MESSAGE

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government (HKSARG) delivers a huge volume of services for the community and over the years these services have expanded to cope with a rapid increase in population. Demographic changes are also increasing community needs, requiring continuous improvement to the way in which public services are delivered and managed.

To help achieve this the Efficiency Unit (EU) has developed the Serving the Community Programme to drive continuous improvement in the management and delivery of public services.

The Serving the Community Programme incorporates the Government's management principles –

- **Being accountable**, because the Government has an obligation to answer to the community which it exists to serve
- Living within our means, because the Government must determine how best to meet the community's needs within the resources available
- Managing for performance, because the Government must deliver the best possible services for public money
- **Developing our culture of service**, because the Government must be a responsive organisation, committed to quality service

The EU co-ordinates and resources a programme of work to help put these principles into practice. This programme requires the EU and other agencies to work across organisational boundaries. To facilitate this the EU reports directly to the Chief Secretary for Administration and works closely with policy bureaux and departments.

(Colin Sankey) Head, Efficiency Unit

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT IN PUBLIC SERVICES

Our Policy Objective is to secure continuous improvement in public services through an on-going programme of public sector reform, promoting best practice in management.

Our longer term targets in pursuing this Policy Objective are –

- To facilitate an on-going improvement in the quality of public services as measured by community and public satisfaction
- To facilitate an on-going improvement in productivity
 - High level measures for these targets are not yet available so our immediate target is –
- To develop measures which would enable us to assess community and customer satisfaction and public sector productivity

Progress Made

The ultimate measure of success with our Policy Objective on continuous improvement is evidence of an improving trend in the quality of public services delivered and the productivity achieved. The outcome of this year's survey on the effectiveness of Government's Performance Pledges gave an encouraging picture that the public (and indeed departments) do see real improvements in service quality, and that some of our key initiatives have contributed to this. We continue to work to develop broader measures of service quality and productivity.

The Asian economic slowdown and its impact on Hong Kong have created many pressures. The social and economic consequences have increased the community's needs for public services, yet Government needs to contain expenditure to reflect limited economic growth. The Government as a whole and the Efficiency Unit has placed a particular emphasis on improving the value from the available resources through the Enhanced Productivity Programme (EPP). Phase Two of EPP has taken shape as a structured programme of work to pursue opportunities to release resources for higher priority tasks. This gives a clear focus for Efficiency Unit in the year ahead and beyond.

Government also implemented the Target-based Management Process (TMP) to manage for results by results, and thus manage delivery of the Government's policy objectives. We decided that the Performance Measurement Programme (PMP) should be taken forward as an integral part of TMP, and good progress has been made in improving performance measures and their use. The Customer Service Programme has also made good progress, both by building on the strength of the Performance Pledges Programme and through the new developments detailed later in this booklet.

KEY RESULT AREAS (KRAS)

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

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Identify opportunities

The Efficiency Unit (EU) focuses its efforts on issues of particular concern to the community. To identify problems and opportunities it collects information on current performance through membership of high level groups, through a network of contacts across Government, and by responding to requests for assistance from policy bureaux and departments.

The Government faces challenges that are different from those facing the private sector, and indeed often different from those facing other governments. Approaches and solutions to problems have to be designed to fit the Hong Kong environment. But there is much that can be learnt from best practices developed in the private sector and in other governments. The EU collects and manages knowledge of approaches which have been used elsewhere, what has worked well and what has not, why different approaches have been more successful, and what might work best in Hong Kong.

The EU's Term Consultants contribute information and insight into best practices in the public and private sectors, and advise on how these might be tailored and developed for Hong Kong. We also draw more broadly on the expertise of practitioners, academics and consultants.

Progress Made

Our focus has been on searching for opportunities to lift public sector productivity and thus release more resources to meet the community needs at this difficult time. We have been focusing at three levels: opportunities to redirect resources to best effect in delivering Government's key policies and priorities; opportunities to re-engineer front line services to exploit new technologies and processes; and opportunities to draw lessons from the private sector and other governments on how to secure best value from support services. This work has revealed many opportunities and the most promising ones have been selected for early action and are reflected later in this booklet. Perhaps more importantly, the approaches being developed have the potential to impact on almost all areas of Government activity.

