

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PANEL ON PUBLIC SERVICE

An Overview of Training and Development for Civil Servants

Purpose

This paper provides an overview of the provision of training and development for civil servants by the Civil Service Bureau (CSB) and presents the new initiatives to be implemented to strengthen civil service training in 2013.

Overview

2. The Administration is committed to providing civil servants with learning opportunities that would equip them with the skills, knowledge and mindset necessary for providing quality service to the public.

3. While bureaux and departments (B/Ds) provide vocational training to meet job-specific needs, CSB, through the Civil Service Training and Development Institute (CSTDI), focuses mainly on training programmes which are best provided by a central training agency, such as leadership and management, language and communication, national studies and the Basic Law. In addition, CSTDI provides consultancy services to B/Ds on human resource management, and promotes a culture of continuous learning in the civil service.

4. In 2012-13, CSB has budgeted \$58 million for the provision of these training programmes and services. In 2012, CSTDI organized programmes, seminars and workshops for about 54 000 civil servants, conducted 250 consultancy projects on training and human resource management for B/Ds, and recorded 530 000 visits to the e-learning portal. The following paragraphs provide a summary of the training and development activities organized by CSTDI.

Leadership and Management Development

5. To enhance the leadership and management skills of directorate civil servants, we organize an *Advanced Leadership Enhancement Programme* every year for around 35 directorate civil servants. Comprising two modules each lasting for four days, the programme is led by professors from the School of International and Public Affairs of the Columbia University, the Richard Ivey School of Business of the University of Ontario, and the University of Hong Kong. The programme aims at enhancing participants' knowledge in public sector leadership, challenges to policy formulation and public governance, crisis management, public engagement and human resources management through case studies, panel discussions, guest talks and simulations.

6. For senior professionals, we provide a three-week *Leadership In Action* programme. This programme is organised twice a year with around 70 participants each year. The content of the programme includes formulation and implementation of public policies, media and communication skills, stress management, leadership and change management. For middle managers, we offer a 13-day *Innovative Managers Programme* in three classes for around 100 civil servants each year. The programme covers leadership, innovation in the public sector, good governance, issue management and media communication. Besides, we provide a 10-day *Leadership Essentials Programme* three times a year for around 100 staff at junior managerial positions. The programme focuses on managing self, motivating people, developing teams, building professional image and understanding the fundamentals of public management. Apart from engaging local scholars and experts to facilitate discussion sessions, guest speakers from relevant fields are also invited to share their personal experiences and insights in the above programmes.

7. Throughout the year, we also organise a series of *Advanced Management Workshops* for senior civil servants on a wide range of topics. Led by distinguished scholars and subject experts, the workshops usually last for one to two days covering topics such as accountability, public engagement, negotiation and media communication skills. Regular short seminars for senior civil servants are also delivered by prominent speakers and experts on topical subjects, such as executive health, social media and global economic issues. In 2012, about 400 and 2 100 civil servants attended these workshops and seminars respectively.

8. Other than classroom training activities, we also arrange a variety of attachment programmes for senior civil servants to develop broader perspectives. These include attachments to policy bureaux, regional and international public bodies overseas such as the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Secretariat. CSTDI also sponsors selected civil servants to attend executive development programmes at renowned overseas institutions,

such as Harvard John F. Kennedy School of Government in USA, London Business School in UK and INSEAD in France. Most of these programmes last for four weeks.

National Studies and Basic Law Training

9. CSB has been devoting great efforts to enhance civil servants' understanding of the latest developments in the Mainland; and promote sharing and exchange between Mainland and Hong Kong civil servants. These efforts include training courses, seminars, theme-based visits to the Mainland, civil service exchange programme and a dedicated website on Mainland-related information and development. In addition, we also provide training on the Basic Law for civil servants and organise a variety of promotional activities to enhance understanding of the Basic Law amongst civil servants.

National Studies Training

10. A brief description of the training programmes and activities related to national studies is given below.

(i) *One-week National Studies Programme at the Chinese Academy of Governance for Senior Directorate Officers*

11. This is an intensive study-cum-visit programme introduced since 2011 for senior directorate officers (i.e. those at Directorate Pay Scale Point 3 (D3) and above). The programme aims to provide participants with an update of government's policies, enhance their understanding of the latest political, economic and social developments in the Mainland, and provide opportunities for sharing and exchanges with senior Mainland officials. The programme also includes visits to community facilities in Beijing or neighbouring cities. By the end of 2012, about 90 senior directorate officers have attended this programme, and their feedback has been highly positive. In 2013, we will enrich the content by incorporating visits to developing cities in the Mainland.

(ii) *Advanced National Studies Course at the Chinese Academy of Governance*

12. This is a two-week programme introduced since 1999 for civil servants at junior directorate (D1-D2) level. Through lectures and talks delivered by distinguished Mainland scholars and senior Central People's Government officials, the programme aims to deepen participants' understanding of the current policies and topical issues in the Mainland, and enhance networking between participants and their Mainland counterparts. By

the end of 2012, about 600 directorate civil servants have attended this programme.

