

## **Reengineering the Malaysian Public Service and the Use of Information Technology in Promoting Efficiency and Quality**

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### **Introduction**

THE CHALLENGES facing governments today have become more formidable than in the past. Governments are pressured to seek solutions to modern social problems and cope with demands for better services from the public who are more conscious of their rights and more critical of service standards. At the same time, the public service has to deal with the complexities of open economic systems as vividly illustrated by the economic and currency turmoil which we are witnessing at present.

The public service and its administrative apparatus has to face the brunt of such demands. It has to respond to the needs and expectations of different interest groups, be it the ordinary citizen or the private sector as well as the political masters and stake holders. There has been much debate as to how the public service can best undertake its role in such a scenario. There is little doubt that the public service has to reengineer its many systems, mechanisms and relationships if it is to successfully meet these new challenges.

At the outset, I have to state that when I talk of reengineering here, I do not mean to define it in a technical sense, in the vein of true-blue reengineering champions like Hammer and Champy. Theirs is a definition set in the very specific context of an organization-based "fundamental rethinking and radical redesign of business processes to achieve dramatic improvements" in overall performance. Mine is a broader one. The Oxford Dictionary defines the word "engineer," other than as the person skilled in the branch of engineering, to also mean "to contrive" or "to bring about." Hence in the context of the current discussion, I refer to "reengineering" to mean "a deliberate and planned initiative that rethinks and reformulates current strategies and approaches in the public service aimed at bringing about change in the way the public service operates so as to enhance its performance and service delivery."

In the case of the Malaysian public service, the initial moorings of the reengineering efforts lie in the *Excellent Work Culture Movement* that took off strongly since the early 1990s. The thrust of this movement was to inculcate a culture of excellence in public sector agencies, based on the core values of quality, productivity, innovation, integrity, discipline, accountability and professionalism. The drive towards excellence and quality in the public sector coincided with a transformation in the role of the Malaysian public service—from its primary role as the custodian of law and order to that of pace-setter and facilitator to the private sector as well as service provider to the people at large.

### **Reengineering Through Administrative Reforms**

Six principal strategies have been employed to reengineer the public service by advancing reforms in the Malaysian public service. They are:

- (a) Providing customer-oriented services;
- (b) Improving systems and work procedures to strengthen administrative support mechanisms;
- (c) Streamlining organizational structures and strengthening human resource development;
- (d) Enhancing accountability and discipline;
- (e) Inculcating values of excellence and best practices; and
- (f) Strengthening public-private sector cooperation.

With the latest advancements in the field of information technology (IT) and the enabling effects of its numerous systems and applications, the public service has incorporated the extensive use of IT in further strengthening these strategies.

#### *Providing Customer-Oriented Services*

The provision of customer-oriented services is the main thrust of reform efforts in the Civil Service. The essence of this effort is to provide quality services that meet the requirements of the customer on a continuous basis. In ensuring the efficient and effective provision of customer-oriented services, the focus was on the implementation of eight special programs.

#### TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT

Total Quality Management (TQM) is a core reform program that sets the foundation for instilling and strengthening the quality culture in the public sector. It represents a strategic approach in managing the public service. Introduced in 1992, the objective of TQM is to institutionalize comprehensive change in an organization with the ultimate aim of satisfying customer needs. Seven key measures for the successful implementation of TQM in government agencies was formulated as follows:

- Top management support
- Quality strategic planning
- Customer focus in providing services
- Training and recognition
- Teamwork
- Performance measurement
- An environment that emphasizes quality assurance

TQM is an on-going program that covers all quality programs carried out in the public sector.

#### INNOVATION AND BEST PRACTICE

The introduction of the Public Service Innovation Award in 1992 showcased the effort to introduce best practice in the Malaysian public sector. Since the introduction of such a recognition system, public sector agencies have worked vigorously towards a work environment that encourages innovation at the work place. The focus has been on reducing operational costs, effecting time savings and improving productivity. Innovations target changes or improvements to the work environment, management style, organizational structure, systems and procedures, technology and the like.

The challenge in terms of advancing best practice within the public service through the innovation program has been to follow up on successful innovations that could be replicated on a wider scale. A referral center for such innovations where agencies can access and review information about innovations successfully undertaken by government agencies is one of the strategies that is being considered.

