

Some Problems Arising in Setting up and Running Economic Information Service Centres

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The great leader Comrade **Kim Jong Il** said as follows.

“This is an age of science and technology.”(“**KIM JONG IL SELECTED WORKS**” Vol. 10 P. 123)

In an age of IT industry, IT is developing rapidly and the economic management is being put on a scientific and information basis.

Today organizing economic information service properly is of great significance in ensuring the scientific accuracy and quick transmission of economic information and putting the economic management on a scientific and information basis.

Economic information service is an activity of offering information needed for economic management and activities, information processing instruments and scientific and reasonable information processing methods.

What is important in organizing economic information service is properly setting up economic information service centres and operating them.

The centres are bases for processing economic information in an intensive way and developing and disseminating programs and other information processing tools and methods. Their basic mission is to offer information needed for economic management and convenience for officials in their information activities.

Setting up and running such centres is essential for satisfying the demands for information arising in economic management and putting the economic management on an information basis.

The demands for information arising in economic management and people's economic life are diverse, their volume is tremendous and they are linked to one another. As the scientific and information-based level of economic management is raised, many pieces of economic information are processed by such complicated mathematical methods as regression and correlation and information technology.

Proceeding from such characteristics of economic information, it is necessary to set up and run a specialized service unit that collects and processes economic information on the basis of such expert knowledge as economics, mathematics and informatics and such information technology tools as computer and program.

To put the economic management on an information basis successfully, it is necessary to set up service centres that develop and disseminate specially information products, like the various economic management programs and management databases. Such centres can also offer service for computer, network and programs.

The specialized service centres are also needed for organizing and managing economic information systems in the relevant organs and enterprises. To develop and manage the systems in a scientific way, information system management centres, or information service centres, built by involving system, program and database experts, are necessary.

These centres offer such services as collection, retrieval, processing, analysis and transmission of economic information according to the demands arising in economic management. The main things here are the processing and analysis of economic information.

The centres also develop and disseminate various programs, databases and economic information language for economic management and offer such services as development of economic information systems.

The centres also play the function of managing the information systems of the relevant units.

The centres also offer technical services, like the training of human resources for information management and maintaining of IT tools.

Information service centres, like the economic information service centres, are divided according to various factors.

They can be divided, according to the scope of service, into local centres and collective centres. The former process is only the information raised by the organs and enterprises that have their own service centres, while the latter process the information raised by various users.

They can also be divided into small, medium and large centres according to the information processing capacity.

According to the composition of the tasks performed, they are also divided into specialized and multifunctional centres. The specialized centres deal with certain tasks. But the multifunctional centres are process a series of technological engineering information in addition to economic information and make scientific research.

What is most important in setting up and operating economic information service centres is to define their forms reasonably.

The major forms are enterprise service centres, sectorial and regional service centres and national service centre.

The enterprise service centres deal with the information arising in the production and management of the relevant enterprises.

The sectorial and regional service centres deal with the information arising in the economic management in the relevant sectors and regions. These centres are necessary for putting the relevant economic sectors and regional economy on an information basis in a unified way and solving the problems with regard to the economic information of sectorial and regional significance.

The sectorial service centres perform such tasks as dealing with the information of the relevant sectors, the machine-building sector in particular, putting their economic management on an information basis. They offer service only to the users in their relevant sectors. For example; the service centre at the Central Bank deals only with the information related with banking organs.

These service centres can be linked to the centres of the organs and enterprises in the relevant sectors in the form of technical process, and give technical guidance to them.

The regional service centres collect and analyze the information needed for solving the economic problems arising in the relevant regions (provinces, cities or counties), develop and disseminate information products for putting the regional economy on an information basis, and offer technical service.

The national service centre is mainly charged with providing economic information necessary for the solution of macro-economic issues, such as the establishment of a national economic development strategy, on the basis of IT and mathematical methods. It also functions as an organ responsible for giving coordinated guidance to all sectors, organs and industrial establishments for their economic information service.

