

**For Discussion
on 15 July 2024**

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PANEL ON PUBLIC SERVICE
Enhancing Leadership Development Training for Civil Servants**

Purpose

This paper briefs Members on the relevant initiatives on enhancing leadership development training for civil servants offered by the Civil Service College (CSC) under the Civil Service Bureau (CSB).

Background

2. The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) resolutely, fully and faithfully implements the principles of “One Country, Two Systems” and “patriots administering Hong Kong”, promoting Hong Kong’s integration into the country’s overall development. As Hong Kong enters a new era of advancing from stability to prosperity, identifying and nurturing more governance talents is crucial to enhancing governance and leading Hong Kong to cope with the prevailing complex international environment and challenges.

Our Beliefs in Leadership Training for Civil Servants

3. Civil servants are the backbone of the HKSAR Government and shoulder major responsibilities in its governance. The CSC strives to strengthen leadership development training to nurture officers with potential for promotion to senior leadership, thereby enhancing the governance of the Government. Our goal is to enable civil servants, especially directorate and senior officers, to gain a deep understanding of the national development strategies and international dynamics through targeted training strategies, and cultivate in them holistic views with a macro perspective, with a view to enabling the Government to leverage Hong Kong’s strengths to connect our country with the world. The training offered by the CSC also helps civil servants strengthen their foresight and

analytical capabilities in the face of complex social issues while embracing an innovative and collaborative mindset. These attributes are essential for the civil service in the effective formulation and execution of public policies.

4. Moreover, leadership is more than giving instructions to subordinates to execute policies and procedures. Leaders of departments should be advocates of the service culture of the Government, steering and strengthening the people-oriented and “One Government” service ethos in their respective departments, demonstrating personal commitment to take on responsibilities in pursuit of excellence, and serving as an inspiring role model for their subordinates. In light of these training needs, the CSC has appropriately integrated the values of patriotism, international perspectives, people orientation, unity and collaboration, professional excellence and innovation into a series of leadership development programmes to nurture leadership for the Government on an ongoing basis.

Initiative to Strengthen Talents Development

5. The CSC is working on an initiative to strengthen talents development. Unlike stand-alone leadership development programmes, this initiative seeks to be an incubator for talents with emphasis on the continuous and in-depth nurturing of governance talents in a holistic and systematic manner. The initiative will bring together officers with potential nominated by departments for targeted training on a regular basis to help them accurately grasp the governing tenets and policy thinking of the governing team, broaden their horizons, and develop common values and a sense of mission.

6. Training activities will be organised in various forms, including flagship leadership development programmes, Mainland and overseas training, thematic seminars, interactions and exchanges with the governing team and leaders from various sectors, and online learning, etc. to continuously enhance participants’ leadership knowledge, skills and competence. The initiative also includes personal development coaching to facilitate participants’ self-reflection, learning and growth. The CSC will maintain close communication with bureaux and departments in respect of nominating colleagues with potential and exchanging views on training effectiveness to ensure that the departmental management will actively participate throughout the talents development process for enhanced effectiveness of the initiative.

Key Training Programmes

7. The CSC's key leadership training programmes are set out below:

Enhancing holistic views and international perspectives

Master's Degree in Public Policy Programme jointly organised with Peking University

8. Starting from 2022, the CSC jointly organises the two-year **Master's Degree in Public Policy Programme with Peking University** for senior civil servants with potential for promotion to deepen their understanding of the national development, strengthen their national awareness and strategic vision, and enhance their overall leadership skills essential to public administration. Each year, the CSC selects 15 to 20 civil servants to participate in the programme. In the first year, participants will engage in immersive learning in Beijing and visit various places on the Mainland for in-depth exchanges with scholars, officials and the public, and see with their own eyes the national development and people's lives. Participants will return to Hong Kong in the second year to complete their thesis and apply their learning to enhancing the governance of Hong Kong. Senior civil servants from different departments can also take the opportunity to share experiences and deepen connections with one another to facilitate inter-departmental cooperation in future. The first cohort of participants just completed the programme in early July. Besides, the CSC sponsors senior civil servants to attend the "Executive Master of Public Administration Programme for the Project of Hong Kong Public Administrative Talents" at Tsinghua University.

Fireside Chat Series

9. The CSC launched the **Fireside Chat Series** in March 2024. Distinguished leaders and experts were invited to have in-depth dialogues with the governing team and to exchange views and experiences on issues such as international relations, national strategies, governance and leadership capabilities. In the first seminar of the series, former Minister for Foreign Affairs of Singapore Mr George Yeo shared his wisdom of governance, extensive governance experience and global vision. The seminar was attended by the Chief Executive and about 70 Principal Officials, Permanent Secretaries and heads of departments. The Chat Series will continue to be held to keep enhancing the leadership capabilities of the governing team and further widen their perspectives.

