

For discussion
on 17 February 2014

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”).

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 on training programmes that 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 2013-14, CSB has budgeted \$63.5 million for the provision of these training programmes and services. In 2013, CSTDI organised programmes, seminars and workshops for over 54 000 civil servants, conducted 270 consultancy projects on training and human resource management for B/Ds, and recorded about 580 000 visits to the e-learning portal, Cyber Learning Centre Plus (“CLC Plus”). The following paragraphs provide a summary of the training and development activities organised by CSTDI.

Leadership and Management Development

5. In 2013, CSTDI had enhanced the elements of policy and social innovation, leading change and creative problem solving in our leadership and management development programmes, workshops and seminars for civil servants at different ranks. Apart from engaging local scholars and experts at

discussion sessions, we also invited guest speakers from relevant fields to share their experiences and insights. About 29 000 officers attended these programmes in 2013.

(i) Advanced Leadership Enhancement Programme

6. To enhance the leadership and management skills of directorate civil servants, we organise 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 Ivey Business School of the Western University, and the University of Hong Kong. The programme aims at enhancing participants' knowledge in public sector leadership, challenges to policy formulation and public governance, policy and social innovation, crisis management, public engagement and human resources management through case studies, panel discussions, guest talks and simulations.

(ii) Leadership In Action Programme

7. For senior officers at Master Pay Scale ("MPS") Point 45 to 49, we provide a three-week Leadership In Action programme which comprises modules on formulation and implementation of public policies, media and communication skills, stress management, leadership, innovation and change management. The programme is held twice a year for around 70 participants.

(iii) Innovative Leadership Programme

8. For officers at MPS Point 38 to 44, we offer a 13-day Innovative Leadership Programme which covers innovative leadership, service innovation and implementation, public/staff engagement and communication with the media. We offer three classes each year for around 100 civil servants.

(iv) Leadership Essentials Programme

9. A 10-day Leadership Essentials Programme is provided three times a year for around 100 officers at MPS Point 27 to 37. The programme focuses on managing self, motivating people, developing teams, building professional image and understanding the fundamentals of public management.

(v) Advanced Management Workshops

10. Throughout the year, we organise a series of Advanced

Management Workshops for senior civil servants on a wide range of topics. Led by distinguished scholars and subject experts, workshops usually last for one to two days covering topics such as accountability, public engagement, leading change, negotiation and media communication skills. In 2013, about 500 officers attended these workshops.

(vi) Seminars and Management Programmes

11. Regular short seminars for senior civil servants are delivered by prominent speakers and experts on topical subjects, such as “Global Economic Outlook for 2014”, “Positive Psychology and Building Resilience”, and “Social Media: Opportunity Not Threat”. In 2013, about 2 000 civil servants attended these seminars.

12. CSTDI also provides a wide range of training programmes to enhance the knowledge and management skills of civil servants and support the implementation of policies and departmental initiatives. The following are some examples of programmes provided in 2013 -

- (a) induction training for new recruits covering integrity and core values of the civil service;
- (b) briefings and workshops to update civil servants on legislation and guidelines on equal opportunities; workshops on gender, race and cultural sensitivity, disability discrimination issues; and training courses to support the free access initiatives in government premises;
- (c) workshops on supervisory accountability as well as coaching and counselling skills to strengthen supervisors’ leadership capability;
- (d) seminars and workshops on principles and skills in performance management and promotion of best practices within the civil service; and
- (e) courses for enhancing the quality of customer service, handling public complaints, managing conflicts, managing stress and maintaining emotional well-being.

(vii) Attachment Programmes and Overseas Training

13. Other than classroom training, we also arrange attachment programmes for senior civil servants to develop broader perspectives. These

include attachments to policy bureaux, regional and international public bodies 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 the Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, London Business School, University of London and INSEAD. Most of these overseas programmes last for four weeks.

(viii) E-learning Resources on Leadership Development

14. We also provide online learning resources at the “Leaders’ Corner” of the CLC Plus website for continuous learning by directorate and senior officers. These resources include articles on leadership and management subjects such as leading change and succession management, highlights of local seminars held, insights and observations contributed by participants of overseas and Mainland programmes. The platform provides a useful forum for cross learning and sharing of experiences.

National Studies and Basic Law Training

15. CSB has been devoting a lot of 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, a civil service exchange programme and a dedicated website on Mainland-related information and development. In addition, we also provide training on the Basic Law and organise a variety of promotional activities to enhance understanding of the Basic Law amongst civil servants. In 2013, about 12 700 officers attended these programmes.

National Studies Training

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

16. 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 Mainland 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 developing cities in the Mainland. By the end of 2013, about 110 senior directorate

officers have attended this programme, and their feedback has been highly positive.

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

17. 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 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 2013, about 630 directorate civil servants have attended the programme.

(iii) Tsinghua and Peking University Programmes

18. We have been organising the Tsinghua University Programme and the Peking University Programme since 1993 and 2004 respectively for senior civil servants at MPS Point 45 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 2013, about 3 100 civil servants have attended the two programmes.

(iv) Foreign Affairs Studies Programme

19. Since 2004, we have commissioned the China Foreign Affairs University to organise a one-week Foreign Affairs Studies Programme for directorate and senior civil servants who are involved in external affairs. The programme covers China's foreign affairs, protocol and other related topics. By the end of 2013, about 200 civil servants, including officers at our overseas Economic and Trade Offices, have attended the programme.

(v) Jinan, Nanjing and Zhejiang University Programmes

20. We have been organising national studies programmes for civil servants at MPS Point 34 to 44 since 2006. Since 2012, we have commissioned three universities, namely the Jinan University, Nanjing University and Zhejiang University to run this one-week programme which 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 2013, about 1 900 civil servants have attended these programmes.

