

## 10. REVIEW OF SCHEMES OF SERVICE AND QUALIFICATIONS

- 10.1 In this Chapter, we look into issues related to scheme of service which is considered as a document binding the employee to the employer in the public sector. As a general rule, each grade in the Civil Service has a specific scheme of service.
- 10.2 The scheme of service is a legal document which specifies the qualifications, competencies, skills, experience and qualities required of the job holder, the duties and responsibilities of a job. The mode of recruitment/appointment is also specified.
- 10.3 In accordance with section 15 of the Public Service Commission Regulations, the Senior Chief Executive of the Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms (MCSAR) is responsible for the prescription of schemes of service for each grade in the Civil Service after consideration and agreement by the Public Service Commission (PSC).
- 10.4 The scheme of service is of vital importance in the management of human resource functions such as recruitment, promotion, performance management, training and development, job evaluation, design of pay structures, organization design; and therefore the design or amendment to a scheme of service needs to be done with utmost care and in a timely manner. Delays in the prescription of schemes of service inevitably cause prejudice both to the organization and to the employees concerned.
- 10.5 The process leading to the prescription of the scheme of service for a grade consists of the following steps:
- (i) a Responsible Officer, after consultation with his Minister, submits to the Senior Chief Executive, Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms any proposed scheme of service for examination;
  - (ii) where the proposed scheme of service is found to be acceptable at official level, the Responsible Officer consults the appropriate staff association and submits the views of the latter together with his comments thereon, to the Senior Chief Executive of the MCSAR;
  - (iii) the Senior Chief Executive of the MCSAR consults the staff side;
  - (iv) the proposed scheme of service is forwarded to the appropriate Service Commission for consideration and agreement; and
  - (v) where the agreement of the appropriate Service Commission has been obtained, the scheme of service is prescribed in its official form.

- 10.6 There is constant protest from staff side and growing unrest as a result of prolonged delays in the prescription of or amendments to schemes of service. Such delays hinder the process of filling of vacancies and cause frustration among officers.
- 10.7 In this context, the MCSAR has identified two major components in the processing of schemes of service which need to be addressed, namely streamlining of procedures and consolidation of schemes of service.

### ***Streamlining of Procedures and Consolidation of Schemes of Service***

- 10.8 The proposed review of the procedures for the prescription of schemes of service is in conformity with Government's vision to carry out fundamental reforms in the Civil Service with a view to improving service delivery:

**(i) Streamlining of procedures for the prescription of schemes of service so that there is a gradual reduction in the processing time from six months to four months.**

The procedures for the prescription of schemes of service comprise a series of elaborate steps as set out in the Human Resource Management Manual as reproduced at paragraph 10.5 above. It has been a long standing practice to allocate a delay of 21 days to the Staff Associations/ Unions and 30 days to the Federations of Unions to submit their views and comments on proposed schemes of service. As such, the processing of schemes of service generally takes a minimum of six months to be finalized. The MCSAR is in the process of reviewing procedures to reduce the processing time of the prescription of schemes of service.

**(ii) The consolidation of schemes of service in order to considerably reduce the number of schemes of service in the Civil Service.**

The MCSAR is presently working on a system whereby there will be one or two schemes of service for the various grades in a particular hierarchical structure having common duties and responsibilities with a view to reducing considerably the number of schemes of service across the public service.

### **Qualifications Requirements for Entry Grades**

- 10.9 In our 2003 PRB Report, we have set the qualifications for entry grades requiring a degree which should thereafter be a post 'A' level degree in the relevant fields, except in the education sector where a post SC degree is deemed to be equivalent to a post HSC Diploma and a post SC degree with a Master's degree or a postgraduate diploma in the specific field is deemed to be equivalent to a post 'A' level degree.

- 10.10 Following the decision of the Ministry of Tertiary Education, Science, Research and Technology to increase the access to tertiary education in Mauritius and to increase the gross Tertiary Enrolment Rate (to 72%), Tertiary Education Institutions, with awarding powers, would be called upon to offer foundation programmes as part of their curriculum to enable students who do not meet the entry requirements to progress to a degree programme.
- 10.11 Tertiary Education Institutions would also be encouraged to admit to their programmes, disabled persons, working class school leavers, housewives and mature students, that is, persons who have attained a certain age and who are returning to higher education after a break.
- 10.12 The MCSAR is presently working on a new policy for the qualifications requirements for entry grades in the public service in consultation with the relevant authorities.

