

## 19. RODRIGUES AND THE OUTER ISLANDS

- 19.1 Specific conditions of service have been tailored to suit the needs of public officers of Mauritius who are on a tour of service in Rodrigues and the Outer Islands (Agalega and St. Brandon) and these conditions are highlighted in this Chapter. Similarly, public officers domiciled in Rodrigues when posted for a tour of service in Mauritius benefit from specific conditions.
- 19.2 Currently, it is binding on all public officers of Mauritius to serve on a tour of service in Rodrigues and the Outer Islands, as and when required.

### Recommendation 1

- 19.3 We recommend that it should continue to be binding on all public officers domiciled in Mauritius to serve on a tour of service in Rodrigues and the Outer Islands - Agalega and St. Brandon, as and when required, notwithstanding their terms of employment.**

### CONDITIONS OF SERVICE SPECIFIC FOR A TOUR OF SERVICE

- 19.4 With a view to ensuring a continued service delivery of various departments/outstations, public officers from the Civil Service and Parastatal Bodies of Mauritius are posted on a tour of service in Rodrigues and Outer Islands to serve in certain positions whereby professional and technical expertise is still required. Those officers:
- are paid a disturbance allowance so as to compensate them for their distant posting and disruption of their social life and also to meet household expenses;
  - benefit from rent-free accommodation or quarters;
  - are eligible for free passages; and
  - earn enhanced vacation leave.
- 19.5 On the other hand, public officers on the establishment of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly (RRA) are usually sent to Mauritius for training or placement purposes and even posted in Mauritius, though rarely. In the same way, officers from the RRA are compensated for their posting.

### TOUR OF SERVICE IN RODRIGUES

- 19.6 A tour of service in Rodrigues is generally of 12 months' duration for which Mauritian officers are paid a monthly disturbance allowance of 25% of their respective gross salary (basic salary plus salary compensation at approved rates). However, there are cases where a tour of service is approved for a shorter period but not less than six months. The payment of the disturbance allowance is limited to three tours of service but in exceptional cases it may be for more than three tours of service subject to the approval of the Ministry of Public Service, Administrative and Institutional Reforms (MPSAIR).

19.7 For this review, there were no representations in respect of disturbance allowance from our stakeholders. Since the existing provisions are considered adequate, we are retaining same.

## Recommendation 2

**19.8 We recommend that:**

- (i) the duration of a tour of service in Rodrigues should generally be of 12 months' duration;**
- (ii) the duration of a tour of service can be of shorter period but not less than six months for exceptional cases such as the non-availability of qualified staff in certain scarcity areas, subject to the approval of the MPSAIR;**
- (iii) payment of the monthly disturbance allowance should be 25% of gross salary for the duration of a tour;**
- (iv) payment of the disturbance allowance should, save in exceptional circumstances and subject to the approval of the MPSAIR, be limited to three tours of service only; and**
- (v) Mauritian officers posted in Rodrigues on a tour of service should continue to benefit from rent-free accommodation or quarters.**

## Inducement Allowance

19.9 At present, an inducement allowance of 50% of monthly salary, in lieu of the disturbance allowance, is paid to professionals classified in scarcity areas when posted on a tour of service in Rodrigues. The categories of people entitled to the inducement allowance is determined and approved by the MPSAIR. Generally, the inducement allowance is paid to professionals/experts in the IT, health and legal fields.

19.10 Specialist/Senior Specialists, who are posted for short duration in Rodrigues, are accommodated in fully furnished rent-free quarters/houses and they are paid inducement allowance on a *pro-rata* basis for the duration of stay. Whenever public officers are provided with board and lodging in hotels for the duration of their tour, they are not eligible for the inducement allowance.

19.11 Certainly, inducing professionals in scarce supply should continue so as to allow a smooth service delivery in Rodrigues. Therefore, the Bureau considers that the provision of the inducement allowance should be maintained.