(iii) Tsinghua and Peking University Programmes

13. We have been organising the Tsinghua University Programme and the Peking University Programme since 1993 and 2004 respectively for senior civil servants (i.e. those at point 45 of the Master Pay Scale (MPS) or above). Both programmes last for 17 days and include classroom lectures and visits to state agencies in Beijing, as well as a 3-day visit to selected Mainland cities. The programmes provide participants with a comprehensive introduction of the political, social, economic, cultural and legal developments in the Mainland. By the end of 2012, about 2 800 civil servants have attended the two programmes. Participants considered the programmes highly effective in improving their understanding of the Mainland and its latest development.

(iv) Foreign Affairs Studies Programme

14. Since 2004, we have commissioned the China Foreign Affairs University to organize a one-week Foreign Affairs Studies Programme for directorate and other civil servants involved in external affairs. The programme covers China's foreign affairs, protocol and other related topics. By the end of 2012, about 170 civil servants, including heads of our overseas Economic & Trade Offices, have attended this programme.

(v) Jinan, Nanjing and Zhejiang University Programmes

15. We have been organising National Studies Programme for middle ranking civil servants (i.e. those at MPS point 34 to 44) since 2006. Three universities, namely the Jinan University, Nanjing University and Zhejiang University were commissioned to run this one-week programme in 2012. This programme covers the latest socio-economic and political developments in the Mainland, with special focus on the culture and regional development in the Pearl River Delta region or Yangtze River Region. By the end of 2012, about 1 620 middle ranking civil servants have attended national studies programmes held in the Mainland.

(vi) Thematic Study Programmes

16. Since 1991, thematic study programmes have been organised for middle level to senior level civil servants (MPS 34-49). These programmes mainly take the form of familiarization visits to selected Mainland provinces and cities. They aim to enhance participants' general understanding of the

systems and developments in the Mainland in selected policy areas or themes. By the end of 2012, more than 1300 civil servants have attended these programmes.

(vii) Civil Service Exchange Programme with the Mainland

17. The civil service exchange programme with the Mainland commenced in 2002 and we have partnered with the municipal governments of Beijing and Shanghai, the city government of Hangzhou and the provincial government of Guangdong. In 2013, the programme will be extended to cover a few more Mainland provinces or cities.

18. Under the programme, civil servants of one side are attached to government departments of the other side for about four weeks with a view to broadening exposure, sharing experience and expertise, and fostering networking and communication. While on attachment, the participants will observe the host organizations' work practices through attendance at briefings, participation in training, meetings, discussion forums, experience sharing sessions and site visits, etc. They will not take up any specific posts or duties in the host organizations, and they will only have access to information which is not of a confidential and sensitive nature.

19. So far, over 50 Hong Kong government departments/ public organizations and about 150 Mainland departments/agencies have participated in the exchange programme. HKSARG has sent over 100 civil servants at senior professional level to the Mainland, while about 220 Mainland officials, mostly at division director or deputy division director level, have been sent to Hong Kong. The scope of exchange covers a wide range of disciplines, such as city planning, traffic management, public housing, health and food safety, trade and commerce, information technology, culture and arts, etc. Participants from both sides have found the programme very useful and effective, especially in enabling them to understand the structure and operation of the host organisations.

(viii) Local Seminars on National Studies

20. We work closely with local and Mainland institutions in conducting seminars for civil servants on latest developments in the Mainland. These seminars cover a wide variety of topics such as the Mainland's political and government reforms, legal system, economic and social changes, administrative and civil service systems, foreign affairs, etc. Seminars on topical issues, such as "New Leaders of the 18th CPC Central Committee and their Governing Principles" and "China's role in 2012 world economic crisis",

were organised. In 2012, about 2 860 civil servants attended these local seminars. In 2013, in commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the launching of national studies training, CSTDI will organise seminars on topical issues featuring distinguished scholars from Mainland universities and institutions.

(ix) National Studies E-Learning Portal

21. On our “Cyber Learning Centre Plus” website, we have developed a learning portal on national studies which provides comprehensive information about the Mainland, covering such areas as the political and civil service systems, the economy, the legal framework and geographical data. In-depth analyses of current issues, such as “China’s space technology: a new era” and “18th CPC National Congress” are also available. The portal has been well received, recording about 650,000 viewing rate by the end of 2012.

Basic Law Training

22. We have adopted a multi-pronged approach which includes classroom training, e-learning, publications and diversified promotional activities to ensure that Basic Law forms an integral part of training for civil servants, and is provided in a systematic and well planned manner. The progress of the training on the Basic Law is set out below.

