

20. RODRIGUES AND THE OUTER ISLANDS

- 20.1 This Chapter deals with the Conditions of Service specific to officers on the establishment of Ministries/Departments/Organisations in Mauritius posted on tour of service in Rodrigues and the Outer Islands comprising Agalega and St Brandon. Some of these specific conditions also apply to officers on the establishment of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly (RRA) posted in Mauritius.
- 20.2 In all these three islands, officers of the civil service and parastatal bodies from Mauritius are posted on tour of service in order to palliate the lack of qualified staff and/or to ensure the proper manning and running of various departments and outstations. On the other hand, officers from RRA are generally sent to Mauritius for training, placement and on rare instances are posted in Mauritius.
- 20.3 While serving on a tour of service in Rodrigues and the Outer Islands, the officers are entitled to enhanced pay and benefits. These serve as inducement to enlist the services of required staff for their distant posting as well as an incentive to the officer for the delocalisation and the disruption of family and social life.
- 20.4 In a similar manner, officers on the establishment of the RRA who are sent to Mauritius for training or posted in Mauritius benefit from additional compensatory allowances.
- 20.5 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, notwithstanding their terms of employment.
- 20.6 In this Report, we are maintaining the arrangements in order to ensure the proper and adequate manning and continued delivery of services in Rodrigues and the Outer Islands.

Recommendation 1

- 20.7 We recommend that it should 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 TO MAURITIAN OFFICERS POSTED TO RODRIGUES

Tour of Service in Rodrigues

- 20.8 At present, Mauritian officers serving on a tour of service in Rodrigues, for a minimum of 12 months' duration, are paid a monthly disturbance allowance of 25% of their respective gross salary (basic salary plus salary compensation at approved rates). The payment of this allowance is limited to three tours of service and only in exceptional cases it is paid for stay beyond three tours of

service subject to the approval of the Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms (MCSAR).

- 20.9 On their posting in Rodrigues, officers are provided with free accommodation.
- 20.10 A few Ministries/Departments have made representations that a tour of service in Rodrigues should be of six months' duration. They argue that it would be more practical to post officers, particularly senior officers, in their sub-offices in Rodrigues for shorter duration. We have examined the submissions and consent that there might be cases where postings of shorter duration would be more appropriate.

Recommendation 2

20.11 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 6 months for exceptional cases such as the degree of scarcity and non-availability of staff, subject to the approval of the MCSAR;**
- (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 MCSAR, 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/quarters.**

Inducement Allowance

- 20.12 An inducement allowance of 50% of monthly salary in lieu of the disturbance allowance is paid to certain categories of professionals in scarce supply and posted on a tour of service in Rodrigues subject to the approval of the MCSAR.
- 20.13 The categories of people entitled to the inducement allowance are determined by MCSAR and in that respect the MCSAR has approved payment of inducement allowance on posting on tour of service to Systems Analysts, Senior District Magistrates, Community Physicians, Medical Health Officer/Senior Medical Health Officers and Managers (Procurement and Supply), among others.
- 20.14 Payment of the inducement allowance is made on a *pro-rata* basis for the duration of stay to Specialist/Senior Specialists who are posted for short duration in Rodrigues and who are accommodated in fully furnished rent-free quarters/houses.
- 20.15 However, the inducement allowance is not payable to officers who are provided with board and lodging in hotels for the duration of their tour.

20.16 Today, there is still need for additional incentives to attract professionals or experts in specialised fields and in scarce supply for posting in Rodrigues. On this account, we are maintaining the existing provision and arrangement.

Recommendation 3

20.17 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 MCSAR;**
- (ii) the payment of the inducement allowance of 50% 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.**

Allowance to Rodriguan Officers coming to Mauritius on Training

20.18 At present, Rodriguan officers sent to Mauritius on training are paid an allowance equivalent to 50% of salary for the duration of the course. They are provided with rent-free quarters. Those who cannot be provided with quarters are paid an allowance of Rs 2000 monthly as assistance towards payment of rent. We are maintaining the above arrangement and revising the quantum of assistance towards payment of rent.

