

For discussion
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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 Government is committed to providing civil servants with learning opportunities that will help them acquire a forward-looking perspective and an innovative mindset, and perform the Government’s roles as a “service provider”, “regulator”, “facilitator” and “promoter”.

3. While bureaux and departments (“B/Ds”) offer vocational training to meet job-specific requirements, the Civil Service Training and Development Institute (“CSTDI”) under CSB focuses on training that fulfills the common training needs of civil servants, such as leadership and management, language and communication, national studies and the Basic Law. CSTDI also formulates policies on training and performance management, provides consultancy services to B/Ds on human resource management and promotes a culture of continuous learning in the civil service.

4. In 2018-19, the estimated expenditure of CSB on training programmes and services is \$71.6 million. CSTDI expects to organise programmes, seminars and workshops for about 68 000 civil servants, conduct around 270 consultancy projects on training and human resource management for B/Ds, and attract about 610 000 visits to the e-learning portal - Cyber Learning Centre Plus (“CLC Plus”) in 2018. A summary of the main activities of CSTDI is given below.

Leadership and Management Development

5. In keeping with the new style of governance of the current-term Government and having regard to the various challenges of Hong Kong’s development, CSTDI helps B/Ds draw up leadership development strategies and forge partnership with different universities and institutions in organising

programmes for civil servants to enhance their leadership and management skills. The major leadership and management courses organised by CSTDI are set out below.

Leadership Development Programmes

6. CSTDI organises a series of flagship courses to develop the leadership capabilities of middle and senior-level managers in the civil service. This includes a 10-day “Advanced Leadership Enhancement Programme” for directorate officers, a three-week “Leadership In Action Programme” for senior officers at Master Pay Scale (“MPS”) Point 45 to 49, a 13-day “Innovative Leadership Programme” for officers at MPS Point 38 to 44 and a 10-day “Leadership Essentials Programme” for officers at MPS Point 27 to 37. The core elements of these programmes include public sector leadership, policy formulation and implementation, public engagement strategies, communication with the Legislative Council and District Councils, public service innovation, as well as media communication and change management. New topics, including creativity and design thinking, smart city and new technological trends and application, will also be added this year.

7. CSTDI also make arrangements for senior professionals and directorate officers to attend leadership development programmes organised by renowned institutions, such as the “Leadership and Public Policy Executive Education Programme Series” offered by the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, and the programme on “Negotiation : Strategies and Processes for Impactful Outcomes” offered by the Booth School of Business of the University of Chicago in Hong Kong. CSTDI also organises different workshops conducted by distinguished scholars and experts. These workshops last for one to two days and cover such topics as public sector accountability, strategic innovation, people management and crisis management. In 2018, we will add a number of new topics, such as the use of social media to interact with the public, innovative leadership and smart city. It is estimated that there will be some 2 650 civil servants attending the above programmes in 2018.

Overseas Exposure and Attachment Programmes

8. CSB also sponsors senior civil servants attending executive development courses at renowned institutions, such as the Harvard University, the University of Oxford, the University of London and the University of California, Berkeley. The duration of these courses ranges from one week to a year. Besides, we arrange attachments to regional and international organisations (such as the Asian Development Bank, the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation Secretariat and the Financial Action Task Force) for senior civil servants to broaden their perspectives. There are about 60 civil servants

participating in these overseas training and attachment programmes every year. CSB also arranges professional grade officers nominated by their departments to attach to various policy bureaux to broaden their exposure to the work of different policy areas.

Management and Communication Courses

9. CSTDI also offers a wide spectrum of management and communication courses for staff at different ranks. Some of the courses are outlined below -

- (a) induction training for new recruits covering integrity and core values of the civil service;
- (b) training of different themes including legislation and guidelines on equal opportunities, gender, race and cultural sensitivity, Disability Discrimination Ordinance, barrier-free access facilities and services, and basic sign language;
- (c) programmes for enhancing managerial competencies including financial management, decision making, problem solving and coaching skills;
- (d) courses on performance management and promotion of good practices within the civil service;
- (e) courses for front-line and supervisory staff in enhancing customer service, handling public complaints, managing conflicts and verbal violence, coping with stress and maintaining physical and psychological well-being; and
- (f) courses and seminars on written English and Chinese, Putonghua and communication, including those on English writing and editing for managerial staff, writing in response to complaints and effective Putonghua telephone skills to cater for the job-specific requirements of different B/Ds.

It is estimated that there will be about 47 800 civil servants attending the above management and communication courses in 2018.

National Studies and Basic Law Training

10. The increasing influence of China in the world stage makes it necessary for us to remain conversant with the macro developments in our

country, and important national policies such as the Belt and Road Initiative and the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Bay Area. Cross-boundary infrastructure projects, like the Hong Kong Section of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link and the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge, reflect a much closer interface between Hong Kong and the Mainland, which calls for broader engagement and mutual understanding. CSB attaches great importance to national studies and Basic Law training, ensuring that civil servants are equipped with updated knowledge of the social and economic policies and blueprints of our country that might have impact on Hong Kong.

11. In 2018-19, we plan to enhance national studies and Basic Law training for civil servants, and arrange various programmes for them to timely update their knowledge on the political, economic, social and cultural policies and developments of our country. A summary of the major courses is given below.

