

GiatMARA & IKM) and Higher Education (private companies under MARA) which caters to Diploma and degree programmes.

A bridging programme will be formally developed to enable students who have graduated from GiatMARA to move to IKM/Higher institutes within MARA. It is currently possible but there is no formal framework in place and students do not get exemption for modules completed at GiatMARA.

Interview Note 5: National Vocational Training Council (NVTC)

Notes of Meeting with NVTC on October 21, 2004 at 9.30 a.m.

Present: Mr. Pang Chau Leong, Deputy Director General
Tuan Hj. Zairuddin, Assistant Director, Research and Planning
En. Mohd Yusof Abu Bakar, MOSQ
En. Mohamed Sulaiman, Director NOSS
Mr Hitoshi Ara, JICA Malaysia Office
Ms Lim Pao Li, PE Research
Mr Gregore P Lopez, PE Research

Introduction

Mr. Ara introduced the objective of our meeting by providing a background of the study that is being conducted.

Mr. Pang then explained the role and functions of NVTC:

- It is the co-ordinating agency on skills training in Malaysia.
- It facilitates the establishing of standards for skills training
- It accredits skills training centres. (The accredited skills training centres are allowed to use NOSS and to issue skill certificates).

However, he stressed that NVTC does not develop the curriculum, which is developed by the respective training providers. (Mr. Pang was called away by the Minister but the meeting carried on with the other NVTC officers.) NVTC also arranged for a briefing on the Council, and a digital copy of the presentation was supplied (copy of digital copy has been given to JICA Malaysia Office – Mr Ara).

The Council

The Council comprises 23 members with the Secretary General of MOHR as Chairman. The other members include 10 from the public sector, 10 from the private sector and 2 appointed by the Minister.

To a question posed by Mr. Ara regarding the relationship between NVTC and the industries on development of NOSS, En. Ahmad pointed out that there are 15 skills advisory committee (SAC). However only eight committees are currently functioning. It is divided by industry. CIDB is not part of NVTC as they have their own set-up. Each SAC has between 8 to 10 members who are representatives of industry associations, SMIs, MNCs and individuals. (Refer to ppt for overall view). The SAC updates NVTC on skills needs, shortages and developments in technology. This team meets twice a year. The SAC chairman is also a member of the Standards and Certification Committee.

There is also a Committee for Co-ordination of Public Agencies, which meets quarterly.

NOSS

The NOSS (National Occupational Skills Standards) is developed by the industry. The role of NVTC is only to facilitate the establishment of these standards. The NOSS is a minimum standard. The training centres will then develop their curriculum based on NOSS. The curriculum will be developed according to the demand (private sector) or mandates/objectives of agencies in the public sector. NVTC maintains a registry to keep track of all the NOSS identified. The NOSS is identified and developed according to specific job titles/occupations. The NOSS can be purchased at RM20.00 per job title for approximately two or three levels.

The setting-up of NOSS (refer to ppt presentation)

- Guided by OPPs, IMPs, labour market report, industry HR report, EPU surveys.
- NVTC will decide on which job and skill area to focus on
- NVTC will gather industry experts from the specific area
- The method used is DACUM (Developing a Curriculum)

Accreditation and Monitoring

In relation to accreditation and certification, Tn. Hj. Zaharuddin explained that centres are accredited and training is certified. En. Ahmad also briefed on the process of verification, inspection and auditing (refer to ppt) for the training programmes, the programme delivery, the centre – premise, equipment, facilities, the lecturers, etc.

With regards to the VTIs under the Ministry of Education, the polytechnics have their own system (LAN accredited). The vocational schools would only achieve NOSS level 1 because of number of hours allocated. Community colleges (CC) also follow Ministry of Higher Education guidelines and not NVTC/NOSS. Furthermore CCs also act as feeder to polytechnics.

NOSS Manual - Development

The process used is DACUM (<http://www.dacum.org/index.asp>). The duration for this process is approximately three to four months and it costs RM40,000 in terms of direct expenses. Effective 2005, NVTC has plans to outsource development of all NOSS. The current NOSS manuals only consist of Standard Content and Standard Practise. The new NOSS manuals will include Standard Training Manual and Standard Internship Manual to the existing two manuals.

