

SUPPORTING SERVICES

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The Corporate Services Division, the Information Technology Division, the Legal Unit and the Corporate Secretary Unit provide the essential supporting services for ensuring and enhancing the effective management and operational processes of the MPFA.

CORPORATE SERVICES DIVISION

The Corporate Services Division is responsible for providing administration and other support services. Its main scope of work includes human resources management, financial control, treasury functions, translation service and general administrative support.

HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

In 2000-2001, the Human Resources Department continued to be heavily engaged in recruitment of staff. Up to 31 March 2001, we had recruited 115 staff out of an approved establishment of 315, giving a total strength of 272. In addition, we have employed 109 temporary staff to help with peak workloads. The 2 largest recruitment exercises were for the Inspectorate staff and Community Relations Assistants.

During the year, individual reviews were conducted on the structure of various divisions and departments, enabling them to be more efficient and effective in meeting the changing requirements of the MPFA. The Corporate Services Division, the Information Technology Division, the External Affairs Division and the Enforcement Department of the Member Protection Division have all undergone restructuring to some extent, gearing them up for the challenges of the launch of the MPF System in December 2000.

The Human Resources Department also developed, designed and formulated all the human resources related policies and the Human Resources Policy and Administration Manual was completed.

To ensure an effective reward-for-performance strategy, a rigorous review of the performance appraisal system, and the performance-related bonus payment and salary adjustment mechanism was conducted and implemented.

By 1 December 2000, we had enrolled all our staff in MPF schemes. We have appointed three trustees to provide a wider selection of scheme choices to our staff. Arrangements were also made to transfer staff's ORSO scheme assets to the MPF schemes. Comprehensive communication sessions were arranged to facilitate understanding of the interface arrangements.

With the establishment of the training section in July 2000, training policies had been formulated. Structured training programmes and core training modules for understanding the MPF System and the MPFA were developed; 28 classes of these core programmes covering 378 participants were conducted; training for the Community Relation Assistants and the Inspectorate grades were also carried out. During the year, 48 classes covering eight skills training workshops, including Staff Appraisal Review, Stress Management, Complaints Handling, Interpersonal and Communication Skills, Effective Team Management, Telephone Manners and First Aid had been organized with an attendance of over 1 400.

An Editorial Board for the Staff Newsletter was formed in December 2000 with the first issue published in February 2001. To keep our staff informed of up-to-date corporate issues, other staff communication tools such as the Staff Express and Staff Bulletin were also launched. To cultivate and maintain a culture with emphasis on teamwork, a Staff Welfare Committee was formed to plan and organize staff social activities.

With a kind donation by the Chairman of the MPFA, the Hon Charles Lee Yeh-kwong, a "gym room" was set up and equipped with an exercise bicycle, a stepper, OSIM chairs, TV and mini-Hi Fi for staff to relax and keep fit. Other social activities organized included a fun day at the International Golf & Yacht Club, an outing to the Po Leung Kuk Holiday Camp, movie evenings and a Staff Christmas Party.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

The General Administration Department provides a wide range of administrative support services to the MPFA to ensure the smooth functioning of the office. These

services included the timely provision of suitable equipment, facilities and amenities, and ensuring a safe and comfortable working environment for staff members. Furthermore, it also ensured that assets and records of the MPFA were kept in a safe and easily retrievable manner.

To cope with staff expansion and the need for ancillary space, additional offices were leased at the 5/F International Finance Centre to accommodate the Call Centre, and four floors at the Asia Standard Tower to house the Enforcement Department. Storage space at Sunley Centre at Kwai Chung was also leased for off-site storage of materials which were not of immediate use.

FINANCIAL CONTROL

During the year, the budget structure was reviewed and revised to cope with operational needs. In addition, the budgetary process was also reviewed and a more systematic approach was used in the preparation of the 2001-2002 budget.

MPFA directors, committee members and staff participated in a MPF Telegame Show jointly organized by the MPFA and Community Chest.



A financial and accounting policy manual listing all fundamental financial policies of the MPFA was compiled. The existing financial management system was improved through process re-engineering and automation by applying information technology, in particular the addition of a module to capture commitment of funds.

TREASURY

During this year, the Treasury Department was established. One of its first tasks was to map out interim investment strategies for the Capital Grant and the Compensation Fund. As from 30 March 2001, two external bond fund managers were appointed to manage two portfolios, and a master custodian was appointed to

keep safe custody of MPFA's assets. Treasury policies and procedures were laid down and a manual produced.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

The Community Relations Department (CRD) was set up in April 2000 to provide a centralized avenue for the public to make enquiries about the MPF System. As at 31 March 2001, there were 27 permanent and 52 temporary staff members at the CRD, who were the frontline personnel at the receiving end of all public enquiries and complaints made through e-mail, by phone, by fax, in writing or in person.

Enquiries

In anticipation of surging public enquiries in the run-up to the MPF launch, a Call Centre has been set up since April 2000 to answer questions related to the MPF System, such as MPF scheme features, roles and obligations of different parties, members' rights and relevant services. The services and operating hours of the Call Centre were progressively enhanced and extended at various stages of MPF implementation. At the peak of the demand of its service between November and December 2000, the Call Centre operated a hotline enquiry service from 8:30 am to 10:00 pm and a round-the-clock voice-mail service. In March 2001, the hotline enquiry service ran from 8:30 am to 7:00 pm.

