

**For discussion on
20 June 2022**

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PANEL ON PUBLIC SERVICE

Enhancement of Training and Development for Civil Servants

Purpose

This paper sets out the initiatives and measures which have been rolled out by the Civil Service College (College) as well as those in the pipeline to enhance training and development for civil servants.

Background

2. The civil service is the backbone of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government, shouldering the crucial responsibilities of thoroughly implementing “One Country, Two Systems”. Training is an integral part in the management of the civil service.

3. Established in December 2021, the Civil Service College is a major undertaking by the HKSAR Government to enhance training for civil servants on all fronts. Its interim accommodation is in the North Point Government Offices. The College is committed to providing a wide variety of training programmes to meet the service-wide training needs of the civil service. In particular, the College accords the highest priority to enhancing civil servants’ understanding of the Constitution of the country, the Basic Law of the HKSAR and the Hong Kong National Security Law, as well as national affairs. The College also strives to enhance training in leadership skills and innovation and technology application, and broaden civil servants’ international horizons and global outlook. In terms of delivery mode, the College would, apart from running training programmes in Hong Kong, also arrange training programmes in the Mainland and overseas and, in particular, run and enhance training programmes, thematic visits and exchange activities in the Mainland for civil servants. The College would also actively develop e-learning resources and encourage continuous learning in the civil service.

4. While only established for half a year, the Civil Service College has spared no efforts in launching various new initiatives, many of which have incorporated the valuable advice of the Civil Service Training Advisory Board and its working groups. The relevant measures are set out below.

Training on the Country's Constitution, the Basic Law, the Hong Kong National Security Law and National Studies

5. Shouldering the crucial responsibilities of thoroughly implementing “One Country, Two Systems”, civil servants must understand accurately the constitutional order established under the country's Constitution and the Basic Law of the HKSAR. Civil servants must also acquire an accurate understanding of the Hong Kong National Security Law and enhance their awareness of safeguarding national security. In the past two years (from June 2020 to now), we have organised about 200 training programmes and seminars covering the topics of the country's Constitution, the Basic Law, the Hong Kong National Security Law and national security, for around 25 000 trainees.

6. To enable training to be conducted in a more orderly manner, we will establish a more systematic training framework and designate training programmes for mandatory attendance by officers of different levels. Under this training framework, the College has launched or will launch a number of training initiatives with details as follows:

- (a) In respect of **induction training**, with effect from 1 July this year, all new recruits will be required to complete within the probationary period a more comprehensive foundation training programme. The annual target number of trainees is about 10 000. The contents will cover the HKSAR's constitutional order, the Constitution, the Basic Law, the Hong Kong National Security Law, the country's system and major policies, as well as the civil service's core values and public service culture. Officers of degree or professional grades will also be required to take part in **advanced training** upon confirmation to the permanent establishment, so as to deepen their understanding of the country and its major policies, as well as the principle of “One Country, Two Systems” and national security, etc.

- (b) We will further increase the number of training places and arrange for more middle and senior-level civil servants to take part in **national studies programmes, thematic visits and exchange programmes** in the Mainland as they advance in their career, so that they will have more opportunities to gain first-hand experience about the country's latest development, thereby strengthening their sense of national identity. The College collaborates with nine Mainland institutions (namely the National Academy of Governance, Tsinghua University, Peking University, China Foreign Affairs University, Zhejiang University, Nanjing University, Wuhan University, Jinan University and Sun Yat-sen University) in running programmes lasting 5 to 12 days. Apart from the country's latest policies and development, the contents of the programmes also cover topics related to the Constitution and the Basic Law as well as safeguarding national security. A majority of directorate officers have already attended training programmes in the Mainland. It is our target to gradually raise the percentage of directorate officers having attended training in the Mainland to 100%. In addition, the College also provides departments with support in organising national studies training for their staff, thereby strengthening exchanges and co-operation with the relevant Mainland authorities.
- (c) The Civil Service College signed an agreement with **Peking University** in April this year for their collaboration to launch a Master Programme in Public Policy for senior civil servants of the HKSAR Government, with the aim of broadening the horizons and enhancing the expertise of the participating officers in public administration. About 15 civil servants with potential will be nominated by their departments to take part in the programme each year. The first cohort will be launched this September. The programme lasts two years and covers four major areas, namely public administration and leadership skills, national and Hong Kong affairs, global affairs and governance, as well as social studies and field work. Participants have to attend the programme on a full-time basis at Peking University in the first year and visit different areas in the Mainland to conduct research and studies and prepare reports, with a view to deepening their understanding of the country's development. Besides, we will also continue to provide sponsorship for senior civil

