14th ASEAN CONFERENCE ON CIVIL SERVICE MATTERS (ACCSM) 29 – 31 OCTOBER 2007

TECHNICAL PAPER OF BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

CLIENT'S CHARTER – TOWARDS A MORE TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE PUBLIC SERVICE (BRUNEI DARUSSALAM'S EXPERIENCE)

BALI-INDONESIA
2007

Executive Summary

The purpose of this paper is to share Brunei Darussalam's experience on the efforts made in creating a customer oriented public service through the implementation of client's charter, which is called as "Tekad Pemedulian Orang Ramai (TPOR)". TPOR is a program consists of a complete process of the client's charter.

TPOR is defined as a **written promise** or **commitment** made by an agency to the public/clients on its service standard, based on the clients' expectations and needs and accommodated to the agency's capabilities. In other word, a short statement that describes the service experience a client can expect from an agency. However, direct translation of "Tekad Pemedulian Orang Ramai (TPOR)" is as follow:

- "Tekad" – a promise;
- "Pemedulian – caring; and
- "Orang Ramai – public/clients.

This paper will also discuss the Government's aims to enhance the importance of giving customer excellent service and the initiatives that had been carried out to make the implementing of TPOR is a reality.

Globally, governments are constantly striving to keep abreast of an ever-changing world while being challenged with rapidly changing public's needs and expectation, and who are getting affluent and knowledgeable. Here, the client's charter is a powerful tool for the ministries, departments, management and staff to continuously improve service delivery to the stakeholders, whether it is across the counter, via the telephone or through electronic means.

Most governments recognized the benefits of having the client's charter and various models have been adopted to reform the government into client-focused, open, transparent, and accountable entity. In the Great Britain public service, the client's charter had been implemented since 1991; similarly, Canada had its client's charter in 2000 through the incentives of "Citizen First 2000". Brunei Darussalam has

2

_____
Technical Paper for the 14th ACCSM Main Conference
Bali, Indonesia, 29-31 October 2007

no exception, as the client's charter (TPOR) concept was introduced since 1995. As a caring government, His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam had consented for all ministries and departments to have their own client charters in 1997.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. One of the aims of The Government of His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, like any other ASEAN and developing countries is to have a government that could be trusted, credible, transparent, effective and efficient in delivering its services which is also in line with His Majesty's speech and the Brunei's Civil Service 21st Century Vision. Having a civil service that is competitive and responsive will enable the citizens and people to live in contentment and comfort. Whether we like it or not, the civil service has to face the challenges and changes in the globalize era. The only way is to move forward and be in pace with other countries to achieve the ultimate goals of the Brunei's Civil Service 21st Century Vision.

1.2. With the rising expectations of people, education and knowledge and the emergence of a diverse form of interest groups requires the civil service and government to be even more competent and efficient. Thus, the need for the government to provide a more transparent and accountable service is very much urged. All these factors forced the civil service to evaluate performance, uplift service standards, and ease work processes, systems, and procedures to meet the ever-dynamic needs of clients and public as a whole. To succeed, Brunei's Civil Service has to be ready in facing the challenges and accepting changes according to times, be it small or big.

1.3. The government of His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam has always put on its great effort in fulfilling the public needs to keep it in-line with the country's policies and development objectives. Several efforts had been and still carried out in order to upgrade the competency and effectiveness of the public administration. This includes the reviewing of 'service-delivery' programs of the civil service. The client's charter or ***Tekad Pemedulian Orang Ramai*** (TPOR) is one of the strategy in considering and handling the public needs.

1.4.   The objectives of implementing TPOR in Brunei Civil Service are, firstly, to uphold His Majesty Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam's Speech who continuously highlighted the aspects of care to the public.

