

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PANEL ON PUBLIC SERVICE

An Overview of Training and Development for Civil Servants

Purpose

This paper presents an updated overview of the provision of training and development opportunities by the Civil Service Bureau (CSB).

Summary

2. The Government is committed to providing civil servants with training opportunities that would equip them with the skills, knowledge and mindset necessary for providing quality service to the public.

3. In general, vocational training for meeting work requirements and job-specific needs is provided by departments. For example, to support the use of environmental design in the building design process, the Housing Department has conducted a series of training on "solar heat gain", "traffic noise", "daylighting", "bioclimatic building design", etc. for architects and building services engineers. To strengthen investigative skills, the Government Laboratory provides their chemists with training on "DNA collection at crime scenes", "analytical techniques for food additives", and other professional subjects.

4. CSB, through the Civil Service Training and Development Institute (CSTDI), focuses on meeting the common training needs of all civil servants. They include training on leadership, general management, human resource management, languages, communications, information technology, customer service, national studies and the Basic Law. In 2006-07, CSB spent around \$42 million on training and development for over 37,000 trainees through classroom training, over 42,000 trainees through e-learning, and 220 consultancies in training and human resource management/development.

5. The following paragraphs give a summary of the training and development activities organized by CSTDI, other than the national studies and the Basic Law programmes already presented to Members in January 2007 vide LC paper No. CB(1)623/06-07(04).

Senior executive development programmes

6. We are committed to providing directorate and senior non-directorate staff with adequate support in acquiring leadership skills, in developing new ideas, and in learning the best management practices to meet current and future challenges. To achieve this purpose, we offer different programmes for senior staff at different levels, and review/refine these programmes from time to time to match the changing needs of bureaux/departments and their officers.

(i) Local training programmes

7. For junior directorates and senior professionals, we offer a 3-week *Leadership In Action* programme that covers formulation and implementation of public policies, media and presentation skills, crisis management, stress management, leadership and change management. This programme is conducted by local and overseas experts.

8. We provide a one-week *Leadership Enhancement and Development* (“LEAD”) programme, specially developed for directorate officers, is led by a team of faculty from the Kennedy School of Government of the Harvard University. Using the Harvard’s case approach that includes comparative study of overseas and local cases, the programme examines public sector leadership, accountability, crisis management, and strategic management.

9. We also offer an *Advanced Management Workshop* series for directorate officers on a wide range of public management issues. Led by distinguished scholars and subject experts, the workshops usually last for one to two days and cover such topics as competitive strategy, negotiation, communication strategy, leading and developing talent, and so forth.

10. Apart from the above programmes, we also organize on a regular basis short seminars by prominent speakers on topical subjects like judicial review, QDII (qualified domestic institutional investor), economic integration with the Mainland and public sector reform.

(ii) Attachment programmes

11. We arrange a variety of attachment programmes for senior officers to gain wider exposure and develop broader perspectives. These include attachments to policy bureaux, organizations in both the public and private

sectors in Hong Kong, and overseas organizations/government bodies. The attachment duration ranges from a few weeks to a year, with six months being the norm.

(iii) Overseas programmes

12. CSTDI provides funding support and assist bureaux/departments in grooming and developing their officers. Selected officers are sponsored to attend executive development programmes at renowned overseas institutes. Most of these programmes last for 2-6 weeks. There are also degree courses that run up to one year.

(iv) E-learning

13. “Leaders’ Corner”, our on-line resource centre for senior officers, provides a convenient platform for their continuous learning and development. With items like book summaries/reviews, sharing by other CEOs, online speech banks, media tips, stress management information, summaries of seminars held, and a spectrum of relevant topics, the website enables senior civil servants to find new ideas, learn useful tools and acquire new knowledge in different areas at their convenience. Summary reports, insights and observations contributed by the past participants of overseas and Mainland programmes are also available for cross learning and sharing.

Training and learning opportunities for junior and front line staff

14. CSB actively encourages civil servants at all levels, in particular junior and front line staff, to pursue continuous learning to enhance their capabilities and versatilities at times of change and to meet increasing demands from the public for higher performance standards. In this connection, diversified training and learning opportunities are made available to different grades and ranks to support them in meeting new challenges and to enable them to provide better services to the community. An account of these training activities is given below.

