

## **4.5 Fisheries Department**

- 4.5.1 The RRA is laying much emphasis on the development of the fisheries sector as it is one of the main economic pillars of the island. It is committed to maintain the biodiversity and productivity, among others, despite the rising pressure on the coastal and marine spaces.
- 4.5.2 Activities of this department are being carried out under the: Marine Academy and Research Centre (MARC); Fisheries Protection Service, which is the enforcement arm; and the Marine Parks Division. A position of Head, Fisheries exists to oversee the activities of the Fisheries Department. However, same has never been filled and a Scientific Officer (Fisheries) has been assigned its duties.
- 4.5.3 The Union and Management made some common representations, consisting of a consolidation of the existing structure through the creation of a few levels along with the restyling, upgrading and merging of certain grades. These were examined in the light of additional information obtained. Other demands pertain to extension of existing allowances to other grades; and provision of enhanced Conditions of Service. Additionally, Union requested for: a review in the manner activities are organised at the Department; allocation of funds for the purchase and maintenance of modern equipment. Such requests do not do not fall under the Bureau's purview, but should be addressed administratively.
- 4.5.4 After examining the current structure, we consider that same should be revisited at the top, the moreso the grade of Head, Fisheries has not served its purpose and consequently remained unfilled.

### **Head, Fisheries**

- 4.5.5 The Head, Fisheries is responsible for overseeing the Fisheries Department, comprising the Fisheries Protection Service, MARC and Marine Parks. However, Management apprised that the latter position is vacant and part of the duties incumbent upon the grade is being shouldered by a Scientific Officer (Fisheries).
- 4.5.6 Hence, Union requested for a reorganisation of the Department so that the Head, Fisheries would be responsible for research, training and development and implementation of projects, while enforcement duties be overseen by the Controller, Fisheries Protection Service, for more efficiency. While examining the demand, the Bureau also paid heed to the main challenges being faced by the fisheries sector which include a reorganisation of the Fisheries Department; controlling illegal fishing in the lagoon; restoring marine ecosystem and diversity of the lagoon; and carrying out research and survey in respect of untapped marine resources.
- 4.5.7 In the given circumstances, we consider that a restructuring is warranted to demarcate between the functions relating to research, training and development and projects with those of enforcement, as they are of different nature. Moreover,

since the position of Head, Fisheries has remained vacant, we are abolishing it, while providing for a new position to lead activities of a scientific/professional level. We are recommending along these lines.

## **Recommendation 1**

### **4.5.8 We recommend that the grade of Head, Fisheries be abolished.**

#### **Marine Academy and Research Centre**

4.5.9 The Marine Academy and Research Centre (MARC) forms part of the Fisheries Department and provides services related to: research, development and aquaculture; marine resources and licensing; and marine science. It is committed to: ensure sustainable management of maritime ecosystems and resources; provide relevant information for helping policy makers in decision making; and conduct research works for proper implementation of fisheries projects, among others.

4.5.10 At present, the core duties are being performed by officers in the grades of Scientific Officer (Fisheries) and Technical Officer (Fisheries). General Workers are also posted there to support the professional and technical staff.

4.5.11 Union and Management made some common representations pertaining to the enlargement of the mandate of the MARC and reorganisation of its activities. These issues should be addressed administratively. Additionally, they advocated for a strengthening of the structure with the creation of higher level(s). Bearing in mind the importance of the fisheries sector as a major economic pillar in the RRA and the emphasis that is being laid on research and development in that particular area, we consider that there is ground for a senior professional level to head the MARC.

#### **Senior Scientific Officer (Fisheries) (New Grade)**

4.5.12 With the abolition of the grade of Head, Fisheries, there is need for a higher level to oversee matters related to the activities carried out by the MARC. We are, therefore, providing for a supervisory level which would take over relevant duties that were previously incumbent upon the defunct grade of Head, Fisheries and to lead research, among others. In the same vein, it would also be a promotional route for the base grade.

