

For discussion
on 21 December 2015

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 Civil Service Bureau (“CSB”).

Overview

2. The Government 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”) offer vocational training to meet job-specific requirements, the Civil Service Training and Development Institute (“CSTDI”) under CSB focuses on training programmes that fulfill the common training needs of civil servants, such as leadership and management, language and communication, national affairs 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 2015-16, CSB has budgeted \$67.4 million for the provision of training programmes and services. By the end of 2015, CSTDI aims to have organised programmes, seminars and workshops for about 58 600 civil servants, conducted around 270 consultancy projects on training and human resource management for B/Ds, and attracted about 595 000 visits to the e-learning portal - Cyber Learning Centre Plus (“CLC Plus”). A summary of the main activities carried out by CSTDI is set out below.

Leadership and Management Development

5. Apart from helping B/Ds draw up leadership development strategies and identify suitable training opportunities, CSTDI forges partnership with universities and institutions to organise management programmes.

Leadership Development Programmes

6. A series of flagship courses is in place to develop the leadership capabilities of middle and senior-level civil servants. This includes a nine-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. Core elements of these programmes include public sector leadership, policy formulation and implementation, public engagement strategies, working with the Legislative Council, public service innovation, as well as media communication and managing change. CSTDI also enrolls civil servants in other similar programmes run by local and overseas institutions, such as the “Leadership and Public Policy Programme” jointly organised by the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology and the University of Oxford, and the “Leading High Performance Organisations Programme” conducted by Booth School of Business of Chicago University in Hong Kong.

7. Throughout 2015, CSTDI organises different workshops led by distinguished scholars and experts that last for up to two days covering topics such as public sector accountability, social innovation, people management, negotiation, social media and crisis communication. We expect that about 2 750 civil servants would have attended these programmes by the end of this year.

Attachment and Overseas Exposure

8. As a complement to traditional classroom instruction, we arrange attachments for senior civil servants to broaden their perspectives in policy bureaux and regional/international bodies like the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation Secretariat and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, and the Financial Action Task Force. Sponsorship is also available for executive development courses at renowned institutions such as Harvard University, the University of Oxford, the University of London and the University of California at Los Angeles that last from one week to one year. We expect that about 50 civil servants would have attended these courses by the end of this year.

Management and Communication Courses

9. CSTDI offers a wide spectrum of management and communication courses for staff serving at different ranks. Some examples are outlined

below -

- (a) induction training for new recruits covering integrity and core values of the civil service;
- (b) seminars on legislation and guidelines on equal opportunities, gender, race and cultural sensitivity, disability discrimination and barrier-free access initiatives in government premises;
- (c) courses on supervisory accountability as well as coaching and counselling skills;
- (d) courses on performance management and promotion of good practices within the civil service;
- (e) courses for enhancing the quality of customer service, handling public complaints, managing conflicts, coping with stress and maintaining emotional well-being; and
- (f) courses on English, Chinese, Putonghua and communication for both general and job-specific situations.

We expect that about 42 800 civil servants would have attended the courses by the end of this year.

National Studies and Basic Law Training

10. Increasing influence of China in the world stage and its subtle interplay with major trading partners of Hong Kong compel us to remain conversant with macro developments in the country. Meanwhile, closer interface heralded by cross-boundary infrastructure projects and coordinated regional initiatives call for broader engagement and mutual understanding. Our appeal to foreign talents and investments lies not only in geographic advantage and institutional strengths, but also the all-round ability to function as an effective platform for entrepreneurs and investors seeking venture in a market with fast pace of growth and promising potential.

11. Against this setting, it is necessary for civil servants to keep abreast of social and economic issues in the Mainland so as to equip themselves with updated knowledge on national social and economic strategies and blueprints that might impact on Hong Kong. To maintain our competitive edge against neighbouring cities, empowering civil servants through acquisition of exposure on the ground through dialogue and immersion is vital to upholding our status

as a premier business centre and opening up new frontiers to propel long-term economic growth.