Some excerpts from His Majesty's Speech:

⇨   Government officers and staff must continuously be caring to the public needs when they visited government departments acquiring information or services.
[21 June 1989]

⇨   To officers and staff, I would like to emphasize the needs to care for the public, practice courtesy and to attend to the complaints or problems.
[15 July 1998]

⇨   To ensure rules and procedures of the government agencies should be transparent in order to avoid delays in processing and delivering the services to the public.
[15 July 1999]

2.   RATIONAL

⇨   To uphold His Majesty's speech emphasizing the aspects of care to the public;
⇨   To uphold the 21st Century Civil Service Vision – to be an institution of quality and excellence;
⇨   To enhance the commitment and accountability of government agencies in generating an organization that is efficient, effective, caring to the needs and expectations of the public according to the service standard promised;
⇨   To boost transparency especially in the efforts, actions and processes taken by ministries and departments in providing services;

⇨ To enhance the public's trust on the government as a reliable service-provider;

⇨ To enhance productivity, quality of services and clients' satisfaction; and

⇨ To produce civil servants with positive attitudes – responsible, committed and caring.

2.1.   In 1997, His Majesty through his speech, consented that all government agencies must have their TPOR and implemented systematically.

3.   CONCEPTS

3.1.   TPOR is a **written promise** or **commitment** made by an agency to the public/clients on its service standard, based on the clients' expectations and needs and accommodated to the agency's capabilities. In other word, a short statement that describes the service experience a client can expect from an agency.

3.2.   TPOR **focused** on three main areas, comprise of :

a. Public/Clients: main receiver of services / products which require quality services from government agencies.

b. Standard: The standard is set (eg timeliness), and the agency who provide the service/product is required to comply with the standards. TPOR of an agency must review from time to time to ensure the quality of services in line with the public needs and within the agency's capabilities.

c. Attitude / Ethics: TPOR acts as means of monitoring for shaping and nurturing civil servants to be more responsible, committed and caring.

3.3.   **Characteristics** of TPOR : every TPOR document must adhere to the six characteristics:

- clear,
- easy to disseminate,

6

_____
Technical Paper for the 14th ACCSM Main Conference
Bali, Indonesia, 29-31 October 2007

- practical,
- specific,
- confidence; and
- amendable.

3.4.   The introduction of TPOR brought **benefits** to both the clients/public and the government agencies.

a. Benefits to the clients :
⇨ Allows client to know clearly and accurately the service quality rendered by the government;
⇨ Allows client to voice their suggestions on the government agencies' level of service delivery;
⇨ Client would be aware of particular government agencies' ability, effectiveness and quality of services delivered by them; and
⇨ Offer valuable information to the client on the service / product standard of a specific department.

b. Benefits to the agencies :
⇨ Act as monitoring devices which can be used to benchmark organization progress level from time to time;
⇨ Permits an organization to be more transparent and accountable when providing services; and
⇨ Nurture commitment, discipline and responsibility among the civil servants.