**Interview Note 6: Malaysian Textile Manufacturers Association (MTMA) and
Malaysian Textile and Apparel Centre (MATAC)**

Notes of Meeting with MTMA and MATAC on October 21, 2004 at 2.30 p.m.

Present: Mr Soo Cheong Futt, Director
En Ismail Abu Hasim, HRD Manager (MATAC)
Ms Sophia Wong, Marketing Executive
Ms Audra Chin, Marketing Executive
Ms Lim Pao Li, PE Research
Mr Gregore P Lopez, PE Research

Introduction

Lim Pao Li introduced and explained the background of the study and pointed out that the objective of the interview is to determine the key issues pertaining to vocational training that are encountered by the textile and apparel industry. Furthermore the meeting is to develop an understanding of some of the industry best practises with respect to training, which can be emulated by the public sector training providers too.

Mr. Soo informed that Malaysian Textile Manufacturing Association (MTMA) is represented in the NVTC (by Mr. David Lee). He however pointed out that none of the public sector training providers offer skills-training subjects pertaining to industrial sewing or equipment maintenance for the textile and garment industry. Rather, the courses provided at the vocational training providers are often for entrepreneurship (tailoring). Only recently have they introduced two subjects that are for the industry (sewing and technician). However, specific skills (e.g. spinning, weaving, and dyeing, etc) are offered at IKM but these are at the diploma and degree levels.

There is a shortage of skilled labour in the industry. The garment industry is labour intensive. Sewing is 90% of the total labour force in a garment company. The companies train their own staff. Some also set-up their own training centres.

Initiatives

MATAC, NVTC and HRDB recently developed the NOSS and apprenticeship schemes for (i) sewing and (ii) sewing machine technician. NVTC helped co-ordinate and pay for the expenses, MATAC is the implementing agency while HRDB provided the financing for the firms to send their staffs for training (apprenticeship). The training centre is in Sg. Petani (United Sweetheart).

There is also a shortage of trainers. Equipment suppliers will only provide training for the machines that are bought.

The most recent project is the development of NOSS for dyeing and printing. This was a project by MATAC, Malaysian Knitting Manufacturers Association (MKMA) – located in Batu Pahat, HRDB and NVTC. The NOSS, curricula and apprenticeship programmes were developed (how to handle knitting machines and as well as its maintenance).

Prior to this (and still ongoing) MATAC had already began to provide distance learning through the Hong Kong Polytechnic University (HKPU). The training programme/course, examinations and grading are done by the HKPU, while the instructors/tutors and administrators of the examination are MATAC.

The programmes offered are (i) Certificate in Fashion and Clothing Manufacturing and (ii) Certificate in Apparel Manufacturing (now converted to diploma in apparel studies). It is

based on self-learning while tutorial are provided on a scheduled basis. The tutorials are held at the textile clusters throughout Peninsular. Approximately 300 students have passed. In Malaysia, it is based on 100% examination with assignments. However, in HK it is 60% examination and 40% assignment.

The Certificate in Merchandising was introduced to improve the merchandising capability of the industry.

Both the private and public sector training providers did not respond to their needs. MATAC had approached CIAST, WIT & suppliers to provide training but has not been successful. However, TAR College (in Segamat) has introduced a certificate course in Apparel Manufacturing. One of the reasons for the lacklustre support is the high capital outlay for equipment for training in these areas (each sewing machine cost from RM3,000 to RM15,000). MATAC has also brought in courses from CITA (Clothing Industry Training Authority) from HK.

Some companies have automated. However, automation is very expensive as garment manufacturing is labour intensive and automation can only reduce handling. Automation is only cost effective in certain areas. They supplier will only train if the equipment is purchased (approximately RM800, 000 per equipment).

Training

Most of the training is carried out at factories themselves, utilising machines that are idle or unused. MATAC has also developed 40 Interactive Computer Aided (IMCAT) modules. It was developed by MATAC and financed by HRDB (RM300,000). It provides the best methods for a list of skills utilised in the textile and garment industry.

