

Pemandu explains RM64 mil expenditure

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The Performance Management and Delivery Unit (Pemandu), raising eyebrows with its RM63.9 million price tag, has pointed out that the expenditure pales in comparison to similar programmes undertaken by multi-national companies.

In a blog posting on the Economic Transformation Programme's website yesterday, it said that out of the total amount covering communications and consultancy work, only RM27.5 million was expended on communications.

Out of which, RM15 million went to communications regarding the Government Transformation Programme while for the same purpose another RM12.5 million channelled to the Economic Transformation Programme.

But without providing a detailed breakdown, the statement said that they embraced "open days, exhibitions, speaker platforms and other targeted ground activities, media relations, advertising, digital campaigns, investor relations, production of videos, brochures and collaterals".

"The total communication expenditure to-date is RM27.5 million over a duration of more than 18 months, covering two highly intensive and extensive transformation programmes incorporating six National Key Result Areas and 12 National Key Economic Areas," said the statement.

After providing addition breakdowns, the statement added that the expenditure on communications meant that annually RM9 million went to each programme, already a steal compared to what large corporations devote for similar programmes.

By comparison, (advertising expenditure) Adex 2010 indicates that large Malaysian corporations spend anything between RM80 to RM100 million on the execution of communications programmes similar in scope or smaller to that of Pemandu.

"To ensure we keep costs low, wherever possible, Pemandu works with media owners directly on advertising opportunities.

"We also employ cost-effective small to mid-sized local agencies and freelance resources, to complement our execution of communications programmes," it added.

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Koh Tsu Koon had told parliament on Wednesday of the amount, also stressing that it was far less than what the private sector would spend.

Under-staffed Pemandu needed consultants

As for the balance of RM36.9 million, Pemandu said that it went to 38 lab initiatives attended by 1,400 people over a period of six to eight weeks.

Insisting that not all of the funds went to consultants, the statement said that a portion was also allocated for 'operating costs' such as renting venues, food and beverages and logistics.

In the beginning, we engaged consultants to assist Pemandu as we did not have the staff strength, the requisite skill sets or the luxury of time to run these labs.

"We hired consultants for their abilities to question the status quo and current practices, offer world-class best practices that Pemandu could emulate where applicable, offer analytical and technical expertise over a variety issues within the GTP and ETP focus areas.

"During this time, there were many opportunities to transfer technology and skills to better prepare the team in Pemandu to subsequently lead, facilitate and manage labs," it said.

As a result, Pemandu said that they can now manage the labs internally with 'minimal help' from freelance resources.

Malaysiakini had reported previously that Pemandu's birth was the result of RM66 million worth of consultation, with a major portion of it going to the American consultancy firm of McKinsey and Co at an estimated RM36 million.

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