Mainland Programmes on National Studies

12. CSTDI joins hands with various institutions and universities in the Mainland to run national studies programmes, comprising tutorials and site visits, that last for seven to 17 days. Directorate officers and Administrative Officers will mainly attend lectures at the Chinese Academy of Governance, and senior staff at MPS Point 45 or above are catered for by the Tsinghua University or the Peking University. The China Foreign Affairs University also runs a nine-day course on international relations and foreign affairs for officers at MPS Point 45 or above, particularly for those who may be posted to economic and trade / liaison offices outside Hong Kong. In respect of officers at MPS Point 34 to 44, we have secured the assistance of the Zhejiang University, the Nanjing University and the Wuhan University to run a one-week course for them, and will increase the number of these officers attending national studies courses in the Mainland starting from 2018. We also plan to extend the national studies programmes offered by the Jinan University and the Sun Yat-sen University to officers at MPS Point 28 to 33 from the latter half of 2018. It is estimated that there will be about 840 participants attending the above national studies programmes in 2018.

Local Seminars on National Studies

13. We organise local seminars of various themes on the latest national policies and trends from time to time and enhance civil servants' understanding of our country's history and culture. The seminars held between 2017 and 2018 cover topics such as the Belt and Road Initiative and the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Bay Area, international landscape and China's foreign affairs, and the origins of Chinese civilization. It is estimated that there will be about 7 100 participants attending these seminars in 2018.

Thematic Visits and Staff Exchange Programmes

14. Every year, we organise thematic visits for officers at MPS Point 34 and above to help them understand the economic situation, development of industries, culture preservation etc. in different regions of our country. Two visits are expected to be organised in 2018, one to Fujian and the other to Sichuan. In addition, there are exchange programmes organised jointly with various cities in the Mainland for officers at MPS Point 45 to 49 and their Mainland counterparts at division director/deputy director level to share work experience and challenges faced by their cities, and prevailing policies and practices with regard to public service delivery in areas such as city planning, traffic management, public housing, health and food safety, trade and commerce, information technology, and culture and arts. It is estimated that there will be about 60 participants attending these training programmes in 2018.

Basic Law Training

15. We continue to provide Basic Law training for civil servants and will strengthen the content of our current training to include the relationship between the Constitution of the People's Republic of China and the Basic Law. Apart from providing Basic Law foundation courses for all new recruits, we will enhance the training for middle and senior level officers by arranging more advanced courses and thematic seminars on the Basic Law for them. For instance, on the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, we organised seminars in 2017 to review the development and implementation of the Basic Law through case studies. It is estimated that there will be about 9 600 civil servants attending such training in 2018. In addition to classroom learning, online resources, such as a newly-designed web course, videos, past seminars and articles on various Basic Law issues, are available at the CLC Plus.

Consultancy Services on Human Resource Management

16. CSTDI provides consultancy services for individual B/Ds, such as analysis of staff training needs, formulation of training and development plans and hosting workshops and retreats to help B/Ds crystallise their vision and mission, draw up business strategy, forge team spirit, and strengthen internal communication etc. We also assist B/Ds in developing and implementing competency-based performance management systems, organise experience sharing sessions and advise on how to nurture talents and conduct succession planning.

Other Initiatives to Promote Continuous Learning

17. Civil servants are encouraged to strive for continuous enhancement of their capabilities and service quality by making use of diversified learning opportunities.

E-learning Resources

18. We offer web-based learning tools through our e-learning portal - CLC Plus, which contains some 2 400 items including web courses, articles, video clips, library collections, learning tips, book summaries and publications, guidelines and good practices as well as reference materials. In 2017, we redesigned or launched a number of theme-based portals, such as “The Basic Law Corner” and “Climate Change Portal”, to enable civil servants to have a good grasp of the latest information on these subjects. We also launched the “New Recruits’ Avenue” to provide useful information on topics such as administrative practices of the Government, official writing and management skills for new recruits to help them get familiar with their work as soon as possible and provide quality services to the public.

19. We also support B/Ds in using e-learning as part of their training and development plans. At present, some 25 B/Ds are making use of our CLC Plus to provide training information or learning materials to their staff. We will keep on improving the user interfaces of CLC Plus to facilitate the use of various e-learning resources through smartphones and tablets.

Financial Sponsorship

20. In addition to training programmes organised by CSTDI and B/Ds, all civil servants can apply for reimbursement of fees after attending job-related courses in their own spare time. In 2016-17, a total sum of \$7.1 million was incurred by B/Ds for this purpose. CSB also implements the Training Sponsorship Scheme to encourage civil servants to pursue lifelong learning. In 2018, we will further extend the scheme to cover all officers at MPS Point 49 and below, and raise the sponsorship ceiling from \$6,000 to \$10,000 per applicant each year.

Establishment of a Civil Service College

21. CSB is actively studying and planning for the establishment of a new

civil service college with a view to enhancing training for civil servants and upgrading related facilities. We have identified a site which is generally suitable for the construction of the civil service college and are conducting further studies to follow-up. The new college will enhance training for civil servants in the areas of leadership development, interaction and communication with the public, innovation, use of technology, etc. It will also help deepen civil servants' understanding of our country's development, enhance their awareness of international affairs, and promote exchanges with civil servants in other places on the development trends in public service and sharing of management experience. When a more specific plan has been worked out, we will report to the Legislative Council Panel on Public Service, and conduct related studies and apply for funding in accordance with the established procedures for public works.

Way Forward

22. Before the commissioning of the new civil service college, CSB will explore ways to further improve and enhance training for civil servants. These include inviting experts in different fields to deliver talks to and share their experience with civil servants, organising flagship courses on innovation and technology and enhancing national studies and Basic Law training in order to help civil servants meet the ever-changing needs and challenges.

Civil Service Bureau
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