

**THE MALAYSIAN PUBLIC SECTOR TRAINING
PROGRAM EVALUATION. A FACT OR FALLACY.**

A MINISTRY OF DEFENSE CASE STUDY.

BY

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ABSTRACT

1. The MINDEF Corporate Plan identifies development of human capital as one of the thrusts for implementation. Consequently the MINDEF allocates about RM 92.7 million annually for training and development of capability. This accounts for about 12% of the yearly MINDEF Operating Expenditure (OE) Budget for the year 2006. On a training dollar per head basis spent on trainees, MINDEF has committed to expend about RM 22,524 / head (trainee) to ensure that the Armed Forces maintain their cutting edge in defense capability. The program agreement that is entered into by the program manager (implementer) and the controlling officer (financier) requires that programs be evaluated for program appropriateness, effectiveness, efficiency, economy and value for money in resource usage. Evaluation based on these criteria, it is expected, will allow program managers the ability to establish the program impact.

2. The process of establishing a basis for training program evaluation has a profound effect on the organization in that it allows management to focus on benefits of the program and ensure that the amounts of money invested are well spent to improve capability. By setting an evaluation mechanism in place, the organization will be forced to establish measurable objectives that can determine the progress for any segment of the process. The adoption of these targets will invariably require training managers to focus on accountability and develop a commitment for evaluation of program outcomes.

3. This study will start by examining the current scenario and develop a model that could be implemented successfully. The basis of developing the most suitable model will involve taking into consideration the ability of the training managers to understand and utilize it. Whatever model chosen should not prove to be too complicated for implementation and should allow for easy and

economical implementation. The management must be convinced that there is a continuing need to provide effective learning opportunities and the utilization of the model will ensure that the planned programs meet the organizational objectives.

4. It is apparent that some form of training program evaluation is being conducted in MINDEF. However it is equally apparent that such assessment is primarily designed to gauge customer satisfaction only and unable to confirm the level of training outcomes achieved. This satisfies the alternate hypothesis that '... Program Evaluation is seldom undertaken and even if they are undertaken the results are rudimentary and unable to confirm the level of training outcomes achieved'. The lack of expertise contributed to organizational apathy and this again supports the alternate hypothesis. The general view was that the proposed ROI Model is complicated to apply in all cases and a selective application is prudent. Further this Model tends to be more investment driven and does not give enough emphasis to the social objectives to be achieved. This again is in line with the alternate hypothesis which states that the '...ROI Model is too complicated...and cannot be the only basis for determining the amount of funds available for training activities'. Similarly the current decision process is seen as being unable to use the information generated and success can only come with the establishment of a comprehensive data management system. Only with that can management determine the performance gap between planned and actual output.

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THE MALAYSIAN PUBLIC SECTOR TRAINING PROGRAM EVALUATION – A FACT OR FALLACY. A MINISTRY OF DEFENCE CASE STUDY

PART 1: INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

The concept of public sector accountability is not a new phenomenon in Malaysia. The Modified Budgeting System mandates that all program managers evaluate program output in relation to the amount of resources invested in them. This evaluation is based on summative evaluation of results once in five years and may not be wholly adequate in this day and time. The need to develop human capital in the Ministry of Defense (MINDEF) is seen as being fundamental to the nation's ability to defend itself in times of an emergency. The MINDEF Corporate Plan identifies development of human capital as one of the thrusts for implementation. Consequently the MINDEF allocates about RM 92.7 million annually for training and development of capability. This accounts for about 12% of the yearly MINDEF Operating Expenditure (OE) Budget for the year 2006. On a training dollar per head basis spent on trainees, MINDEF has committed to expend about RM 22,524 / head (trainee) to ensure that the Armed Forces maintain their cutting edge in defense capability. The program agreement that is entered into by the program manager (implementer) and the controlling officer