#### QUALITY CONTROL CIRCLES (QCC)

The QCC program was one of the early reform programs introduced in the Civil Service. The adoption of TQM breathed new fire into the QCC program. Premised on the concept of participative management, the program is geared towards greater teamwork and empowerment of employees where every employee is given the opportunity to make meaningful contributions towards attaining organizational goals. As a reinforcement measure, annual QCC Conventions have been organized since 1995. The QCC Convention brings together QCCs from different agencies to share their experiences while participating in a competitive environment. Awards are presented to those evaluated to be the best QCCs in the different categories. A recent introduction is the Best QCC Facilitator Award that seeks to encourage the development of a pool of effective QCC facilitators across agencies that will further boost the QCC movement in the public sector. Both the Innovation Award and QCC Award initiatives have helped strengthen the learning and sharing of best practices among public sector agencies.

#### CLIENT'S CHARTER

A major initiative to upgrade efficiency and effectiveness of agencies within the Malaysian public service was seen in the introduction of the Client's Charter in the public sector in 1993. The Client's Charter is a written commitment by public sector agencies to provide services and output to customers according to set quality standards in conformance with customer expectations. Through commitments contained in the Client's Charter, customers can know what level and quality of service and output is to be expected from an agency.

The implementation of the Client's Charter is a major step towards greater transparency in the public service. The Charter serves two purposes. Firstly, customers can evaluate the performance of an agency and seek redress where appropriate. At the same time, agencies themselves can evaluate the standards set out in the Charter and together with feedback from customers can effect measures to improve on weaknesses and set higher performance standards. A salient feature of the Charter is the incorporation of the provision for a service recovery mechanism. Service failure can occur resulting in standards or pledges made in the Client's

Charter not being fulfilled. Service recovery here can take the form of alternative service delivery or action to inform customers of service failure as well as the provision of status reports on remedial action. Currently, there is a concerted focus on a review of existing standards contained in the Charters with a view to upgrade the level of service delivery.

#### COUNTER SERVICES

Despite the looming prospect of the reduction in the number of government service counters as well as the number of people using such counters as a result of the introduction of new IT-based service delivery channels, the provision of efficient and effective counter services remains a crucial factor. Counters literally provide a face and a human dimension to government. They are the point of contact between citizens as customers and the government. The quality of this interface will obviously influence the perception of the citizen-customer about the image of the government. As such, the emphasis on efficient counter services has been maintained by emphasizing the following aspects:

- Improving the physical aspects of the counters
- Improving work systems and procedures
- Introducing mobile and temporary counter services
- Providing additional facilities such as drive-in counters, extended counter working hours and varied payment options
- Increasing the skills and efficiency of counter staff.

#### ONE-STOP COUNTERS

In line with the concept of customer-oriented services, more one-stop centers were set up to enable customers to obtain the services of different government agencies at one center. These include the One-stop Bill Payment Center where the public can make different payments such as local tax assessment and utility charges at one place. The One-stop Investment Centre facilitates investors in obtaining information, approvals and licensing needs for projects. Such centers operate in agencies such as the Malaysian Industrial Development Authority (MIDA), the State Economic Development Corporations and the State Economic Planning Units. The One-stop Licensing Centre enables speedier decisions on applications for licences, expatriate employment, issuance of certificates of fitness, building plans and the like. The Royal Customs and Excise Department and the offices of the various Local Government Authorities provide one-stop licensing facilities.

#### PUBLIC SERVICE NETWORK (PSN)

The Public Service Network or PSN, officially launched in May 1994, offers counter services on-line to the public at Post Offices throughout the country. Among the services available through the PSN are the renewal of driver's license, learner driver's license and motor vehicle license, all of which come under the purview of the Road Transport Department as well as the renewal of business license which is issued by the Registrar of Business.

## IMPLEMENTATION OF MS ISO 9000

The Malaysian public service embarked on the implementation of MS ISO 9000 as another effort to reengineer the operations of individual agencies. The objective of implementing MS ISO 9000 is to develop an efficient and effective quality assurance system in the public service. This is premised on the definition of quality in the context of ISO 9000, which essentially covers all actions taken by an organization to meet customer requirements. ISO 9000 requires agencies to comply with a quality management system that emphasizes prevention and not a system centered on remedial action after defects have occurred. Hence under MS ISO 9000, agencies must carry out continuous review of the critical processes and take immediate corrective action. The system identifies and puts into practice clearly distinguishable general principles that prescribe minimum specifications deemed necessary for an agency to carry out quality activities.