In the course of identifying and scoping these opportunities we have established a good database of best practice in each area, and we are continuing to develop the EU's Public Sector Reform Internet web site as an effective interactive tool for collecting and disseminating information.

To achieve results in this area, various initiatives have been undertaken in the past years. Details are set out below –

Initiative *	Target #	Present Position +
To design and conduct surveys of satisfaction with public services (Efficiency Unit (EU))	 To establish a range of surveys across Government and a mechanism for aggregating them by end-1999 To make available an up-to-date picture of community views from early 2000 (1998) 	The pilot study to measure community satisfaction, which will help identify opportunities, is near completion. Drawing on lessons learnt, the survey process will be extended across Government. (Action in Progress: On Schedule)
To launch a network to share best practice in the management and delivery of public services with selected governments across Asia-Pacific (EU)	 To inaugurate an active exchange through an Asia-Pacific Forum by mid-1999 To conduct benchmarking and best practice studies on at least three topics a year from 1999-2000 (1998) 	We see inter-government exchange as a good source of opportunities and we have received positive responses from various governments. Since most countries are already participating in the Eastern Regional Organization for Public Administration (EROPA) and other forums, EU is exploring the option of Hong Kong hosting the next EROPA meeting in 2000. (Action in Progress: Behind Schedule)

the bracketed information denotes the agency with lead responsibility for the initiative
 the bracketed information denotes the year in which the target was set
 the bracketed information denotes the status of the target

Initiative	Target	Present Position
To create opportunities for partnership with the private sector in sharing best practices in the management and delivery of services (EU) To conduct stocktaking studies of selected topics across government as the basis for benchmarking with best practice (Management Services Agency (MSA))	 To conduct at least three benchmarking and best practice studies per year from 1999-2000 To organise and conduct at least two experience sharing events a year with private sector (1998) To conduct at least three stocktaking studies per year from 1999-2000 (1998) 	In view of the increasing interaction between the public and private sectors, it was considered useful to consolidate the study work of these sectors. Various benchmarking/stocktaking and best practice studies conducted include – • re-inventing service delivery through integrated call centres • performance measurement • provision of internal support services • setting customer service standards • use of shared service centres for support services • world-wide Public Sector Reform web sites (Action Completed)
To conduct a review of the MSA with a view to maximising its contribution to continuous improvement in public services (EU)	To complete the review and make proposals by January 1999 (1998)	The review has been completed. MSA is refining the proposals to maximise benefits. (Action Completed)

In the next 12 months, we will assess our performance in respect of this KRA against the following indicators -

Indicator	1999 Target
The number of significant opportunities identified for improvement in the management and delivery of services	To identify three new opportunities in 2000-2001

Indicator	1999 Target
The availability of up-to-date information on best practices in the public and private sectors –	
 Number of publications/study reports on best practices in the public and private sectors issued 	 To achieve an increase in the number of publications/study reports on best practices in the public and private sectors issued in 2000-2001

We will undertake the following initiative to deliver results in this area –

Initiative	1999 Target
To identify further opportunities to improve customer service and raise public sector productivity through best practice and stocktaking studies (EU)	To conduct at least six best practice/ stocktaking studies

Develop broad direction and proposals

Having identified problems and opportunities, and reviewed the potential application of best practices, the next step is to develop the broad direction and specific proposals. New proposals are developed through papers, seminars and presentations, and through the use of external advice.

