

**立法會**  
**Legislative Council**

LC Paper No. CB(4)488/14-15(04)

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**Panel on Public Service**

**Meeting on 16 February 2015**

**Updated background brief on training and development for civil servants**

**Purpose**

This paper provides background information on the provision of training and development opportunities for civil servants by the Civil Service Bureau ("CSB"), and summarizes the major views expressed by members when the subject was discussed at meetings of the Panel on Public Service ("the Panel") in the past five legislative sessions<sup>1</sup>.

**Background**

2. The Government provides civil servants at various ranks with training and development opportunities, so that they will be equipped with the necessary skills, knowledge and mindset to serve the public. Whilst individual bureaux/departments ("B/Ds") provide vocational training to meet job-specific needs, CSB, through the Civil Service Training and Development Institute ("CSTDI"), formulates training policies and provides support to B/Ds in training and development matters. The four core functions of CSTDI are senior executive development; national studies programmes; consultancy services for B/Ds on human resource management initiatives; and promotion of a continuous learning culture in the civil service.

3. Brief descriptions of the various training programmes and activities organized by CSTDI are set out in the Administration's paper (LC Paper No. CB(4)379/13-14(03)) for the Panel meeting on 17 February 2014. For the financial year 2014-2015, the approved financial provision for CSB for its work on civil service training and development is \$132.4 million.

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<sup>1</sup> For summaries of the Panel's discussions on the subject in the previous terms of the Legislative Council, please refer to the previous background briefs on the subject, i.e. LC Paper Nos. CB(1)321/11-12(04) and CB(1)534/11-12(05).

## **Deliberations of the Panel**

4. The Panel discussed issues relating to the training and development for civil servants at its meetings held on 18 January 2010, 17 January, 21 November and 19 December 2011, 18 February 2013 and 17 February 2014. Major views and concerns expressed by Panel members and the Administration's responses are summarized below.

### National studies and Basic Law training

5. In view of the different political and legal systems between Hong Kong and the Mainland, concern was raised by some members that civil servants attending the national studies courses conducted in the Mainland might be exposed to one-sided views only.

6. The Administration advised that many B/Ds had direct work contacts with the Mainland. There was a genuine operational need for civil servants to understand the systems and other aspects of the Mainland. In attending the national studies programmes conducted in the Mainland, civil servants would meet with different organizations and people so that they could understand the political, social and economic developments in the Mainland from different angles. Open discussions were held in which programme participants could freely express their ideas. Apart from those visits and exchange programmes which were conducted in the Mainland, the Administration also organized national studies workshops, seminars and e-learning portal for civil servants, which were all conducted in Hong Kong. Moreover, local scholars/experts with different political perspectives had been invited to conduct seminars on national issues and their presentations had been uploaded onto the dedicated e-learning portal on the Cyber Learning Centre Plus ("CLC Plus") website.

7. On the adequacy of Basic Law training for civil servants, the Administration advised that training on the Basic Law formed an integral part of the training for civil servants. There were core programmes on the Basic Law for different ranks of civil servants, and thematic seminars on specific topics were organized regularly so as to keep civil servants abreast of the developments relating to the Basic Law. Updated information on the Basic Law was also available at the CLC Plus website for self-learning by civil servants.

8. Responding to the concern raised by some members that the Basic Law training might contain brainwashing elements and those civil servants who had attended such training would enjoy favourable consideration in promotion and advancement, the Administration advised that CSB would invite speakers of different backgrounds to conduct the Basic Law training so as to enable programme participants to benefit from different viewpoints and perspectives on

the matter. There was no direct relationship between attendance in Basic Law training and promotion.

### Civil Service Exchange Programme with the Mainland

9. Noting that the objective of the exchange programme was to enhance mutual understanding of the systems and developments of the two places, members asked how Hong Kong civil servants could benefit from the exchange programme. There was a suggestion that the programme should cover topics on Hong Kong's legal, auditing, complaint redress systems as well as anti-corruption practices, so that Mainland officials could learn from Hong Kong's achievements and strengths.

10. The Administration advised that the exchange programme aimed at fostering mutual understanding and networking between Hong Kong and Mainland officials. The topics suggested by members in paragraph 9 above were covered in the orientation programme provided to the Mainland participants of the exchange programme. Owing to the differences in political and administrative systems, it might not be appropriate to directly apply the Mainland's experience in Hong Kong and vice versa. However, it would be useful to discuss some common problems faced by the two places, such as aging population and disparity between the rich and the poor.