4.   TPOR IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

4.1.   To achieve the optimum result of TPOR implementation, each government agency must go through the six implementation processes as follow:
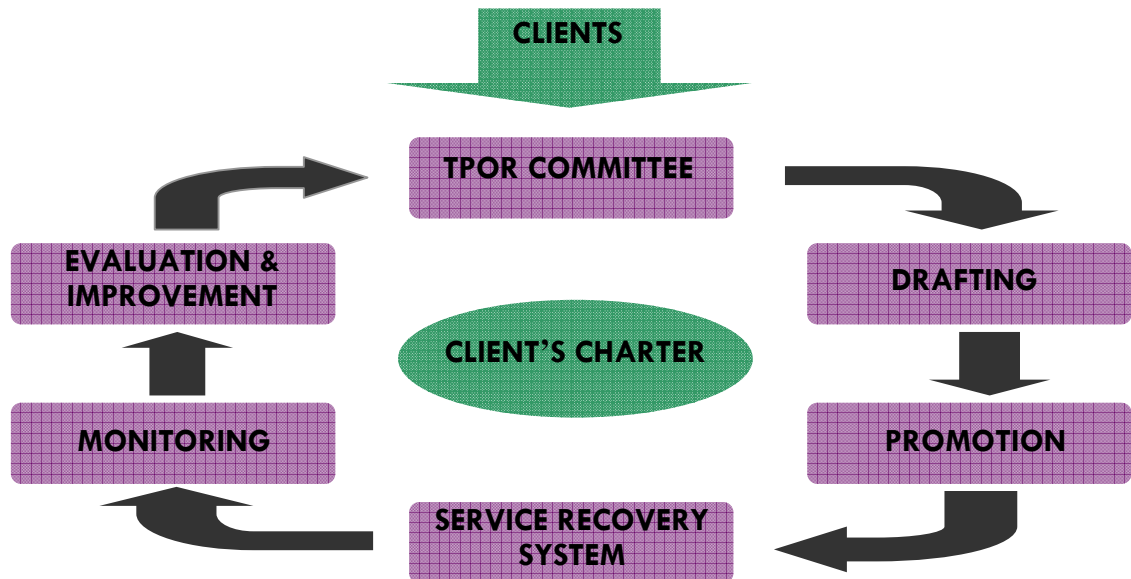
a. **TPOR Committee** – each government agency must establish TPOR committee, responsible in ensuring the implementation of TPOR runs accordingly;

b. **Drafting TPOR** – split into 4 actions such as**:**
   ⇨ Identifying clients and their needs
   ⇨ Identifying the core businesses of the agency
   ⇨ Determining the standard of services / products
   ⇨ Preparing TPOR document

c. **Promotion** – the prepared TPOR must be promoted to public/clients by displaying at strategic areas and mass media;

d. **Service Recovery System** – this system must be prepared considering the possibility of an agency unable to deliver services / products at stated time.   Inability of an agency to meet deadlines may ruin its image and credibility.   To overcome such problems, two methods can be used, *Proactive recovery* and *Reactive recovery*;

e. **Monitoring** – a continuous process function to measure the level of achievements of the agency concerned, to identify whether the targeted standard met; and

f. **Evaluation and Improvement** – to make certain the TPOR is suitable and effective. Evaluation and improvement must be exercised from time to time. This means that agencies must regularly review their TPOR to ensure its ongoing relevance and effectiveness.

5. INITIATIVES

5.1. In monitoring the implementation of TPOR in government agencies, several initiatives to make the implementation of TPOR a reality were introduced. The initiatives are as follow:

5.1.1. PUBLICATION

⇨ TPOR Handbook, first published in 1996, then in 1997, 2003 and the latest in 2006.

⇨ Publication of leaflet – "Guideline on Lodging Complaints in Government Services" in 2006.

⇨ Publication of Auditing TPOR Handbook was published in 2003, and 2006.

⇨ Handbook on Delivering Services to the public

      i. Launched during the 10th Civil Service Day in 2004;

      ii. First published in 2004 then in 2006;

      iii. This handbook aimed to help civil servants especially the front liners in dealing with the client to provide quality service delivery and thus create customer-friendly atmosphere and to cultivate customer-oriented working culture.

⇨ Leaflet on guidelines of preparing TPOR

      i. Published in 2005 aimed to assist government agencies in preparing TPOR documentation based on standard format;

9

_____
Technical Paper for the 14th ACCSM Main Conference
Bali, Indonesia, 29-31 October 2007

        ii. Disseminated to civil servants during TPOR talks and workshops.

5.1.2 PROMOTING TPOR

⇨ Television program named 'TEKAD', which started in 1998 until 2000. In this program, the heads of department promoted their TPOR;

⇨ Government agencies' TPOR were publicized in the government official newspaper – *Pelita Brunei* on a weekly basis since 2001 to date;

⇨ TPOR is made as a curriculum for training at the Civil Service Institute aimed for Division II officers and below since 2001;

⇨ Talks and consultation also given from time to time or on request;

⇨ Initiatives made by agencies in promoting their TPOR :

- Displaying TPOR at strategic places where clients can access;
- Producing leaflets on TPOR which are then disseminated to the clients; and
- Displaying TPOR in the website.