## **Recommendation 2**

**4.5.13 We recommend the creation of a grade of Senior Scientific Officer (Fisheries). Appointment thereto, should be made by promotion, on the basis of experience and merit, of officers in the grade of Scientific Officer (Fisheries) who reckon at least four years' service in a substantive capacity in the grade.**

4.5.14 Incumbent would be responsible to the Departmental Head and required to: advise the latter on all aspects relating to research, development and training with

respect to the Fisheries Sector, the introduction of new technologies needed for the development of fisheries resources; ensure follow up and timely execution of Government policies and projects; advise on sustainable development of fisheries and aquaculture; and guide and supervise subordinate staff.

### **Scientific Officer (Fisheries)**

4.5.15 The grade of Scientific Officer (Fisheries) is filled from candidates possessing a Degree in specific fields. Presently there are Technical Officers (Fisheries) who hold the relevant qualifications and have acquired experience in the field. Their experience may be gainfully utilised if the post of Scientific Officer (Fisheries) was to be filled from the Technical Officers (Fisheries). We are, therefore, recommending accordingly and we are also widening the fields in which expertise is required.

### **Recommendation 3**

**4.5.16 We recommend that, henceforth, appointment to the grade of Scientific Officer (Fisheries), should be made by selection from among officers in the grade of Technical Officer (Fisheries) who possess a Degree in Aquaculture or Biology or Biological Oceanography or Fish Technology or Fishing Technology or Fisheries Science or Marine Biology or Marine Environmental Science or Marine Science or Zoology or any fisheries related discipline. In the absence of suitably qualified Technical Officers (Fisheries), recruitment should be made by selection from among candidates possessing the recommended qualification.**

### **In-Attendance Allowance**

4.5.17 Presently, Scientific Officers (Fisheries) are paid an In-Attendance Allowance of Rs 130 per hour for attending to emergency cases beyond normal office hours during Weekdays, Weekends and Public holidays. We consider that there is need for the continued payment of this allowance in view of the exigencies of the service. We are recommending accordingly and revising the amount.

### **Recommendation 4**

**4.5.18 We recommend the payment of an In-Attendance Allowance of Rs 145 per hour to officers in the grade of Scientific Officer (Fisheries) who are required to effectively work beyond normal working hours to attend to emergency cases on Weekdays, Weekends and Public holidays.**

### **Fisheries Protection Service**

4.5.19 The Fisheries Protection Service (FPS) is actively involved in: the enforcement of fisheries legislation; developing off-lagoon fishing methods; encouraging off-lagoon fishing; educating and training lagoon fishers; and providing incentives to fishers to engage in outer-lagoon fisheries and aquaculture, among others.

- 4.5.20 A Controller is at the head of the FPS. However, the post is presently vacant and its functions are being carried out in an acting capacity by a Principal Fisheries Protection Officer. Incumbent is assisted by an Acting Assistant Controller and officers of the Fisheries Protection Officer Cadre, as well as employees of the Workmen's Group.
- 4.5.21 Since certain key positions at the FPS are still not filled, we are bringing no change to the existing structure.

#### **Controller, Fisheries Protection Service**

- 4.5.22 In the wake of the recommended restructuring of the Fisheries Department, we consider that there is need to enrich the duties of the grade of Controller, Fisheries Protection Service, to enable incumbent to assume higher responsibilities with respect to enforcement. We are recommending accordingly.

#### **Recommendation 5**

- 4.5.23 **We recommend that the duties of the grade of Controller, Fisheries Protection Service be enriched, so that incumbent be also required to: advise and assist in the preparation of appropriate fisheries legislations in line with Government policies; undertake a re-engineering of the processes at the Fisheries Protection Service, as and when required; implement reforms which would transform the Service into a modern, effective and efficient one; ensure follow up action on prosecution cases; and monitor all fishing activities and advise on their control and surveillance, among others.**
- 4.5.24 **The recommended enrichment in duties has been taken into account in arriving at the revised salary of the grade.**
- 4.5.25 **We further recommend that Management should expedite the review of the scheme of service of the grade of Controller, Fisheries Protection Service.**

#### **Movement beyond Top Salary**

- 4.5.26 According to present provisions, Fisheries Protection Officers and Senior Fisheries Protection Officers are allowed to move incrementally beyond their top salary subject to possessing the relevant Diploma, which is a requirement for Principal Fisheries Protection Officers to cross the Qualification Bar (QB) in their salary scale. Since these provisions are still relevant, we are reiterating same.