Agencies seeking MS ISO 9000 certification will be assessed against one of the ISO 9000 contractual models namely ISO 9001, ISO 9002 and ISO 9003. The choice of the model by an agency depends on the activities and services provided to the customers by the relevant agency. To date 14 agencies have succeeded in gaining MS ISO 9000 certification.

A roadmap for the implementation of MS ISO 9000 in the Malaysian public service incorporates seven important phases. Specific milestones have been formulated whereby all agencies are required to have at least one core process certified to the MS ISO 9000 standard by the year 2000. In implementing MS ISO 9000, heads of departments and agencies are expected to play an important role in:

- Determining core processes of their agencies that are to be certified
- Formulating the quality policy and objective
- Providing the necessary resources in terms of budget and personnel
- Appointing a management representative to coordinate and monitor the implementation.

*Improving Systems and Work Procedures*

Work systems comprise activities that are designed to produce the relevant output while procedures are the specifics that operationalize these activities. Systems and procedures strike at the very heart of the operational efficiency of an organization. Hence they need to be dynamic and flexible so as to meet current requirements of the work environment. In Malaysia, the approach towards improving systems and work procedures incorporates the following:

- Increasing transparency and speedier decision-making
- Improving records management through easy, speedy and timely access to relevant information
- Enhancing office automation by adopting and keeping abreast of improvements in technology and systems
- Clearing specific instances of backlog of work that have been identified through feedback from the public and private sector

#### STREAMLINING ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES AND STRENGTHENING HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Several strategic decisions have been taken as part of the overall effort at ensuring optimum performance of public sector organizations. These include the following:

- Control over the creation of new posts with a general cap of new posts set at 0.53 per cent growth per annum
- Abolishment of non-critical vacant posts
- Restructuring of public sector organizations under the New Remuneration System
- Reviewing the status and functions of statutory bodies and Regional Development Authorities
- Implementation of privatization programs

#### TRAINING PUBLIC SECTOR PERSONNEL

An important focus of reengineering efforts has been on human resource development in the public sector. A four-pronged strategy towards public sector training involves the following:

- Exposure to and upgrading of knowledge in the area of technology development through both long-term and medium-term courses
- Developing expertise and specialization through long-term courses at certificate, diploma, first degree, masters and doctoral levels
- Devising short-term courses for management executives
- Decentralizing training functions to government agencies.

#### PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

A new performance appraisal system was introduced for public sector personnel with the implementation of the New Remuneration System (NRS) in 1992. Under this system, public sector employees are evaluated on specific outcome-based performance targets agreed upon by appraiser and appraisee at the start of a particular year. Mid-term reviews of performance plans allow for changes in performance targets. Under the NRS, performance appraisal is directly linked to annual salary increments. Depending on their performance appraisals, public sector personnel are eligible for diagonal, vertical and lateral salary movements on a three-tiered salary matrix. Poor performers may not receive any salary increments. The salary matrix is also a new feature of the NRS replacing the old single-line salary scale. The introduction of performance-based appraisals has heightened the awareness for results and quality in the work of individual personnel.

#### *Enhancing Accountability and Discipline*

Accountability and discipline form the basis for a strong, clean and credible public service. A number of programs have been introduced to strengthen accountability and discipline in the public service. They include:

- Improving financial management by focusing on:
  - Financial management and accounts of Federal Statutory Bodies
  - Implementation of the Standard Accounting System for Government Agencies (SAGA)
  - Implementation of the Modified Budgeting System (MBS)
  - Implementation of the Micro Accounting System (SPM)
  - Maintenance management
  - Follow-up action on the Auditor General's Report
  
- Enhancing performance measurement at organizational and individual levels. At the organizational level, the agencies need to establish a comprehensive performance measurement system to monitor the implementation of their programs and activities.
  
- Strengthening the management of public complaints by improving the public complaints management system and strengthening the Public Complaints Bureau
  
- Improving the management of conduct and discipline in the public service

The establishment of Management Integrity Committees at all levels of administration, the tightening of the disciplinary rules governing the conduct of public officers as well as more stringent anti-corruption legislation seek to strengthen efforts at maintaining accountability and discipline in the public sector.

