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VSS for errant civil servants

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KUALA TERENGGANU: The government may consider introducing a voluntary separation scheme (VSS) to rid the civil service of under-performers and staff with disciplinary problems.

Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Mohd Sidek Hassan said such a scheme could be modelled after those used in the private sector.

Sidek said that while he had constantly spoken about merit-based promotion, a clear exit policy was also needed for civil servants who were either underperforming or had disciplinary problems.

"The Public Services Commission should look at the VSS exercised by the private sector as one of its models," he said when closing the 10th annual conference of the Public Service, Education and State Civil Service Commission here yesterday.

Sidek said if such a system was adopted, it would be implemented in a fair and transparent manner.

He said a fast changing world necessitated the public service sector becoming even more competitive and this meant civil servants had to change the way they worked.

Sidek declined to elaborate on the VSS suggestion when asked by reporters later.

When contacted, PSC chairman Tan Sri Jamaluddin Ahmad Damanhuri said he would only comment after reading Sidek's statement.

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ployees in the Public and Civil Service (Cuepacs) president Omar Osman, however, described the suggestion as "inappropriate".

He said: "The VSS is used in the private sector if a company wants to downsize, not to get rid of problematic or non-performing staff. Furthermore, these workers in the private sector are given compensation.

"In the civil service, if a worker has problems, he can be given extra training or counselling. If you were to ask them to take VSS, where

would they go? They have families to think of."

Earlier in his speech, Sidek proposed that government departments emulate the private sector in identifying students who had the potential to excel as employees.

"They should spot the outstanding students, especially those in their final year. This way the civil service will remain strong and relevant in developing the country," he said.

More than 200 people attended the conference which is held once every two years.