Executive series on “Brokering North and South: China in a Multipolar World”

10. The CSC will organise an executive seminar series on **“Brokering North and South: China in a Multipolar World”** in July this year with renowned scholars and leaders from the Mainland and overseas as guest speakers. Through such activities as thematic seminars and roundtable discussions, directorate and senior civil servants will ponder on the influence of China, as a major player in a multipolar world, on the global community amid the rise of the global south and profound changes in the international landscape. We will explore how civil servants, in a city where East meets West, should leverage their strengths in language and cultural exposure in their unique role in connecting our country with the world. The seminar series will be chaired by Mr Eric Li, Chairman of the Advisory Committee of the China Institute of Fudan University. The first seminar “A Century of Exploration of the Chinese Path and its Global Significance” will be held on 15 July, with Professor Zhang Weiwei, Dean of the China Institute of Fudan University cum Board Member of China’s National Think Tanks Council as the speaker.

Executive series on “Connecting with the World – ASEAN”

11. In November 2023, the CSC launched the Executive Series on **“Connecting with the World – ASEAN”** to further broaden the international perspectives of directorate and senior civil servants. Prominent experts were invited to analyse the changing international dynamics and the development of ASEAN countries, including economies of emerging markets, opportunities and challenges from regional trade agreements, the role and positioning of ASEAN, and the diversity of ASEAN economies, and engage in in-depth discussions with participants. The recent two seminars were held in April and June this year on “Opportunities and Challenges from Regional Trade Agreements under the New World Order” delivered by Lead Advisor (Southeast Asia Region) of the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia Dr Lili Yan Ing, and on “Diversity of ASEAN Economies” delivered by Professor Krislert Samphantharak of the School of Global Policy and Strategy at the University of California San Diego. Since the launch of the Executive Series, a total of about 700 participants have attended the seminars.

Seminar series on the country's foreign affairs

12. The CSC has jointly organised with the Office of the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the HKSAR (OCMFA) a series of talks on the **country's foreign affairs**, including thematic briefing sessions on “International Landscape and China's Foreign Relations” by the Commissioner of OCMFA, and talks by relevant officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on various topics, with a view to enhancing civil servants' understanding of international affairs, awareness of national security and holistic views. Proposed topics to be covered in the second half of 2024 include the latest developments of multilateral diplomacy, China-Middle East relations, telling good stories of China, etc. Since the end of 2021, nearly 4 400 directorate and senior civil servants have attended the seminar series.

Developing leadership attribute and capabilities

Flagship leadership development programmes

13. The CSC has organised a multitude of leadership development programmes for officers with potential for promotion. The various programmes are designed in light of the roles and core competencies of leaders at different levels with a view to helping participants enhance their personal leadership skills and capabilities, thereby equipping them for competently assuming greater leadership responsibilities upon promotion to higher ranks. The programmes with different focuses include:

- (a) **Advanced Leadership Enhancement Programme for directorate officers (8 days)**
 - focuses on broadening participants' international perspectives, holistic views about our country and strategic thinking to help them support the national development strategies and the development needs of Hong Kong when formulating policies;

- (b) **Leadership In Action Programme for senior officers at Master Pay Scale Points 45-49 (3 weeks)**
 - focuses on strengthening participants' capabilities in leadership and strategy execution, and their ability to think from multiple perspectives for effective formulation and implementation of public policies;

- (c) **Innovative Leadership Programme for officers at Master Pay Scale Points 38-44 (13 days)**
 - focuses on enhancing participants’ capabilities of promoting service innovation and keeping frontline officers abreast of the times for delivery of people-oriented services; and

- (d) **Leadership Essentials Programme for officers at Master Pay Scale Points 27-37 (5 days)**
 - focuses on enhancing participants’ capabilities in team management and collaboration, and fostering the “One Government” mindset in the provision of services.

14. We will continuously enrich the content of the programmes. New topics such as the Belt and Road Initiative and the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA), sustainable development, geopolitics and national strategies, Hong Kong’s distinctive advantages and opportunities, data-driven innovation and cyber security have been added to keep civil servants abreast of the latest local, national and global developments. The programmes are conducted via different pedagogical approaches including case studies and analyses, experience sharing and site visits to maximise learning effectiveness.

15. The participants said that the above leadership development programmes had given them a profound experience, fuelling their passion of serving the public and prompting them to re-think how to lead their teams to better serve the community. The programmes have also strengthened their commitment as leaders to facilitating culture building in departments. In addition, the sharing by experts and scholars of various fields has broadened the participants’ horizons and global outlook, inspiring them to consider how they can support the Government in their respective roles in capitalising on Hong Kong’s advantages and contributing to the development of the country. The participants also commented that the programmes had provided an effective platform for experience sharing and networking for colleagues from different departments, which would in turn strengthen inter-departmental communication and collaboration.