MATAC has also developed Standard Training Packages, which determine the standard way of training in the industry.

Future of the T&G Industry

The industry is still viable. Many of the large companies have done the necessary changes to their business including Outward Processing Arrangements (OPA) in order to remain competitive.

However the industry needs to build its image to attract more people. The salary is also very comparable to other professions.

Challenges include the Free Trade Agreements that are being signed with other producing countries (especially Thailand), and issues regarding rules of origin.

Interview Note 7: Human Resource Development Berhad (HRDB)

Notes of Meeting with HRDB on October 27, 2004 at 2.00 p.m.

Present: Dato' YH Tan, Chairman HRDB
Ms Lim Pao Li, PE Research

Introduction

Ms Lim introduced the objective of the meeting by providing a background of the study that is being conducted. More specifically, the meeting was to find out more on the directions of the various vocational training apprenticeship schemes that are supported by HRDB.

Dato' Tan started with an overview on how HRDB has grown since its inception. (A copy of the Annual Report for 2003 was supplied.) He stressed that HRDB works very closely with the various industry associations to develop schemes that meet the needs of industry.

Utilisation of Funds

The large firms, especially the MNCs, take advantage of the facility and they use up all their funds. However, in the case of SMIs, utilisation is still below 60%, despite the efforts of Government to encourage them to use up the funds.

Apprenticeship Schemes

Dato' Tan informed that HRDB has worked closely with industry associations to set up apprenticeship schemes to train school leavers in various disciplines to meet the needs of industry. The schemes also enable the firms that are registered with HRDB to be involved in the training schemes. These apprenticeship schemes involve both theory and practical training and school leavers or employees of firms that are registered with HRDB will undergo both on-the-job and off-the-job training. The former is conducted at the workplace of the sponsoring firm, while the latter is conducted at appointed training centres accredited by HRDB. At the end of the training, the apprentice is required to work for the sponsoring firm for a fixed period (between 1 and 3 years), as per the contract. The fees for the scheme are fully paid by HRDB. In addition, the apprentice is also paid an allowance by the sponsors (which are claimable from HRDB).

Some of the industry apprenticeship schemes that have been launched are:

- Mechatronics Apprenticeship Scheme (since July 1996);
- Machinery Industry Apprenticeship Scheme (since June 1998);
- IT Apprenticeship Scheme (since July 2000);
- Wood-based Furniture Apprenticeship Scheme (since March 2002);
- Plastic Injection Moulding Apprenticeship Scheme (since June 2002);
- Tool and Die Maker Apprenticeship Scheme (since November 2002);
- Industrial Sewing Machine Technician Apprenticeship Scheme (since September 2004).

Interview Note 8: Ministry of Youth and Sports (MYS)

Notes of Meeting with MYS (Skills Development Division) on November 2, 2004 at 10.00 a.m.

Present: En. Mohd. Hashimi b. Abdul Hadi, Director
Ms Lim Pao Li, PE Research
Mr Gregore P Lopez, PE Research

Introduction

Lim Pao Li introduced and explained the background of the study and pointed out that the objective of the interview is to develop a better understanding of the role of the Ministry and its agencies with respect to vocational training and skills development for youths.

Target Group

Mr. Hashimi explained that youths in Malaysia are defined as those below 40 and that the Ministry focuses on youths that are coming out of the school system but with low academic achievements (minimum pass SPM – i.e. a pass in Bahasa Malaysia). Currently every year approximately 350,000 students complete SPM. According to him, out of this, approximately 100,000 do not have good enough qualification to further their studies. This is the group targeted by the Ministry.

There are currently 5,000 places available in the 14 IKBNs. A new IKBN is currently being built. The number of hostel places available limits the intakes. There are plans to increase the number of IKBN by 5 more under the 9MP. The Minister would also like to target for 100,000 student places. This will be achieved by providing weekend classes, night classes and so forth. Places will not be limited by hostels, as students will be placed in private facilities.

