

'Getting clearer view of public's perception of civil service'

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"Studies by the PCB and the Malaysian Administrative Modernisation and Management Planning Unit (Mampu) have shown that only two to three per cent of all complaints about poor public services are lodged directly with the bureau.

"This means we are not getting the whole picture and we cannot ensure that all complaints are being addressed," he said.

The complaints listed in these reports, coupled with those lodged directly with the bureau, are expected to give a much clearer overall view of the public's perception towards the civil service.

Wan Abdul Wahab said the reporting system was based on trust but added that Mampu's inspectorate team would double-check the reports made.

In the first six months of the year, the PCB received 2,085 complaints about services at State and Federal Government departments. This was

about 58 per cent more than the number of cases received in the corresponding period last year.

Most complaints against Federal departments concerned delays in taking action and making decisions while those against State departments and local government were about the lack of enforcement.

So far, 1,768 complaints have been investigated.

In addition to the reporting requirements, he said 12 Ministries which had been receiving the highest number of complaints over the years would be given online access to the bureau's computer system by the end of this year.

This will enable the Ministries to be quickly informed of complaints made against them and to take remedial action.

Wan Abdul Wahab assured complainants that their identities would be kept confidential.

The bureau will also be "taking their office" to the people by setting up mobile complaint counters in

small towns and rural areas.

Wan Abdul Wahab said the bureau's officers would take down complaints and, armed with digital cameras, attend to problems on the same day or soon after.

This initiative to provide access to more people began last year and saw 14.3 per cent of all complaints reaching the bureau through this method.

Also this year, the bureau has organised meetings between State and Federal department heads and the public at district-level.

He said here, complaints were reported directly to department heads and attended to on the spot with the relevant department's officers in attendance.

Wan Abdul Wahab said such meetings had been organised in Kota Star (Kedah), Johor Baru and Kota Baru so far. About 700 people and 90 Government department heads attended the meeting in Kota Baru.

The next half-day meeting will be held in Penang in August.

Since its inception in 1971, the bureau has received 70,185 complaints. Wan Abdul Wahab said over the years, an average of 50 per cent of complaints were recurrent ones about delays by Government departments in taking action.

He said a poor work attitude was the main reason why this complaint continued to top the list.

"However, from late last year, the Chief Secretary to the Government has encouraged all officers in Government departments, especially those with counter services, to write their personal client charter.

"Here, an officer, in his own words, promises his client that he will process an application within a certain time frame or offer service with a smile," said Wan Abdul Wahab.

Wan Abdul Wahab said the PCB has also been tasked with monitoring the monthly *Hari Bersama Pelanggan* organised by all departments.

To date, 359 government agencies hold this monthly programme which has benefited 61,000 people.