

### **13. OMBUDSPERSON FOR CHILDREN'S OFFICE**

- 13.1 Established since 2003, the Ombudsperson for Children's Office (OCO) is an independent body which promotes and protects the rights of children in Mauritius, Rodrigues and Agalega. Its core function entails investigating into cases, either on its own initiative or upon complaints made by children or any adult on their behalf, in relation to violation of the rights of children. Further, it carries out sensitization and awareness campaigns on child related issues in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of Children. The OCO also undertakes research in the field of child abuse and child protection and advises authorities on policies and legislation regarding children.
- 13.2 While the overall accountability of the OCO rests with the Ombudsperson, the administration of the office falls under the responsibility of the Secretary, Ombudsperson for Children's Office. The OCO is also manned by officers in the grade of Investigator as well as staff in grades belonging to the General Services.
- 13.3 We have, in the context of this review, received proposals from the union to create a grade of Senior Investigator, raise the qualification requirement of the grade of Investigator and provide professional training, an on-call allowance and other enhanced conditions of service. It is worth noting that the OCO supported the request for the creation of a grade of Senior Investigator and has further requested to create a grade of Research Officer.
- 13.4 Each of these proposals has been thoroughly examined. The Bureau is not in favour of creating additional levels for duties and responsibilities which have already been prescribed in schemes of service of existing grades. Given that some of the duties devolving on the grade of Investigator already pertain to Research, the need for a Research Officer is not fully substantiated. Furthermore, as there is no functional justification for the creation of the grade of Senior Investigator, we did not accede to the request and union members were apprised accordingly during the consultative meeting. As regards the grant of the 'on-call' allowance, the union was requested to submit additional information to enable the Bureau to take a decision. However for want of information, the Bureau is not making any recommendation in this respect.
- 13.5 As regards the request for professional training, appropriate recommendations have been made in the Chapter Training and Development in Volume 1 of this Report. Further, Management may make necessary arrangements with the Civil Service College for the provision of same.
- 13.6 The Bureau considers that the present structure of the OCO is appropriate to enable it to carry out its mandate effectively. We are, therefore, not bringing any change to it.

**OMBUDSPERSON FOR CHILDREN'S OFFICE  
SALARY SCHEDULE**

Salary Code	Salary Scale and Grade
08 063 082	<b>Rs 32500 x 925 – 37125 x 1225 – 40800 x 1525 – 49950 x 1625 – 58075</b> Secretary, Ombudsperson for Children's Office
08 054 081	<b>Rs 25525 x 775 – 32500 x 925 – 37125 x 1225 – 40800 x 1525 – 49950 x 1625 – 56450</b> Investigator
24 022 051	<b>Rs 12750 x 260 – 14050 x 275 – 15150 x 300 – 15750 x 325 – 17700 x 375 – 19575 x 475 – 21950 x 625 – 23200</b> Driver

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