

51. MAURITIUS RESEARCH AND INNOVATION COUNCIL

- 51.1 The Mauritius Research and Innovation Council (MRIC) came into existence in September 2019 with the proclamation of the Mauritius Research and Innovation Council Act 2019. The new Act entailed the repeal of the Mauritius Research Council Act No. 10 of 1992 and empowers the organisation to re-orient its resources and expertise towards building innovative capacities within the public, private and social sectors through collaborative partnerships.
- 51.2 Its mandate is to promote and pioneer research for sustainable development to enhance the quality of life of the people of Mauritius. The main objects of the Council consist of promoting and coordinating applied research, innovation and research and development according to the needs of the country and improving the quality of life; fostering a research, innovation and entrepreneurship culture; encouraging the development and application of advances and innovative technology to meet the needs of industries; enhancing private sector participation in research and development and innovation; and promoting commercial utilisation of the results of research and development and innovation in national interest.
- 51.3 According to the new Act, the Executive Director is the Chief Executive Officer of the Council and is responsible for the execution of its policy and day-to-day business.
- 51.4 In the context of this Report, the Bureau did not receive any representation from the Union. However, a few requests were made on an individual basis from certain employees. These consisted in: the alignment of salary of the Project Monitoring Officer to what obtains for similar grades elsewhere; payment of an extra duty allowance for performing work related to ISO certification; and the payment of an allowance for Continuous Professional Development.
- 51.5 Management on its side submitted, among others, proposals with regard to the structure of the MRIC. These include: the revisiting of the schemes of service of certain key grades obtainable at the ex-Mauritius Research Council (ex-MRC), coupled with an eventual upgrading and restyling of job appellations; assigning the responsibility of Head MRIC, Rodrigues Branch to a Research Officer or Research Coordinator; creating various grades, such as, IT Manager; Finance Manager as well as Administration and HR Manager against the abolition of that of Head of Finance and Administration on the establishment of the ex-MRC; Senior Accounts Officer; and Assistant Procurement and Supply Officer. In addition, representations were made regarding a few general and specific conditions of service and the extension of the provisions regarding Continuous Professional Development to technical staff of the Mauritius Research and Innovative Council as well as the grant of a lump sum to staff engaged in research on a yearly basis.
- 51.6 In the light of the various requests made by the staff and Management, the Bureau found it pertinent to point out that in the context of a restructuring exercise whereby the Council is governed by a new Act with a reviewed mandate, Management should initiate prompt action for the integration of the employees of the ex-MRC in the MRIC.

In addition, the schemes of service of grades obtainable at the ex-MRC should be prescribed on an *ad hoc* basis, through established procedures, that is, through their parent Ministry and the MPSAIR. In the same vein, the proposals for restyling certain job appellations may be considered on an *ad hoc* basis, while framing the new schemes of service. Against this backdrop, we have made all the grades of the ex-MRC evanescent while providing for revised salaries to the grades concerned.

- 51.7 We additionally consider that: it is for Management to decide in which level, officers are more apt to assume the duties devolving upon the Head, MRIC of the Rodrigues Branch; general recommendations have been made with respect to conditions of service and same should be applied in a uniform manner across the public sector; and a few representations pertaining to implementation issues, should be dealt with by Management. Moreover, with a view to consolidating the new structure, we are, in this Report, creating the grades of Finance Manager, Administrative and HR Manager, IT Manager, Senior Accounts Officer and Assistant Procurement and Supply Officer, whilst providing for a few conditions of service specific to the MRIC.

Finance Manager (New Grade)

Administrative and HR Manager (New Grade)

- 51.8 Management requested for the creation of the grades of Finance Manager and Administrative and HR Manager against the abolition of that of Head of Finance and Administration under the ex-MRC, as there is need to separate the Administrative/Human Resource Department from the Finance Division in line with the fundamental principle of segregation of duties as dictated by good corporate governance practices. After examining the request, we are agreeable to create the grades of Finance Manager and Administrative and HR Manager, whilst abolishing that of Head of Finance and Administration obtainable at the ex-MRC.