servants to attend the Executive Master of Public Administration Programme for the Project of Hong Kong Public Administrative Talents at **Tsinghua University**.

- (d) We are actively making preparations for the **Civil Service Staff Exchange Programme**, and will extend it to cover the Mainland municipalities in the Greater Bay Area (GBA). Moreover, we would continue to organise thematic visits in the GBA, started in 2019, for civil servants to better understand the latest development of innovation and technology (I&T) and smart cities there. We look forward to resuming, as soon as the epidemic situation has stabilised, the training programmes and exchange activities in the Mainland.
- (e) We will continue to collaborate with Tsinghua University and provide, through the “**Tsinghua Lecture Series**”, a series of pre-recorded lectures for civil servants on national policies and the latest development in the Mainland. The “Tsinghua Lecture Series” was launched in December 2020. To date, five series of lectures have been launched, covering a wide range of topics including the National 14th Five-Year Plan, the governance of the country, economic development, international landscape, I&T, history and culture.
- (f) The College strives to strengthen the provision of e-learning resources¹ for civil servants through the **online learning platform** of Cyber Learning Centre Plus (CLC Plus). For example, in support of the National Security Education Day this year, the College launched a series of pre-recorded lectures delivered by experts from Tsinghua University, covering the topics of resource security, biosecurity and outer space security, to enhance colleagues’ understanding on the different major fields in the “Holistic View of National Security”. In addition, the College also launched a pre-recorded talk on “National Security, the Hong Kong National Security Law and Improving Electoral System”. The talk was delivered by former Secretary for Justice and former

¹ There are also a number of dedicated webpages including the Basic Law Portal, Safeguarding National Security Theme Page, National Studies Portal, Greater Bay Area Theme Page, the National 14th Five-Year Plan Theme Page, etc. in the Cyber Learning Centre Plus. We will update the contents of the dedicated webpages from time to time to enable civil servants to better grasp the latest information on national development.

Vice-Chairperson of the HKSAR Basic Law Committee of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, Ms Elsie Leung. The talk had its focus on the responsibility of the HKSAR to safeguard national security and the key elements of the Hong Kong National Security Law. It also covered topics such as improvements to HKSAR's electoral system and implementation of the principle of "patriots administering Hong Kong", so as to enhance civil servants' understanding of these related subjects in a holistic manner. This pre-recorded talk is another important online resource launched on the Hong Kong National Security Law, further to the video talk last year delivered by the then Deputy Director of the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council, Mr Deng Zhonghua.

7. These training initiatives not only deepen civil servants' understanding of national affairs, but also help foster their sense of "One Country" and inspire civil servants to contemplate how to leverage Hong Kong's advantages under "Two Systems" and proactively complement the country's development and policies.

Leadership Development

8. On senior leadership development, the Civil Service College is establishing a more comprehensive framework for leadership development, and drawing up a series of **flagship leadership development programmes** and workshops so that Heads of Departments/Heads of Grades can incorporate them into the development of the senior echelons. The flagship leadership development programmes include:

- (a) an eight-day Advanced Leadership Enhancement Programme for directorate officers;
- (b) a three-week Leadership In Action Programme for senior officers at Master Pay Scale points 45 to 49;
- (c) a 13-day Innovative Leadership Programme for officers at Master Pay Scale points 38 to 44; and
- (d) a five-day Leadership Essentials Programme for officers at Master Pay Scale points 27 to 37.

