

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The University of Malaya comprises of 750 acres with the population of 29,078 people. In the 49<sup>th</sup> Annual Report of University of Malaya for the Year 1998, this population consists of 25,216 students, 191 professional and management staffs, 1,585 academic staffs and 2,086 supporting staffs. With this high population, the campus can be considered as a small township in the middle of Lembah Pantai and still developing.

No doubt that building services and facilities projected the image of the University especially towards corporatization. The role of maintenance in the University environment is becoming increasingly important and accepted to be more in the future. Jabatan Pembangunan dan Penyelenggaraan Harta Benda or JPPHB (hereafter, referred as the Department) is the responsible department in building's facilities and maintenance.

### **1.1 Purpose and Significance of the Study**

Due to the aging infrastructures and buildings complimented by new handed over buildings the amount of complaints seems to be increasing. There are complaints received from the building users that the staffs of the Department were not responding as they are supposed to whereas the Department claims that they have performed to their best efforts.

The writer is trying to observe and analyze the scenario on One Stop Complaint Center, the complaint handling system of the Department and

unveils any significant findings in it, especially in the context in recommending for improvement.

The writer hopes that the study will contribute to the improvement of the complaint handling system thus the performance of the Department, particularly in the roles of managing building facilities. This is vital in light of the fact that this Department responsibilities in the University's infrastructures and buildings.

In addition, no proper studies have been done before in this organization. Therefore, it is necessary to study the activities of this Department and identify their level of performance and recommended action to be taken to improve the facilities upkeep.

## **1.2 Objective of the Study**

This study attempts to evaluate the complaint handling system of the Department. This is to be in aligned with the Department mission to becoming an efficient organization in providing and manage infrastructures and assets by providing efficient and effective services to the community of the University.

Specifically, the objectives of the study system are: -

1. To analyze and evaluate the existing complaint handling system of the Department.
2. To examine the existing complaint database from the period of 1997 until 2000.
3. To reveal the level of understanding or awareness of the Department staff towards the complaint handling system.
4. To recommend for improvement of the complaint handling system.

### **1.3 Scope of the Study**

This study is performed in the Department itself and the University campus. It attempts to investigate and evaluate the complaint handling system, which is capable for improvement.

Complaints received from the building users are based on the level of satisfaction of services provided by the Department, speed in resolving the complaints and providing more conducive environment as the premier educational institution in Malaysia.

The writer shall views the Department as a responsible organization in operation and maintenance of the infrastructures and building services of the University. Finally, highlighting recommendations to be taken by the Department in improving the system.

### **1.4 Limitation of the Study**

The scope of the study shall be focused on the internal environment of the Department. Among the tools to be used are the four years received complaint databases developed by the Department own engineer. The complaints only have been computerized and stored in Microsoft Access Application Database since August 1997. However, since November 2000, on-line complaint system was introduced through the website and still on trial basis and shall not be examined.

This study does not include on-going new physical development projects, which are still under construction. These projects are under the responsibilities of out-sourcing nominated consultants.

## **1.5 Background of Jabatan Pembangunan dan Penyelenggaraan Harta Benda (JPPHB)**

The Department or JPPHB formerly known as Estate Office is one of entity of the central administration of the University. It is located on an approximately 5 acres land adjacent Fifth College. It consists of two-storey building as the main administration office, connected with single storey building served as storage for stationeries, inventories and equipment and a carpentry and mechanical workshop. Another isolated single storey building operates as Landscaping unit, canteen and surau.

Since its establishment 38 years ago, the Department plays an essential role and has become an important department in the University in providing operation and maintenance services and facilities to the University community. The reason behind the emergence of its function was due to the rapid physical development approved, especially through the Malaysian Plan Grant. As it is commonly known that once the new building have been officially handed over to the University, this department should be fully responsible to its operation and maintenance of the buildings and its facilities.

The official mission statement of the Department is (JPPHB 2000): -

To be an organization that is excellent in preparing and maintaining the infrastructures and assets of the University thus ensuring that University of Malaya becomes a premier university.

The official objectives of its establishment are (JPPHB 2000): -

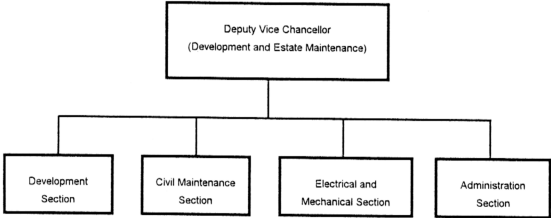
1. To safeguard the importance and comfort of members of the University and users of University's facilities.
2. To create an effective, committed and dynamic system to maintain University's properties.
3. To implement efficient and cost effective development projects.