Recommendation 1

- 51.9 **We recommend the creation of a grade of Finance Manager. Appointment thereto should be made by selection from among serving officers of the MRIC who are qualified members of a professional accountancy body and are registered with the Mauritius Institute of Professional Accountants in accordance with section 51 of the Financial Reporting Act and reckon at least seven years' post-qualification experience at a middle management level in the field of Accountancy.**
- 51.10 Incumbent would, *inter alia*, be responsible to develop, operate and manage appropriate manual and computerised management accounting and business information systems and manage the Council's financial and accounting requirements including all statutory financial reporting, budgeting and management accounting reporting; and be required to, among others: ensure that the affairs of the Mauritius Research and Innovation Council are conducted in accordance with strict financial regulations and the Accounts and Audit Act; participate in the business management of the Council including strategic planning, cost control, time management and customer service; and manage the disbursement of funds for MRIC research projects.

Recommendation 2

- 51.11 **We recommend the creation of a grade of Administrative and HR Manager. Appointment thereto should be made by selection from among serving officers of the MRIC, possessing a Degree in Management or Administration or Human Resource Management and a Master's Degree in one of the relevant field or an equivalent qualification acceptable to the Council and reckoning at least five years' post degree experience in a managerial level in human resource and administrative duties.**
- 51.12 Incumbent would be required, among others, to: be responsible for the day-to-day management of the Administration and Human Resource Department of the MRIC; to serve as Secretary to the board or any sub-committee thereof and draft minutes and follow up actions and progress relating to decisions taken; establish, elaborate and implement administrative procedures for the efficient functioning of the Council, including internal and external communications; advise and ensure that all matters relating to human resources policies, practices and procedures are properly interpreted and consistently applied to carry out human resource planning and forecasting to match human resource requirements in terms of number, roles and level of responsibilities; advise the Executive Director and the Board, as required; and to propose changes to existing administrative policies and/or procedures.

IT Manager (New Grade)

- 51.13 At present, the IT Department is being serviced by officers in the grades of Systems Administrator and IT Technician/Senior IT Technician under the establishment of the ex-MRC. In view of the enlarged mandate of the MRIC in driving innovation, Management informed that there is need for the IT Department to expand and respond to a diverse client base. In this context, request has been made for the creation of a grade of IT Manager. After consideration, we view that there is merit in the request. We are, therefore, recommending accordingly.

Recommendation 3

- 51.14 **We recommend the creation of a grade of IT Manager. Appointment thereto should be made by selection from among candidates possessing a Master's Degree in Computer Science or Computer Engineering or Information Systems or IT Software Engineering or any other equivalent qualifications requirement acceptable to the Council and reckoning at least five years' post degree experience in the field of IT with involvement in managing projects or in systems engineering (software and hardware).**
- 51.15 Incumbent would, *inter alia*, be required to: be responsible for planning, coordinating and implementing IT policies, strategies and processes in line with goals and objectives of the Council; advise management on the overall IT aspects, strategy and policy; develop, implement and maintain databases and applications for data and information management; identify emerging trends to ensure that IT systems are responsive and meet the ongoing needs of the organisation; and supervise and guide staff under his supervision.

Senior Accounts Officer (New Grade)

51.16 Management has requested for the creation of a grade of Senior Accounts Officer as there is a need for a dedicated grade at operational level to assist the Accountant in the discharge of her duties owing to an increase in the volume and complexity of operations. After studying the request, we consider same to be meritorious.

Recommendation 4

51.17 We recommend the creation of a grade of Senior Accounts Officer. Appointment thereto, should be made by selection from among serving officers of the MRIC who have passed the Applied Skills Examinations of the ACCA or an equivalent qualification acceptable to the Council and who reckon at least four years' experience in the field of Accountancy. In the absence of qualified candidates, appointment should be made by selection from among candidates who have passed the Applied Skills Examinations of the ACCA or an equivalent qualification acceptable to the Council and reckoning at least four years' experience in the field of accountancy.

51.18 Incumbent would be required, *inter alia*, to: assist the Accountant in the preparation of financial statements and budget estimates; examine the expenditure analysis/financial reports of research and development projects; keep the accounting and payroll system up to date and to perform a monthly back up of the system; maintain monthly bank reconciliations; assist the Accountant to attend audit queries; and supervise the work of subordinates.

