

2. APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 This Chapter outlines the broad approach and methodology in conducting this 10th overall review. It also spells out the various difficulties/constraints encountered during this exercise of such magnitude.

Scope of the Review

- 2.2 Once approval was conveyed for the PRB to undertake this assignment, a communiqué was issued on our website to inform all our stakeholders. Concurrently, the Bureau mobilised both its technical and support staff and continued to update its website thereby displaying all the information that have been requested from the parties concerned. In parallel, technical staff were designated as desk officers to disseminate information as well as to attend to any technical queries.
- 2.3 The Bureau adopted its customary approach based on extensive consultations with a view to promoting greater transparency. A planned calendar of activities was established comprising consultative meetings and data collection exercises, among others. The consultative approach enabled two-way interactions with stakeholders and relevant clarifications were provided to all questions raised during those meetings.

Data Collection

- 2.4 To start our preparatory work, inputs were sought from our different stakeholders. Letters and Circulars were issued to Federations in June 2023 inviting them to submit their memorandum on Conditions of Service. Subsequently, Management of Civil Service, Parastatal Bodies, Local Authorities and Rodrigues Regional Assembly were requested in July 2023 by way of a Circular to provide updated information on their respective organisation, namely their vision, mission and objectives as well as the grades with the corresponding establishment size. Management was also requested to designate a senior officer who would act as a contact person/facilitator in providing all the required information to the Bureau and for making the necessary arrangements in connection with site visits and filling of Job Description Questionnaires, among others.
- 2.5 In August 2023, Unions were sent Circulars requesting them to submit their representations/proposals in respect of the grades they represented. The MPSAR was in turn requested in August 2023 to submit its views/proposals on Conditions of Service as well as on certain general issues. Another Circular was issued in September 2023 calling upon Management of Ministries/Departments/Organisations to furnish additional information, followed by another one concerning submission of their proposals.

- 2.6 Following a decision of the then Government that all new Parastatal Bodies would be governed by the PRB's regime, Circulars were sent to organisations concerned, with a view to gathering information as well as providing them the opportunity to submit their proposals for this Report.
- 2.7 Informative meetings were held with the representatives of the Parastatal Bodies concerned where they were apprised of the activities of the Bureau and the procedures adopted to collect job information and how to proceed in making their representations, among others.
- 2.8 Many organisations, however, did not respond to our Circulars by the deadline set, which was around end of year 2024. Consequently, a reminder was issued as the Bureau was finalising meetings with Management. Following the persistent non-response from some organisations, a second reminder was sent to them.
- 2.9 Until the publication of the Report, technical staff of the Bureau have been conscientiously seeking relevant information from different stakeholders through emails, letters and by telephone.

Surveys

- 2.10 With a view to capturing updated, relevant and factual information on different subjects regarding Conditions of Service and Pay, the Bureau carried out seven surveys as per the table below:

Survey No.	Date of Issue	Survey
1	12 December 2024	Recruitment and Retention Problems in the Public Sector
2	10 February 2025	Flexible Hours of Attendance and Flexible Working Arrangement in the Public Sector
3	19 February 2025	Training and Development in the Public Sector
4	11 March 2025	Travelling by Car in the Public Sector
5	04 April 2025	Recommendations made in the 2021 PRB/Addendum Reports which have not been implemented
6	04 April 2025	Recommendations made in Volume 1 of the 2021 PRB Report which have not been implemented
7	01 July 2025	Remuneration in the Public Sector

- 2.11 As at the closing date, several organisations did not respond to our surveys. In view thereof, a communiqué was issued on the Bureau's website to extend the deadline of most surveys up to 30 May 2025. Since the response rate was still very low as at that date, a reminder was issued to push the deadline to 30 June 2025. Findings of the Surveys are presented under the respective Chapter of this Volume.

