

Message

Our Policy Objective is to ensure that the Civil Service is trustworthy, efficient and serves the needs of the community.

We have set out in this booklet five Key Result Areas which we aim to achieve through the action plans drawn up under the 17 new initiatives.

We welcome your comments and suggestions on our Policy Objective and our initiatives.



(W K Lam)
Secretary for the Civil Service

Management of the Civil Service

Our Policy Objective is to ensure that the Civil Service is trustworthy, efficient and serves the needs of the community.

Our targets in pursuing this Policy Objective are –

- that the Civil Service remain and be seen by the public to be trustworthy
- that the Civil Service meet community needs for quality service in a cost effective way

Key Result Areas (KRAs)

To ensure that this Policy Objective can be achieved, we must deliver results in a number of areas, that is, we must –

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The following sections of this booklet explain the importance of these KRAs, describe the broad thrust of our efforts, and outline the indicators which we are using to assess progress. Each section lists the new key initiatives being taken to achieve our objectives and pinpoints the agency accountable for each initiative and the specific targets which we intend to meet.

I

Modernise the policy and practice applicable to the management of the Civil Service

To maintain a cost effective Civil Service which is capable of meeting community needs for quality service, we need to ensure that our management policies and practices are constantly reviewed and improved in line with present day circumstances.

This year we have introduced a unified set of terms and conditions (common terms) for all new appointments to the Civil Service which will be implemented in the last quarter of 1998.

We have also successfully launched a scheme to develop a multi-skilled general support service to enable us to deploy staff more effectively.

Another achievement has been the adoption of an updated policy on the provision of school and leave passages which provides flexibility to the recipients and savings for the government.

With regard to staff wastage monitoring and staff succession planning, we have increased the frequency of departmental succession reviews from yearly to half-yearly to ensure that staffing in all departments is maintained at an optimal level.

On line access to the Civil Service Regulations (CSRs) through the Government's Local Area Network was launched in December last year to allow for easy access to this key document to facilitate reference to it by civil servants.

We will continue to take appropriate initiatives to improve further the management of the 187 000-strong Civil Service.

Indicators

Our indicators of progress in this area are –

- the extent to which the appointment and deployment of staff at various ranks and among various grades may be optimised through a more flexible appointment policy which suits present day circumstances
- the extent to which the quality and cost effectiveness of the general support service may be enhanced
- the extent to which the terms and conditions of service may be further rationalised

Initiatives

To modernise the appointments policy by making it more flexible to suit departments' needs

*(Civil Service Bureau (CSB))**

Targets

- To complete a comprehensive review of the policy on the offer of pensionable, agreement, and temporary terms by 1999
- To implement the proposed changes gradually, beginning from 1999

* the brackets denote the agency with lead responsibility for the initiative

Initiatives	Targets
<p>To develop a strategy to streamline the provision of clerical services within Government (CSB)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To develop a strategy by March 1999 ● To implement the strategy with effect from 2000 ● To assess regularly the effectiveness of the new strategy in meeting departments' needs for clerical services from 2000
<p>To update the policy on prevention of double housing benefits for civil servants to suit present day circumstances (CSB)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To complete a review of the policy by March 1999 ● To introduce proposed changes, if any, by September 1999

III

Equip staff with the skill, knowledge and ability to deliver an efficient service to the community

Civil servants need to have the skill, knowledge and ability to provide the community with the range and level of service which it expects. The Civil Service Training and Development Institute provides a wide range of training programmes, from basic skills courses to in-depth management programmes.

In the past year, we have signed a new contract with the Tsinghua University on the provision of China Studies Courses for senior civil servants. We have also held the first Leadership Enhancement and Development Programme course organised by the John F Kennedy School of Government of Harvard University, which was attended by 30 senior officers.

Language training, China Studies and management training continue to be among the heavily subscribed courses. A total of 38 929 officers have taken part in such training in the first nine months of 1998.

In parallel, the Official Languages Agency (OLA) has been working with departments to promote the wider use of Chinese in official business. The OLA has helped translate the CSRs into Chinese and has developed a common Chinese character set.

We will pursue further ways to upgrade the expertise of civil servants.

Indicators

Our indicators of progress in this area are –

- the number of updated and new training courses and schemes to meet service requirements
- the number of officers who benefit from these updated and new courses and schemes
- the satisfaction rating of the training courses and schemes as indicated by trainees and their departments
- the extent to which Chinese is used in official business
- the extent to which officers communicate in written Chinese and Putonghua without resorting to translation or interpretation services

Initiatives

To help departments set up a mechanism to chart and review progress in using Chinese in official business

(Official Languages Agency (OLA))

Targets

- To complete a full round of visits to departments by September 1999 to encourage and assist them to set up the mechanism
- To have 50% of departments implemented the mechanism by September 2000