These programmes are conducted by a mix of different means including case analysis, experience sharing and site visit. Their contents mainly cover leadership, policy formulation and implementation, public engagement strategies, public service innovation, trends and applications of new technologies, media and public communication strategies, as well as change management, etc.

9. We also organise different **executive workshops for senior managers** covering the areas of “leadership and public policy”, “I&T application” and “public communication and crisis management”. Since late last year, we have launched expert seminars on different themes, such as the “Expert Round Table for Economic Development Series” in collaboration with the Hong Kong Academy of Finance, “Dialogue with Experts Series”, “New Perspectives on National Economy Series” and “Planning and Development of Chinese Cities Series”, etc. Senior civil servants may, by way of interaction and exchanges with different sectors through these sessions, broaden their horizons, get in touch with the pulse of the community more closely, and enhance their leadership and management capabilities.

10. The Civil Service College also continues to work with departments to place civil servants with potential on **attachment to bureaux**. Such attachment postings, each lasting for six months, seek to enhance departmental officers’ knowledge and skills beyond their professions, and to enrich departmental officers’ experience of participating in the process of policy development. During their attachment to the bureaux, departmental officers will take part in various types of jobs including coordinating various working groups on special projects, organising promotion programmes and public consultation exercises, as well as assisting bureaux to handle relevant paperwork for LegCo business, etc.

Enhancement of International Horizons and Global Outlook

11. In face of the increasingly sophisticated international landscape, civil servants need to acquire a deeper understanding of the national development strategy and the evolving global order. In this regard, the Civil Service College has strengthened collaboration with the Office of the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (OCMFA) in the HKSAR to enhance training for civil servants in learning more about the country’s foreign affairs. This aims to deepen civil servants’ understanding of the international scene and the country’s positioning, thereby enabling them to act in better concert with the country’s foreign affairs policy in handling

the relevant areas of work. The Civil Service College and the OCMFA have jointly launched the “**National Foreign Affairs series**” of talks. The series was unveiled by a thematic briefing session delivered by the Commissioner, Mr Liu Guangyuan, last December on “International Landscape and China’s Foreign Relations in 2021”. Under the College’s collaboration with the OCMFA, a series of monthly talks delivered by relevant officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs have been held since January 2022. Five talks have been successfully held so far.

12. In addition, with the support of the Central Government and the assistance of the OCMFA, the HKSAR participated in the **United Nations (UN) Junior Professional Officer Programme** (JPO Programme) for the first time in 2019. With the recommendation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the first batch of five young HKSAR public officers have joined the JPO Programme as Chinese personnel and assumed different posts in the UN’s offices in New York in the United States, Geneva in Switzerland, and Vienna in Austria since early 2020. The HKSAR Government attaches great importance to training of young civil servants and is committed to facilitating young civil servants to widen their horizons outside Hong Kong. In this connection, the OCMFA has started working with the HKSAR Government so that the second batch, with a greater number of participating officers, can be sent once the first batch of them returns to Hong Kong this year.

Innovation and Technology Application

13. The HKSAR Government adopts a multi-pronged approach to enhance training on I&T application for civil servants to support the implementation of the Smart City Blueprint for Hong Kong. Training provided for civil servants on this includes I&T training by Bureaux/Departments (B/Ds) for their staff based on operational needs, and training provided by the Civil Service College to meet the service-wide training needs of the civil service.

14. Examples of training provided by B/Ds for their staff based on operational needs include building information modelling, robotics application, artificial intelligence (AI), big data analytics, chatbot for public communication and security management for information technology projects.