#### INCULCATING VALUES OF EXCELLENCE

All reform efforts will come to nought if public sector personnel do not possess the values that facilitate quality and effective service delivery. The physical aspects such as work systems and procedures and sophisticated technology alone will not suffice. The personal qualities and values among individual public officials are key factors that need to be given full consideration. Positive personal values contribute to building respect, team spirit and close rapport among the employees of an organization. Undoubtedly this impacts on productivity and the quality of service rendered by an agency. Although not a subject matter that is easily taught, much of the effort in assimilating positive values is tackled by way of training programs. Awareness about the need for positive values and work ethics is spread through seminars, publications as well as speeches and exhortations by the political leadership and heads of departments. The role of leadership is seen to be critical here as leaders have to pave the way through leading by example and initiating innovative methods of motivating members of their organizations to adopt an excellent work culture.

#### *Strengthening Public-Private Sector Collaboration*

Close collaboration between the public and private sectors under the banner of Malaysia Incorporated has been utilized since 1983 as a unique means of reengineering the operations of the public sector.

In keeping with the shift in the role of the public sector as facilitator and pacesetter, the Malaysian public service introduced various initiatives to support and help the private sector play a more active role in development. The objective is to provide a conducive environment for economic growth and thus enhance the nation's competitiveness internationally.

The Malaysia Incorporated Policy has been operationalized through the establishment of a number of structured consultative mechanisms. Dialogue sessions have helped in the formulation of strategies to further enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the public service. In the past this has led to benefits such as:

- Recommendations of the Study on Licensing and Permits Pertaining to Business and Investments that helped overcome issues relating to improvements in application processes, streamlined rules and regulations, and more effective licensing;
- Feedback from industry on the private sector's perceptions about the efficiency, predictability and performance of the government administration;
- Proposals on improving the process of expatriate employment and streamlining of foreign labor importation regulations;
- Guidelines for the setting up of Regional Offices and International Procurement Centers;
- Information dissemination on important government measures such as the Industrial Master Plan and the Seventh Malaysia Plan
- Better access to information through the publication of pamphlets and guidebooks and electronic databases such as SIRIMLINK, PALMOILIS and others

### **Enabling Reforms Through Information Technology**

Information technology (IT) is seen as critical to the quality movement. IT is an enabler towards better government through the opportunities presented by new technologies as well as improved information management policies and practices. Over the years the public sector has initiated a number of information technology programs to expand the use of IT in the public service such as:

- Infrastructure development under the Government Integrated Telecommunications Network (GITN)
- Information dissemination through the Civil Service Link as a single-window gateway to public domain databases
  - The development of suitable government web sites and homepages
  - The establishment of a greater number of public domain databases
  - A full-scale computerization program in the public sector

These initiatives provide the basis for the latest reform initiative that has huge reengineering implications for the public service. This initiative is the implementation of Electronic Government or EG. EG is one of the seven flagships under the development of Malaysia's Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC) project. By definition, EG is a multimedia networked paperless administration linking government agencies within the new Federal administrative center at Putrajaya and Government centers around the country. It is intended to facilitate a



collaborative government environment that is capable of providing the best services to business and citizens.

From this definition is derived the vision for EG which hopes to:

- Transform the administration process of government by using leading edge IT
- Drastically improve the performance of government processes
- Provide high-quality, low-cost administrative services to citizens and business
- Employ multimedia technology to foster government effectiveness
- Attract world-class multimedia webshapers to Malaysia.

It is envisaged that under such a definition and vision, EG will involve the operations of every one of the 24 federal ministries and numerous other agencies at the federal, state and local government levels.

In terms of communication channels, EG will be operated in a multi-dimensional fashion, that is, at the intra-government, citizen-to-government and business-to-government dimensions. EG will thus provide further impetus to the public sector's efforts to institutionalize a culture of excellence in the delivery of its varied services.

EG will cover a whole range of services that include:

- Submission of applications electronically to the government
- Electronic transfer of monies as payment
- On-line information access
- Communication via electronic/multimedia medium
- Electronic procurement and tendering
- Electronic polling
- One-stop help desk
- Single interface with public to relay grievances

#### *Reinventing Government through Connectivity*

EG will revolutionize the way in which services are provided by the public sector. Because available technology makes interconnectivity a reality, agencies in the public sector will see improved information flow and superior communication between the different components of government. Hence EG offers public sector agencies a golden opportunity to break with the bureaucratic practices of the past by reengineering existing processes to meet customer needs and move towards what is termed as seamless government.