Initiatives	Targets
<p>To translate widely used circulars into Chinese and encourage the bilingual issue in future of such circulars (OLA)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To have all widely used circulars translated into Chinese by September 1999 ● To have bilingual issue of all major circulars from September 1999
<p>To enrich induction training programmes to instil Civil Service values (Civil Service Training and Development Institute (CSTDI))</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To design a new training package by April 1999 ● 3 000 trainees to benefit from the package in 1999-2000
<p>To enhance training in the knowledge of the Basic Law (CSTDI)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 27 000 staff to attend training and promotional activities on the Basic Law in 1998-1999 ● To produce nine issues of reference materials on the Basic Law and have 700 000 copies distributed to staff in 1998-1999
<p>To introduce a new training course for senior civil servants to provide in-depth and theme-based studies on contemporary Mainland issues and policies (CSTDI)</p>	<p>To introduce the new course in 1999-2000</p>

Initiatives	Targets
<p>To organise more exchanges with the private sector and other governments on management and public administration <i>(CSTDI)</i></p>	<p>To organise three large-scale seminars with international speakers and participants from the private sector and other governments in 1999-2000</p>
<p>To institutionalise the Secretariat attachment training scheme to provide better development opportunities for officers throughout Government <i>(Civil Service Bureau)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To complete a review of the current arrangement by early 1999 ● To promote the scheme to all departments in 1999-2000



Promote a culture focused on achieving results

In order to serve the community effectively, the Civil Service must adopt a client based and outcome oriented approach to service provision. A total of 1 540 staff have attended customer service training courses over the 12 months to September 1998. We have allocated \$3.5 million to assist departments with their initiatives aimed at enhancing a customer focused culture. We have continued a programme of providing consultancy support on human resource management (HRM) reviews in government departments. To support the Target-Based Management Process in government, we have, in conjunction with Efficiency Unit, commissioned a consultancy study to devise a new performance measurement framework for three departments on a pilot basis.

Indicators

Our indicators of progress in this area are –

- public perception of the standard of government services
- the number of HRM and quality service improvement projects implemented in departments
- the extent to which departments account for their services through an outcome oriented performance measurement framework

Initiatives	Targets
<p>To publish more thematic guide books on key HRM issues including appointments, staff relations and staff motivation <i>(Civil Service Bureau (CSB))</i></p>	<p>To publish three more guide books in 1999-2000</p>
<p>To introduce a “Customer Service Award” scheme to further promote a quality service culture <i>(CSB)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To develop and publicise the scheme in mid-1999 ● To present the awards in late 1999
<p>To promulgate a new performance measurement framework with the emphasis on achieving results <i>(CSB/Efficiency Unit)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To issue a guide on performance measurement by end 1998 ● To promote the new framework in 1999 ● To get departments to adopt the new framework by 2000-2001

IV

Uphold the integrity of the Civil Service

A trustworthy and impartial Civil Service is an essential cornerstone of society. We are committed to upholding the highest standards of honesty and integrity throughout the Civil Service. We work closely with the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) and Heads of Departments to promote anti-corruption practices. In the past year, we have organised a high level seminar with ICAC on “Maintaining Integrity in the Civil Service”. We have also revised the system of declaration of investments by civil servants and will soon issue a guide book on good practice for civil servants at all levels to enhance their knowledge and awareness of proper standards of conduct and probity.

Indicators

Our indicators of progress in this area are –

- public perception of the trustworthiness of the Civil Service
- the number of programmes organised by the Government to promote good conduct in the Civil Service
- the number of new or updated Civil Service Regulations and guidelines on conduct and discipline

Initiative	Target
<p>To assist departments to draw up guidelines on the avoidance of conflict of interest situations</p> <p><i>(Civil Service Bureau)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To reach out and help 20 departments review or develop their departmental guidelines on avoidance of conflict of interest in 1999-2000 ● To provide advice and support to the ICAC and Heads of Departments and grades in organising 300 training seminars for staff on avoidance of conflict of interest in 1999-2000



Promote staff well-being

Well motivated civil servants are likely to perform better than those who are not well managed. We recognise that we must promote good staff relations throughout the Civil Service to enhance team spirit.

We meet regularly with the four Central Consultative Councils to ensure effective communication with staff, and we are committed to consulting staff on any major changes which affect their conditions of service. We also promote direct communication with the senior management of departments through regular gatherings.

We continue to promote awareness of occupational safety and health in the Civil Service and in the last year, we have organised a major exhibition on safety and health in the work place.

We have improved the Civil Service Newsletter, which is an effective link between management and staff, by encouraging more staff participation.

In the current climate, the performance of civil servants is crucial to Hong Kong's continual well-being and our ability to improve the local economic situation and social structures. With this in mind, we will seek to provide staff with the support and encouragement that they will need to help steer us through these difficult times.

Indicators

Our indicators of progress in this area are –

- the number of staff participating in major staff relations promotional schemes
- the timely completion and implementation of the Good Practice Guideline on Safety Management Systems

Initiatives

Targets

To improve the staff Holiday Bungalow Scheme

(Civil Service Bureau (CSB))

To rent three additional holiday bungalows to raise the successful application rate from 24% to 37% when the additional bungalows are available for use

To provide professional counselling services to help staff cope with stress

(CSB)

To launch a pilot scheme to provide civil servants with ready access to expert counselling services on stress management

To devise a Good Practice Guide on Safety Management Systems to enhance safety at work

(CSB)

- To compile the Good Practice Guide by July 1999
- To start implementing the Guide in 50% of departments by the end of September 1999