For information

Legislative Council Panel on Manpower

**Progress of Year 2000 compliance exercise in
Government departments, Government-funded and
Government-regulated organisations
responsible for labour and manpower matters**

Purpose

      This paper serves to update Members on the progress of the Year 2000 (Y2K) compliance exercise in the Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB) and the following departments and agencies - responsible for labour and manpower matters - under its purview :

      Labour Department
      Vocational Training Council
      Employees Retraining Board
      Clothing Industry Training Authority
      Construction Industry Training Authority
      Occupational Safety and Health Council.

Overview on preparations for Y2K

2.   Overall, all the mission-critical systems[1] identified in the departments and agencies listed above have been confirmed as Y2K compliant or rectified. Contingency plans in respect of EMB and the Labour Department have been formulated and tested in accordance with the guidelines issued to government departments by the Steering Committee on Year 2000 Compliance to deal with disruptions that may arise from Y2K failures. Their plans have been submitted to the Information Technology and Broadcasting Bureau.

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[1] Mission-critical systems are those computer and embedded systems whose proper functioning is related to public health and safety, the provision of crucial services to the public, or payment and revenue collection.

Formulation and testing of contingency arrangements

3.   The following is a summary of the formulation and testing of contingency preparations for Y2K compliance by EMB and the departments and agencies under its purview.

Education and Manpower Bureau

4.   There is no mission-critical computer system in EMB. Nevertheless, all computer systems in EMB have been tested for their Y2K compliance and the necessary rectification has been completed. They are all Y2K-compliant now. A contingency plan has been drawn up to outline the action to be taken to minimise the disruption to EMB's office operations in case of unexpected Y2K-induced problems. A Y2K Coordination Team has been set up within EMB to coordinate all matters concerning the subject.

Labour Department

5.   The Labour Department (LD) has completed rectification work on all its ten mission-critical computer and line communication systems. All of them have been confirmed to be Y2K compliant. LD has also formulated contingency plans to mitigate possible Y2K induced disruptions and to allow speedy recovery of systems and facilities affected. The contingency plans of the mission-critical systems have also been tested by simulation of possible Y2K failure scenarios. All of them have passed the tests satisfactorily.

6.   On-site/stand-by teams comprising Information Technology Services Department and LD staff have been scheduled to monitor the mission-critical systems to ensure the smooth rollover to year 2000 and some other critical dates in year 2000. If any problem is detected, the contingency plan will be activated and a manual system will be put in place immediately according to the contingency plan until the system resumes normal operation. A "Wellness Check" will also be conducted on 1 January 2000 to ensure that the systems are running properly.

Vocational Training Council

7.   The Vocational Training Council (VTC) has completed rectification work on all its seven mission-critical computer systems. VTC has also drawn up

Y2K contingency plans for all mission-critical systems to cater for the possible breakdown of system when turning into the new millenium.

8. A Y2K Contingency Working Group (Working Group) has been formed to look into each mission-critical system. The Working Group has formulated the following contingency options -

- Use simplified solutions such as manual operations
- Backup computer systems and data before the rollover to enable restoration in case of system failure
- Use additional resources such as personal computers to handle problems that may occur
- Advance or delay activities whenever appropriate

9. The contingency plans have been tested and confirmed to be capable of providing the desired level of support if normal operation fails. A Y2K Rollover Support Team has also been set up to standby in the office during the rollover period and other critical dates. The team will be responsible to take emergency action should problems arise.

Employees Retraining Board

10. The Employees Retraining Board (ERB) has completed rectification work on all its six mission-critical computer systems. A Y2K contingency plan has been drawn up to ensure continued operations of all computer systems and services on the critical dates. All computer information will be backed-up to ensure that no data will be lost. A series of manual procedures will start operation in the event of system failure. A support team will also stand by in the Executive Office to monitor all operations on and after 31 December 1999.

Clothing Industry Training Authority

11. There is no mission-critical computer system in the Clothing Industry Training Authority (CLITA). Nevertheless, all computer systems in CLITA have been confirmed to be Y2K compliant. CLITA is also working closely with other agencies to ensure that all electrical and mechanical equipment will not encounter problem when entering into year 2000. In case of system failure, CLITA will switch the computer systems into manual operation.

Construction Industry Training Authority

12.   The Construction Industry Training Authority (CITA) has completed rectification work on all its seven mission-critical computer systems. A contingency plan has also been set up to respond to unexpected failure of computer systems.

13.   All critical systems are to be backed up twice at the close of business on 30 December 1999. In case of failure, critical data will be downloaded to personal computers for processing to ensure an undisrupted service to the public. In addition, all staff in the computer section would be on duty on 31 December 1999 to ensure a smooth transition to year 2000.

Occupational Safety and Health Council

14.   The Occupational Safety and Health Council (OSHC) has completed rectification work on all its four mission-critical computer systems. In case of system failure, the OSHC will switch the computer systems into manual operation. All staff of the computer department will also stand by on 31 December 1999 to ensure a smooth transition to year 2000.

Education and Manpower Bureau
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