The broad direction has been established through the Government's management principles described earlier. Under this broad umbrella, the Government has developed the following programmes of work to achieve continuous improvement in the management and delivery of public services –

- Target-based Management Process: to clarify objectives and priorities, focus on results, ensure delivery of outcomes for the community, and measure performance
- Enhanced Productivity Programme: to achieve a lasting improvement in Civil Service Productivity
- Customer Service Programme: to understand better customers' needs and improve the quality and timeliness of response

The Efficiency Unit acts as lead or facilitator for these programmes under high-level sponsorship, managing progress and piloting solutions before wider roll out. This ensures that the proposals are workable in practice, and that we have the hands on experience to achieve successful implementation.

Progress Made

Target-based Management Process (TMP)

Whilst the structure and systems for TMP were successfully put in place last year, we are developing further proposals for improvement, including better information systems support and effective knowledge management. Continued support and innovation will be necessary to ensure the full benefits of TMP are delivered.

Enhanced Productivity Programme (EPP)

Government has instituted a series of Fundamental Expenditure Reviews which take a top down policy driven approach, focusing on what Government is really trying to achieve in each area, and the most effective strategies and resource allocation to maximise results. Experience to date shows that such reviews reveal significant opportunities to redirect

resources to better effect. The key proposal on front line services is the potential of the telephone call centre approach to improve access to Government services and reduce both frustration for the public and duplicated effort by having a single point of contact. Work on the first call centre has emphasised the broad potential to apply this approach across many areas of Government. One of the main proposals on support services is to make the full costs visible to the departments using support services such as accommodation, whilst giving them both accountability and incentives to make the most efficient use of such services.

Customer Service Programme

The call centre proposals also have important benefits for customer service. Other proposals have included the development of improved tools for collecting feedback from customers and the community on both Government's services and its overall success in delivering its policy objectives. Feedback is a powerful driver of improved services, and allows us to focus our efforts on areas of most concern to customers.

To achieve results in this area, various initiatives have been undertaken in the past years. Details are set out below –

Initiative	Target	Present Position
To develop and pilot an approach to extending the benefits of the Target-based Management Process (TMP) to departmental level (Efficiency Unit (EU))	 To develop the proposals by end 1998 To have the pilot approach in place by March 1999 (1998) 	We have integrated the implementation of TMP at departmental level with the implementation of the Government's policy objectives published in 1998. (Action Completed)
To develop and test improved models for the role, operation and resources of Resource Management Units (RMUs) in policy bureaux (EU)	To develop and pilot the revised RMU role, operation and resources by July 1999 (1998)	It was agreed with policy bureaux that this project should commence in May after the roll out of the TMP. A suggested improved model is under development and piloting is underway. (Action in Progress: Behind Schedule)

Initiative	Target	Present Position
To establish reshaping Government as part of the Enhanced Productivity Programme (EPP) to achieve a step jump improvement in the results achieved from available resources. This will include: transferring services; more trading funds and autonomous agencies; and reinventing front line and support services. The EU will co-ordinate the effort across Government, working with the lead agencies (EU)	To establish clear milestones for achievement and set targets for improved productivity by mid-1999 (1998)	Phase Two of the EPP is now well structured and underway. More specific targets and initiatives have been included under the Looking Forward section of this KRA. (Action Completed)
To broaden the Performance Measurement Programme (PMP) to develop and promote best practice in measuring performance at government wide, policy and departmental levels (EU)	To develop a broader performance measurement framework and an implementation programme by mid-1999 (1998)	The PMP is being taken forward as an integral part of TMP, and good progress has been made in improving performance measures and their use at various levels. (Action Completed)
To develop and pilot a range of methods and tools for assessing customer satisfaction (EU)	To develop and pilot a range of tools by mid-1999 (1998)	A five-factor model to assess customer satisfaction has been implemented and we continue to provide assistance to departments in respect of other methods/tools. (Action Completed)

Initiative	Target	Present Position
To design and pilot the first phase of a call centre approach for handling telephone enquiries and managing service delivery (EU)	Subject to the success of a feasibility study, to develop proposals for implementation by mid-1999 (1998)	 A scoping study on an integrated call centre on "Cleanliness and Environmental Hazards Issues", which involved the work of 16 departments has been completed. A business case for an Integrated Call Centre on Environmental Hazards & Cleanliness has been completed along with proposals for implementation. (Action Completed)