Expert seminars

16. The CSC has launched a series of expert seminars on different themes to facilitate civil servants’ interactive exchanges with experts from various sectors and help them gauge the pulse of the community. The “**Dialogue with Experts**”

seminar series has invited veteran media professionals, expert scholars and enterprise leaders to share insights on the international landscape and the latest situation in Hong Kong, and exchange views with civil servants on topics such as public governance, social development and organisational management. In the “Leaders’ Perspectives: Application and Management of Artificial Intelligence” seminar held this March, Prof Dong Sun, Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry, and Mr Herbert Chia, Member of the Digital Economy Development Committee, were invited to share the strategies and trends in the development of artificial intelligence in Hong Kong, and explore the application and management of artificial intelligence for promoting the development of a smart city and digital government. More than 600 senior civil servants in total have attended the “Dialogue with Experts” seminar series so far.

Gain first-hand experience, build interpersonal networks

National studies programmes on the Mainland

17. The CSC arranges for middle and senior-level officers to attend Mainland programmes as they advance to different stages of their career. Apart from classroom learning, they also gain a deeper understanding of national affairs through on-site experiences. Currently, the CSC 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 national studies programmes that last for 5 to 12 days. The programmes cover such topics as the Constitution of our country and the Basic Law, safeguarding of national security, the latest national policies and developments, as well as site visits to learn about the social livelihood on the Mainland. It is expected that about 1 500 middle and senior-level civil servants will take part in the Mainland programmes organised by the CSB in 2024.

Exchange programme and attachment scheme, overseas training

18. The CSB launched a **Civil Service Staff Exchange Programme** with Mainland cities in the GBA in December 2023. The first batch of ten middle and senior-level civil servants of Hong Kong joined the exchange programme lasting about three months in Shenzhen last December. They were assigned to different government departments in Futian and Qianhai to perform specific duties, taking part in projects that promote Hong Kong-Shenzhen cooperation and city

development. The exchange period has been extended from four weeks to about three months, which allows Hong Kong civil servants to attach to the Mainland authorities for a longer time for a deeper understanding of the operations of the Mainland authorities and the formulation and implementation of policies while establishing close ties with the Mainland officers to better support the GBA's development strategy. We are also actively organising exchange programmes with other Mainland cities beyond the GBA (including Beijing, Shanghai, Chongqing, etc.).

19. Furthermore, to help groom officers in departments, the CSC also arranges for departmental officers with potential for promotion to attach to policy bureaux for a period of six months to enhance their knowledge and skills beyond their professional domains. About 20 civil servants participate in the attachment scheme every year. The CSB also arranges for middle and senior-level civil servants with potential to attend courses at overseas institutions. After the pandemic, we have been resuming relevant training in an orderly manner, including the resumption of overseas training for Administrative Officers (AOs) on completion of probation. The first round of overseas training programmes was launched in January this year, where about ten AOs attended training at Sciences Po in Paris for around eight weeks. The second round of overseas training programmes also commenced in June with about ten AOs attending training in the London School of Economics and Political Science for around eight weeks. The CSB will continue to arrange overseas training for more civil servants. Apart from the CSB, individual departments or grades also arrange for their staff to attend executive development programmes at renowned overseas institutions (e.g. the University of Oxford, the International Institute for Management Development in Lausanne, Switzerland, INSEAD, and the National University of Singapore), and participate in training and attachment programmes related to their professional fields in different places (e.g. France, Italy, Korea, Singapore, the UK).

20. With the support of the Central People's Government and the assistance of the OCMFA, we took part in the United Nations (UN) Junior Professional Officer (JPO) Programme for the first time in 2019. Two batches totalling 17 HKSAR young public officers recommended by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were sent to work in the UN offices in New York, the United States; Geneva, Switzerland; Vienna, Austria; and Nairobi, Kenya as Chinese personnel. The first batch comprising five JPOs has completed their tenure with outstanding performances, which was highly commended by the UN side. 12 JPOs in the second batch have also progressively commenced their second year of tenure. The

HKSAR Government will continue to explore opportunities for HKSAR public officers to give their best in the international arena, tell good stories of Hong Kong and contribute to the country.

Continuous learning online

21. A dedicated webpage “Our Country, Our World” has been launched on the Cyber Learning Centre Plus for civil servants to gain a deep understanding of subjects covering the Chinese narratives, global politics, economics and society, and innovation and technology. Through expert insights in featured articles and videos, civil servants can continuously broaden their knowledge and international perspectives. The e-learning resources and face-to-face leadership development training together provide civil servants with more comprehensive and in-depth learning experiences.

Way Forward

22. The CSC will continue to fulfil its responsibility of nurturing high-calibre governance talents, actively enhancing the breadth and depth of leadership training for civil servants at all levels, so as to support the Government in giving full play to the power of “patriots administering Hong Kong”, and fostering the steadfast and successful implementation of “One Country, Two Systems”

Advice Sought

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

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