### Recommendation 1

#### 10.13 We recommend that :

- (i) **the MCSAR reviews the process so far adopted for the prescription of a scheme of service such that the scheme of service of a grade may be processed and prescribed in a period of not more than four months;**
- (ii) **the MCSAR opens discussions with Stakeholders/Responsible Officers of Ministries/Departments with a view to consolidating schemes of service for grades requiring same level of skills and competencies; and**
- (iii) **pending the implementation of the new policy on qualifications, the existing provisions regarding qualifications requirements for grades in the Public Service be maintained.**

### Alternative and Equivalent Qualifications

- 10.14 It is the practice in public sector organisations, when conducting a recruitment exercise, to appoint candidates who possess qualifications which are considered to be equivalent/alternative to those prescribed in the scheme of service for the grade. In the last Report, we recommended that alternatives to a prescribed qualification should, as far as possible, be of the same level and in the same subjects that are required for the post. **We recommend that the existing provision be maintained.**

### Additional Qualifications

- 10.15 The competencies and skills required for incumbents to deliver effectively in the respective positions are defined in the scheme of service. It is well known that we have an increasing number of candidates who have successfully completed their tertiary education and, therefore, in certain areas candidates possessing higher academic qualifications than the prescribed ones join the grade, and quite often perform duties at a higher level than expected.

10.16 Officers joining the grade with higher qualifications than the ones prescribed for the grade may apply for grant of incremental credit which is some sort of compensation for higher level of competency. In some instances, officers possessing higher qualifications are called upon to perform duties of a higher position in the organisation and in such case they are compensated by the payment of an allowance upon recommendation of the Responsible Officer and approval of the Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms (MCSAR). **This provision is being maintained.**

## **Recommendation 2**

**10.17 We recommend that where an officer in a grade possesses a technical or professional qualification higher than what is required for the grade and his competency/ability on account of the possession of that qualification is effectively used by the organization through allocation of relevant duties, such officer may, subject to the recommendation of the Responsible Officer/Supervising Officer and the approval of the MCSAR, be paid an appropriate allowance.**

## **Experience Required for Recruitment/Appointment**

10.18 For the effective performance of functions of some grades, experience at a certain level is a requirement for incumbents to be eligible for consideration for appointment. The experience may be quantified as a given number of years of experience or as experience at management, middle/senior management level.

10.19 It is very difficult to provide a common definition for the different levels of management which would be applicable in each and every organization in the Public Sector in view of their distinct organization structures, grades which are specific to certain organizations, size of the organization, level of management responsibilities assigned to the number one in the organization and the number of management positions in the organization. Some organizations may not have all the three levels of management.

10.20 A general definition for the three types of Management are given hereunder but careful consideration should be given to the factors mentioned at paragraph 10.18 above before applying the definition in any organization:

- (i) Management at the primary level of operations in an organization is responsible for the day-to-day running and administration of functional areas or responsibilities assigned to them.
- (ii) Middle management level generally consists of heads of sections/divisions who execute or implement policies and plans and coordinate the activities of the Section/Unit.
- (iii) Senior Management – what constitutes senior management in one organisation may not necessarily be applicable in another organization. Generally, senior management officials determine objectives, policies and

plans of an organisation, mobilize assets and may be responsible for major units in an organization.

### **Recommendation 3**

**10.21 We recommend that, to the extent that it is possible, the terms “Management, Middle Management and Senior Management Level” should not be included in schemes of service.**

### **Qualifications Requirements for Grade-to-Grade promotion**

10.22 A serving officer is considered for promotion to the next level in the hierarchy if he possesses the higher/highest qualification prescribed but lacks part of the lower qualification in a case where more than one qualification are required. In our last Report, we recommended that where two or more qualifications are specified for promotion, an officer in the service at the level immediately below who possesses the whole of the higher/highest qualification but lacks only part of the lower qualification/s should also be considered for promotion provided he satisfies all the other requirements of the promotional grade. **This provision is being maintained.**

### **Recognition/Accreditation of Prior Experience**

10.23 The ability of employees to deliver on-the-job is highly dependent on the knowledge, skills and competencies of the incumbent. In the previous Report, provisions were made for recognition/accreditation of prior learning designed primarily for employees who have acquired knowledge and skills/competencies through experience over the years. We continue to hold the view that these provisions should be maintained provided the experiential learning is recognized by an approved body.