When public sector agencies are networked, electronic applications can be put in place to facilitate better delivery of information and services not only at government counters but through kiosks, personal computers, web-TVs, telephones and others. What this means is, citizens need not deal directly with the respective public sector agency in order to obtain information or services; rather these services would be brought directly to the citizens. This would lead to a situation where the respective government agencies would no longer be associated with the specific services that they have to offer. Instead, citizens would have access to these services through a multitude of delivery channels.

### *Implementation of Electronic Government*

The implementation of EG will take off with five initial projects, namely:

- The Electronic Delivery of Driver and Vehicle Registration, Licensing and Summons Services, Utility Bill Payments and Ministry of Health On-Line Information
- Electronic Procurement
- Generic Office Environment
- Project Monitoring System
- Human Resource Management Information System

The impact of IT in enhancing service delivery standards and quality under these pilot projects are as laid out below.

#### THE ELECTRONIC DELIVERY OF DRIVER AND VEHICLE REGISTRATION, LICENSING AND SUMMONS SERVICES, UTILITY PAYMENTS AND MINISTRY OF HEALTH ON-LINE INFORMATION

This pilot project has high impact in terms of feasibility of implementation. It is highly visible because all Malaysian citizens transact at least one of the services in the pilot on a monthly and annual basis. The pilot will also enable citizens to transact more easily with government and utility companies. Citizens will no longer be limited to conducting these services at agency branches and utility offices. Instead, citizens will be provided with a choice of multiple delivery channels, which they can access anytime of the day, anywhere at their convenience.

There will no longer be separate queues for each service, but with the one-stop service window provided, citizens and businesses will be able to conduct a wide range of services from a single point of contact, in one short visit. In addition, services offered will be tailored to the needs of various population segments such as the elderly, IT disadvantaged and physically disabled to make the electronic service delivery more user-friendly, multi-media and help-responsive.

In terms of usage, the Road Transport Department currently provides the highest number of counter services relative to other government agencies. Driver, vehicle and summons transactions amount to over five million per annum. Utility payment also cuts across a wide user base. Over four million households pay electricity and telephone bills every month, amounting to over 80 million transactions a year.

The Road Transport Department, Ministry of Health and utility companies will benefit from the process automation which will facilitate form lodgement, payment, data processing, data retrieval and updating. Some business processes may be streamlined for greater efficiency, productivity, transparency and accountability. Multiple delivery channels will also compete to deliver best quality services and help enhance revenue collection efforts.

#### ELECTRONIC PROCUREMENT

Currently, government procurement is primarily a manual operation. With the introduction of an electronic procurement system, it is envisaged that most processes can be automated,

reengineered and transformed into a more effective and efficient process. This system will allow government agencies to electronically select items to be procured from the desktop, initiate an electronic approval process and also create, submit and receive purchase orders, delivery orders and other related documents electronically.

Electronic Procurement is highly visible since all government agencies procure goods and services. Government agencies spend an estimated RM35 billion per annum on total procurement or 15 per cent of Malaysia's GDP. Upon full roll-out of this project, over 200 government agencies and more than 25,000 registered suppliers are expected to implement the electronic procurement system.

The successful implementation of the electronic procurement application will benefit both the government and the business community. The procurement system will enable the government to become a smart and more efficient buyer by reducing costs and leveraging scale economies while improving control and accuracy in the ordering and billing process. Government will also reap the benefits of receiving up-to-date supplier information and be able to better manage supplier performance. Under the new procurement system, suppliers both large and small will be IT-enabled and will gain from the benefits of increased transparency and faster payment turn-around time. Other benefits include increased efficiency due to more accurate orders and fewer product returns and lower cycle time and operation costs due to electronic retrieval and submission of quotations. Suppliers will also be able to extend their reach to new customers on a global basis, with the creation of an electronic catalogue with internationally recognized product classifications.

#### GENERIC OFFICE ENVIRONMENT

The Generic Office Environment (GOE) is a multimedia environment that provides the common functional components required to accommodate a variety of business functional components which closely reflect any government agency's business processes. It will consist of :

- Enterprise-wide Information Management System that provides a universal interface for users to manage, find, retrieve and compose the information that they need in their day-to-day operations
- Enterprise-wide Communication as well as Collaboration Management Systems that allows users to communicate and collaborate in a group to perform work functions.