# 1.6 Organization Structure and Chart

The Deputy Vice Chancellor (Development and Estate Maintenance) directly administrates the Department, assisted by four Section Heads, namely, Electrical and Mechanical Section (M&E), Civil Maintenance Section, Development Section and Administration Section as shown in *Figure 1*.

The figure explains that the Department is an administrated from a centralized location. All the Section Heads are fully responsible for their own section and staff. The line chart simplifies determining works, work scheduling, estimation jobs, evaluation and etc. But, it will create huge difficulty in coordination works if various sections to be involved especially in major renovation work.

FIGURE 1  
Organization Chart



(Source: JPPHB, University of Malaya, December 2000)

Engineer heads all sections except the Administration Section. In general, the operation of Department is based on three main functions i.e. development, operation and maintenance and service. Brief activities and function of each section are to be discussed as following.

### **1.6.1 Development Section**

A Chief Civil Engineer heads the section. The major role of this section is as project manager for all the new physical development projects. The projects were financed, mainly through Malaysian Plan Grant. Its main function is to ensure all the projects to be completed on time and within approved budget.

Its main activities are coordination works with nominated consultants i.e. the architect, quantity surveyor, civil and structural engineers and mechanical and electrical engineers. They shall review the preliminary design and drawing plans by the consultants for approval by the Economic Planning Unit and for tendering purposes. Finally, supervising, controlling and monitor the progress of the project, attending site and coordination meetings and solve problems that might occur during the construction works. Most of the time, one project takes more than two years to complete.

### **1.6.2 Civil Maintenance Section**

A Civil Engineer heads the section. The section is responsible in maintaining, renovation, repairing and/or upgrading works of the existing buildings and infrastructures to ensure they are safe to be occupied. Among of these basic infrastructures are water supplies system, drainage, roads, quarters, colleges and etc.

### **1.6.3 Electrical and Mechanical Section**

A Chief Electrical and Mechanical Engineer head the section assist by a Mechanical Engineer and an Electrical Engineer. The section is responsible in operation and maintenance of all mechanical and electrical building systems such as air conditioning system, lift system, pumping system, cold room,

water coolers, gas installation, fire protection system, electrical substations, electrical wiring and telephone.

The section is also responsible in renovation and upgrading works, which involved the mechanical and electrical system of the existing buildings and infrastructures to ensure they are safe to be used.

On regular basis, this section's engineers assist in contributing technical and professional assistance to the Development Section in mechanical and electrical services. This is due to lack of in-house mechanical and electrical engineers and the complexity of the services.

#### **1.6.4 Administration Section**

An Assistant Registrar heads the section. Its main responsibilities are to manage administration and financial aspects of the Department such as budget preparation, inventories, purchase orders and etc. Also, responsible in cleaning services in the building, store, landscaping, functions and events management of the University.

#### **1.6.5 Staffing**

The breakdown and distribution of Department staff is shown in **Figure 2**. In general, there are four categories of staff, namely, Professional and Management group, Technical Supporting group, Clerical Supporting group and General group.

**FIGURE 2**  
**Distribution of the Department Staff**

Section	Professional and Management Staff	Technical Supporting Staff	Clerical Supporting Staff	General Staff
Development	1	2	2	None
Civil Maintenance	1	16	4	14
Electrical and Mechanical	3	22	3	8
Administration	1	3	17	93
Total	6	43	26	115
Total of Staffs = 190				

(Source: JPPHB, University of Malaya, December 2000)

## 1.7 Organization of the Study

The study comprises of five chapters with an abstract attached at the beginning of the study and bibliography followed at the end of the study.

**Chapter 1** is the introduction of the study explaining the purpose and its significance, the objectives, defining its scope and limitations. It shall also highlight the background of the Department i.e. JPPHB and its organization.

**Chapter 2** is the literature review explaining the concept and theoretical aspects of complaint and complaint handling system.

**Chapter 3** discusses the research methodology to achieve the objectives. This chapter describes the research questions and hypothesis of the study. It



also explains the research instrument, sampling and data collection procedures and data analysis techniques to be applied. Problems encountered in the study shall also be included, if any.

**Chapter 4** is the analysis and the interpretation of the findings.

**Chapter 5** summarizes and concludes the study. Considerations for improvement and recommendations to be highlighted based on the findings. The findings and recommendations might be useful for future research.