### **Recommendation 4**

**10.24 We recommend that for posts requiring technical qualifications which are scarce, consideration may be given to the appointment of candidates who lack part of these technical qualifications but have acquired a minimum of 10 years’ relevant experience/competence which has been duly recognised by the Mauritius Qualifications Authority (MQA) or any other recognised body as sufficient to make good for the lack of the technical qualifications.**

### **Qualifications Requiring Registration with Recognised Bodies**

10.25 There are grades which require professional registration to recognised Institutes/Bodies according to the schemes of service while there are others which do not require such registration but incumbents register to avail themselves of books/periodicals issued by these bodies to broaden their outlook and keep abreast of latest development in their respective fields of activities. Registration involves payment of an annual subscription fee. At present, the full amount of the annual subscription fee up to a maximum of Rs 5200 is refunded annually to officers who according to their schemes of service are required to be members of

recognised Institutes/Bodies to be able to exercise their profession and have to subscribe for membership in order to be on roll.

10.26 Officers serving in posts carrying a salary in a scale the maximum of which is not less than Rs 40000 are granted an assistance equivalent to 50% of the annual subscription fee subject to a maximum of Rs 2600 on approval of the Responsible Officer and provided the knowledge/knowhow acquired on being a member of the Institutes/Bodies is relevant to the duties of the officer.

10.27 We are maintaining the provision for a refund of the registration fees and reviewing the quantum of the ceilings along with the percentage of the refund.

### **Recommendation 5**

**10.28 We recommend that:**

- (i) **an officer who is required to be professionally registered with recognised Institutes/Bodies according to the relevant prescribed scheme of service to be able to practice the profession, should be refunded the full amount of annual subscription fee with one of the relevant bodies subject to a maximum of Rs 5720 annually; and**
- (ii) **an officer drawing salary in a scale, the maximum of which is not less than Rs 48600 who, though not required to be registered with recognised Institutes/Bodies according to the relevant prescribed scheme of service but has opted to register himself to keep abreast of latest development in his specific field of activities, may be granted, subject to the approval of the Responsible Officer, an assistance of 50% of the annual subscription fee subject to a maximum of Rs 2860, provided that the knowledge/knowhow derived from being a member of the Institutes/Bodies is of relevance to the duties of the officer.**

### **Continuous Professional Development (CPD)**

10.29 At present, an assistance is provided to some professionals who are required to achieve a minimum number of units of continuous professional development every year as a condition to maintain their membership in their respective professional Institutes/Bodies. We are maintaining this arrangement and reviewing the maximum amount that can be paid.

### **Recommendation 6**

**10.30 We recommend that officers who, as a condition to retain their membership to recognised Institutes/Bodies are required to achieve a minimum number of units of CPD should be provided an assistance of 50% of the total expenses in relation to the achievement of the appropriate number of units of CPD, subject to a maximum of Rs 11000 annually.**

### Technical Officer Cadre providing Support Services to Professional Cadre

- 10.31 With the improvement in the availability of learning facilities provided by distance learning institutions and the setting up of tertiary institutions in the country, the number of graduate professionals coming in the job market is ever increasing. Jobs whose qualifications are either a School Certificate with credit in five subjects and Higher School Certificate attract degree holders and posts whose qualification requirements are post School Certificate or post Higher School Certificate diploma are mainly filled in by graduate professionals.
- 10.32 Widespread representations have been made by individuals and unions' representatives for upgrading of qualifications at various levels.
- 10.33 Incumbents in grades where the qualification requirement is "having read up to School Certificate" ask for the qualification to be raised to School Certificate; those in grades with School Certificate as requirement want upgrading to Higher School Certificate, while others have requested that the requirement for diploma and degree be raised to degree and Master's degree respectively.
- 10.34 Several serving officers who have completed diploma courses are following further courses to top up to degree level and those who have completed a degree course have nourished hopes and represent that the salary of their substantive posts should be upgraded to those of degree level jobs.
- 10.35 The operational needs of certain organisations justify performance of activities both at professional level and technical level and the establishment size of posts at professional level is quite often limited. However, the professional aptitude of technical staff is put to use only in certain areas, where such levels of learning is required for the effective performance of duties.
- 10.36 In our last Report, recommendations were made to provide some reward to officers of technical cadre required to provide support to professional staff at a level higher than those of technical officer level, by movement beyond the top salary incrementally by an additional number of increments.
- 10.37 We are maintaining the existing provision.