Representations Received from Stakeholders

- 2.12 Further to the various representations received, around 15400 from Unions/Federations and Management including a few from individuals, they were invited to make their oral submission during consultative meetings held at the Bureau. Staff side mainly requested for, *inter alia*: review of salary, creation/merging/restyling of grades; enhanced Conditions of Service; upgrading of qualifications requirement; provision of appropriate training; grant of protective equipment; an increase in establishment size; and provision of a conducive working environment with special consideration on safety and health as well as mental wellbeing. Nevertheless, the key expectation of employees at all levels remains the grant of a high pay rise and improvement in other Conditions of Service.
- 2.13 Management's proposals were geared towards: creation of units/sections; creation/merging/abolition of grades; provision of enhanced salaries; redefining reporting lines; Reform Initiatives; and Training and Development.
- 2.14 Our recommendations were formulated following careful examination of all the proposals made by our stakeholders. Special attention was paid on the need to establish fair relativities, create better career path/earnings, improve working environment and enhance Conditions of Service, among others.
- 2.15 During their interactions with the Bureau, the stakeholders were informed that only those proposals found meritorious would be taken on board. Representations that were beyond the purview of this exercise could not be acted upon.

Site Visits

- 2.16 Wherever it was found necessary, site visits were conducted to gain first-hand experience and insight of the working conditions, job/duties performed and the work environment. Officers of the Bureau also interacted with employees and provided explanations/clarifications as needed. However, a few requests for site visits were not entertained as the information sought was already available in the freshly filled Job Description Questionnaires. Overall, the officers of the Bureau carried out 17 site visits in Parastatal Bodies and Ministries/Departments.

Consultations with Stakeholders

- 2.17 Prior to scheduling meetings with Federations, they were requested to submit their demands through their memorandum to enable an in-depth examination thereof, so that issues are better understood and informed responses are provided during ensuing consultative meetings. Unfortunately, except for the Federation of Parastatal Bodies and Other Unions (FPBOU), no other memorandum was received by the due date. In view of this inertia on the part of other Federations and its impact on the planned calendar of activities of the Bureau, a first meeting was scheduled on 18 September 2023 with the FPBOU. As still no memorandum was received from other Federations more than one month after the set due date, they were notified by way of letter dated 03 October 2023 that consultative meetings with them would resume after receiving their proposals on Conditions of Service and their views/comments on some general issues such as Greening of the Public Sector, Digitalisation of Government Services, Succession Planning, Homeworking and Artificial Intelligence, among others.
- 2.18 As from 15 November 2023, consultative meetings were scheduled with Unions of Parastatal Bodies, whereas those with Local Authorities were held in July 2024. Meetings with Unions of the Civil Service began on 01 August 2024. Representatives of Federations invariably attended the meetings held with Unions. At the very outset of all those meetings, Unions' members and the representatives of the Federations were carefully explained on the approach adopted, the parameters and the major factors that would be considered in framing our recommendations.
- 2.19 Once the meetings with Unions were over, the Bureau met the Management of different organisations to discuss their proposals and this lasted until end of June 2025. However, due to late submissions from certain grades, some meetings with Unions had to be held concurrently with those of Management. Representatives of MPSAR were present during all meetings with Management to provide clarifications related to Conditions of Service and implementation issues. As regards Parastatal Bodies and Local Authorities, a representative of the parent Ministry also attended the Management meetings to answer to any query.
- 2.20 By the end of March 2025, still no memorandum was received from the Federations. A reminder was, therefore, issued on 04 April 2025 requesting them to submit their proposals on Conditions of Service at latest by 21 April 2025. Meetings with Federations began on 12 May 2025 after receipt of their memorandum.
- 2.21 Extensive consultative meetings ensued with Federations on Conditions of Service. The latter were given the opportunity to elaborate on their proposals as well as to provide their views on certain issues such as Artificial Intelligence, Succession Planning and so on. They were informed during those meetings

which of the representations could be considered and the reasons for which others could not be entertained. These meetings were ongoing until July 2025.

2.22 Around 696 meetings were held with different stakeholders, including with individuals. Moreover, the Bureau held a few working sessions with officers of the Human Resource Cadre to provide explanations on some issues for a clear interpretation and proper implementation of PRB recommendations.

2.23 We note with concern that certain members of Unions chose to ignore the decorum of meetings held at the PRB including a few representing professional grades. The Bureau humbly considers that Federations must educate their members on behavioural traits like courtesy, respect and civility to foster constructive consultations.

Customer Satisfaction Survey

2.24 A Customer Satisfaction Survey was carried out using a customer feedback form. Our stakeholders were requested to fill same after each consultative meeting with them. The feedback forms captured the perception of our stakeholders on the way consultations were held and also invited their suggestions/proposals for enhancing customer satisfaction. The survey findings revealed that 100% of our stakeholders were satisfied with the way discussions/meetings were held. Nevertheless, a few proposals were made to improve the consultative process.

