

# Training Human Resources for Market Surveillance in South Central Coast, Vietnam

**Khanh Doan Quang**

Binh Dinh Market Surveillance Department, Vietnam

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## ABSTRACT

In the context of increasingly deepening international economic integration, the current situation of violations related to smuggling, trade fraud, counterfeit goods, and intellectual property infringement is a pressing issue. It demands the presence of a market management team equipped with the necessary capabilities to address these challenges. Therefore, the Market Surveillance force needs to proactively research programs to fundamentally change the methods and quality of training and development for market surveillance officials. Through a survey of 380 questionnaires conducted with individual market surveillance officials in the Market Surveillance Departments of South-Central Coast, the article has assessed the current status of human resource training for market surveillance in South Central Coast. It has identified variations in the capacity and professional qualifications of market surveillance officials in some units. There are cases where officials exhibit lax management practices, failure to adhere to regulations in operational activities, leading to errors in the inspection and handling of administrative violations. The methods and tactics employed by subjects are becoming more sophisticated, making the inspection and control activities of the market surveillance force more passive. Based on this foundation, the article also proposes solutions to address and mitigate these issues.

**Keywords:** Training human resources, Market Surveillance, South Central Coast, Vietnam

## INTRODUCTION

The human resources in the Market Management sector are one of Vietnam

Directorate of Market Surveillance's resources under the management of the Ministry of Industry and Trade. Departments of Market Surveillance are reorganized based on the Market Surveillance Department of provinces and centrally-run cities according to the decision of the Prime Minister (2018)[1]. Departments of Market Surveillance under the Vietnam Directorate of Market Surveillance includes: Provincial and centrally-run city Market Surveillance Department; Inter-provincial and centrally-run city Market Surveillance Department, are state management agencies responsible for enforcing laws on preventing, combating, and handling acts of smuggling goods; producing, trading counterfeit goods, prohibited goods, goods with unclear origins; acts infringing intellectual property rights; acts violating laws on quality, measurement, price, food safety; acts violating laws on protecting consumer rights and fraudulent commercial activities as stipulated by the legal regulations.

Currently, there are 8 Market Surveillance Departments in South Central Coast with responsibilities and authorities assigned by the state for inspection and examination tasks to control the market, stabilize commercial activities, and address illegal business practices such as smuggling, production and trade of counterfeit goods, trade of prohibited goods, goods with unclear origins, infringement of intellectual property rights, violations of laws on quality, measurement, price, food safety, violations of laws protecting consumer

rights, and fraudulent commercial activities as stipulated by the law. Consequently, these departments constantly face modern technological challenges and sophisticated "crimes" perpetrated by individuals with high levels of expertise. The Departments closely adhere to the 5 main tasks set by Vietnam Directorate of Market Surveillance, with the top priority being the stability and completeness of the organizational structure, and the second priority being the enhancement of the quality of the personnel. To effectively carry out these tasks, the Departments always consider the development of individuals, both in terms of professional competence and ethical and political qualities, as the decisive factor for the overall strength of the unit.

Since their establishment, the Departments have experienced significant development and have received profound attention from leadership at various levels regarding human resources development. However, the effectiveness of human resources development activities still faces some challenges, including insufficient manpower to meet assigned tasks, uneven levels of expertise among personnel, low remuneration and allowances for Market Surveillance personnel, early-stage operation of the Departments, difficulties in building the workforce and organizational structure, limited working conditions, legal constraints, and a lack of coordination among functional forces and regions. Additionally, there is a lack of comprehensive, scientific, and specific research on human resources in general and the development of human resources specifically for this organization.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Baranova (2013) employed a competency-based approach to develop human resources in the Federal Customs Service of Russia, aligning with global trends in human resource management. The author identified trends in human resource management within the Russian Customs sector,

including: (i) Increased demand for competencies, (ii) Optimization of the workforce within Customs, and (iii) Utilization of modern personnel assessment tools. The conclusions drawn were: (i) The strategic role of human resource management is growing within the Customs sector, with the development of human resources crucial for building capabilities and modernizing Customs; (ii) In modern conditions, the requirements for the competencies of Customs staff are constantly changing and increasing; (iii) Workforce optimization is necessary to maintain and develop human resources within Customs; (iv) To ensure objectivity and effectiveness in personnel assessment within Customs, modern competency management tools must be used; and (v) Competency-based approaches to human resource development are becoming increasingly popular, with successful experiences noted in large companies in Russia and internationally, as well as in Customs administrative agencies [2].