#### **Recommendation 6**

- 4.5.27 **We recommend that:**

- (i) **Management should continue to sponsor officers of the Fisheries Protection Officer cadre to follow the Diploma course in Fisheries Science or a Diploma in Fisheries Enabled Services or an equivalent qualification;**

- (ii) officers in the grades of Fisheries Protection Officer and Senior Fisheries Protection Officer who:
  - (a) were in post as at the eve of the publication of the 2021 PRB Report, that is, 13 October 2021, and possessed a Diploma in Fisheries Science or Fisheries Enabled Services or an equivalent qualification, should be allowed to move incrementally in the Master Salary Scale up to the salary point Rs 47950 and Rs 51200 respectively, on a personal basis; and
  - (b) were in post as at the eve of the publication of the 2021 PRB Report, that is, 13 October 2021, and obtained the above mentioned qualification after that date AND those who joined the grade as from the date of publication of the 2021 PRB Report, that is, 14 October 2021, and possess the additional qualification, should be allowed to move incrementally in the Master Salary Scale by one increment,provided that they satisfy the performance criteria as set out in the Chapter on Observations and General Provisions of this Volume; and
- (iii) Principal Fisheries Protection Officers who possess a Diploma in Fisheries Science or a Diploma in Fisheries Enabled Services or an equivalent qualification should be allowed to proceed beyond the Qualification Bar (QB) inserted in their salary scale.

#### **Allowance to officers posted in Flying Squad**

4.5.28 Officers of the Fisheries Protection Officer Cadre are paid a monthly special duty allowance equivalent to one and a half increments at the initial of their respective salary scale for effecting surprise visits inland as well as at sea, to track contraveners of the Fisheries Act. We are maintaining the allowance at a revised rate.

#### **Recommendation 7**

4.5.29 We recommend the payment of a monthly special duty allowance to officers of the Fisheries Protection Officer Cadre, equivalent to one and a half increments at the initial of their respective salary scale, for conducting surprise visits inland and at sea to track contraveners of the Fisheries Act.

#### **Rent Allowance**

#### **Recommendation 8**

4.5.30 We recommend the payment of a Rent Allowance to eligible officers of the Fisheries Protection Service not occupying Government quarters as follows:

Grades	Amount (Rs)
<b>Fisheries Protection Officer</b>	<b>680</b>
<b>Senior Fisheries Protection Officer</b>	<b>735</b>
<b>Principal Fisheries Protection Officer</b>	<b>940</b>
<b>Assistant Controller, Fisheries Protection Service</b>	<b>1035</b>
<b>Deputy Controller, Fisheries Protection Service</b>	<b>1060</b>
<b>Controller, Fisheries Protection Service</b>	<b>1120</b>

### Sensitisation Fee

4.5.31 A monthly allowance of Rs 265 is paid to officers of the Fisheries Protection Service for conducting sensitisation programmes after normal working hours of a duration of 1¼ to 1½ hours per session, in respect of fishing activity to fishers and the community at large. We are revising the quantum as hereunder.

### Recommendation 9

**4.5.32 We recommend that officers of the Fisheries Protection Service who effectively conduct sensitisation programmes of 1¼ to 1½ hours per session, after normal working hours, should be paid a monthly allowance of Rs 290.**

### Allowance to General Workers

4.5.33 Owing to a shortage of staff at the FPS, a monthly *adhoc* allowance of Rs 945 is currently paid to General Workers who are required to perform certain duties devolving upon the Fisheries Protection Officers. We consider that such arrangement should continue, pending the recruitment of an adequate number of Fisheries Protection Officers. We are, therefore, reproducing the current provision whilst revising the quantum of the allowance.

### Recommendation 10

**4.5.34 We recommend that General Workers who perform certain duties devolving upon the Fisheries Protection Officers, should continue to be paid a monthly *adhoc* allowance of Rs 1040, pending the recruitment of an adequate number of Fisheries Protection Officers.**