

OBSERVATIONS AND GENERAL PROVISIONS

14. This Chapter provides certain observations on some pertinent issues as well as a few general recommendations which are applicable in the Local Authorities. Common main requests made by our stakeholders have equally been highlighted.

Results-Oriented Performance Management System and Performance-Related Incentive Scheme

15. Following its introduction in the Public Service in 2006, the Performance Management System (PMS) has been rolled out in the Public Sector, instilling to some extent a performance culture. However, the Performance-Related Incentive Scheme (PRIS) could not be implemented due to the absence of sufficient safeguards. Further to Government's renewed focus on improving productivity and performance in the Public Service, the Performance-Based Budgeting (PBB) has been re-introduced, as a strategic tool to assist in resource management and public sector accountability. Same would be extended in the Parastatal Bodies, Local Authorities and Rodrigues Regional Assembly and in this context, relevant legislations have been amended.
16. However, to improve the effectiveness and accountability in the management, operations and implementation of policies, there is need to shift the focus from the traditional approach, that is, from activities/outputs to one based on results, which strengthens the linkages between funding and results. In this perspective, the Bureau has provided in **Chapter Results-Oriented Performance Management System and Performance-Related Incentive Scheme in Volume 1 of this Report**, for, among others, the development of an Integrated Performance Management Framework for the implementation of a Results-Oriented Performance Management System (ROPMS) in the Public Sector, through an integrated approach by synergising the PBB and PMS. We consider that along with the ROPMS, a PRIS should be established and implemented as a means to recognise and appreciate the achievements of high performers.

Training and Development

17. Training and development rank high on the Government's agenda, with its commitment to transform public sector organisations so that they are future-ready, performance-driven and citizen-focused. During consultations, the Bureau has been apprised that in many quarters, difficulties are being encountered in providing training opportunities to employees. The main challenges faced comprise a limited available budget; shortage of resource persons to act as trainers in the Public Sector; reluctance from Management to release their officers due to exigencies of service; measuring the effectiveness and value of training; and tracking the impact of training. Federations have also pointed out that employees of the Workmen's Group were not being provided with the relevant training or the training provided were inadequate, not attuned to the work performed and, in some instances, quasi-inexistent.

18. Since training is fundamental in enhancing employee's productivity and improving their performance, the Bureau is anew urging Management to provide appropriate and adequate training to employees, including those of the Workmen's Group. We have also provided for the Ministry of Public Service and Administrative Reforms (MPSAR), in collaboration with the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Institute of Public Service and Innovation, to dispense resilience training, among others, to public sector employees. **Recommendations related thereto have been made in Chapter Training and Development in Volume 1 of this Report.**

Upgrading of Qualifications Requirement

19. Both Unions and Management from several quarters across the Public Sector have proposed for an upgrading of the qualifications requirement of grades at different levels owing to: an evolution in duties performed by officers; changes in work processes; and higher qualifications possessed by officers, among others.
20. In principle, qualifications are set based on the nature and level of duties/responsibilities, rather than on those possessed by incumbents. Furthermore, as qualification is only one of the compensable factors in job evaluation, an upgrading in same may not necessarily fetch a higher salary, particularly if the level and nature of duties have remained unchanged. **In such circumstance, prior to considering reviewing upward the qualifications requirement, we hold that it would be more appropriate for Management to properly assess the need for any amendment to same. To this end, general recommendations and relevant observations have been made in the Chapter Review of Schemes of Service and Qualifications in Volume 1 of this Report.**

Schemes of Service

21. It has been observed that schemes of service of grades in Local Authorities are amended without consulting the Ministry of Public Service, and Administrative Reforms (MPSAR) for their views. We consider that since the MPSAR is the custodian of all schemes of service, the MoLG should submit proposed schemes of service of grades in the Local Authorities to the latter for examination, to ensure consistency and uniformity.
22. Against this backdrop, we are making appropriate recommendations.

Recommendation 1

23. **We recommend that while framing/reviewing schemes of service of grades on the establishment of Local Authorities, the MoLG should submit same to the MPSAR for examination.**
24. **We also recommend that further to recommendations made in Volume 1 of this Report in Chapter Review of Schemes of Service and Qualifications, the review and prescription of schemes of service in the Local Authorities should be carried out and finalised within a period of three months.**

25. **We additionally recommend that where the scheme of service of identical/comparable grades in the Local Authorities are aligned on those of the Civil Service, the MoLG as well as the MPSAR, should ensure that the specific duties devolving on grades concerned in the Local Authority are reflected in the scheme of service.**