Mainland Programmes on National Studies

12. CSTDI joins hands with renowned institutions and universities in the Mainland to run national studies programmes that last from seven to 17 days and comprise tutorials supplemented by site visits. Directorate officers will attend lectures at the Chinese Academy of Governance, and senior staff at MPS Point 45 or above are catered for by Tsinghua University or Peking University. In respect of officers at MPS Point 34 to 44, we have secured Jinan University, Nanjing University and Zhejiang University to run a one-week course for them. Finally, China Foreign Affairs University runs a nine-day course on international relations and foreign affairs for officers at MPS Point 45 or above. We expect that about 650 civil servants would have attended these courses by the end of this year.

Local Seminars on National Studies

13. Furthermore, we collaborate with institutions in Hong Kong and the Mainland on local seminars on issues that include “current international landscape and China’s foreign affairs” and “development of free trade zones”. We expect that about 6 300 civil servants would have attended these seminars on national studies by the end of this year.

Thematic Visits and Staff Exchange Programmes

14. Every year, we organise two seven-day thematic visits for officers at MPS Point 34 and above, featuring “Nuclear and New Energy” and “Nature Conservation and Water Management” in 2015. That aside, an exchange programme has been operating since 2002 for officers at MPS Point 45 to 49 and their Mainland counterparts at division director/deputy director level to share experience on inherent constraints, endemic problems and prevailing practices on service delivery concerning city planning, traffic management, public housing, health and food safety, trade and commerce, information technology, culture and arts, etc. We expect that about 50 civil servants would have attended these programmes by the end of this year.

Basic Law Training

15. We customise Basic Law training for civil servants at different stages of their career - foundation courses for new recruits on key concepts and provisions; modules designed to enrich knowledge through recent court cases

for officers at MPS Point 34 and above; and tailor-made programmes for individual B/Ds. In 2015, a series of talks and roving exhibitions have been held to mark the 25th anniversary of promulgation of the Basic Law. We expect that about 6 000 civil servants would have attended these courses by the end of this year.

Consultancy Services on Human Resource Management

16. CSTDI provides consultancy services and technical support on needs analysis, formulation of training and development plans, as well as organising customised activities for individual clients. We host workshops and retreats for B/Ds to crystallise their vision and mission, draw up business strategy, forge team spirit and strengthen internal communication.

17. On performance management, we assist B/Ds to map out and implement competency-based systems, disseminate good practices on human resource management through experience sharing sessions, and counsel on ways to groom talents and execute succession plans.

Other Initiatives

18. Civil servants should be encouraged to pursue continuously enhancement of their capabilities and attain higher performance standards by taking advantage of diversified learning opportunities.

E-learning Resources

19. We offer e-learning through CLC Plus that posts some 2 250 items of web courses, articles, video clips, library collections, learning tips, book summaries and publications, guidelines and good practices as well as reference materials. Meanwhile, a number of theme-based portals have been developed, such as the “Leaders’ Corner” for senior officers, the “National Studies Portal” concerning Mainland affairs and Basic Law, and the “Service Excellence website” sharing good practices. Ample language resources on English, Chinese and Putonghua are also available, while 23 B/Ds have deposited over 150 pieces of literature related to their respective disciplines on CLC Plus.

Financial Sponsorship

20. All civil servants can apply for reimbursement of fees after attending courses of operational relevance at their own spare time, and a total sum of \$6 million for this purpose was incurred in 2014-15. On the other hand, CSTDI has concocted the Training Sponsorship Scheme to promote life-long

learning among junior staff whose starting salary is at MPS Point 16 or below. With sponsorship capped at \$6,000 for up to three courses per applicant each year, about \$2 million has been earmarked for 600 applications in 2015-16.

Way Forward

21. We will keep our training programmes under constant review against changing circumstances and strengthen our consultancy support for B/Ds to meet new demands and emerging challenges.

Civil Service Bureau
December 2015