

## **27. MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE**

- 27.1 Shifting to a cleaner and greener Mauritius in line with the measures enunciated in the Government Programme 2020-2024 is the primary objective of the Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change.
- 27.2 The main activities of the Ministry are to: process Preliminary Environment Report/Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) reports; advise industrialists and the public on appropriate pollution abatement measures; attend to complaints made by the public regarding environmental pollution; impart public awareness and environmental education to the non-formal sector; and upgrade infrastructure and enhance the environment, among others.
- 27.3 Mauritius remains one of the most exposed and vulnerable countries to the impacts of climate change. It is estimated that approximately 2.15% of the GDP is invested every year on environment and climate change issues. The Government has further set up a financial portfolio under the National Environment Fund to tackle flood management, coastal protection and disaster risk reduction and management, solid waste management and landslides issues.
- 27.4 Activities of the Ministry are organised under the Department of Environment, the Living Environment Unit and the Solid Waste Management Division which comprise various sub-divisions. The overall management of the Ministry rests upon a Permanent Secretary who is assisted by officers of the Administrative and Technical Cadres.
- 27.5 With regard to the departmental structures of the Ministry, these have been dealt with under the relevant department.

### **DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT**

- 27.6 The Department of Environment is the technical arm of the Ministry. A few of its divisions are, *inter alia*, the Environment and Climate Change Division; the Environmental Law and Prosecution Division; the Integrated Coastal Zone Management Division; the Sustainable Development Division; and the National Environmental Laboratory. Each of these divisions has distinct functions.
- 27.7 A Director is at the apex of the Department. Assistance in the carrying out of daily activities is provided by the Deputy Directors as well as staff of professional and General Services grades.
- 27.8 In the context of this Report, the staff side has, among others, made proposals for the payment of a monthly Enquiry and Prosecutor's Allowance to officers of the Environment Officer Cadre posted in the Prosecution Division; merging of the grades of Scientific Officer and Senior Scientific Officer, which was also requested by Management; restyling of certain grades; payment of a monthly allowance to officers for performing duties related to the online processing of EIA applications; granting of

a Risk Allowance; and reviewing of the cut point for travel grant. For the latter request, the issue is governed by provisions which are subject to a general policy. As to the other requests, they were studied by the Bureau and views of Management were sought whenever deemed necessary.

- 27.9 Union members equally made submissions with respect to the restyling of the grades of Environment Officer/Senior Environment Officer and Scientific Officer (Environment) in line with appellations obtainable in foreign jurisdictions. Following examination of the request, the Bureau holds that the current appellations better reflect the duties and responsibilities devolving upon incumbents.
- 27.10 We are, in this Report, providing for a new grade and revising the quantum of existing allowances.

### **Environment Education and Communication Officer (New Grade)**

- 27.11 The grade of Environment Education and Communication Officer was created on an *ad hoc* basis and a request was made for the Bureau to provide its salary grading. In view of certain implications, we deferred the matter for consideration in the context of this review exercise. After examining the proposal, we have provided for a grade with a reviewed qualifications requirement which is compatible with the proposed duties.

### **Recommendation 1**

- 27.12 We recommend the creation of a grade of Environment Education and Communication Officer. Appointment thereto should be made by selection from among candidates possessing a Diploma in Communication Studies or Political Science or International Relations or an equivalent qualification.**

- 27.13 Incumbent would be required, among others, to: design, execute and supervise campaigns and sensitisation programmes related to environmental issues; develop and organise stakeholder meetings, workshops, seminars and other events for publicity and dissemination of information on environmental issues with a view to promoting a clean and green environmental culture; prepare brochures, reports, newsletters informational and publicity materials and formulate communication materials on environmental-related issues and initiatives for internal and external audiences; and deliver educational programmes and increase awareness on developments with regard to environmental issues targeting specific groups, including students, elderly persons and Non-Governmental Organisations.

### **On-Call and In-Attendance Allowances**

- 27.14 Owing to the nature of the work at the Division, officers of certain grades are required at times to perform duties after normal working hours. Subsequently, the officers concerned are placed on-call after office hours during the whole month. In a few cases, they are also called upon to attend work while being on-call. In this respect, they are paid a monthly commuted On-Call Allowance as well as an In-Attendance

Allowance per hour for attending work while on-call. We are revising the quantum of the two allowances.

## Recommendation 2

**27.15 We recommend that a monthly commuted On-Call Allowance for being on-call during the whole month after office hours, and an In-Attendance Allowance per hour when attending work while on-call be paid to officers concerned, as below:**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>On-Call Allowance per month Amount (Rs)</b>	<b>In-Attendance Allowance per hour, inclusive of travelling time Amount (Rs)</b>
<b>Environment Enforcement Officer (Personal)</b>	<b>580</b>	<b>115</b>
<b>Scientific Officer (Environment)</b>	<b>1050</b>	<b>210</b>
<b>Senior Scientific Officer (Environment)</b>	<b>1285</b>	<b>255</b>
<b>Environment Officer/Senior Environment Officer</b>	<b>1155</b>	<b>230</b>
<b>Divisional Scientific Officer (Environment) Divisional Environment Officer</b>	<b>1445</b>	<b>290</b>

### LIVING ENVIRONMENT UNIT

27.16 The Living Environment Unit (LEU) of the Ministry is a supporting arm responsible for the upgrading, landscaping, uplifting and embellishment of the physical environment as well as for enhancing quality of life. The management of the Unit rests with the Project Manager, who is presently assisted by the Deputy Project Manager, the Project Officer and officers in the Inspectorate Cadre.

27.17 In the context of this Report, Management submitted that Inspectors of the LEU be granted 70% duty remission for the purchase of a car. The decision thereto related would be taken on the basis of the findings of the Survey on Travelling and Car Benefits and the Management was so informed. Management also pleaded for an alignment in salary of the Project Officers on that of some other grades. Our study revealed that the structure referred to is different and, therefore, the request for alignment cannot be acceded to.

27.18 The Bureau considers that the present structure of the LEU is appropriate to enable it to fulfil its mandate and, therefore, requires no change.