#### PROJECT MONITORING SYSTEM

The Project Monitoring System (PMS) is designed to provide a mechanism for monitoring the implementation of government projects. The PMS covers three types of services, namely, the Application Services, Data Services and Communication Services. Application services provide capabilities to support the processes involved in project monitoring and improve the general efficiency and effectiveness of the managerial and operational functions. Data services, on the other hand, provide the databases to satisfy the different needs of monitoring activities such as handling different types of information and media, information sharing capability

among and within the agencies, and keeping track record of know-how to facilitate the sophisticated management of project monitoring. Communication services provide connections across agencies for data exchange, resource sharing, personal communication and automate the flow of business processes.

#### HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM (HRMIS)

The Human Resource Management Information System (HRMIS) is aimed at providing a single interface for government employees to perform human resource management (HRM) functions effectively and efficiently in an integrated environment. With the implementation of the HRMIS, HRM operational processes which are currently done manually will be automated. Up-to-date and consolidated. HRM information for effective HRM planning will be developed while infrastructure will also be put in place to ensure better communication, horizontal integration and more streamlined HRM processes among government agencies. This will enable the central HRM agency, the Public Service Department, to achieve optimum staffing requirements of the public service. In addition, the HRMIS will also enable the electronic distribution of human resource policy manuals and circulars, thus enabling the use of less paper.

Some of the benefits envisaged from the implementation of the HRMIS are (1) Submission and processing of leave and claims applications electronically; (2) Converting the Personnel Service Book into electronic form; (3) Electronic submission and processing of yearly appraisal and salary increments; and (4) Systematic and integrated consolidation of information for pension benefits.

#### *Reengineering the Internal Workings of Agencies*

It is clear that the introduction of IT into government administration necessitates reinventing the internal workings of government agencies. The introduction of IT cannot be seen as merely equipping public sector personnel with computers on their desks. On the contrary, the manner in which we use, maintain, store and retrieve information in government has to be reconceptualized. This will require that an effective inter- and intra-agency application landscape be put in place. Such a landscape should be capable of dramatically improving productivity, communication and information-sharing capability as well as enhancing core operational capacities and functions of the relevant agencies.

A major component of the change to the internal workings of government agencies is seen in terms of the reengineering of processes, systems and procedures. While reengineering will help bring about efficient processes and systems within an agency, much more will be required if the ultimate aim is the creation of a seamless government.

The key to seamless government is of course connectivity and communications within and between the various components of government. The introduction of inter-connected and networked databases will mean that service delivery is no longer confined to the counters of the agency that provides the service. With multi-channel service delivery such as through kiosks, PCs, web-TVs, telephone and others, the face of government itself will see a tremendous change. That is only the front-end of the process. The back-end requires that individual agencies have sufficiently reengineered their internal workings to meet this new paradigm.

There is little doubt that IT-based systems are set to bring about a new way of operations for government agencies. But they must ensure that their IT systems do not only cater to the requirements of their own needs. Instead they should examine how their own internal systems dovetail into the overall infostructure demands of a seamless government characterized by interconnectivity and inter-networking.

#### *Cyberlaws*

At the same time other measures to support the EG initiative and the other flagship applications have been instituted. An example of this is the provision of “soft infrastructure” through appropriate legislation to cater to new scenarios that will undoubtedly arise under EG and MSC applications. To date the Digital Signature Act 1997, the Computer Crime Act 1997, the Copyright Act (Amendment 1997), the Telemedicine Act 1998, and the Communications and Multimedia Act 1998 have been approved by Parliament. These pieces of legislation will help instill confidence in the reliability and effectiveness of the various mechanisms and systems under the EG initiative.

#### **Conclusion**

The paradigm shifts that have taken place in the Malaysian public service are a result of conscious and continuous efforts to ensure that the public sector is able to deliver its services efficiently and effectively, in tandem with national development aspirations and in meeting with the demands of globalization. The foundation for excellent performance, laid under the quality movement since the early 1990s, must be fortified with the innovative utilization of IT to bring about a new Malaysian public service for the coming millennium. The Malaysian public service cannot afford to rest on its laurels. The current economic difficulties faced by the nation is a challenge to the resilience of the public sector. It is an opportune time for the public service to show how the efforts to reengineer its operations can help the nation tide over these difficult times.