Assistant Procurement and Supply Officer (New Grade)

51.19 Management has submitted that the workload in the Procurement and Supply Department has considerably increased owing to a rise in the number of activities/projects and events organised at the Council. In this respect, the Bureau has been requested to create a level whereby incumbent would provide support to the only Procurement and Supply Officer. We are agreeable to the request and recommending accordingly.

Recommendation 5

51.20 We recommend the creation of a grade of Assistant Procurement and Supply Officer. Appointment, thereto, should be as recommended in the Introductory Chapter of this Volume.

51.21 Incumbent would be required, among others to: perform procurement, supply and stock control operations and maintain updated records of transactions in compliance with the Financial Management Kit and regulations made under the Public Procurement Act 2006 and other regulations in force, as appropriate; assist in any assignment related to procurement, supply and stock control operations; operate e-procurement and inventory management systems; and prepare tender documents and launch quotation as well as assist in the proper up-keeping of equipment.

Specific Conditions

51.22 We are providing for the two specific conditions which existed at the former Mauritius Research Council, namely regarding the provision of consultancy services and enhanced pension benefits for PhD holders. We are equally introducing a new benefit to staff engaged in research relating to Continuous Professional Development.

Continuous Professional Development

51.23 The Bureau has been requested to extend in the MRIC a few benefits granted in certain organisations which are actively involved in research. After duly examining the proposal, we are agreeable to provide an incentive to professional staff who are involved in the field of research, with a view to enabling them to further develop/update their research skills and knowledge.

Recommendation 6

51.24 We recommend that professional staff involved in the field of research at the MRIC be:

- (i) paid an allowance of Rs 8400 annually which is cumulative over a maximum period of three years, to meet expenses towards their professional development on presentation of documentary evidence; and**
- (ii) granted special leave of 10 days annually, subject to exigencies of the service, to enable them to take advantage of professional development programmes either locally or abroad. The special leave may be combined with other types of leave whenever the number of days of leave required exceeds 10 days.**

Consultancy Services

Recommendation 7

51.25 We recommend that:

- (i) staff of the MRIC should be allowed to provide consultancy services; and**
- (ii) the income distribution ratio between officers involved in the consultancy and the Council should be 2:1.**

Enhanced Pension Benefits for PhD holders

51.26 Further to requests made in the context of this Report regarding the grant of enhanced pension benefits to PhD holders, the Bureau has re-examined the whole issue. In the light of the findings of the study, we are revisiting the eligibility criteria, limiting it to officers who are effectively involved in research activities on a regular basis. We are, therefore recommending in that direction.

Recommendation 8

51.27 We recommend that officers in a professional level or above, holding a PhD degree recognised by the Council and who are effectively engaged in research activities on a regular basis, should be eligible to four pensionable months of

service for every three years of post-doctoral effective service, subject to a maximum of 40 months.

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SALARY SCHEDULE

MRIC 1 : Rs 19850 x 325 - 21475 x 375 - 22225 x 400 - 23425 x 525 - 26050 x 675 - 27400 x 825 - 35650 x 900 - 37450

Assistant Procurement and Supply Officer (New Grade)

MRIC 2 : Rs 30700 x 825 - 35650 x 900 - 37450 x 950 - 42200 x 1300 - 46100 x 1575 - 49250

Senior Accounts Officer (New Grade)

MRIC 3 : Rs 40300 x 950 - 42200 x 1300 - 46100 x 1575 - 49250 x 1650 - 54200 x 1700 - 64400 x 1800 - 69800 x 2000 - 75800 x 2150 - 77950

Administrative and HR Manager (New Grade)

IT Manager (New Grade)

MRIC 4 : Rs 49250 x 1650 - 54200 x 1700 - 64400 x 1800 - 69800 x 2000 - 75800 x 2150 - 82250

Finance Manager (New Grade)

EX-MAURITIUS RESEARCH COUNCIL

MRC 1 : Rs 21150

Safety and Health Officer (Part-Time) (Personal)

MRC 2 : Rs 14725 x 250 - 15225 x 260 - 17825 x 275 - 18925 x 300 - 19525 x 325 - 21475 x 375 - 22225 x 400 - 23425 x 525 - 23950

Office Attendant (Personal)