Malek Mami and Seyyed Akbar Nilipou Tabatabaei (2021) conducted a study about development of a human capital model for customs offices of Western Iran [3]. The authors utilized the concept of human resource development by Thomson and Mabey (1994) [4], which includes three components: organizational development, career development, and training and development. Through a survey method, the results indicated that the most important factors influencing human resource development for Customs offices in Western Iran were both internal and external, including leadership style, employee commitment and motivation, demographic characteristics, labor unions, legal regulations, and government policies. The study aimed to investigate barriers to human resource development in Customs offices in Western Iran, revealing that barriers within and outside the environment, such as ineffective leadership, lack of systematic approaches and planning for utilizing the best human resources, changes

in demographic characteristics, lack of employee commitment, lack of support for human resource initiatives and innovation, lack of training, slow adoption of modern information technology and the internet, and lack of motivation and encouragement, hinder human resource development.

Vo Xuan Hoai (2020) researched development of economic management human resources in provincial-level state administrative agencies in Vietnam, based on the theoretical framework of human resource development, analyzed the current situation of economic management human resource development in provincial-level state administrative agencies in Vietnam through the analysis of quantity, structure, and quality of economic management human resources in provincial-level state administrative agencies in Vietnam from 2017 to 2019. The research results showed that the development of economic management human resources in provincial-level state administrative agencies in Vietnam from 2017 to 2019 had ensured a quantity of about 27,988 officials and civil servants with a diverse structure, 66% aged 30 to 50, 85% holding a degree from university or higher, and continuously improving work capacity. The distribution of human resources among different sectors and localities was relatively uniform, and most economic management officials in provincial-level state administrative agencies had basic theoretical and political knowledge to meet the organization's development goals. However, the study also pointed out some limitations, including the insufficient emphasis and breakthroughs in mechanisms and policies for economic management human resources in provincial-level state administrative agencies, especially in building standards, professional standards for economic management human resources, and policies for recruitment, attraction, and utilization of talent [5].

The research works mentioned have contributed to systematizing the theories, analyzing, and evaluating fundamental

aspects of human resource management in general, and specifically the development of human resources within businesses, economic organizations, and state management agencies worldwide, including Vietnam, across various industries and fields of activity. However, as of the current moment, these studies have not clearly defined a specific research framework regarding the internal development of human resources in the Market Surveillance sector in South Central Coast.

## **MATERIALS & METHODS**

This study was conducted through a survey process using a formal questionnaire. The survey targeted laborers at the Market Surveillance Departments in South Central Coast. The minimum expected number of participants was 25% of specialized workers in the units, with an anticipated sample size of 380 civil servants in the Market Surveillance Departments in South Central Coast. Some common characteristics addressed in the survey included gender, age, work experience, education level, position, and the agency where the respondents were currently working.

The measurement scale used involved Likert's 5-point scale for all questions. For the dependent variable "Training Human Resources" of the Market Surveillance Departments in South Central Coast, the scale ranged from 1 - Completely Disagree, 2 - Disagree, 3 - Agree, 4 - Agree Strongly, 5 - Agree Completely. For the independent variables representing factors influencing the development of human resources in these departments, the scale ranged from 1 - Completely Not Influential, 2 - Not Influential, 3 - Influential, 4 - Strongly Influential, 5 - Very Strongly Influential. Data were collected through two methods: direct distribution, email distribution, and the use of Google Forms as a data collection tool.