(i) Core Programmes and Thematic Seminars on the Basic Law

23. We have introduced three core programmes on the Basic Law, viz. Introductory Course for New Appointees; the Intermediate Course for Middle Level Civil Servants (MPS 34 - 44); and the Advanced Course for Senior Level Civil Servants (MPS 45 and above) since 2008 to enable civil servants, at various stages of their careers, to have the opportunity to learn and refresh themselves on knowledge about the Basic Law. We have also assisted departments to organize seminars to address their departmental training needs, and organised seminars on specific topics relating to the Basic Law such as “An Analysis of the Continental Law, Common Law and Basic Law” and “Implementation of the Basic Law for 15 Years - Challenges and the Way Forward” for different levels of civil servants. By the end of 2012, about 28 000 civil servants have attended these courses and seminars.

(ii) E-learning Resources on the Basic Law

24. Online resources on the Basic Law are also available at our cyber learning platform for self-learning by civil servants. These resources include a modular web course, presentation materials of course speakers, judgments of

major court cases relating to the Basic Law, relevant articles and speeches by government officials and updated information and promotion activities of the Basic Law.

(iii) Publications and Promotional Activities

25. To enhance the awareness of and sustain interest in the Basic Law amongst civil servants, we organise various promotional activities on a regular basis. Such activities take the form of quiz, competition and exhibition. In addition, we publish a “Basic Law Bulletin” jointly with the Department of Justice and the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau regularly, and provide a “Basic Law Corner” in the Civil Service Newsletter which is circulated to all civil servants.

Consultancy Support to B/Ds on Human Resource Management

26. CSTDI provides advisory and training services to B/Ds in formulating and rolling out training plans in support of their policy/departmental initiatives. The following are some examples of services provided -

- (a) briefings and workshops to update civil servants on new ordinances and guidelines on equal opportunities; workshops on gender related, race and cultural sensitivity, disability discrimination issues; and training courses to support the free access initiatives in government premises;
- (b) civil service-wide and department-specific courses for handling public complaints, managing conflicts and enhancing the quality of customer service;
- (c) seminars and workshops on principles and skills in performance management and promotion of best practices within the civil service;
- (d) workshops on supervisory accountability as well as coaching and counseling skills to strengthen supervisors’ leadership capability;
- (e) courses on basic, intermediate and advanced level Putonghua and refresher workshops; Chinese and English writing and related seminars; and

- (f) induction training for new recruits, covering national studies and Basic Law, integrity and core values of the civil service, in addition to other job-specific orientation classes provided by B/Ds.

27. CSTDI provides consultancy services and assistance to B/Ds in conducting training needs analysis, developing departmental training and development plans, as well as designing and organizing tailor-made classes and activities for their staff. CSTDI also provides facilitators to help B/Ds to review or formulate their vision and mission statements, draw up business strategy, build team spirit and strengthen communication with staff through workshops and retreats.

28. CSTDI also assists B/Ds to develop and implement competency-based performance management systems as well as provides advisory services on related performance management and appraisal matters. We help to disseminate best practices in training and human resource management through experience-sharing sessions. We also provide advice on ways to groom promising officers and formulate long term human resource development plans.

Continuous Learning

29. We actively encourage civil servants at all levels to pursue continuous learning for enhancing their capabilities and meeting higher performance standards. Diversified training and learning opportunities are made available to different grades and ranks of civil servants.

Enhanced E-learning resources

30. We continue to enhance e-learning opportunities for civil servants. The enhanced Cyber Learning Centre Plus (CLC Plus) website now offers about 2 200 items of learning resources which include web courses, articles, video clips, CSTDI library collection information, learning tips, e-books and publications, guidelines and best practices as well as course reference materials. Nineteen departments have also made use of our platform and hosted about 120 pieces of training materials of their own disciplines on our website.

Financial sponsorship

31. We offer a Training Sponsorship Scheme to encourage officers to pursue learning through external courses. Under the Scheme, civil servants remunerated on or below MPS 16 or equivalent, including MOD I staff, may

apply for reimbursement of course fees for self-arranged studies. The sponsorship ceiling is \$6,000 per applicant per year for a maximum of three courses, all to be pursued outside office hours. About \$11.8 million has been granted to about 4 900 civil servants since 2005.

New Initiatives in 2013

32. In the 2013 Policy Address, the Chief Executive has stressed the importance of fostering a learning culture in the civil service and enriching the training programmes. The Administration will also boost the innovation and drive of civil servants so that they can better support the Government in serving the public. To this end, we plan to strengthen our training services in 2013 by –

- (a) organizing new workshops on innovative problem solving, leading change, positive psychology and managing adversity;
- (b) holding seminars on social and political developments in Hong Kong, public engagement, use of new media in communicating with the public, and communication with media;
- (c) enriching the existing flagship leadership development programmes in the themes of public engagement, innovative leadership and thinking, and communicating with the public and media; and
- (d) assisting B/Ds in formulating human resources strategies on fostering innovation, building learning culture, leadership development, staff engagement and communication.

Way Ahead

33. We will continue to strengthen and diversify the range of training opportunities for all civil servants. In addition to continuing with the existing programmes and services, we will strengthen our consultancy and training support to B/Ds to build up resilience and foster innovation for meeting new demands and challenges.