In the next 12 months, we will assess our performance in respect of this KRA against the following indicator –

Indicator	1999 Target
The number and scope of the improvement proposals developed	To develop at least three major proposals with potential broad application across the majority of bureaux/departments

We will undertake the following initiatives to deliver results in this area –

Initiative	1999 Target
To support the on-going programme of Fundamental Expenditure Reviews (FER) of Policy Objectives to identify savings/redeployment opportunities (EU)	 To complete three FERs by end-1999 To conduct three further FERs in 2000

Initiative	1999 Target
To develop programmes of work to transform Government's internal support services (EU)	To identify 10% savings/redeployment opportunities in each area reviewed
To develop and pilot proposals for institutional change as a mechanism to sharpen accountability and increase resource management flexibility (EU)	To pilot institutional changes in three departments/agencies by end-2000
To develop proposals for increasing the visibility of full costs within Government as a tool to help managers maximise value for money (EU)	To develop proposals by mid-2000
To examine Government-wide management information needs and develop proposals to improve knowledge management (EU)	To develop proposals by mid-2000

Secure ownership and support

Governments around the world, and organisations in the private sector, are littered with examples of apparently compelling change agendas that have come to nothing. Successful implementation requires much more than identifying a problem and developing the right answer. It requires firm commitment from senior levels and support from managers and staff. The Chief Secretary for Administration set out early this year a compelling vision for the public service we aim to achieve in the next five years, and demonstrated her commitment and support. The most senior levels of the Civil Service have also made plain their support for the Enhanced Productivity Programme (EPP).

Securing management and staff support involves broadening awareness and understanding of the opportunities available to improve public services and conveying both the benefits of proposed improvement and the practicability of the proposals.

The experience of implementing change in Hong Kong demonstrates that, as in all large organisations, building the critical mass of support for change requires sustained efforts. However, once a corporate decision is taken the Civil Service commits to putting the changes into practice, and to ensuring the real practical improvements result.

Progress Made

One focus for us this year has been to improve our understanding of the level of support for Efficiency Unit programmes within the Civil Service, to allow us to target our efforts on this front. We carried out a communications review which included extensive consultations with management and staff in policy bureaux and departments. Views were very positive where a bureau or department had sought the Unit's assistance, but more mixed in those cases where the Unit was perceived as implementing central initiatives. This picture was confirmed by our post implementation review of the Target-based Management Process (TMP). We need to redouble our efforts in communicating with bureaux and departments on how all the programmes fit together and the benefits to be accrued to the affected organisations in tackling their own issues. We will be launching an initiative to improve our communication planning and delivery.

As the major programme for last year was the implementation of the TMP, it was pleasing that we had sufficient support to achieve the roll out. The challenge for next year will be to sustain the good support for the EPP through to implementation.

To achieve results in this area, various initiatives have been undertaken in the past years. Details are set out below –

Initiative	Target	Present Position
 To organise seminars to encourage support and understanding of the improvement agenda amongst departmental directorate and staff To organise, promote and run a conference on continuous improvement in public services (Efficiency Unit (EU)) 	 To organise seminars on a regular basis on the four key programmes to achieve continuous improvement in public services. Four seminars will be organised in 1999 To organise the conference in Autumn 1999 (1998) 	We will hold a Serving the Community Conference in January 2000 to be followed by a series of seminars on current Public Sector Reform programmes. (Action in Progress: Behind Schedule)
To promote innovation in the management and delivery of public services, including improved productivity, through an awards scheme (EU)	 To have an awards scheme in place by end 1999 To secure at least ten entries to the awards scheme in the first year To devise a scale of improvements identified by projects entered into competition and develop a target for future years (1998) 	 The Awards for Performance Pledges 1999 were organised with the participation of all 63 departments currently publishing performance pledges. The Chief Secretary for Administration presented the awards to winning departments on 23 July 1999. Preparations for the Awards for Productivity Improvement 1999 are underway. (Action in Progress: On Schedule)
To develop the EU's Internet web page as a mechanism for promoting best practice in the management and delivery of public services (EU)	 To develop and implement a world class web page on public sector management and reform by early 1999 To measure the number of hits for the web page and set a target for future years (1998) 	The EU homepage promoting "Public Sector Reform" was launched in February 1999. Very positive response was received from many overseas organisations and there were over 12 780 visitors to the web page as at August 1999. Continuous enhancement of the content and the layout of the homepage will be maintained. (Action Completed)