## **RESULT**

The training, fostering, and development of economic management human resources in

provincial-level state administrative agencies are carried out in accordance with regulations. However, the coordination in implementing the training, fostering, and development tasks among the units is not strict, and the assessment of needs and the construction of plans are not practically guided, resulting in insufficient participation. The content of the training programs lacks practical skills.

**Evaluation of Training Needs**

The assessment of training needs is crucial. In reality, most of the Market Surveillance Departments in South Central Coast have not genuinely paid attention to this task. The evaluation of training needs based on the assessment of the actual job performance of civil servants is a practical method. According to the survey results, 29% of the Market Surveillance Departments in South Central Coast do not use the results of job performance assessments in training needs evaluations.

According to interviews with experts regarding training and development needs, it

is observed that the majority of Market Surveillance Departments in South Central Coast do not formally and systematically assess training and development needs.

**Planning for Training**

After identifying training needs, the Market Surveillance Departments in South Central Coast need to prioritize and analyze the necessary training needs to formulate training plans. The survey results indicate that the analysis of job performance results to identify training needs is highly regarded (mean score 3.91). The Market Surveillance Departments in South Central Coast have relatively well-implemented the detection of important training content and methods for the agency's success in planning training (mean score 3.78). Additionally, there is a considerable level of agreement on the issue of developing training plans with appropriate training funds for the Market Surveillance Departments in South Central Coast, and the overall planning for training implementation received an mean score of 3.80 and 3.73, respectively.

**Table 1. Current Situation of Training Planning at the Market Surveillance Departments in South Central Coast**

| No. | Content   | Level of Agreement |    |     |     |     | Mean |
|-----|---|--------------------|----|-----|-----|-----|------|
|     |   | 1                  | 2  | 3   | 4   | 5   |      |
| 1   | Analyzing the performance results of Market Surveillance civil servants to determine training needs | 0                  | 25 | 103 | 134 | 118 | 3.91 |
| 2   | Identifying suitable training types and content to enhance job performance                          | 0                  | 37 | 113 | 125 | 105 | 3.78 |
| 3   | Planning training with an appropriate training fund for the Market Surveillance Departments         | 0                  | 39 | 106 | 128 | 107 | 3.80 |
| 4   | Developing an overall plan for implementing training at the Market Surveillance Departments         | 0                  | 43 | 116 | 122 | 99  | 3.73 |

An interesting observation from the in-depth interviews is that, in most cases, the Market Surveillance Departments in South Central Coast do not undertake the task of training planning. This can be explained by respondents possibly expressing positive views about their respective units, or they may perceive it as an informal training plan within the organization.

**The current situation of organizing and implementing training activities**

In recent years, the Market Surveillance Departments in provinces has consistently prioritized training activities to enhance the skills of its civil servants. The selection of

candidates for further education to improve qualifications occurs annually. Objectively speaking, the departments have achieved certain results in training and developing its human resources. Civil servants exhibit a self-learning awareness and a sense of responsibility in their work, contributing to an elevated quality of the workforce that compares favorably with other units.

However, there are still certain limitations in the workforce development efforts, such as the uneven distribution of training for officials, not aligning precisely with actual needs. For instance, some specialized fields may have fewer participants, while less crucial areas might attract more officials for

further education. Additionally, budget constraints pose challenges to effective training initiatives, failing to fully meet the

needs of those selected for training and lacking encouragement for broader participation to enhance skills.

**Table 2. Human Resource Training Status at Market Surveillance Departments in South Central Coast**

| No. | Content  | Level of Agreement |    |     |    |    | Mean |
|-----|--|--------------------|----|-----|----|----|------|
|     |  | 1                  | 2  | 3   | 4  | 5  |      |
| 1   | Effective training, right people, right expertise            | 3                  | 46 | 239 | 45 | 47 | 3.23 |
| 2   | Sending employees for higher education to enhance skills     | 0                  | 42 | 208 | 78 | 52 | 3.37 |
| 3   | Fair, objective, democratic planning of job titles           | 8                  | 36 | 188 | 88 | 60 | 3.41 |
| 4   | Emphasizing and appointing leaders according to requirements | 5                  | 38 | 210 | 70 | 57 | 3.36 |