### Recommendation 3

#### 19.12 We recommend:

- (i) the payment of inducement allowance of 50% of the monthly salary to certain categories of professionals in scarce supply and posted on a tour of service in Rodrigues, subject to the approval of the MPSAIR;
- (ii) the payment of the inducement allowance of 50% of the monthly salary on a *pro-rata* basis to those Specialist/Senior Specialists posted for short duration in Rodrigues and who are accommodated in fully furnished rent-free quarters; and
- (iii) that the inducement allowance should not be payable to officers who, for one reason or another, are provided with board and lodging in hotels.

### Officers Performing Duties in a Higher Capacity

19.13 Officers who are called upon to act in a higher capacity or are assigned duties of the higher post in the hierarchy are paid the disturbance allowance or inducement allowance which is computed on the basis of aggregate earnings (basic salary plus salary compensation at approved rates plus acting/responsibility allowance). It is considered fair to continue with this present mode of computation.

### Recommendation 4

19.14 We recommend that the disturbance allowance or inducement allowance of officers who are called upon to act in a higher capacity or assigned duties of the higher level should be computed on the basis of aggregate earnings (basic salary, salary compensation at approved rates plus acting/responsibility allowance).

### Other Conditions

19.15 An officer domiciled in Mauritius and posted to Rodrigues for a tour of service of a minimum period of 12 months is eligible for benefits regarding passages, transport and vacation leave as outlined below:

#### (a) Passages:

- (i) one free passage, to and from Rodrigues, for himself, his spouse and up to three dependent children below the age of 21; and two additional free tickets to Mauritius to married officers in case the tour of service is extended for another 12 months;
- (ii) one free return ticket from Rodrigues for medical treatment in Mauritius in respect of himself or any immediate member of his family, as at subparagraph (i) above, provided a Government Medical Officer certifies that such medical treatment is not available in Rodrigues and cannot safely be postponed until the end of his tour of service;

- (iii) two free return tickets from Rodrigues for medical treatment in Mauritius in respect of himself or any immediate member of his family, as at sub-paragraph (i) above, provided a Government Medical Officer certifies that such medical treatment is not available in Rodrigues and cannot safely be postponed until the end of his tour of service, and that the patient needs to be accompanied; and
- (iv) one additional free return ticket to Mauritius to single officers in case the tour of service is extended for another 12 months.

**Note:** The entitlement of free return tickets, under sub-paragraphs (i) and (iv) above, is limited to three tours of service only.

**(b) Transport:**

- (i) free transport by sea of his personal effects to the extent of six cubic metres; and
- (ii) free transport by sea of his car/jeep/motorcycle/bicycle subject to the approval of the Prime Minister's Office;

provided that the total volume of (i) and (ii) does not exceed 12 cubic metres.

**(c) Enhanced Vacation Leave:**

- (i) an officer domiciled in Mauritius, when posted to Rodrigues for a tour of service, earns during the period of his service there, vacation leave at the rate of 50% more than what he is eligible for in respect of that period;
- (ii) the additional leave granted under sub-paragraph (i) may be accumulated over and above his normal entitlement; and
- (iii) an officer on a tour of service in Rodrigues is not allowed to enjoy vacation leave, save in exceptional cases, subject to the approval of the Island Chief Executive.

**Recommendation 5**

**19.16 We recommend that the special conditions at paragraph 19.15 in connection with passages, transport and vacation leave to which an officer who is domiciled in Mauritius and posted to Rodrigues is entitled to should be maintained.**

**19.17 We also recommend that an officer, on his return to Mauritius at the end of his tour of service, should be given priority of consideration to take his earned vacation leave.**

**TOUR OF SERVICE TO THE OUTER ISLANDS – AGALEGA AND ST. BRANDON**

- 19.18 A tour of service to the Outer Islands (Agalega and St. Brandon) normally varies from four to six months as it depends on the movement of vessels to these islands. Unlike for a tour of service in Rodrigues, the monthly disturbance allowance payable to the Mauritian officers is 60% of their gross salary.
- 19.19 Mauritian officers serving in the Outer Islands presently benefit from enhanced vacation leave and pension benefits. In view of the difficult situation in which these officers serve in Agalega and St. Brandon, it is justified that these provisions should continue to prevail.