### Recommendation 7

- 10.38 We recommend that officers of a technical cadre, where the qualification requirement for the entry grade is a diploma and subsequently the incumbents have upgraded their qualifications to degree or post graduate in the relevant field may be allowed to proceed beyond the top of the salary scale incrementally by the number of additional increments approved by the Standing Committee on incremental credits which they earned by virtue of the additional qualifications.**

**10.39 This recommendation would be applicable only to officers drawing salary in a scale the maximum of which is not less than Rs 35400 and who are often called upon to do part of the professional functions.**

**10.40 We further recommend that the above recommendation shall equally apply to other officers of the Civil Service, Parastatal Bodies, Local Authorities and the Rodrigues Regional Assembly.**

### **Special Provisions for Graduates and Professionals**

10.41 Graduates and professionals are recruited to join the public sector organizations, and serve in various fields including Administration, Accounting, Architecture, Computer Science, Economics, Education, Land Surveying, Pharmacy, Quantity Surveying, Statistics, etc.

10.42 The organisation structure of professional cadres in the Public Sector differs from one organisation to another. The scope for movement higher up the hierarchy is not the same in each and every organisation. At certain levels, movement in the career ladder is by selection whereas in others it is by promotion on the basis of seniority.

10.43 In our last review exercise the following issues were examined:

- (i) absence of effective supervisory role at a level immediately above the entry level;
- (ii) limited number of posts at the second level, causing stagnation of professionals in the entry grade on reaching their top salary ;
- (iii) the need for flatter structure and giving way to delayering with a view to sustaining increased efficiency and attain better results/outcomes;
- (iv) the need for merger of first two professional levels particularly where there was overlapping of duties to a large extent in determining the remuneration package of professionals.

10.44 With a view to providing incentives to graduate professionals stagnating on their top salary for several years, we are making provisions for graduates and professionals as well as for officers of the level of Principal Assistant Secretary to move incrementally in the master salary scale so as: (a) to ensure that the remuneration package of incumbents with relevant experience in the Public Sector is competitive, and (b) link the grant of increment to more stringent performance criteria to bring about a performance oriented culture.

### **Recommendation 8**

**10.45 We recommend that officers in entry grades/promotional entry grades requiring a University Degree or a recognised professional equivalent qualification drawing salary in a scale the maximum of which is not less than Rs 48600 and having reached the top of their respective salary scale**



should be allowed to move incrementally in the master salary scale up to salary point Rs 53100, provided that they have:

- (i) drawn the top salary for a year; and
- (ii) been consistently efficient and effective in their performance as evidenced by their Performance Appraisal Report during the preceding two years and have not been adversely reported upon on ground of conduct.

#### **Recommendation 9**

**10.46** We further recommend that officers drawing salary in a scale the maximum of which is not less than Rs 54600 and not more than Rs 78000 and having reached the top of their respective salary scales should be allowed to move incrementally up to a maximum of two increments in the master salary scale, provided they have:

- (i) drawn the top salary for a year;
- (ii) been consistently efficient and effective in their performance as evidenced by their Performance Appraisal Report during the preceding two years i.e. have displayed skills and competence as relevant in (a) the leadership function; (b) the strategic, coordinating and integrative role; (c) the critical decision making and crisis management responsibilities; and (d) the delivery of the necessary outcomes; and
- (iii) not been adversely reported upon on ground of conduct.

**10.47** The foregoing recommendation should also apply to corresponding flat salaries in the same range.

#### **Recommendation 10**

**10.48** We recommend that, the Authorities consider gradually raising the minimum qualification requirements for entry to grades requiring a degree with salary in a scale the maximum of which is Rs 48600 to a Post graduate Degree or equivalent post graduate qualification in the respective fields, except in scarcity areas.

**10.49** The foregoing recommendations should equally apply to Parastatal Bodies, Local Authorities and the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, wherever relevant.

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