Initiative	Target	Present Position
To organise and promote a second Serving the Community week (EU)	 To organise and run the events in Autumn 2000 To promote at least 80 linked events To have over 50 000 visitors attend the events (1998) 	Planning for the event is underway. (Action in Progress: On Schedule)

In the next 12 months, we will assess our performance in respect of this KRA against the following indicators –

Indicator	1999 Target
The level of support within the Civil Service for proposals to achieve continuous improvement to be measured through internal surveys and regular contact with departments	To ensure that 70% of client bureaux and departments rating the services provided by EU as effective and helpful in improving management and delivery of public services
The proportion of proposals which proceed to implementation	 To implement a majority of the proposals for improvements To provide practical assistance to the majority of bureaux/departments seeking help

We will undertake the following initiatives to deliver results in this area –

Initiative	1999 Target
To develop the EU's Internet web page as a mechanism for promoting best practice in the management and delivery of public services (EU)	 To develop and promote the EU web site more as an interactive tool by Spring 2000 To achieve 20% increase in number of hits to the best practices web sites in 2000-2001

Initiative	1999 Target
To promote innovation in the management and delivery of public services, including improved productivity through an awards scheme (EU)	 To organise the second awards scheme by early 2001 To secure entries from a majority of departments
To develop a structured EU communication strategy with bureaux/departments (EU)	 To develop a clear strategy for communication by early 2000 To implement the strategy by mid-2000

Implement and monitor results

All of the previous KRAs are vital if the Government is to achieve its objective of continuous improvement in the management and delivery of public services, but the results will only be felt if the opportunities and proposals identified flow through into successful implementation. Successful implementation begins with developing sound solutions to real issues and building support and commitment. It also requires effective planning and implementation, together with dedicated resources and expert assistance where needed. The Efficiency Unit (EU) has found a programme management approach to be most effective. Within each programme we have a mix of projects at scoping, development and implementation stages, brought together under clear objectives and accountability for delivery, and top level sponsorship within Government. Each project is delivered by a mixed project team including EU, Management Services Agency and, where appropriate, consultant resources. The teams work in close partnership with the affected policy bureaux and departments.

Our highest priority for implementation in the coming year will be to follow through on the many encouraging proposals emerging from the earlier stages of the Enhanced Productivity Programme. But it is important to remember that the Target-based Management and the Customer Service Programmes will also continue to have an important contribution to improving productivity.

Progress Made

The ultimate measure of success for this KRA is evidence that the proposals we have implemented have led to an improvement in customer service and productivity, and thus contributed to the achievement of the overall policy objective. The responses to our review of the Performance Pledges demonstrated that the public has seen significant improvements in customer service and sees the Pledges as having contributed. As with the policy objective, we continue to work to develop broader measures of customer satisfaction and productivity improvements in order to evaluate the impact of our programmes.

The key target for last year was the final centrally led stage of the roll out of the Target-based Management Process across all areas of Government. This process began with the publication of the policy objectives for the whole of Government with the 1998 Policy Address. Since then the Unit has worked with bureaux and departments to put in place the management mechanisms to ensure delivery of the policy objectives. The roll out was achieved and the broad structure and systems are available across Government. However, continued effort and support will be needed to ensure that these tools are used effectively and that the full benefits of managing for results by results are achieved.