15. As for the Civil Service College, it **organises programmes in close collaboration** with different government departments and organisations, and engages experts, academics, trade representatives and government officials to talk about the latest I&T developments and share experience with the participants. The goal is to enhance the ability of senior management to harness the potentials of new technology so as to devise strategies for service innovation, and help middle managers develop practical knowledge and skills required to implement service innovation and manage digital services. The training covers areas such as leadership and innovation, I&T application, smart city development, use of social media, design thinking, etc. The courses organised recently revolved around the following themes: latest global trend and use of digital media, innovative strategies in the digital world, utilising social media to promote public services, steering digital services with big data and AI, etc. Also, we are going to launch a workshop on I&T essentials where technologies such as AI, blockchain, cloud computing and big data will be explored, with a view to familiarising non-IT professionals with the application of digital technology and the future development trend.

16. We have also enhanced the contents in relation to I&T application in different leadership development and national studies programmes, so as to introduce the development of I&T promotion in the Mainland and smart city implementation by means including visits to key I&T facilities and institutions in the Mainland. Up to 150 e-learning resources are provided through the CLC Plus, which include materials on innovation trends, application of technology, tools for analysing database, data security, infographics, image editing and video production. The Government will continue to enhance training on I&T application for civil servants at all ranks. The overall number of civil servants participating in training in this area has increased from about 41 000 in 2017-18 to about 70 000 in 2021-22, representing an increase of around 70%.

17. To promote I&T application by civil servants, the Civil Service Outstanding Service Award Scheme (Award Scheme) this year will, apart from the existing three categories of awards², introduce for the first time the **innovation and technology awards** in collaboration with the Innovation and Technology Bureau to recognise B/Ds which are proactive in devising and implementing innovative measures and impactful solutions, and encourage a wider adoption of I&T by civil servants to improve government services. The Award Scheme is organised at an

² The existing three categories of awards are Excellence in Partnership, Excellence in Service Enhancement, and Excellence in Team Collaboration.

interval of two to three years, and aims to recognise the exceptional achievements of departments and teams in providing quality service, promote a customer-focused culture in the civil service, inspire innovation, and allow departments and teams to share experience. The Civil Service College has added an element of multi-pronged training to the Scheme by providing the relevant training to representatives of participating departments. The training includes drafting of submission for the competition, preparing for interview with adjudicators, project presentation, etc., with a view to helping colleagues explain policy concepts and implementation details more effectively. Such techniques can also be used for enhancing communication between the departments and the public. We will produce video series for the winning projects and stream them on different channels including CSB's Facebook page, YouTube channel, the thematic website for outstanding public services, so that the public can get to know more about the outstanding services provided by departments.

Way Forward

18. The recruitment exercise for the post of the Head of Civil Service College has completed. The inaugural Head will take up the appointment on 5 July, and steer the further planning and development of the College. Apart from the Head of the College, the College's current establishment of only two posts at the directorate level will not be adequate for the institution to cope with the anticipated increase in workload and service requirements. The Head of the College will review the organisation structure and map out a full-fledged plan on the manpower requirements (including manpower requirements at the directorate level) to enable a healthy and on-going development of the College.

19. Apart from manpower, sufficient space and quality facilities are indispensable to the effective delivery of training by the Civil Service College. The future new accommodation in Kwun Tong will meet the needs on this front. It will have a net operating floor area of about 16 600 square metres, and will be equipped with more professional and diversified facilities conducive to creating an environment that promotes learning and stimulates thinking, so as to better help civil servants learn and share new knowledge and experience, and cater for different focuses and modes of training. The ground breaking ceremony of the Kwun Tong Composite Development Project and the Civil Service College took place just on 9 June. The whole development project is expected to be completed by phases beginning from the end of 2026.

20. Through upgrading the hardware facilities of the College and coupling with the enhancements to various civil service training and development programmes, we look forward to further raising the training provided in both quality and quantity terms, so as to nurture more talents for the civil service in contributing to the development of Hong Kong and the country.

Advice Sought

21 Members are invited to note the content of this paper.

Civil Service Bureau
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