A computerized Enquiries Handling System, which enabled the logging of all incoming calls and other useful information, was installed in August 2000. The Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS) installed in December 1999 was further enhanced in January 2001. With these improvement measures, calls can be answered within thirty

seconds and the number of abandoned calls dropped drastically to less than two per day on average.

During the year, the CRD received 319 464 enquiries. The number of enquiries peaked in November 2000 with the record of 6 000 calls in a single day.

Complaints

The CRD provides a central depository of all complaints referred to the MPFA since 1 December 2000. At the end of November 2000, a computerized Complaints Handling System was installed to facilitate the recording, processing, and monitoring of all complaint cases. The system has been linked up with the MPF trustees and the Labour Department through electronic means to facilitate quick referral of complaints. From 1 December 2000 to 31 March 2001, the CRD received a total of 1 387 complaints.

Statistics

Statistics of enquiries and complaints are included in Part D of the Statistics section.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DIVISION

The Information Technology (IT) Division has played a significant role in ensuring that all the required computer and IT systems are ready and operate smoothly so as to facilitate the launch of the MPF System on 1 December 2000, and the discharge of the MPFA's various statutory and corporate management functions effectively.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (IMS)

The most important accomplishment made in the year was the successful completion of the IMS core systems, which went live in November 2000 despite the earlier project slippage. The core systems do not only provide public access to relevant MPF information, they also facilitate the efficient processing of applications submitted by service providers for registration of MPF trustees, schemes, intermediaries and investment funds, and assist in the management and monitoring of enrolment and compliance. Moreover, with the disaster recovery drill successfully conducted in

November 2000, there was added assurance that in case of a disaster, the IMS services could be restored at a backup site and business operations could be resumed speedily. The Default Contribution system went live on 26 February 2001. The launch of these systems was the result of the hard work and collaboration between the IT Division, the user representatives and the project contractor staff in all stages of system development. The close monitoring and management by the IMS Committee was also indispensable to the successful and timely implementation of the core systems. This Committee is headed personally by the Chairman and consists of experts of very high standing in the IT field, namely Dr David Cheung, Associate Professor of the Department of Computer Science at the University of Hong Kong; Mr Daniel Lai, President of the Hong Kong Computer Society and Head of Information Technology of the MTR Corporation; and Mr Stephen Lau, Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data.

In parallel with the development of the IMS, several interim systems had been built to meet the immediate and critical business needs of the MPFA and to ensure that the MPFA's operations were not adversely affected by the slippage of the IMS project. These interim systems have served as back-up systems once the IMS core systems went live.

COMPLAINTS HANDLING SYSTEM

The Complaints Handling System installed before the launch of the MPF System was developed by the IT Division in order for the MPFA to effectively and speedily respond to complaints lodged by the public. The system was built around an information database, which is accessible through a shared network among the trustees, the Labour Department, and the MPFA.

TRUSTEE SUPERVISION

To ensure the readiness of the IT systems of the Trustees and Administrators, the IT Division visited their data centres to ascertain their

IT competence and the soundness of their systems and procedures. Observations and recommendations were communicated to their management staff.

OTHER IT SERVICES

During the year, the IT Division provided technical support to the infrastructure on which the application systems were run, ensuring a stable and secure system environment for over 300 users. It assisted in the testing and acquisition of software for other supporting departments of the MPFA and also has developed peripheral systems to facilitate the rendering of various supporting services, such as the various bulletin board systems to facilitate efficient dissemination and sharing of information within the MPFA.

LEGAL UNIT

The work of the MPFA generates many legal issues. The MPF and ORSO systems derive from legislation, common law and equity and are complex from a lawyer's perspective insofar as they interact with the laws of contract, trusts,

insurance, financial services and employment. The administrative functions of the MPFA are governed by administrative law and affected by privacy and anti-discrimination legislation. As a statutory corporation the MPFA has internal governance issues. As an enterprise the MPFA faces employment law issues and commercial issues relating to the supply of requisite facilities (e.g. leased premises, computer systems), materials and services. The Legal Unit advises on all legal issues affecting the MPFA in its various roles.

Before the commencement of the MPF System on 1 December 2000, the primary focus of the Unit was advising on the interpretation and implementation of the MPF and ORSO legislation. The MPFA is not empowered to definitively interpret the law. Nevertheless, it has been essential to the success of the MPF and ORSO systems that the MPFA forms accurate and accepted views

on the law affecting MPF and ORSO schemes and expresses those views for the guidance of employers, trustees and service providers. The Unit has played an important role in formulating those views, particularly in the form of draft guidelines for clearance by the Guidelines Committee.

Since the launch of the MPF System in late 2000, the Unit has been active in supporting the MPFA's enforcement actions. The Unit liaises closely with the MPFA inspectors, the Police and the Department of Justice and advises on each investigation report before it is dispatched to the Department of Justice for further action with a view to prosecuting offenders.

The MPF legislation needs to be refined and amended in the light of operational experience. The Unit has played an important part in advising on the legal aspects of proposed legislative amendments affecting retirement schemes. At the same time, it has also been involved in the provision of legal education to MPFA staff, particularly inspectors.

CORPORATE SECRETARY UNIT

The Unit has been responsible for providing secretariat services to the Management Board and the MPF Schemes Advisory Committee and co-ordinating matters relating to other boards and committees of the MPFA. It collated and drafted the annual Corporate Plan, reported on progress reviews of the Corporate Plan and managed the production of the Annual Report. The Unit has assisted in receiving and arranging meetings with visitors to the MPFA, including those from the Mainland and overseas.