

THE HONG KONG HOUSING AUTHORITY

Memorandum for the Human Resources Committee

Progress Report on Human Resource Management Plan Implementation

PURPOSE

The purpose of this paper is to inform Members of the progress of implementation of the programmes and initiatives included in the Housing Authority's (HA) Human Resource Management (HRM) Plan Update (1998/1999 to 1999/2000)¹.

BACKGROUND

2. In accordance with the planning process, half-yearly reports will be submitted to the Human Resources Committee (HRC) on the progress and the achievement made of the initiatives included in the six driver programmes of the HRM Plan Update. The last progress report was submitted for Members' information on 30 November 1998 vide HRC Paper No. 56/98.

PROGRESS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF PLANNED PROGRAMMES

3. All initiatives set out in the HRM Plan Update have been implemented according to planned objectives, targets and schedules. Major achievements over the past six months include:

¹ The HA's first HRM Plan was developed in July 1997 covering the five years from 1997/1998 to 2001/2002. Having regard to the changing circumstances since July 1997, HRC endorsed the first update of the HRM Plan from 1998/1999 to 1999/2000 in May 1998.

- a) completion of a review to open up the D3 and D2 posts in the four business branches to all departmental disciplines²;
- b) conduct of an annual evaluation of the current level of development and implementation of HRM programmes;
- c) completion of a review on employment and management of HA contract staff³;
- d) development of a departmental training plan based upon corporate strategies, training needs of departmental staff groups and priority of respective business branches;
- e) development of leadership programmes to support change management;
- f) devolution of training administration and responsibilities to the four business branches;
- g) development of core competency profiles for Technical Officers and Survey Officers is in near completion; and
- h) publishing of a “Guide to Training and Duty Visit Administration”, “Competent Communicator Resource Kit”, and a “Guide to Coaching for Improved Performance”, and production of the second episode of staff video magazine.

_____ The up-to-date position of the major initiatives vis-à-vis their key performance indicators are highlighted at the **Annex**.

² The review findings and recommendations were endorsed by HRC at its meeting on 11 February 1999. HRC Paper No. 4/99 refers.

³ The review findings and recommendations will be submitted to HRC for consideration at its meeting to be held on 14 May 1999.

NEW HRM CHALLENGES AND IMPLICATIONS

4. The programmes and initiatives as included in the HRM Plan Update were drawn up in early 1998 taking into account the prevailing circumstances at that time, namely the announcement of the Chief Executive's housing pledge in October 1997; the changing role of HA from provider to facilitator of public housing and associated services upon the implementation of Tenants Purchase Scheme; and the adoption of a business and process management approach in the organisation. Through the design and implementation of a focused set of HRM programmes as contained in the HRM Plan Update, we have made considerable progress in our HRM programme development as reflected in the half-yearly progress reports and the Consultant's evaluation of our HRM system development and implementation⁴.

5. Notwithstanding the above, HRM plans are designed to be living documents that require continuous updating and review to reflect the changing external and internal environment. We see the need to start planning work for updating the current version of HRM Plan, having regard to the following emerging issues which will definitely have far-reaching implications on HRM in HA:

- (a) increasing private sector involvement (PSI) in HA's work with focus on the provision of estates management and maintenance services;
- (b) wider employment of HA contract staff⁵ and the outcome of the review of their terms and conditions and related management issues;

⁴ In his annual evaluation of HA's HRM system development and implementation conducted in early 1999, Dr Iain McCormick has commented that HA has made considerable progress in its HRM development, the focus of which is considered in alignment with the strategic objectives of the organisation. The overall development is assessed to be at a competent level, implementation is progressing according to schedule, and users' satisfaction is generally high. HRC Paper No. 5/99 is relevant.

⁵ Wider employment of HA contract staff starting from all recruitment ranks of all grades was one of the initiatives of HA manpower strategy endorsed by HRC at its meeting held on 30 July 1998. The Department will review the arrangement in one year after its implementation. HRC Paper No. 33/98 refers.

- (c) the consultation document on Civil Service Reform with focus on entry and exit mechanism, pay and conditions, conduct and discipline, performance management, and training and development; and
- (d) the implementation of the Enhanced Productivity Programme which aims to improve productivity and efficiency through, for instance, streamlining organisational structures, operational procedures etc.

6. Against the above background, we need to nurture a reform culture and a shared perspective of change at different levels of the departmental structures and cascade the need for change to all levels of staff through a shared vision and common direction. Specifically, we need to help our staff members to respond to the future challenges more readily and prepare themselves positively in the face of the keen competition ahead. We will also continue to develop a work force that is more open and flexible, with an increasing sense of responsibility, accountability and adding value to our customers as the main thrust of HRM as we enter the new millennium.

THE NEXT STEP

7. The next update of the HRM Plan will therefore be built along these lines to meet new human resource challenges. The focus of the programmes and initiatives will be on preparing the organisation for change through enhancing its efficiency and effectiveness; cultivating a more customer-oriented culture; developing skills of staff, particularly junior staff, to respond proactively to change and increase their competitive edge including their capability to manage the transition into the private sector; maintaining their motivation and contributions through further improvement in performance management and training; and stepping up communication to handle staff concern for retention and transfer.

8. The HRM Plan is an integral part of the corporate plan and links closely with the business plans. It is essential to link the updating process with the planning cycle of the business plans and with the Chief Executive's next Policy Address to be announced in early October 1999 so that significant new policy initiatives vis-à-vis implications on our HRM can be addressed timely. Accordingly, we aim to complete the review and submit a new version of the

HRM Plan for Members' consideration when we have more details about the PSI proposal and the likely impact of the civil service reform on HA.

INFORMATION

9. This paper is issued for Members' information.

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