⇨ Customer Day

- In January 2006, all government agencies (especially those who involve directly with the clients) are urged to organize "Customer Day" focusing on the core services, TPOR, question and answer session with the clients on any queries related to the services concerned.

⇨ Customer Friendly Program

- An annual program that will group individuals of different background to voice out problems/suggestions on a determined subject and directly tackled by panels of senior officials.
- First program was held on 7th March 2007

⇨ Logo competition was open o the public in 2004.

10

_____
Technical Paper for the 14th ACCSM Main Conference
Bali, Indonesia, 29-31 October 2007

5.1.3 MONITORING TPOR

⇨ Handling clients' complaints and grievances on government services since July 1998. Research on specific issues based on the complaints started since 2005. This is part of the review exercise to identify any services rendered in the TPOR documents are monitored or otherwise by the agencies concerned.

⇨ Compilation of government agencies' TPOR
  - Compilation of TPOR documents for government agencies was made in 1999 for Cabinet Ministers' Council references;
  - Government agencies were requested to submit their latest TPOR documentation in 2002;
  - In 2003, feedbacks were forwarded to agencies concerned (those submitted their TPOR) through their Permanent Secretaries suggesting actions be taken to improve their TPOR;
  - In 2006, a follow-up was made to agencies that had not submitted their updated TPOR documents to forward their TPOR;
  - To date, only 86% of government agencies submitted their TPOR documents and the rest of the departments claimed not to interact directly with the client.

⇨ Spot-checks on some government agencies had been carried out from 1999 till 2002, to ensure the agencies concerned adhere to their TPOR, promoting TPOR accordingly, provide means of getting feedbacks from clients, examined the level of counter services and to identify problems in implementing TPOR, etc.

⇨ Surveys on Customer Focus in the Civil Service were made in 2002 and 2006. Comparing results from the findings show improvements on the civil servants' POSITIVE attitude towards customers and understanding on the slogan "Customer is always right". The clients'

11

_____
Technical Paper for the 14th ACCSM Main Conference
Bali, Indonesia, 29-31 October 2007

satisfaction on the services provided by government agencies is also increased. Comparison on the two findings as shown in the table :

	2002	2006
Civil servants' POSITIVE attitude towards customers	75%	80.3%
Civil servants' understanding on the slogan 'Customer Is Always Right'	35.4%	43.6%
Customers' satisfaction	49%	64.5%

⇨ Auditing of TPOR

- It is another initiative aimed to identify the level of commitment and implementation of TPOR in government agencies;

- Purpose of auditing is more to developmental and not 'fault-finding' as claimed by some agencies;

- This initiative was implemented in line with His Majesty's Speech in July 2003 and the Prime Minister's Office circular 1/2003 dated 20th May 2003;

- Talks were held in the same year to educate officers on this initiative;

- Divided into three phases, the 1st phase still ongoing which focused on agencies dealing directly with the client;

- Scopes of auditing divided into two, that is to assess whether the audited department follow through the six TPOR implementation processes and to measure the level of TPOR achievements on few selected services;

- To date, 19 departments had been audited and findings were surprisingly almost of similar conclusion. Majority of the audited department do not complete the TPOR cycle (6 processes) although they had TPOR documents, however its preparation does not follow the TPOR guidelines. The performance of the services audited that complied with the stated timeliness was differing from one department to

another. Few showed above 90% compliance and some of the services were unable to assess since no specific measures when the services were asked for (eg date received of the application); and

- During the audit follow-up in February 2007 (four departments), it shows improvements such as:
  o Using the time study to determine the achievements of the TPOR (monitoring tools);
  o Log in the date of received in every applications, and in-complete applications will be rejected. The clients will be provided with the checklists required to fill-in the form.
  o Some agencies had proactive system recovery, eg. The clients are informed if the applications are delayed or if there were any queries.