MRC 3 : Rs 15485 x 260 - 17825 x 275 - 18925 x 300 - 19525 x 325 - 21475 x 375 - 22225 x 400 - 23425 x 525 - 26050 x 675 - 27400

Driver (Personal)

Driver/Office Attendant (Personal)

MRC 4 : Rs 16525 x 260 - 17825 x 275 - 18925 x 300 - 19525 x 325 - 21475 x 375 - 22225 x 400 - 23425 x 525 - 26050 x 675 - 27400 x 825 - 30700

Technician/Driver (Personal)

EX-MAURITIUS RESEARCH COUNCIL (Contd)

- MRC 5 : Rs 16525 x 260 - 17825 x 275 - 18925 x 300 - 19525 x 325 - 21475 x 375 - 22225 x 400 - 23425 x 525 - 26050 x 675 - 27400 x 825 - 34000**
Receptionist/Word Processing Operator (Personal)
- MRC 6 : Rs 16785 x 260 - 17825 x 275 - 18925 x 300 - 19525 x 325 - 21475 x 375 - 22225 x 400 - 23425 x 525 - 26050 x 675 - 27400 x 825 - 34825**
Clerk/Word Processing Operator (Personal)
- MRC 7 : Rs 18925 x 300 - 19525 x 325 - 21475 x 375 - 22225 x 400 - 23425 x 525 - 26050 x 675 - 27400 x 825 - 35650 x 900 - 37450**
Management Support Officer (Personal)
- MRC 8 : Rs 19850 x 325 - 21475 x 375 - 22225 x 400 - 23425 x 525 - 26050 x 675 - 27400 x 825 - 35650 x 900 - 37450**
Research Support Officer (Personal)
- MRC 9 : Rs 21475 x 375 - 22225 x 400 - 23425 x 525 - 26050 x 675 - 27400 x 825 - 35650 x 900 - 37450 x 950 - 42200 x 1300 - 43500**
Confidential Secretary (Personal)
- MRC 10 : Rs 24475 x 525 - 26050 x 675 - 27400 x 825 - 35650 x 900 - 37450 x 950 - 42200 x 1300 - 43500**
Accounts Officer (Personal)
Procurement and Supply Officer (Personal)
- MRC 11 : Rs 23950 x 525 - 26050 x 675 - 27400 x 825 - 35650 x 900 - 37450 x 950 - 42200 x 1300 - 44800**
Office Management Assistant (Personal)
- MRC 12 : Rs 21850 x 375 - 22225 x 400 - 23425 x 525 - 26050 x 675 - 27400 x 825 - 35650 x 900 - 37450 x 950 - 42200 x 1300 - 46100 x 1575 - 49250 x 1650 - 54200**
IT Technician/Senior IT Technician (Personal)
- MRC 13 : Rs 27400 x 825 - 35650 x 900 - 37450 x 950 - 42200 x 1300 - 46100 x 1575 - 49250 x 1650 - 54200 x 1700 - 62700**
Administrative Officer (Personal)
Public Relations and Communication Officer (Personal)
Research Assistant (Personal)
Statistician (Personal)

EX-MAURITIUS RESEARCH COUNCIL (Contd)

MRC 14 : Rs 30700 x 825 - 35650 x 900 - 37450 x 950 - 42200 x 1300 - 46100 x 1575 - 49250 x 1650 - 54200 x 1700 - 62700

Accountant (Personal)
Project Monitoring Officer (Personal)
Resource Officer (Personal)

MRC 15 : Rs 40300 x 950 - 42200 x 1300 - 46100 x 1575 - 49250 x 1650 - 54200 x 1700 - 64400 x 1800 - 69800

Research Officer (Personal)
Systems Administrator (Personal)

MRC 16 : Rs 49250 x 1650 - 54200 x 1700 - 64400 x 1800 - 69800 x 2000 - 75800 x 2150 - 82250

Business Services Manager (Personal)
Research Officer (Personal to officers in post as at 06.05.19)

MRC 17 : Rs 68000 x 1800 - 69800 x 2000 - 75800 x 2150 - 82250 x 3000 - 88250 x 3125 - 97625

Research Coordinator (Personal)

MRC 18 : Rs 110125

Programme Director (Personal)

MRC 19 : Rs 163250

Executive Director (Personal to holder in post as at 31.12.15)



