

18.10 ACTING AND RESPONSIBILITY ALLOWANCES

- 18.10.1 An officer who has been appointed to act in a higher post by the appropriate Service Commission or by the Responsible Officer/Supervising Officer as delegated, is normally paid an acting allowance. An acting appointment, however, does not give right to the officer concerned to claim for promotion to the higher position.
- 18.10.2 An acting appointment is an assignment given to an officer deemed capable of performing the full duties and assuming the full responsibilities of a vacant position when the substantive postholder in the higher grade is on authorised leave or when the post is vacant pending its permanent filling.
- 18.10.3 A Responsibility Allowance is paid to an officer, who for administrative convenience, has been assigned duties of a higher office by the appropriate Service Commission or by the Responsible Officer/Supervising Officer, as delegated.
- 18.10.4 Over its subsequent reports, the Bureau has improved the provisions regarding acting and responsibility allowances namely in respect of the mode of computation of acting allowance in grade-to-grade and class-to-class cases, which has been harmonised; the quantum of responsibility allowance, and the qualifying period enabling an officer to be paid the allowance, have been reviewed.
- 18.10.5 In the context of this Report, the Bureau has received representations to the effect that the responsibility allowance which at present is payable at the rate of 80% of the acting allowance to officers who are not fully qualified, should be paid the full quantum of allowance since the incumbent serves the higher position in full capacity. Moreover, proposal has also been made for the qualifying period required for the payment of responsibility allowance for shouldering higher duties be reduced from seven to three days.
- 18.10.6 We have duly examined these representations and consider that the existing provisions are fair, equitable and practical. Furthermore, we are reflecting a decision of the High Powered Committee regarding the qualifying period in the case of an officer acting in an Accounting/Responsible Officer position.

Acting Allowance

Recommendation 1

- 18.10.7 We recommend that the quantum of acting allowance payable, whether in a grade-to-grade or class-to-class situation, should be equivalent to the difference between the initial or flat salary of the higher post and the substantive salary of the officer, provided the allowance is not less than three increments worth at the incremental point reached in the substantive post. Where the salary scales overlap, the allowance should**

be equivalent to three increments worth at the incremental point reached in the substantive post provided the total emoluments of the officer are not less than the initial salary and not more than the maximum salary of the higher post.

Responsibility Allowance

Recommendation 2

18.10.8 We recommend that responsibility allowance should continue to be paid as follows:

- (i)** where an officer is fully qualified to act in the higher post, the allowance should be equivalent to the acting allowance;
- (ii)** where the officer is not fully qualified to act in the higher post, the allowance should be 80% of the acting allowance; and
- (iii)** where appointment to a higher office is made by selection and no additional qualification is required, whether in terms of academic or technical qualification or experience or in terms of physical requirements, the responsibility allowance payable to officers who are assigned the duties of the higher office should be equivalent to the acting allowance.

Payment of Responsibility Allowance to Employees in the Workmen's Group

Recommendation 3

18.10.9 We recommend that the responsibility allowance payable to employees in the Workmen's Group should be computed:

- (i)** on the same basis as for acting allowance even if the employee is not fully qualified;
- (ii)** for the full period of actingship (inclusive of Saturdays, Sundays and Public holidays) whenever the period of actingship exceeds seven continuous days; and
- (iii)** on the basis of the actual number of days worked in case the actingship is less than seven days.

Qualifying Period/Specific Provisions

Recommendation 4

18.10.10 We recommend that the qualifying period/specific provisions in respect of Acting and Responsibility Allowances should be as hereunder:

- (i)** No Acting or Responsibility Allowance is paid to an officer unless he acts in the higher office for a continuous period of seven days, i.e. the assignment should be for a minimum period of seven continuous days, inclusive of Saturdays, Sundays and Public Holidays, except for those who act in an Accounting/Responsible

Officer position where the actingship is payable even if the period of actingship is less than seven days.

- (ii) An officer performing higher duties is not eligible for Acting or Responsibility Allowance for any period of absence exceeding seven days at a stretch.**
- (iii) Where an officer who is acting in a higher office proceeds on official mission overseas, he is paid a special allowance equivalent to the Acting Allowance he would have drawn had he not gone on mission.**
- (iv) Where an officer is acting in an Accounting/Responsible Officer position for a period of at least three consecutive days or more but less than seven days, he is paid 80% of the normal acting/responsibility allowance payable for the period in the normal circumstances and no formal actingship or payment is made for a period of less than three days.**
- (v) Where an officer has been appointed to act or assigned duties in an Accounting/Responsible Officer position by the relevant Service Commission or Board *vice* permanent vacancies or *vice* temporary vacancies which would eventually become permanent, he should be eligible for all benefits attached to the post after a continued period of actingship of at least four months.**

General Observations

- 18.10.11 Persistent representations have been made from union members on the fact that acting appointment is not given to employees whilst the latter are requested to perform duties of a higher position, hence leading to demotivation.
- 18.10.12 Generally, acting appointments provide employees with a range of potential professional development opportunities whilst supporting and enhancing operational efficiency and the achievement of an organisation's objectives. These arrangements benefit employees in terms of reward, capacity building and experience as well as recognition of their ability to deliver whilst enabling continuity and operational stability to prevail in the organisation.
- 18.10.13 The Bureau, therefore, considers that in an attempt not to create frustration among employees and imbalance in an organisation, opportunities for acting assignments should be provided and same be managed in such a manner that would not result in an unfair advantage to anyone except in other circumstances when other administrative arrangements have been made for continuous workflow.