(vi) Thematic Study Programmes

21. The thematic study programmes mainly take the form of familiarization visits to selected Mainland provinces and cities. They are organised for civil servants at MPS Point 34 to 49 to enhance their understanding of the systems and developments in the Mainland on selected policy areas or themes. Since 1991, about 1 400 civil servants have attended these programmes.

(vii) Civil Service Exchange Programme with the Mainland

22. 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. 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. During the attachment, the participants will study the host organisations' work practices through attendance at briefings, participation in training, meetings, discussion forums, experience sharing sessions and site visits, etc. The attachees will not take up any specific posts or duties in the host organisations.

23. So far, over 50 Hong Kong government departments/ public organisations and about 160 Mainland departments/agencies have participated in the exchange programme. HKSARG has sent over 110 civil servants at MPS Point 45 or above to the Mainland, while about 240 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) Seminars on National Studies

24. 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 range of topics such as the Mainland's political and government reforms, legal system, economic and social changes, civil service systems, foreign affairs, etc. In 2013, seminars on topical issues, such

as “The Latest Economic Development in the Mainland” and “Contemporary China’s Foreign Affairs”, were organised. In commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the launching of national studies training, we also organised a few seminars featuring distinguished scholars from the Tsinghua University. In 2013, about 2 900 civil servants attended these seminars.

(ix) *E-Learning Resources on National Studies*

25. On the CLC Plus website, we have administered a learning portal on national studies which provides comprehensive information about the Mainland, covering areas like the political and civil service systems, the economy, the legal framework and geographical data etc. Updates on Mainland current issues such as “Healthcare Reform and Food Safety” and “Family Planning Policy” are also available on the website.

Basic Law Training

26. We have adopted a multi-pronged approach, which includes classroom training, e-learning, publications and diversified promotional activities, to ensure that the Basic Law forms an integral part of training for civil servants.

27. We organise Basic Law courses for civil servants, at different stages of their careers, to equip them with the opportunity to learn and update themselves on their knowledge about the Basic Law. Foundation training is provided to new appointees to provide them with an overview of the key concept and major provisions of the Basic Law. For officers at MPS Point 34 to 44 and senior officers at MPS Point 45 and above, training programmes are organised to update them on the latest development of the Basic Law through the use of related court cases. We have also assisted departments to organise programmes to address their departmental training needs, and have offered seminars on specific topics relating to the Basic Law such as “One Country, Two Systems and the Basic Law” and “The Protection of Rights under the Basic Law”. Since 2008, about 34 000 civil servants have attended these courses and seminars.

28. Online resources on the Basic Law are also available at the CLC Plus website for self-learning. These resources include a web course, online seminars, presentation materials of course speakers, judgments of major court cases relating to the Basic Law, articles, speeches and updated information of the Basic Law.

29. To enhance the understanding 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 quizzes, competitions and exhibitions. In addition, we publish regularly a “Basic Law Bulletin” jointly with the Department of Justice and the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau, and provide a “Basic Law Corner” in the Civil Service Newsletter which is circulated to all civil servants.

Consultancy Services on Human Resource Management and Development

30. 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 organising tailor-made classes and activities for their staff. CSTDI also organises workshops and retreats for B/Ds to review or formulate their vision and mission statements, draw up business strategy, build team spirit and strengthen communication with staff.

31. CSTDI 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. It also disseminates best practices on training and human resource management through experience-sharing sessions, and provides advice on ways to groom promising officers and formulate long term human resource development plans.

Continuous Learning

32. 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.

Language and Communication Training

33. We provide language and communication training to help civil servants at different levels polish the skills required for effective communication at work. CSTDI offers a range of English, Chinese communication courses for both general and job specific situations, enabling civil servants to communicate effectively with colleagues and the general public. In 2013, about 13 000 civil servants attended these courses. Apart from classroom training, a full range of e-learning resources including articles, writing tips and reference guides are available for self-learning.

Enhanced E-learning resources

34. We continue to enhance e-learning opportunities for civil servants. The CLC Plus website now offers about 2 250 items of learning resources which include web courses, articles, video clips, CSTD library collection information, learning tips, e-books and publications, guidelines and best practices as well as course reference materials. 19 departments have also made use of our platform and hosted about 130 pieces of training materials of their own disciplines on the CLC Plus website.

Financial sponsorship

35. 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 Point 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 \$13.8 million has been granted to B/Ds for over 5 500 civil servants since 2005. In addition, civil servants may apply for training sponsorship by their respective B/Ds for attending training courses that are job-related.

2014 Policy Address

36. In the 2014 Policy Address, the Chief Executive has stressed the importance of having a professional, clean and dedicated civil service. We will provide more training opportunities for civil servants, encourage and provide subsidies for them to attend training courses and exchange programmes, and deepen their understanding of national development. To this end, we will strengthen our training services in 2014 by –

- (a) enriching our training programmes on innovative problem solving, leading change, positive psychology and managing adversity to boost the innovation and drive of civil servants;
- (b) sponsoring civil servants to attend executive development programmes at renowned local and overseas universities, such as the Leadership and Public Policy Programme jointly organised by the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology and the Oxford University;
- (c) inviting experts and scholars to conduct seminars on topical issues such as “The Mid-term Review of the National 12th Five-year Plan” and “Global Economic Development”; and

- (d) extending our Civil Service Exchange Programme with the Mainland to cover more Mainland cities.

Way Forward

37. We will continue to keep our training programmes under review and to strengthen our consultancy and training support to B/Ds for meeting new demands and challenges.

Civil Service Bureau
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