

20. RODRIGUES AND THE OUTER ISLANDS

- 20.1 The Conditions of Service specific and applicable to public officers of Mauritius who are on tour of service in Rodrigues and the Outer Islands (Agalega and St. Brandon) are outlined in this Chapter. Some of these specific conditions also apply to officers on the establishment of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly (RRA) posted in Mauritius.
- 20.2 It is presently 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.

Recommendation 1

- 20.3 We recommend that it should continue to 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

- 20.4 Mauritian public officers from the civil service and parastatal bodies are posted on tour of service to Rodrigues and the Outer Islands to palliate the shortage of qualified staff, to provide professional and technical expertise, and to ensure the continued service delivery of various departments and outstations. As regards public officers domiciled in Rodrigues, they are usually sent to Mauritius for training and placement purposes and on rare instances are posted in Mauritius.
- 20.5 For officers serving on a tour of service in Rodrigues and the Outer Islands, a disturbance allowance is paid to compensate them for their distant posting and to cater for household expenses as well as for the disruption of family and social life. These officers also benefit from rent free accommodation and enhanced vacation. Similarly, officers from the RRA posted in Mauritius are paid additional allowances.

Tour of Service in Rodrigues

- 20.6 Currently, Mauritian officers are paid a monthly disturbance allowance of 25% of their respective gross salary (basic salary plus salary compensation at approved rates) for serving on a tour of service. A tour of service is generally of 12 months' duration but it may be of a shorter period for exceptional cases. The payment of the disturbance allowance is limited to three tours of service. However, 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). Free accommodation is also provided to Mauritian public officers posted in Rodrigues.

20.7 In the context of this review, representations have mainly been to increase the rate for disturbance allowance. The Bureau considers that the present rate is appropriate and with an increase in the salary, the quantum of the disturbance allowance will also increase.

Recommendation 2

20.8 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 six months for exceptional cases such as the non-availability of qualified staff in certain scarcity areas, 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 or quarters.**

Inducement Allowance

20.9 Certain categories of professionals in scarce supply are posted on a tour of service in Rodrigues and they are paid an inducement allowance of 50% of monthly salary instead of the disturbance allowance.

20.10 The MCSAR determines the categories of people entitled to the inducement allowance and approves the payment of the allowance.

20.11 Whenever Specialist/Senior Specialists are posted for short duration in Rodrigues and are accommodated in fully furnished rent-free quarters/houses, they are paid inducement allowance on a *pro-rata* basis for the duration of stay. The inducement allowance is not payable to officers who are provided with board and lodging in hotels for the duration of their tour.

20.12 While we recognise that in Rodrigues the configuration of the labour market has changed and we believe that there is an increasing pool of local talent, there is still need to attract professionals or experts in specialised fields in some scarce domains. The provision for the payment of the inducement allowance is, therefore, being maintained.

Recommendation 3**20.13 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% of the monthly salary 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

20.14 Rodriguan officers coming to Mauritius on training are presently paid an allowance equivalent to 50% of salary for the duration of the course together with rent-free quarters. Those officers who cannot be provided with quarters are paid an allowance of Rs 2400 monthly as assistance towards payment of rent. We are maintaining the existing provision and revising the quantum of assistance towards payment of rent.

Recommendation 4

20.15 We recommend that officers domiciled in Rodrigues and coming to Mauritius on training should continue to be paid an allowance equivalent to 50% of the monthly salary for the duration of the course; and those officers who cannot be provided with quarters be paid an allowance of Rs 2600 monthly as an assistance towards payment of rent.

Officers Performing Duties in a Higher Capacity

20.16 At present, the disturbance allowance or inducement allowance for those officers, who are called upon to act in a higher capacity or are assigned duties of the higher post in the hierarchy, is computed on the basis of aggregate earnings (basic salary plus salary compensation at approved rates plus acting/responsibility allowance). We are maintaining this mode of computation which is appropriate.

Recommendation 5

20.17 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

20.18 A Mauritian public officer 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

- 20.19 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.**
- 20.20 We also recommend that an officer, on his return to Mauritius at the end of his tour of service, should be given priority of consideration to take his earned vacation leave.**

Rodriguan Police Officers posted in Mauritius

- 20.21 Rodriguan Police Officers when posted in Mauritius are paid a disturbance allowance of 25% of monthly salary and are eligible for free passages.

Recommendation 7

- 20.22 We recommend that a disturbance allowance equivalent to 25% of monthly salary should continue to be paid to Rodriguan Police Officers posted on a tour of service in Mauritius.**
- 20.23 We further recommend that an officer domiciled in Rodrigues and posted to Mauritius should 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

- 20.24 Mauritian public officers are also required to serve in the Outer Islands, namely 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 gross monthly salary.
- 20.25 Federations have mainly represented for an increase in the rate of the disturbance allowance. The Bureau considers that the disturbance allowance payable to concerned officers at the rate of 60% of their gross salary

compensates adequately the shorter duration of tour of service and the prevailing working conditions there.

Recommendation 8

- 20.26 We recommend that the monthly disturbance allowance of 60% of gross salary (basic salary plus salary compensation at approved rates) payable to officers on a tour of service in Agalega and St. Brandon should be maintained.**
- 20.27 We also 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

- 20.28 Mauritian officers while on a tour of service in Agalega or St. Brandon, presently benefit from enhanced vacation leave such that they earn vacation leave at the rate of 50% in addition to what they are entitled to for that period. This provision is being maintained.**

Recommendation 9

- 20.29 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% in addition to what they are eligible for in respect of that period.**
- 20.30 We further 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

- 20.31 An officer who is posted to the Outer Islands, Agalega and St. Brandon, 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

- 20.32 We recommend that the special conditions in respect of passages and rent-free government quarters which an officer who is posted to the Outer Islands is entitled to be maintained.**

Enhanced Pension Benefit

- 20.33 The period during which a Mauritian citizen serves as a public officer in Agalega or St. Brandon is presently reckoned as pensionable service at the rate of two times.**

Recommendation 11

- 20.34 We recommend that the existing provision be maintained.**