Focus & Objectives

The focus of the MYS differs from the other VET providers, as there is an element of personal development. The course content is divided into 70% skill training, of which 30% is theory and 70% practical, while the balance 30% is dedicated to human development activities such as discipline, religious studies, leadership, community service, entrepreneurship and nationalism.

Course Content

IKBNs provide both soft and hard skills. The hard skills are the traditional VET course while the soft skill includes those required by the hospitality industry, ticketing, insurance, etc. There is a strategic shift to provide VET to support sports events that are promoted by Malaysia such as aeronautics (small & light aircraft) powerboat racing and Formula 1. IKBNs are targeting their lessons to fill – in semi-skilled workers in this area.

Types of Training

There are two types of training – (i) formal/institution based and (ii) non-formal/non-institutional. The non-formal training is conducted for those who need it (apprenticeship training, weekend training, training at public facilities, non-resident training).

IKBN is a member of NVTC and adopts NOSS certification. It is also a member of CIDB and the Energy Commission certification.

Criteria and Benefits

To enter an IKBN all a student need is a pass in Bahasa Malaysia. There are no fees required. Furthermore, a monthly stipend is provided to the students. All students live in hostels at the IKBN. Students who attend industrial attachment will receive RM210.00

Challenges

Lecturers: Most of the lecturers have only academic qualification and do not have actual hands on experience. They also face difficulty in getting those with industry experience as they are expensive.

Equipment: Unable to procure sufficient equipment (for skill training the ideal ratio is 1:1 or 2:1)

The Ministry is developing Smart Partnership with the private sector. Currently all IKBNs have Advisory Committee that advises on the type of course and for continuous development of lecturers. This Advisory Committee consists of representatives from industry and public sector.

Response: Poor response from the non Malay community for IKBN programmes

Actions Taken

There are currently a number of programmes that are Smart-Partnership with the private sector such as HIAS (Hotel Industry Apprenticeship Scheme). There is also industrial attachment for all VET programmes through partnership with the private sector.

**Interview Note 9: Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers (FMM) and
FMM Institute of Manufacturing (FMM-IM)**

Notes of Meeting with FMM and FMM-IM on November 4, 2004 at 10.00 a.m.

Present: Mr. Ramudaram Narayanan – Executive Director, FMM–IM
Ms. Chin Lye Ha – General Manager (Development), FMM
Lim Pao Li and Greg Lopez, PE Research.

Introduction

Ms. Lim introduced the objective of the study and the interview. Mr. Ramudaram noted that he would explain on training issues while Ms. Chin provided information on policy matters.

Mr. Ramudaram gave a brief history of the training centre. It was established in 1999 (incorporated as a company). Prior to this, FMM had a training department called Entrepreneur and Skills Development Centre (ESDC).

Courses

FMM-IM offers a wide range of functional/skills training programmes in both industrial and management fields. The programmes range from certificate to diploma levels. FMM –IM also offers in-house programmes.

FMM – IM is housed in the FMM building. It has a number of designated training rooms that is suitable for training of soft skills. For hard skills FMM –IM works with its partners, namely GMI, MFI, ADTEC, IKBN, ITI and CIAST. This is a strategic relationship as it allows FMM – IM to save both capital expenditure and operating expenditure on equipment and facilities and at the same time allows the institutes to optimise use of the equipment. This lowers the cost for FMM- IM. Mr. Ramudaram notes there is no problem collaborating with training institutions as most of FMM members are often on the advisory board/committee of these training institutes. Time-tables are prepared in advance and the institutes will block the time. It benefits the institutes as they derive income and the trainers from the institute learn from industry practitioners. FMM-IM will visit the site and inspect the facilities to ensure all are up to specification.

In developing tailor-made programmes for its members, FMM–IM discusses programme outlines and objectives discussed with the companies and trainers will be selected to develop the programmes accordingly be it the private or public sector. All in-house programmes are packaged to be cost effective for its members. The quality of a programme is reflected by the continued demand from the members. However, this can be a tedious process as designing an in-house programme takes approximately 6 months.