5.1.4 TPOR WORKSHOP

⇨ It was launched in March 2006 by Permanent Secretary of Prime Minister's Office;

⇨ Aimed to intensify the knowledge and comprehension of officers and staff towards TPOR and its implementation;

⇨ Targeted for Administrative officers, public relation officers and officers handling TPOR;

⇨ A two-day workshop which includes talks, group discussion and tests on TPOR, Complaint Handling, Working Manual Procedures and guide to delivering services to the public.

6. CHALLENGES

6.1. Although the initiatives undertaken to implement the TPOR is greatly commended, and there are challenges faced by the implementation agency such as:

13

_____
Technical Paper for the 14th ACCSM Main Conference
Bali, Indonesia, 29-31 October 2007

- Lack of co-operation and feedbacks from government agencies, submission of updated TPOR by government agencies need to be continuously reminded;

- Agencies readiness towards auditing of TPOR (thought of fault findings);

- To inculcate the understanding and commitment in implementing TPOR;

- Lack of co-ordination/works overlap between government agencies within the same ministry; and

- Penalty/Enforcement.

7.   WAY FORWARD

a. Customer Relationship Management (CRM) – With this system, the client would be able to make enquiries, lodge complaints, as well as fast and easy access to reliable and accurate information on services rendered by the government agencies on-line. The Self-Service in this system would allow clients to create cases, monitor the cases for registered clients, solution search from the previous cases of the same nature or from the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on government agencies' services.

b. Guidelines on the minimum standard of customer service counters – This guideline will assist government agencies in delivering optimum counter services and ensuring the services provided are customer-oriented. Examples of the minimum standard to the civil servants (especially front liners) are:

⇨ To follow the guideline on "Delivering Services to the Public" as to create customer-friendly atmosphere and to cultivate customer-oriented working culture.

⇨ The usage of name tags especially the frontlines, in line with the Prime Minister's Office circular 09/2006 dated 21st February 2006.

c. Monitoring of Customer Day organized by government agencies

d. Customer Friendly Program – This program will be organized annually in different locations.

e. Conduct a survey on Customer Focus – civil service wide

f. Audit Follow-Up – Revisit audited departments to ensure they had implemented the agreed findings and proposals.

g. Publication of TPOR Handbook in English.

8.   CONCLUSION

8.1. The ever changing clients' expectations are largely influenced by clients being more affluent, educated and well-traveled as well as the needs to compete in diverse areas within the region and international. Therefore, TPOR is focused on the key areas seen as important by the agency's clients, stakeholders, and staff. Essentially, client's charter (TPOR) is a living document that must evolve in line with changes to the agency and its clients.

8.2. Today, requirement on quality and efficiency in public service are the most important elements, and the concept of TPOR and with its proper implementation, the public sector will meet the expectation in:
   - Timeliness
   - Knowledge
   - Competence
   - Fairness
   - Courtesy
   - Outcome
   - Efficiency
   - Service quality

8.3.   Factors like good leadership, reliable human resources and excellent strategic network would lead to the successful implementation of TPOR which eventually leads to high class working culture. This again would intensify the integrity and strength of civil service and thus enhanced the public's trust, which ultimately leads to the prosperity of the country.

8.4.   Ensuring that our civil **service** fulfils its responsibilities and preserves its image of being impartial, disciplined, and accountable is a major challenge. **Public** sector leaders must be prepared to look for new approaches, address weaknesses, and improve quality, efficiency and skills.

8.5.   As TPOR has 3 focuses, it is considered as a public document that should be used as the driver for the cultural change within the agency. This change can encompass client-focus, changed business practices, outcomes, processes, better and more responsive communication, and improved relationship with the clients. This will implant trust and developed credible governments' agencies.

16

_____
Technical Paper for the 14th ACCSM Main Conference
Bali, Indonesia, 29-31 October 2007