Human Resource Planning

26. Various representations were made by Unions for the recruitment of additional staff and filling of vacant positions. It has been reported that in some cases, an acute shortage of staff in certain grades is adversely impacting on the efficiency, timeliness and overall quality of service delivery. In response to these concerns, we have provided **in the Chapter Recruitment, Promotion and Retention in Volume 1 of this Report, for public sector organisations to undertake a Human Resource Planning exercise, with a view to addressing their HR requirements, among others, and ensuring that all vacant positions are filled within a reasonable timeframe.**

Digitalisation and Artificial Intelligence Readiness

27. Further to Government laying much emphasis on the use of digital technologies and Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the Public Sector, Federations have expressed concern on the impact thereof on jobs, in general. Since we are still in an early phase in the application of AI, a proper assessment may not be possible at this stage. Nonetheless, AI should be considered as a tool to help Government to achieve its objectives, and that a sustainable approach to its adoption in the Public Sector should be favoured, based on three key pillars, namely: People, Processes and Technology.
28. Provisions have been made in **the Chapter Digitalisation and Artificial Intelligence Readiness in Volume 1 of this Report**, regarding the fostering of AI initiatives in the Public Sector and the need for capacity building so as to, *inter alia*, equip the technical staff of the Ministry of Information Technology, Communication and Innovation (MITCI) with the necessary skills and knowledge needed to work effectively with AI-related technologies. We have also provided for the proper training of public sector employees to ensure a smooth transition towards AI.

Performance Criteria

29. As per existing provisions, eligible officers in various grades are allowed to benefit from incremental movement beyond their top salary, subject to satisfying certain conditions. We have revisited same as hereunder:
- (i) **they should have drawn the top salary for at least 12 months;**
 - (ii) **where officers are eligible to move by more than one increment beyond their top salary, they should have drawn the first increment for at least 12 months;**

- (iii) they should have been efficient and effective in their performance during the preceding year; and
- (iv) they should not be under report.

The above conditions are termed as “**Performance Criteria**”.

Mental Wellbeing

30. Both the Federations and MPSAR highlighted that mental wellbeing is essential for improved performance and productivity. The Bureau also recognises same as a strategic catalyst for enhancing workforce productivity, as it focuses on prevention, resilience and support. Despite the growing global and local awareness on the issue, persistent workplace stressors and stigma continue to erode employee engagement and output. Concerns over the sedentary lifestyle of public officers have also been underscored, with caution on “**sitting as the new smoking.**” To address these challenges, the Bureau has made a few provisions in the **Chapter Risk, Insurance and Compensation in Volume 1 of this Report**, to embed both mental and physical wellbeing into organisational frameworks, through targeted interventions that foster resilience, reduce absenteeism, optimise performance and improve productivity.

Part-Time Employment

31. There are many positions across the Local Authorities that exist on a part-time basis. While conducting a study on the grade of Sewing Teacher (Part-time), we took cognizance that in certain District Councils, employees are putting in more hours of work weekly as compared to their colleagues in other Local Authorities, for the same salary. Considering the work pattern of the position based on their normal working hours, the remuneration is being reviewed.
32. With a view to preventing any case of abuse towards employees and promoting harmonious industrial relations at the workplace, **we consider that part-time employees should, as far as possible, be made to work not more than 20 hours per week.**

Training for Officers in the General Services

33. Officers in the General Services are provided with relevant and work-related courses to keep them abreast of new development in their fields and develop their skills and competencies for improved service delivery. The Bureau is replicating the existing provisions.

Course for Clerical Officers

Recommendation 2

34. **We recommend that the MPSAR, in consultation with the MoLG and the Local Authorities, should mount and run appropriate training programmes for incumbents in the grade of Clerical Officer to render them skilled and polyvalent.**

Advanced Course for Office Management Assistants**Recommendation 3**

35. We recommend that:

- (i) the MPSAR, in consultation with the MoLG and the Local Authorities should mount the Advanced Course in Effective Office Management and Supervision for incumbents in the grade of Office Management Assistant; and**
- (ii) Office Management Assistants who have successfully completed the Advanced Course in Effective Office Management and Supervision should be granted one increment at salary point reached, subject to the top salary of the grade.**

Advanced Secretarial Course**Recommendation 4**

36. We recommend that:

- (i) the MPSAR, in consultation with the MoLG and the Local Authorities should make arrangement for Confidential Secretaries of Local Authorities to follow the Advanced Secretarial Course;**
- (ii) Confidential Secretaries, on successful completion of the Advanced Secretarial Course, should continue to be granted one increment, at point reached, subject to the top salary of the grade.**

Health Surveillance

37. One of the statutory obligations of Management is to ensure that regular occupational safety and health audits are carried out by a Safety and Health Officer/Senior Safety and Health Officer with a view to identifying the safety and health related risks. Consequently, employees who are prone to risk of contracting occupational diseases are placed under a Health Surveillance Programme. Representations to this effect have been made by various Unions/employees of the Workmen's Group to ensure the Safety and Health of these employees. We are making appropriate provision to this effect.