**Recommendation 6****19.20 We recommend that:**

- (i) the monthly disturbance allowance of 60% of gross salary (basic salary plus salary compensation at approved rates) payable to officers on a tour of service in Agalega and St. Brandon should be maintained;**
- (ii) the monthly disturbance allowance payable to these officers be *pro-rated* with respect to the duration of their stay in these islands;**
- (iii) officers on a tour of service in Agalega and St. Brandon should continue to earn vacation leave at the rate of 50% in addition to what they are eligible for in respect of that period;**
- (iv) these officers, on their return to the main land at the end of their tour of service in Agalega and St. Brandon, should be given priority of consideration to take their earned vacation leave; and**
- (v) the period during which a Mauritian citizen serves as a public officer in Agalega or St. Brandon should be reckoned as pensionable service at the rate of two times.**

**Special Conditions for Outer Islands**

- 19.21 An officer who is posted to the Outer Islands, Agalega and St. Brandon, is eligible for one free passage for himself, his spouse and up to three dependent children below the age of 21 and rent-free government quarters.

**Recommendation 7**

- 19.22 We recommend that the special conditions in respect of passages and rent-free government quarters which an officer, who is posted to the Outer Islands is entitled to, be maintained.**

**Special Provisions during a Pandemic**

- 19.23 During the period COVID-19 Pandemic prevailed in Mauritius, the MPSAIR informed all Ministries/Departments through a circular to make special arrangement for officers proceeding on a tour of service to Rodrigues and the Outer Islands.

- 19.24 In accordance with the Circular, Supervising Officers have been requested to communicate to the MPSAIR the particulars of officers who have been scheduled to proceed to Rodrigues and/or the Outer Islands during the coming three months, to serve on a tour of service, indicating their expected date of departure, so that appropriate arrangements may be made with the Ministry of Health and Wellness for these officers to serve their mandatory quarantine period just before their planned departure.
- 19.25 Since the sanitary protocol would be of relevance, should a similar situation arise in the future, we are making appropriate provision to that effect.

#### **Recommendation 8**

- 19.26 We recommend that whenever officers scheduled to proceed on a tour of service to Rodrigues and the Outer Islands and have to serve a mandatory quarantine period just before their planned departure, their Supervising Officers should communicate to the MPSAIR their particulars at least three months in advance so that appropriate arrangements may be made with the Ministry of Health and Wellness for them to serve the said quarantine period.**

#### **TOUR OF SERVICE IN MAURITIUS**

- 19.27 Police Officers domiciled in Rodrigues when posted in Mauritius are presently paid a disturbance allowance of 25% of monthly salary and they are eligible for free tickets. This provision is considered appropriate.

#### **Recommendation 9**

- 19.28 We recommend that a disturbance allowance equivalent to 25% of monthly salary should continue to be paid to Rodriguan Police Officers posted on a tour of service in Mauritius.**
- 19.29 We further recommend that an officer domiciled in Rodrigues and posted to Mauritius should be eligible for:**
- (i) one free passage, to and from Mauritius, for himself, his spouse and up to three dependent children below the age of 21; and two additional free tickets to Rodrigues to married officers in case the tour of service is extended for another 12 months; and**
  - (ii) one additional free return ticket to Rodrigues to single officers in case the tour of service is extended for another 12 months.**

#### **Allowance to Rodriguan Officers coming to Mauritius on Training**

- 19.30 At present, Rodriguan officers coming to Mauritius on training are paid an allowance equivalent to 50% of the monthly salary for the duration of the course and provided with rent-free quarters.

19.31 However, when officers cannot be provided with quarters, they are paid an allowance of Rs 2600 monthly as an assistance towards payment of rent. Since this practice should be maintained, we are recommending for its continued payment and revising the quantum thereof.

**Recommendation 10**

**19.32 We recommend that officers domiciled in Rodrigues and coming to Mauritius on training should continue to be paid an allowance equivalent to 50% of the monthly salary for the duration of the course together with rent-free quarters; and those officers who cannot be provided with quarters should be paid an allowance of Rs 2895 monthly as an assistance towards payment of rent.**