The economic information service centres can be organized as departments under certain organs or enterprises, or as separate entities at the sectorial, regional or national level.

In organizing and operating the centres it is also important to optimize its internal structure.

This is a prerequisite for ensuring proper functioning of the centres as a whole by making optimum use of its IT means and technical personnel.

The key task in the composition of the internal structure is to correctly define the responsibilities of the staff and their assignments so that all the workloads are distributed reasonably among the personnel, their sense of responsibility is enhanced to the highest possible level and information processing is specialized. The internal structure should also be composed in such a way as to ensure effective management and use of all available IT means and smooth processing of information.

The structure of the centres may vary according to the sectors, organs, enterprises and regions. It is because each centre differs in position, amount of information to be processed, function, availability of technical means, processing capacity and methods. That is why the internal structure of each centre should be selected by type and designed to meet specific needs.

The major responsibilities of the centres comprise making preparations for computer-processing of economic information, arranging and designing for data processing, data processing and technical service for IT means.

At the first stage the centres accept, register and review the document containing information to be processed by them. They also enter primary data into computers and procure references needed for data processing.

At the second stage they select data to be processed and find out ways for their processing, design the steps for data processing, and procure or write appropriate programs.

At the third stage they receive data and process them with computers and other technical means. This is their main responsibility.

At the fourth stage they maintain computers and other IT equipment.

For successful performance of these responsibilities they have several sections under it. In case of the one of a fairly larger size, it has sections responsible for arranging for processes, data processing, computer operation, program development and system development, as well as for planning, financing and supply services.

Another important thing in setting up and operating the economic information service centre is to properly organize business for its operation.

What is most important in organizing business for the operation of the centre is to efficiently organize the processing of economic information.

Although the economic information service centre is supposed to develop programs for economic management and collect, search and transmit economic information, its key task is to

directly process economic information. Therefore, the main thing in the organizing of the activities of the centre is to draw out a right design for technical processes for processing the details of economic information.

The design for technical processes for processing information contains the order of processing, the calculation of procession cycles, the conditions for conducting technical and engineering operation in the given mode and the table of work processes for the whole course of it. In addition, the design presents the technical processes for solving problems and standard operation regulations for each process.

Another important thing in organizing business of the economic information service centre is effective labour management. The centre must solve such problems as the training of personnel and the improvement of their qualification, definition of their work norms, provision of offices, introduction of rational methods of information processing and improvement of working conditions.

Another important one in the operation of the economic information service centre is to provide IT means and their parts, raw materials and equipment. To this end it is important to constantly upgrade technical means in keeping with the development of information technology.

To organize technical service for computers and other IT means is an important aspect in the activities of the centre. What is important in technical service is to establish a strict system of checking and repairing the IT means, computers in particular, in a planned way so as to ensure their normal operation.

Technical service, with the exception of general overhaul, is rendered by the personnel of information service centre. As far as general overhaul is concerned, it is necessary to organize a special organ for it and conduct it in a planned way.

Other importance in the organizing of business for the operation of the economic information service centre is to determine the mode of information processing in a right manner. The mode must be correctly determined not only by individual offices of the centre but also in connection of all of them. The centre must employ various modes of information processing including time partition, real time, parallel procession, concentrated procession and dispersed procession to make the most of IT equipment and raise their speed.

All the economic information service centres must continuously deepen the study on the organizational and technical measures for future development. For this purpose it is necessary to correctly define the direction of their development and study such matters as the introduction of newly-developed IT means, advanced information processing techniques and rational methods of solving problems, as well the improvement of the quality of work and expansion of the scope of service. The economic information service centre must take measures to enhance the efficiency of the overall process of functioning and calculate and analyze the state of its business so as to constantly improve its work.

The economic information service centre must be organized on the basis of economic calculation. It is rational to establish such a centre in the organs and places, including a central statistics institution and provincial seat, all of which have a large volume of economic information to deal with and many economic problems to solve with computers.