Regarding training activity, most respondents agree that training activities bring practical benefits to their units. Enhancing the individual's professional capacity through training is seen as a way to improve overall job performance. In terms of planning leadership positions, the majority of officials are in agreement with an average score of 3.23 points. However, planning for leadership positions from the department level and above still faces many difficulties due to high standards. Besides requirements related to qualities such as competence, political integrity, and ethics, there are also demands for specialized expertise, training background, years of experience, and age.

The appointment of leadership positions, which is generally accepted by employees with an average score of 3.36 points, is perceived as responding to job requirements. Those appointed are believed to have managerial and organizational skills, capable of gathering consensus, and demonstrating a sense of responsibility in the directive process. Market Surveillance Departments in South Central Coast ensure adherence to the proper guidance process, transparency, and democratic spirit in line with the unanimous opinion of all employees.

**DISCUSSION**

To enhance the quality of the current workforce, it is crucial to adopt methods that improve the quality of training and development work. This approach can lead to savings in state budget expenditure, create conditions for increased income for public employees throughout the entire organization, and avoid expanding the

workforce. In response to the development requirements of the market management sector until 2030, training and development activities with the goal of building and developing a workforce with strong political qualities, high professional ethics, and in-depth knowledge and skills in financial management become imperative. The Market Surveillance Departments in South Central Coast should focus on the following areas:

**Building a Training and Development Model based on the classification of target groups:** Properly classifying the target groups for training and development is crucial. After classification, implementing training programs becomes more targeted, avoiding duplication, saving time, and optimizing costs. Training programs can include:

**Leadership Position Training:** Programs on state management, soft skills in management, and specialized expertise relevant to the field.

**Specific Job Function Training:** Tailored programs for specific job roles, such as financial control, accounting, inspection, information technology, and organization management. Developing Training Programs and Curriculum tailored to each type of training and public employee group: The programs must be adjusted and updated annually or periodically to meet management requirements. Training should be practical and include tools (computers, etc.) for participants to practice on-site. Training content should address problem-solving during task execution and provide guidance for future actions.

**Innovating Training Methods and Integrating Training with Post-Training Use:** Employees should be proactive in

learning, focusing on honing soft skills such as teamwork and administrative skills, especially in response to the increasing demands of the management sector. After completing training, employees should apply what they have learned, and their effectiveness should be assessed through practical tasks.

**Emphasizing In-Depth Training for Specialized Job Functions and Fields:** Prioritize training for officials and leaders responsible for control activities. Additionally, focus on training for officials in specialized inspection areas, providing knowledge and skills related to handling administrative violations in the market management sector.

**Encouraging Self-Study for Employees to Improve Foreign Language and Computer Proficiency:** Promote self-study initiatives among employees to enhance language and computer skills. Collaborate with training centers to offer language and computer courses, conduct periodic assessments, and provide rewards for outstanding achievements.

**Regularly Organizing Professional Competency Assessments to Evaluate Employee Capabilities:** Conduct frequent professional competency assessments to evaluate employee capabilities. Based on the results, appropriate measures, timely training, and adjustments to responsibilities or promotions should be implemented. Recognize and reward employees who excel in their studies and apply their knowledge and skills effectively in their work.

## CONCLUSION

Human beings are considered a crucial and paramount factor for the development of every nation, ethnicity, and organization. In the current fiercely competitive market economy, organizations aspiring for sustainable existence and growth must prioritize and emphasize the enhancement of the quality of their human resources.

Workforce training stands out as one of the vital solutions for organizations to achieve this objective. A study has analyzed and evaluated the current state of training activities at the Market Surveillance Departments in the South-Central Coast. From this analysis, the study has identified achievements, limitations, and the reasons behind these limitations, providing solutions to overcome challenges and improve training programs at these bureaus in the coming period.

### *Declaration by Authors*

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