Recommendation 4

20.19 We recommend that officers domiciled in Rodrigues and coming to Mauritius on training should continue to be paid an allowance equivalent to 50% of salary for the duration of the course; and those officers who cannot be provided with quarters be paid an allowance of Rs 2400 monthly as an assistance towards payment of rent.

Officers Performing Duties in a Higher Capacity

20.20 When posted in Rodrigues and the Outer Islands, some officers are called upon to act in a higher capacity or are assigned duties of the higher post in the hierarchy. On this account, they are eligible for acting or responsibility allowance. The disturbance allowance or inducement allowance in such circumstances is computed on the basis of aggregate earnings (basic salary plus salary compensation at approved rates plus acting/responsibility allowance). There is fairness in this mode of compensation. We are maintaining it.

Recommendation 5

20.21 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

20.22 An officer domiciled in Mauritius and posted to Rodrigues for a tour of service of a minimum period of 12 months is eligible for the following:

(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 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;
- (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 6

20.23 We recommend that the special conditions 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.

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

Police Officers domiciled in Rodrigues posted in Mauritius

20.25 At present, Police Officers domiciled in Rodrigues and posted in Mauritius are paid a disturbance allowance of 25% of monthly salary and are eligible for free passages.

Recommendation 7

20.26 We recommend that a disturbance allowance of 25% of monthly salary should continue to be paid to Police Officers domiciled in Rodrigues posted on a tour of service in Mauritius.

20.27 We also recommend that an officer domiciled in Rodrigues and posted to Mauritius 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.

CONDITIONS OF SERVICE SPECIFIC TO MAURITIAN OFFICERS POSTED TO THE OUTER ISLANDS - AGALEGA AND ST. BRANDON**Tour of Service and Disturbance Allowance to Mauritian Officers**

- 20.28 Mauritian public officers are also required to serve in the Outer Islands - Agalega and St. Brandon on a tour of service which normally varies from four to six months. The duration of the tour of service in the Outer Islands is most of the time dependent on the movement of vessels to these islands. The monthly disturbance allowance payable to these Mauritian officers is 60% of their monthly salary.
- 20.29 Representations have been received to the effect that since the movement of vessels to the islands is not regular, officers have to reach their place of work well before the start of their contract and also cannot leave Agalega and St. Brandon on time, at the expiry of the contract.
- 20.30 We have examined these constraints and we are reviewing the mode of payment of the disturbance allowance.

Recommendation 8

- 20.31 **We recommend that the monthly disturbance allowance payable to officers on a tour of service in Agalega and St. Brandon of 60% of gross salary (basic salary plus salary compensation at approved rates) be maintained.**
- 20.32 **We further recommend that the monthly disturbance allowance payable to these officers be pro-rated with respect to the duration of their stay in these islands.**

Vacation Leave

- 20.33 Officers domiciled in Mauritius, while on a tour of service in Agalega or St. Brandon, are presently allowed to earn vacation leave at the rate of 50% in addition to what they are entitled to for that period. We are maintaining this provision.

Recommendation 9

- 20.34 **We recommend that Mauritian officers on a tour of service in Agalega and St. Brandon should continue to earn vacation leave at the rate of 50% more than what they are eligible for in respect of that period.**
- 20.35 **We also recommend that 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.**

Special Conditions

20.36 An officer who is posted to the Outer Islands other than Rodrigues 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 10

20.37 We recommend that the special conditions in connection with passages and government quarters to which an officer who is posted to the Outer Islands is entitled to be maintained.

Enhanced Pension Benefit

20.38 At present, the period during which a Mauritian officer serves as a public officer in Agalega or St. Brandon is reckoned as pensionable service at the rate of two times.

Recommendation 11

20.39 We are maintaining this provision.