Industry response is as expected. The normal trend applies with SMIs often attending public programmes but spend little on HR development while multinationals see training as an integral part of HR development. The larger SMIs and multinationals also request for customised in-house programmes.

Mr. Ramudaram provided PE Research with a copy of the 2005 training schedule as well as the 2004 training schedule.

Certification

FMM–IM does not follow the NVTC certification, as most of its training programmes are industry specific. There is certification based on attendance and there are those based on assessment.

According to Mr. Ramudaram, there is a skill mismatch between the SKM scheme and actual industry experience. There is no flexibility in the NVTC/SKM system. It is not flexible enough and requires a tedious process for documentation or assessment.

Mr. Ramaduram also pointed out there is difference between polytechnics and GMI/MFI. The MFI/GMI graduates are much in demand from the private sector compared to the polytechnics.

Policy Matters

There is a formal dialogue with MoHR on a quarterly basis. In addition, there are issues based committees within FMM that seeks to address some of these issues. FMM takes care of the problems faced by the industry and raises them with the appropriate authorities. FMM does not have any direct contact with the MoHE although there is a representative on the LAN (National Accreditation Board). FMM conducts an annual salary and benefits survey. This survey identifies shortages in the skills as well as provides a guide on remuneration.

FMM works very closely with NVTC and is a member of the council. FMM also chairs one of the training committee (TC1). FMM is also the secretariat for this committee. FMM was also involved in the development of the HRDF.

Interview Note 10: Malaysian Plastic Manufacturers Association (MPMA) and Plastic Training Technology Centre (MPMA – PTTC)

Notes of Meeting with MPMA-PTTC on November 4, 2004 at 2.00 p.m.

Present: Mr. S.C. Chan, Manager (Economics/Industry Information)
Greg Lopez, PE Research.

Introduction

After the introduction on the background and purpose of the interview, Mr. Chan began by noting that training by industry differs from that of the formal VET provided by the public sector. He noted that application (on the job experience) is central to industry training.

Mr. Chan noted that the association believes in providing its own training programmes. NVTC has only three or four job specifications by NOSS. There are also not many providers of training for the plastic industry.

Courses

The courses offered by PTTC are specific to industry needs with 70% practical and 30% theory. The instructors are from the industry itself and provide their services voluntarily. This lowers the cost of training. However, PTTC faces severe shortage of instructors. In fact, it is their greatest challenge. With regards to equipment, it is very expensive (estimated at about RM 4–5 million to fully equip a training centre for the plastic industry). Therefore, the industry uses either the facilities of member companies or partner institutions such as PSDC and SHRDC. There are both short and long term courses administered by PTTC. The trainers will develop the module. A special committee that is in charge of vetting the modules of all training programmes then reviews the module. However, for some courses, the rights of textbooks/ modules are bought by the PTTC. The modules are then used in administering the courses locally.

MPMA also has a design centre. This is to assist local manufacturers to develop their design capability. However, this facility is severely under-utilised.

Challenges

Mr. Chan notes that there are many training centres. However, there is none for the plastic industry. MPMA has submitted an official memo for the IMP3 for the setting-up of a specialised integrated plastic training centre. The plastic industry comes under the petrochemical cluster.

- Some members feel they are left out from training as their needs (very specific and do not have the equipment) cannot be met.
- Job-hopping by staff discourages firms from investing in human resources and limits the development of employees.
- Difficult to attract school leavers into the industry.
- Lack of awareness on the importance of training by member companies.
- Lack of trainers.
- Lack of marketing of programmes by PTTC

Mr. Chan provided PE Research with:

- A copy of the presentation on the Malaysian – Italian Plastic Technology Training Centre
- A Copy of the Overview of MPMA-PTTC and Its Training Activities (1994 – 2002)

- A digital copy of the Report From the Chairman Of the MPMA-PTTC Management Committee for the year 2003/2004
- A digital copy of the "Summary of the Short Courses and Seminar Conducted by MPMA-PTTC Selangor in 2003"
- A digital copy of the presentation on "The Malaysian Plastics Industry – Development Trends and Future Prospects"

