of occupational safety and health in the Civil Service.

To help government departments implement Safety Management Systems, consulting services and financial assistance are provided to departments. Bureaux/departments are also encouraged to organise training and promotional activities on occupational safety and health specific to their requirements in ensuring the safety and health of staff.

The second and final phase of the two-year pilot scheme to provide professional counselling service to help staff cope with stress was successfully completed. Under this phase, the scheme was expanded to cover all staff except those already covered by in-house/departmentally procured counselling services. Some 120 000 staff working in 82 departments and bureaux had access to the service for six months from September 2000 to February 2001. A review of the two-year pilot scheme is underway.

Progress on each previously announced initiative under the above KRAs is set out in the “Detailed Progress” section of this report.

Looking Forward

To achieve our overall targets this year, we will undertake the following initiatives and targets under each of the KRAs for the coming year.

1

Modernise the policy and practice applicable to the management of the Civil Service

To maintain a cost-effective Civil Service which is capable of meeting community needs for quality service, we need to ensure that our management policies and practices are constantly reviewed and improved in line with present-day circumstances.

We will assess our performance in respect of this KRA against the following indicator –

- Extent to which the management of the Civil Service may be enhanced through implementation of revised policies and new initiatives. Our target is to implement smoothly the outcome of recent policy reviews in the areas of appointment, performance management, pay, conditions of service, discipline and training.

We will pursue the following initiatives and targets to deliver results in this area –

Initiative *	Target
To study and explore the feasibility of developing a new medical and dental benefits scheme for new recruits <i>(Civil Service Bureau (CSB))</i>	To complete the feasibility study by early 2003
To review the implementation of the Voluntary Retirement Scheme <i>(CSB)</i>	To complete the review by mid-2002
To explore the feasibility of widening the use of a common language examination by different grades which recruit degree holders <i>(CSB)</i>	To complete the feasibility study by mid-2002

* the bracketed information denotes the agency with lead responsibility for the initiative

2

Equip staff with the skill, knowledge and ability to deliver an efficient service to the community

Civil servants need to have the skills, knowledge and ability to provide to the community the range and level of services which it expects. The Civil Service Training and Development Institute (CSTDI) together with departmental training units provide extensive training and development programmes and advisory services.

We will assess our performance in respect of this KRA against the following indicator –

- Extent to which the Civil Service has been trained to meet service requirements. Our target is to provide an additional 90 000 training places through the three-year Training and Development Programme from 2001-2002 to 2003-2004.

We will pursue the following initiatives and targets to deliver results in this area –

Initiative	Target
<p>To promulgate guidelines for departments and grades to draw up their annual training and development plan</p> <p><i>(Civil Service Bureau (CSB)/Civil Service Training and Development Institute (CSTDI))</i></p>	<p>To assist departments and grades to draw up their training and development plans by developing and promulgating a Guide on Formulation of Annual Training and Development Plan, and organising workshops and experience-sharing sessions in early 2002</p>
<p>To publish a Directorate Personal Development Guide to encourage directorate officers to draw up their Personal Development Plan so that they can lead by example the culture of continuous learning in the Civil Service</p> <p><i>(CSB/CSTDI)</i></p>	<p>To distribute a Personal Development Guide to all directorate officers by early 2002</p>

3

Promote a culture focused on achieving results

In order to serve the community effectively, the Civil Service must adopt a client-based and outcome-oriented approach to service provision. We consider that simplification/streamlining of procedures and further delegation of authority on civil service management matters from the Civil Service Bureau to other bureaux and departments will enable the Civil Service to provide service more effectively and efficiently.

We will assess our performance in respect of this KRA against the following indicator –

- Extent to which the customer-focused culture may be enhanced. Our target is to encourage civil servants to provide quality services to members of the public.

We will pursue the following initiatives and targets to deliver results in this area –

Initiative	Target
To review civil service rules and procedures with a view to identifying further scope for delegation of authority on civil service management matters from the Civil Service Bureau to other bureaux/departments and for simplification/streamlining of procedures <i>(Civil Service Bureau (CSB))</i>	To complete the review in 2002
To organise a “Customer Service Excellence Award” Scheme to further promote a quality service culture in the Civil Service <i>(CSB)</i>	To organise an award presentation cum exhibition in early 2002

4

Uphold the integrity of the Civil Service

An honest, trustworthy and impartial Civil Service is a cornerstone of our society. We are committed to upholding the highest standards of honesty and integrity throughout the Civil Service.

We will assess our performance in respect of this KRA against the following indicator –

- Number of programmes organised to promote good conduct in the Civil Service. Our target is to organise a major promotional programme for senior managers in 2002 and to assist departments, through training and publicity programmes in 2002-2003, in reinforcing the culture of probity amongst civil servants.

We will pursue the following initiatives and targets to deliver results in this area –

Initiative	Target
<p>Together with the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC), to provide assistance to government departments to sustain a culture of probity through the civil service integrity management programme</p> <p><i>(Civil Service Bureau (CSB)/ Independent Commission Against Corruption)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To organise jointly with the ICAC a forum on current integrity challenges for senior government officials in 2002 ● In collaboration with the ICAC, to assist departments, through training programmes and publicity efforts in 2002 and 2003, to reinforce the culture of probity among civil servants
<p>To explore the scope for further shortening the processing time of disciplinary cases</p> <p><i>(CSB)</i></p>	<p>To complete the review and implement further streamlined procedures in 2002</p>

Initiative	Target
To review the existing performance management and disciplinary rules and introduce measures to enhance management responsibility at the supervisory level in the Civil Service <i>(CSB)</i>	To complete the review and implement measures in 2002

5

Promote staff well-being

A safe and healthy working environment is conducive to staff well-being and will enhance team spirit. We recognise that we must actively promote the safety and health of staff at work.

We will assess our performance in respect of this KRA against the following indicators –

- Extent to which injuries and accidents at work can be reduced through better awareness of health and safety issues. Our target is to organise at least four promotional activities in 2002.
- Extent to which Safety Management Systems are being introduced in the Civil Service. Our target is to provide support and assistance to all departments in the implementation of Safety Management Systems.

We will pursue the following initiative and target to deliver results in this area –

Initiative	Target
To strengthen promotional programmes and training to enhance awareness of the importance of safety and health of staff at work <i>(Civil Service Bureau)</i>	To organise a series of seminars and exhibitions to enhance staff's awareness of job-related hazards and promote implementation of precautionary measures against potential hazards at work in 2002