Recommendation 5

38. We recommend that Management should make necessary arrangements with Health Authorities, whenever the need arises, for employees of the Workmen's Group to undergo a health surveillance including regular health check-ups, free of charge.

Miscellaneous

39. The underlying existing provisions under Chapter 'Workmen's Group-General' of Volume 2 Part I of this Report are also applicable to counterparts in the Local Authorities.

Conditions/Allowances	Paragraph	Recommendation
Collection and deposit of keys at Police Stations	42.28	10
Making and Serving Tea/Coffee	42.88	33
Washing of Towels/Tablecloth/Curtains/Carpets/Doormats	42.90	34
Bulk Photocopy	42.92	35
Cleaning of Lavatories	42.94	36
Surveillant	42.96	37

Main proposals of Individuals/Unions/Federations/Management

40. For this Report, the Bureau received a total of around 15400 representations. Listing all of these would have undoubtedly rendered the Report unnecessarily more voluminous. Among these representations, certain are common to all the Individuals/Unions/Federations/Management.
41. Further, the Unions/Federations have requested for a concise Report, written in a simpler language to ease understanding and avoid any misinterpretation of our recommendations, thereby ensuring consistency in their implementation. In this perspective, only the main representations for Individuals/Unions/Federations/Management have been mentioned. As for the common representations, since the same approach has been used during their examination by the Bureau, we are providing adequate explanations in respect thereof in the ensuing paragraphs.

Risk Allowance

42. With regard to the request for the grant of Risk Allowance, the Bureau has provided an appropriate mechanism, namely the Departmental Safety and Health Committee, to determine the eligibility thereof, as set out in the Chapter Risk, Insurance and Compensation in Volume 1 of this Report.

Filling of Posts/Establishment Size

43. Numerous representations were received regarding the filling of vacant posts and increase in establishment size. To this end, the Bureau has, in the Chapter on Recruitment, Promotion and Retention, highlighted the need for Management/ Departments/Organisations to undertake a mandatory Human Resource Planning exercise with a view to, among others, determining the right number of staff required in each grade for effective delivery of their mandate.

Conditions of Service

44. Proposals regarding general Conditions of Service have been studied in a holistic manner and discussed with Federations of Unions and the MPSAR. Appropriate recommendations have subsequently been made in the relevant Chapters in Volume 1 of this Report.

Creation/Merging of Grades

45. In principle, grades are created on the basis of functional requirements, which in most cases have not been met. Further, we have not provided another level merely for the sake of ensuring a promotional path to officers while the impact would be on the organisation's capacity of service delivery or in terms of cost effectiveness. Merging of grades has been recommended where it was found to be consistent with the needs of the organisation or where there was major overlapping of duties, rendering supervision from the higher level superfluous.

Upgrading of Salary

46. All requests for salary upgrading were examined in the light of the job evaluation exercise conducted, taking into consideration, *inter alia*, all duties and responsibilities devolving on the grade, the evolution since the last Report, change in/additional qualifications required, a re-orientation of the sector as per Government decision. However, in some cases, the Bureau was unable to re-assess the grades in the absence of job-related information resulting from the non-submission of the Job Description Questionnaires, among others.

Restyling of Grades

47. Concerning restyling of grades, requests were favourably considered where the current job titles have become outdated; or do not portray a clear description of the duties performed. In some cases, grades have been retitled owing to legal requirements or where there was need for harmonisation. In quite a few instances, the demands for restyling were mainly to align on grades which carry a higher salary, implying a request for salary upgrading. The Bureau did not accede to such proposals.

Upgrading of Qualifications Requirement

48. Qualifications requirement is normally amended when there is a change in the essential/core duties and responsibilities of a grade and the existing qualifications are no longer adequate for the effective performance of the job. Where the current qualifications are deemed appropriate for the level of duties performed, they have been maintained. In many cases, the requests were simply made with the intention that the higher qualifications would fetch higher salaries and, therefore, lacked solid basis.

Duty Remission/Payment of Mileage Allowance

49. Many proposals were received for the grant of 70% duty remission and payment of mileage allowance. These proposals have been examined against a set of

criteria together with the findings of the survey on Travelling and Car Benefits to determine eligibility. With regard to mileage allowance, appropriate provisions already exist concerning the rate payable per km whereas the authority to approve claims in respect of official travelling rests on Management.

Training

50. Demands, particularly from the staff side, have been made for the provision of training facilities to officers. The Bureau has underscored the importance of training and has made appropriate recommendations thereon.