(i) Training and development programmes in support of central and departmental initiatives

15. CSTDI provide advisory and training services to bureaux/departments in formulating and rolling out training plans in support of

their policy/departmental initiatives. The following are some examples:

- (a) In 2006-07, CSTDI, in conjunction with the Efficiency Unit, rolled out a series of advanced contract management workshops and experience sharing sessions for contract managers and front-line supervisors with the aim of improving the design, administration and monitoring of outsourced government services contracts. The course will continue in 2007-08.
- (b) A large-scale training programme on integrity was launched in 2006-07, in partnership with the Environment, Transport and Works Bureau (ETWB) and the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC), for staff of all works departments.
- (c) CSTDI provided support to the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) in organizing a series of workshops to prepare staff for the new roles and reforms in relation to the Review of the District Councils. Working together with the Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) and the Home Affairs Department (HAD), CSTDI will expand the programme in 2007-08 and make it available to relevant officers from all departments. The programme covers communication and presentation skills, managing change and committee paper writing.
- (d) A Command Course, which focused on administrative law, issue management and staff management, was organized for middle managers from both disciplined services and non-disciplined departments who had to carry out regulatory and law enforcement duties.
- (e) To meet the training needs of frontline staff, we have been offering training programmes on enhancing standard of service, such as serving customers with special needs or with tendencies of violence, and on enhancing communication techniques in service delivery.
- (f) Seminars are organized for both front line and supervisory staff on equal opportunities, gender awareness and sexual harassment to promote awareness and increase sensitivity to these matters.
- (g) We also offer induction training for new recruits, covering the Basic Law, equal opportunities, integrity and good practices of civil servants, in addition to other job-specific orientation classes provided by departments. Similarly, retirement seminars are also

organized to help prospective retirees to prepare and properly plan for their retirement.

(ii) Enhanced E-learning resources

16. We have continued to expand the e-learning opportunities for civil servants. Since launching our e-learning portal in 2000, we have made available an increasing number of on-line courses. The enhanced Cyber Learning Centre (“CLC”) Plus website now offers about 270 web courses and job aids. The web courses, covering a wide range of subjects, attracted some 42,000 participants in 2006-07, about 80% of whom were staff remunerated below Point 34 of the Master Pay Scale. More materials will be added during 2007-08, particularly in the areas of Putonghua, English language, IT, general management and work-life balance.

17. CSTD I also assists bureaux and departments in the development of e-learning resources and the enhancement of e-learning platforms so as to encourage more staff to take up learning on-line. Twelve departments have taken advantage of our platform and hosted their e-learning resources on our CLC Plus website, while at least ten other departments have developed their own e-learning platforms for vocational training.

(iii) Encouraging continuous learning through financial sponsorship

18. Since 2005, we have offered two training sponsorship schemes to civil servants who wish to pursue learning through external courses to enhance their knowledge, personal effectiveness and qualifications. The first scheme is targeted at junior to middle managers, which aims at enhancing their management capacity. We encourage them to pursue recognized management courses outside office hours. We reimburse 75% of the course fee up to a ceiling of HK\$22,500 per year. The second scheme is for front-line staff. Those who attend work-related courses or courses that raise their qualification to Form-5 level can obtain reimbursement of up to 75% of the course fee or a ceiling of \$6,000. So far, over 600 frontline staff and close to 400 junior/middle managers have benefited from the two schemes respectively.

19. These two schemes will continue to be offered in 2007-08. To encourage more civil servants to take advantage of them, we will expand the coverage of the schemes by increasing the number of recognized courses. We will also extend the eligibility of the scheme for front-line staff to cover more ranks so that more junior civil servants can take part in it.

Consultancy support to departments in human resource management and development

20. To assist departments to think and plan ahead so that departmental corporate goals could be supported more effectively by training and development activities, CSTDI provides consultancy services to departments by carrying out training needs analysis, developing and implementing departmental training and development plans, as well as designing and organizing tailor-made classes and activities for their staff. Very often, CSTDI provides facilitators to departments in conducting workshops/retreats to review/formulate business strategy, to build team spirit and to strengthen communication with staff.

21. CSTDI also assists departments in developing and implementing competency-based performance management systems as well as provides advisory services on related performance management and appraisal matters. Best practices in HRM/HRD are disseminated for experience sharing amongst departments. Support is also provided to departments to groom promising officers and formulate long term human resource development plans. Where necessary, we provide funding to departments to support their HRM/HRD initiatives.

The Way Ahead

22. We will continue to strengthen and diversify the range of training opportunities for all civil servants. In addition to continuing with the existing programmes and services, we will work very closely with departments to explore new training opportunities and to provide targeted support to meet new demands and challenges ahead.

Civil Service Bureau
April 2007