

## China's Efforts to Enhance Transparency in Public Administration

Since China started reform and opening up in 1978, the Chinese government has devoted great efforts to enhancing transparency in its public administration, considering it key to developing a sound socialist market economy, promoting socialist democracy, enhancing supervision over public administration, and preventing corruption from the very source. In accordance with the requirement of making public as the principle and holding back as the exception, information on the organization and functioning of the government, with due regard for the protection of state secrets, business secrets and personal privacy, is made public to society or a certain scope of receivers of administrative services.

### **I Promote publicity of government information with enhanced efforts**

Guided by the Regulations of the People's Republic of China on Making Public Government Information, the work mechanisms for information publicity and for privacy protection are constantly improved and upgraded, the proper relation between publicity and privacy is ensured, and transparency of public administration is enhanced in a solid manner. Researches are carried out on the procedures of publishing government information at individual requests. Efforts are made to further facilitate public access to government information by expanding publicity means and reducing publicity costs. According to statistics, a total of 28.85 million pieces of government information was made public by 31 provinces (autonomous regions, municipalities) over the country in 2011. Another 1.3 million public requests for government information disclosure were processed, of which more than 85% were promptly answered. In the same year, ministries and departments of the central administration published 1.49 million pieces of government information and provided information to more than 70% of the total 3 thousand public requests for disclosure.

The publicity of financial budgets is vigorously promoted. In the year 2011, 90 out of the 98 ministries and departments whose financial budgets were reviewed by the National People's Congress published their budgets. Governments of 31 provinces (autonomous regions, municipalities) and the 5 cities specifically designated in the state plan published their public financial budgets. 98 central government departments as well as provincial and municipal governments, including Beijing, Shanghai, Guangdong and Shaanxi, publicly released information regarding their spending on official overseas trips, official vehicles and official hospitality

### **II Deepen publicity to promote transparent exercise of power**

The exercise of public power is subjected to constant supervision to ensure transparency. The scientific mechanism to prevent and control clean governance-related risks is being established, featuring proactive controlling measures and enhanced

managerial methods. The Ministry of Supervision and the National Bureau of Corruption Prevention joint held the National On-site Meeting on Strengthening Prevention and Controlling of Clean Governance-related Risks and Standardizing Exercise of Public Power and issued the Guiding Opinions on Strengthening Prevention and Controlling of Clean Governance-related Risks, providing the principles, objectives, methods and contents for this initiative, which according to statistics, has been launched by governments of 31 provinces (autonomous regions, municipalities) nationwide and 75% central government departments. Vigorous efforts are being made to regulate administrative discretion and establish benchmarks for applying discretion in administrative punishment, administrative licensing, non-administrative licensing approval, administrative enforcement, and administrative collection.

### **III Upgrade administrative service quality through publicity**

Enhanced transparency in public administration can create far-reaching social effects when it is combined with improved quality of administrative service. Committed to building a service-oriented government, China has been vigorously promoting the construction and management of one-stop administrative service centers. By the end of 2011, 2912 such centers had been built in 31 provinces (autonomous regions, municipalities) nationwide, including those established in economic and high-tech development zones, of which 10 were of provincial level. 332 cities (prefectures) and 89% counties (county-level cities) had established their administrative service centers. 75% towns (sub-districts) established convenience centers for the public. In 2011, the provincial administrative service centers processed a total of 2.277 million service requests, 98% of which completed on time.

The local administrative service system is being constantly improved to provide more convenience to the public in a more speedy fashion. The General Office of the State Council promulgated the Opinions on Pilot Work to Strengthen Government Affairs Publicity and Improve Administrative Service of County Governments via Electronic Government Platform, to which the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology and the National Bureau of Corruption Prevention jointly issued an Implementation Guide. At present, 100 counties have been selected nationwide to conduct the pilot work on 385 publicity items of administrative power.

### **IV Diversify disclosure channels to enhance actual effect**

Starting from the actual needs of the public, China makes sustained efforts to diversify the channels of disclosure. While the traditional forms of disclosure are well utilized, the Chinese Government draws on the development of information technology to make communication with the public even smoother. The government of the Province of Hebei launches the online policy consulting platform, which enables real-time collection of public concerns and suggestions. In order to facilitate the communication between the

police and the public, the public security organs nationwide have opened more than 1000 official microblog accounts, providing prompter responses to matters of wide social concern. The national retrieval platform for project information and credit record in the construction sector is basically in place. By the end of 2011, more than 7 thousand columns had been opened on government websites in China in this regard, publishing over 1.3 million pieces of project information and 3.36 million credit records, of which 40.6 thousand were related to corporate misconducts.

#### **V Establish regulatory framework to provide standard service**

Drawing on the initiatives and best practices of ministries, departments, and local administrations, and the General Office of the State Council joint issued the Opinions on Deepening Publicity of Government Affairs and Improving Administrative Service, which provides the regulatory basis for government affairs publicity and public administration upgrading within the new social context. The Supreme People's Court, having conducted extensive researches over relevant legal matters, promulgated the Provisions on Issues Concerning the Trial on Administrative Cases over Government Information Publicity. The Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Supervision jointly issued the Provisions on Disclosure of Financial Matters in Rural Economic Collectives to provide guidance to and exert supervision over the publicity of financial matters by rural collectives. According to statistics, 98 regulatory documents on government affairs publicity were enacted by local administrations nationwide in 2011 and 81 by ministries and departments of the central administration. More than 20 provinces promulgated implementation documents on deepening publicity of government affairs and improving administrative service.

#### **VI Explore methods to promote public access to administrative decision-making process**

The scientific decision-making mechanism, which reflects the requirement of governing for the people and by the people, is being established to steadily increase people's access to administrative decision-making, both the process and the results. Provincial and municipal governments including Tianjin, Hebei, Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Guangdong and Jiangxi, before making decisions on major reform plans, policy measures, or construction projects that are closely related to public interests, hold expert consultations, project review meetings, press conferences, and seminars to extensively solicit opinions and suggestions of the public. Timely feedbacks are provided as to the adoption of such opinions and suggestions. This initiative has been widely recognized as an effective means to enhancing transparency in public administration.