Visit to Rodrigues

2.25 As planned, the Bureau proceeded on its official mission to Rodrigues from 13 to 15 June 2024. The Director, accompanied by one Principal Job Analyst, held meetings with Federations, Staff, Unions and Management to explain the *modus operandi* of the Bureau for the upcoming Report as well as on the approach being adopted. Several salient issues were raised and request was made for the Bureau to have more meetings planned with them.

2.26 To maximise interactions with stakeholders, two visits were scheduled in April 2025. Initially, the Deputy Director proceeded on mission to hold meetings with all individual employees who have made a request for oral submissions. Thereafter, for the period 06 to 12 April 2025, the Directorate and a delegation of six officers proceeded to Rodrigues. Twenty meetings were carried out with Unions/Management and 200 interviews were conducted during the visit. Representatives of the MPSAR also attended the meetings with a view to bringing clarifications on issues pertaining to Conditions of Service.

Job Description Questionnaires

2.27 For this Report, Job Description Questionnaires (JDQs) were reviewed and made more user-friendly to facilitate the collection of updated job information. To ensure adequate representation of each grade under our purview, a random stratified sampling method was used. Updated lists of employees classified by

grades and postings served as sampling frames. A 10% systematic random sample was drawn from each stratum. However, where the establishment size was small, discretion was used to sample a greater number of employees.

- 2.28 On 01 December 2023, the Bureau kick-started the interview exercise in respect of the filling of the JDQs for the selected employees of the Workmen's Group. To palliate the shortage of technical staff, the Bureau had recourse to officers in the grade of Human Resource Executive to conduct this exercise. However, prior to embarking on same, they were provided in-house training in interviewing techniques. The carrying out of interviews, around 1710 in respect of manual grades, lasted for more than a year to end in 2025. Approximately 6430 JDQs were issued to non-manual grades.

Job Evaluation and Benchmarking

- 2.29 A combination of analytical and non-analytical job evaluation techniques has been used to come up with the ranking order of grades.
- 2.30 The Bureau revisited both the manual and non-manual Job Evaluation Schemes to ensure their continued validity such that the relevant job characteristics matched compensable factors. The point rating system was used to determine the job scores. On the basis of the revised Job Evaluation Schemes, benchmark grades and benchmark hierarchies were assessed to establish a ranking order of jobs. The job evaluated structure was sent to the main Federations to obtain their views on the job relationships thus established. They were also requested to indicate the job ranking they would wish to see emerge and which they would consider as fair and acceptable. There was a very poor response with only one Federation providing its views and no dissent from main Federations on the established job relationships.

Impediments Encountered

- 2.31 In the conduct of the review exercise, the Bureau faced a few problems which hindered its work progress. The biggest one was the postponement of meetings scheduled with its stakeholders. In many instances, requests related thereto were made at such short notice that it was difficult to reschedule other meetings in lieu thereof. Furthermore, the holding of the 2024 National Assembly Elections and the reconstitution of the Board of many Parastatal Bodies further impacted on our calendar of meetings.
- 2.32 Late submissions from Unions and Management were another setback. In some cases, Management/Head of Organisations did not submit any proposals while in a few others, they just relayed the submissions of their Unions or staff to the Bureau for consideration.

2.33 Other noteworthy constraints encountered during the preparation of our Report are as follows:

- certain memoranda previously submitted and examined/analysed by officers were not canvassed and new ones were submitted for discussion purpose either during meetings or a few days after same;
- delay in submitting requested and relevant information for further examination by the Bureau. In some cases, due to late submission of critical information, the sampling exercise for job description writing was carried out at a later stage, thus further disturbing the work progress;
- submission of outdated and incomplete information;
- delay in obtention of proposals/views of main stakeholders on General Conditions of Service;
- non-submission of additional information/statistics from Unions/Managements despite several follow-ups and reminders sent. In some organisations, the HR personnel were reluctant to provide the requested information; and
- an important shortage of technical staff at the level of the Bureau.

Gender Neutrality

2.34 The Bureau has once again adopted a gender-neutral approach as far as salary and Conditions of Service are concerned. Some job appellations have been demarcated gender-wise in the Disciplined Forces and Health Sector owing to specificities in the workplace. Such demarcation also prevails in foreign jurisdictions in similar quarters.

