

Legislative Council Panel on Public Service
Meeting on 17 February 2003

Civil Service Customer Service Award Scheme

Purpose

This paper informs Members of a Civil Service Customer Service Award Scheme launched by the Civil Service Bureau since 1999 to promote a customer-oriented service culture in the civil service.

Background

2. The Government has, over the years, worked hard towards building up in the civil service a customer service culture that offers the best services to respond to the needs of the community and to meet the rising expectation of the public on the quality and standard of the public service. It fully recognizes the importance of fostering a quality service culture, which is essential for a knowledge-based and service-oriented community. To inculcate a customer-focused service culture in the civil service, many government departments have developed different initiatives to encourage their staff to improve the efficiency and quality of their service.

3. In 1999, the Civil Service Bureau introduced a Civil Service Customer Service Award Scheme at central level to recognize the efforts of civil servants in customer service and to promote a customer service culture in the public sector. Under the Scheme, outstanding civil servants and departments are rewarded for their achievements in providing excellent customer service and making continuous efforts to enhance the quality of public service. Good practices of customer service are shared among government departments with a view to making further improvement in the standard of public service delivery. The Scheme has received favourable response from departments and awards have been given out over these years at the individual, team and departmental levels to recognize current standard of performance and the enhancement of service made over the years.

The Outstanding Customer Service Award in 2002-03

Objective

4. The focus of the Award in 2002-03 is on the overall performance of the

departments in which team spirit and leadership skills could be manifested. Twenty-three departments have enrolled to participate in the Scheme. An *Outstanding Customer Service Award* will be presented to those departments, which have excelled in customer service under the selection criteria of service quality, efficiency and cost-effectiveness. These selection criteria are drawn up on the advice of representatives from government departments, private sector, professional organizations (including Hong Kong Institute of Human Resource Management, Hong Kong Management Association and Hong Kong Association of Customer Service Excellence) and staff sides of the Central Consultative Councils.

Adjudication of Entries

5. The adjudication process includes assessment of written submissions from departments, visits to departments by a consulting firm and presentations of the shortlisted departments to an adjudicating panel. Members of the adjudicating panel are drawn from the Legislative Council, private sector, professional organizations and staff sides of the Central Consultative Councils.

6. Members of the public are also involved in the adjudication process. More than 4,500 sampled households have been invited to vote for the best departments in a telephone interview survey and to provide comments on further improvement measures. The top three departments obtaining the highest number of votes will be presented a *Best Public Image Award* under the Scheme.

Exhibition of Outstanding Customer Service

7. The prize presentation ceremony of the Outstanding Customer Service Award will be held on 24 February 2003 at the Hong Kong Central Library. In conjunction with this event, we will organize a large-scale exhibition between 20 – 23 February 2003 at the Central Library on the services of 48 departments. The exhibition provides an opportunity to enhance public understanding of government service and to further promote the concept of good customer service. A similar exhibition held last year attracted more than 9,000 visitors. A roving exhibition of these exhibits will follow in major shopping centres and government office buildings from March to June 2003.

Good Practices of Customer Service

8. To cascade the concept of quality customer service among staff and to

encourage departments to make further progress in developing a customer-focused service culture, experience-sharing seminars will be organized for the winning departments to exchange their experience with other departments on the good practices of customer service.

9. The feedback obtained during the conduct of the Scheme in past years revealed that government departments have generally made significant improvements in the delivery of public service and have demonstrated a high degree of professionalism in customer service comparable to the standard of leading companies in the private sector. With the concerted efforts of all government departments, we believe that the customer service culture has taken root in the civil service.

Way Forward

10. Providing good customer service is an integral part of civil servants' work. The Government is committed to providing the community with quality service to meet the aspirations of the public. The Civil Service Bureau will continue to provide support to departments to sustain their efforts to enhance the quality of their services and to motivate staff to give their best to serve the community.

Civil Service Bureau

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