### Overseas training for civil servants

11. Members noted that the Administration would arrange civil servants to attend training programmes at overseas universities. A member enquired whether the Administration would sponsor civil servants to attend overseas courses of at least one year duration with recognized degree qualification or courses at renowned overseas business schools.

12. The Administration advised that a few civil servants were sponsored to acquire a master degree in overseas institutions each year. In considering whether to offer one-year overseas training to civil servants, factors such as financial implications, work relevance, and work commitment of the staff concerned would need to be considered.

13. On the question of whether civil servants who were granted full-pay study leave of one year or more by the Government to attend training courses were required to sign an undertaking to serve in the civil service for at least three years after the study, the Administration advised that if the civil servants failed to complete the post-training service as agreed in the undertaking, they would be required to repay the Government the training cost.

### Continuous training

14. Members noted that the Administration offered financial sponsorship, i.e. the Training Sponsorship Scheme, to encourage civil servants to pursue learning through external courses. Under the Scheme, civil servants remunerated on or below Master Pay Scale Point 16 or equivalent, including Model Scale 1 staff, might apply for reimbursement of course fees for self-arranged studies. About \$13.8 million had been granted to B/Ds for over 5 000 civil servants since 2005.

15. Some members considered that the participation rate of the Scheme was relatively low, and queried if the Administration had imposed any restrictions on the applications.

16. The Administration advised that to be eligible for the Scheme, the training courses should be relevant to the work of the civil servants concerned. In addition to the Scheme, civil servants might apply for training sponsorship by their respective B/Ds for attending training courses that were job-related.

### Training for non-civil service contract staff

17. Some members asked about the provision of training for non-civil service contract ("NCSC") staff. The Administration advised that relevant training programmes, including orientation programmes and job-related training, were provided to NCSC staff to better equip them to discharge their duties. Local training activities held in Hong Kong were generally open to NCSC staff. However, leadership and management training would generally be provided only to civil servants, who would have a life-long career in the civil service and who might be required to shoulder heavier responsibilities upon promotion in due course.

### Evaluation of training programmes

18. Some members enquired about the mechanism for evaluating the effectiveness of various training programmes. The Administration advised that feedback from both course providers and participants would be collected systematically for course evaluation with a view to further improving the training programmes. The Administration would seriously consider the views collected and fine tune the programme contents to meet the training needs of civil servants at different levels.

### Organization of networking activities after training

19. Question was raised if the training courses provided by CSTDI would involve participants from non-government organizations ("NGOs") so that civil servants could build up a network with people from different sectors, and to learn about the good practices or latest developments in different industries.

20. The Administration advised that individual B/Ds would provide professional training to their staff through which they would have the opportunities to network with fellow practitioners in their fields and learn the latest developments in different industries. Some of the senior leadership development programmes organized by CSTDI accepted enrollment of senior executives from NGOs so as to promote the sharing of ideas and experience. Civil servants also participated in some executive development programmes at local and overseas institutions with participants from different sectors and countries. The Administration further advised that some civil servants also organized networking activities after attending training courses. The organization and participation of such activities was however voluntary in nature.

### **Latest position**

21. The Administration will update the Panel on the training and development for civil servants at the Panel meeting on 16 February 2015.

### **Relevant papers**

22. A list of relevant papers is in the **Appendix**.

**List of relevant papers**

Meeting	Date of meeting	Paper
Panel on Public Service	18 January 2010 (item V)	<a href="#">Agenda</a> <a href="#">Minutes</a>
	17 January 2011 (item V)	<a href="#">Agenda</a> <a href="#">Minutes</a>
	21 November 2011 (item III)	<a href="#">Agenda</a> <a href="#">Minutes</a> <a href="#">Administration's responses to the issues raised at the meeting held on 21 November 2011</a>
	19 December 2011 (item IV)	<a href="#">Agenda</a> <a href="#">Minutes</a>
	21 January 2013 (item IV on 2013 Policy Address)	<a href="#">Agenda</a> <a href="#">Administration's paper</a> <a href="#">Minutes</a>
	18 February 2013 (item IV)	<a href="#">Agenda</a> <a href="#">Administration's paper</a> <a href="#">Minutes</a> <a href="#">Administration's follow-up paper</a>
	20 January 2014 (item IV on 2014 Policy Address)	<a href="#">Agenda</a> <a href="#">Administration's paper</a> <a href="#">Minutes</a>

Meeting	Date of meeting	Paper
	17 February 2014 (item IV)	<a href="#">Agenda</a>  <a href="#">Administration's paper</a>  <a href="#">Minutes</a>

Council Business Division 4  
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