To achieve results in this area, various initiatives have been undertaken in the past years. Details are set out below –

Initiative	Target	Present Position
To implement TMP across all remaining policy areas (Efficiency Unit (EU))	Full implementation by May 1999 (1998)	The Unit has supported lead bureaux and departments in putting in place the management mechanisms to ensure delivery of the policy objectives. This has included identifying the activities supporting each objective, and developing improved performance measures. (Action Completed)
To design and implement a series of surveys to provide feedback on the Government's achievements against its stated Policy Objectives (EU)	By October 2000, to develop measures and collect data to allow community views, customer satisfaction and public sector productivity to be assessed across Government (1998)	A pilot study measuring community satisfaction covering two policy objectives is near completion. With lessons learnt, we plan to gradually extend the survey process across Government. (Action in Progress: On Schedule)
To implement the computerised Performance Review System (PRS) across the remaining Policy Objectives (EU)	Full implementation by April 1999 (1998)	The PRS has been redeveloped both to cover all the policy objectives and to meet user and other suggested improvements on the first phase. The new system has been available since April 1999, and user training and equipment upgrades are now largely completed. Continuous support to the end users is provided through outreaching and a help desk service. (Action Completed)

Initiative	Target	Present Position
To produce a practical step by step guide to performance measurement for departments (EU)	 To issue the guide by end-1998 To have at least 15 departments making active use of the guide by end-1999 (1998) 	 The best practice guide was made available on the EU web site in February 1999. A step by step guide is being developed to take into account experience gained in the TMP roll out at the departmental level. The step by step guide will be launched at the seminar on performance measurement to be held in January 2000. The guide will then be issued to civil service managers. (Action in Progress: Behind Schedule)
To promote and implement a model for measuring and improving customer service (EU)	To have at least eight departments adopting the model by mid-2000 (1998)	 Three departments are now implementing the model. Action is in hand to extend the model to three more departments by end-1999 and another two by mid-2000. (Action in Progress: On Schedule)
To promote and run a group for customer services managers in departments to share new developments in customer service (EU)	 To have at least 15 departments participating in 1999 To organise at least four related events in 1999 (1998) 	 We have secured the participation of 30 departments in 1999. Two seminars were organised in April 1999. Two experience sharing sessions were organised in September 1999. (Action Completed)
To review Performance Pledges adopted by departments and implement further improvements in the programme (EU)	 To complete the review by end-1998 To implement improvements by mid-1999 (1998) 	The review was completed by end 1998 and the improvements have already been implemented. (Action Completed)

Initiative	Target	Present Position
To re-focus MSA's effort on efficiency studies to support the Enhanced Productivity Programme (EPP) (Management Services Agency (MSA))	To support Policy Secretaries and relevant departments in achieving targeted productivity improvements (1998)	MSA has offered support to all departments. Discussions with individual departments are in progress to identify priority areas. (Action in Progress: On Schedule)

In the next 12 months, we will assess our performance in respect of this KRA against the following indicators –

Indicator	1999 Target
Evidence of continuous improvement in productivity and customer service standards	To develop measures to assess improvements
The number of departments implementing improvements in management and delivery of services	 To ensure that – 70% of bureaux and departments agree to and implement the recommendations for various projects 80% of the projects completed on time 90% of the projects completed within budget

We will undertake the following initiatives to deliver results in this area –

Initiative	1999 Target
To implement an Integrated Call Centre for Environmental Hazards and Cleanliness	• To have the Call Centre operational by end-2000
(EU)	 To have the improved customer service processes fully in place by end-2001

Initiative	1999 Target
To conduct a review of the implementation of the TMP to identify lessons learnt and inform planning for on-going support (EU)	 To complete review by end-1999 To plan on-going support by end-1999
To conduct a review of the implementation of the PRS and inform planning for on-going support (EU)	To complete review and plan on-going support by end-1999
To implement proposals arising from the review of MSA (MSA)	To implement proposals by mid-2000
To provide support to bureaux and department in implementing changes emerging from the EPP (EU)	To provide support to 20 bureaux and departments