

## **9. TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT**

### **Importance of Training and Development**

- 9.1 Training is inextricably linked with reforms in the Civil Service. Its purpose is to improve the performance and productivity of staff and ensure that they have the relevant skills and values to change entrenched mind-sets. Training and Development represents a mutual obligation – the obligation of the organisation to see that all its staff are regularly and continuously trained, developed and updated; and the obligation of the individual to take responsibility for enhancing skills, knowledge, capabilities and expertise necessary to improve his job performance.
- 9.2 The need for training is felt when there are, among others: environmental change (computerisation; automation and mechanisation); organisational complexity (modern interventions, technological upgrading and diversification); Human relations issues (adaption to work culture and human values); and change in the job assignment (to equip old employees with new techniques and technologies).

### **Government Commitment**

- 9.3 Government, in its 2015-2019 Programme has taken the commitment to bring transformational change in the civil service to render it more responsible and responsive in order to provide an expedient service to boost the economy.

### **Role of the Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms**

- 9.4 The Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms is responsible for the training of public officers to equip them with the necessary knowledge and skills to enable them improve their job performance.

### **The Civil Service College, Mauritius**

- 9.5 As formulated in the Government Programme, the Civil Service College (CSC) has been set up as a state owned private company. Its main objective is to specifically cater for the growing training and development needs of officers at all levels, including those from Local Authorities and Parastatal Bodies.
- 9.6 As focal point for all matters related to training and staff development, the CSC focusses on reforms oriented, performance based and demand driven training, identified by different stakeholders through PMS to bridge gaps and bring the awaited transformation in the civil service through continuous professional development.

## **Role of Ministries/Departments/Organisation**

- 9.7 Ministries/Departments/Organisations have the corporate responsibility to ensure sustained performance and productivity through training and development of their human resources.

## **Role of the Employee**

- 9.8 Employees have the professional obligation to update their knowledge and improve their skills to remain efficient and effective members of the public service.

## **Present Position**

- 9.9 A variety of training programmes is being conducted yearly for all categories of employees in the civil service to increase the employees' sense of responsibility and accountability in order to enhance their motivation and commitment towards a performance based and service oriented culture.

- 9.10 To enable organisation's to provide training in identified fields to its staff, the Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms has, in its Circular Letter No. 9/2016, invited Supervising Officers including Parastatal Organisations, Local Authorities as well as Rodrigues Regional Assembly to ensure that sufficient provisions are made in their budget for the training of their officers by the Civil Service College. Additionally, as per Directive No. 14 issued on 10 October 2013 by the Procurement Policy Office or Procurement of Training Services, it has been mentioned that:

*"For any procurement of training services, the public body should consider the Civil Service College as a first option through direct procurement. The price for the services will be determined jointly by the public body and the Civil Service College".*

## **Submissions**

- 9.11 During consultation, the Bureau held with the Management of Ministries/Departments/Organisations and with representatives of Federations/Unions demands were made for increased and improved training. It was represented that: training should be compulsory; Parastatal Bodies should be empowered to devise their own mechanism to impart training; there should be no restriction on the availability of fund; training period of 60 hours should be extended; all organisations should **compulsorily** carry out a comprehensive training needs assessment and finally the CSC should be opened to employees outside the civil service.

- 9.12 The staff side proposed that the selection of candidates for overseas training should be transparent, fair and equitable so that every officer in the service is given a chance in his career to attend mission/courses abroad so as to benefit

from the international exposure. Others have pointed out that the selection of candidates should not be centralised at a specific Ministry and the onus should rest upon the Responsible Officer to recommend an officer for overseas mission/training subject to his satisfying the established criteria. It has also been reported that there is poor commitment on the part of Responsible Officers to implement training programmes although there is a vote in the Budget.

### **Survey Findings and Observations**

9.13 To gauge the effectiveness of the 2013 PRB recommendations with regard to training and development, a general survey was carried out in the public service. The response rate was good with 49% for the Civil Service inclusive of Rodrigues Regional Assembly, 60% for Parastatal Bodies and 58% for Local Authorities.

- The survey has revealed that 39% of organisations in the Civil Service, 24% in the Parastatal Bodies and 43% in the Local Authorities have conducted TNA for all staff during the last 12 months.
- In 80% of Civil Service organisations that responded officers benefit from overseas training. The proportion is 49% for Parastatal Bodies and 86% for Local Authorities where employees benefit from overseas training.
- Opportunities for training have increased since the last PRB recommendations as stated by 50% of organisations in the Civil Service, 33% of organisations in the Parastatal Bodies and 43% of organisations in Local Authorities.
- The number of organisation which has been able to implement annual training requirements is 16% in the Civil Service and 7% in Parastatal Bodies. However, no organisation in the Local Authorities has implemented the annual training requirements.
- The survey has showed that 50% organisations in the Civil Service, 33% Parastatal Bodies and 86% organisations in the Local Authorities evaluate the effectiveness of training dispensed.

9.14 The above findings revealed that there is irregular provision of training to staff as the majority of public sector organisations did not conduct a Training Needs Assessment. Opportunities for overseas training is very good in the Civil Service and Local Authorities as opposed to Parastatal Bodies. More effort is needed in Parastatal Bodies and Local Authorities to provide training opportunities and implement the annual training requirements of their staff.

## **Analysis**

- 9.15 After carefully examining the submissions and the survey findings, it was observed that most of the problems regarding Training and Development in organisations pertained to implementation issues. In fact in its Report, the PRB has extensively dealt with the issue of training through a systematic approach namely: the conduct of the Training Needs Assessment (TNA); Design of Training based on information obtained from TNA; choosing of suitable delivery training methods; allocation of training budget; amount of training to be dispensed to different categories of employees; keeping of data on the training activities through the training information systems; and monitoring and evaluation of training and finally the roles and responsibilities of the key players in the Public Sector Training and Development Strategy.
- 9.16 Much emphasis have been laid on the need to equip public officers with the required skills and competencies in order to be more efficient and effective to meet future challenges and ensure a successful modernisation of the civil service - the moreso to nurture a culture of performance beneficial to all the stakeholders and the country at large. In addition to enhancing organisational efficiency in the delivery of a customer-based service, training moulds the character, changes the behaviour and inculcates a positive mind-set in employees to serve selflessly.
- 9.17 The Bureau considers that a sound system of training is crucial to keep the personnel within the public service on equal footing to adapt to the emerging functional and operational changes. There is need for organisations to pay particular attention in all fairness and equity, to the Job/Work Related Training, In-Service Training and Overseas Training/Mission abroad. It is important that recruits be familiarised with the internal environment and smooth running of the organisation, given the time to acquaint themselves with the personnel, and acquire the basic knowledge of registry, finance, purchasing and system of civil service administration. On the other hand, opportunities should also be given to those officers already in service to upgrade their knowledge, skills and acquire managerial/leadership capabilities and to keep abreast with the latest technological development.

## **Orientation**

- 9.18 In line with the theme of this Report “Transforming the Public Sector for enhanced service delivery to meet citizen’s needs, non-citizen’s needs and other stakeholders’ needs”, it is imperative for organisations to gear towards a strategic human resource management system where the employee is viewed as a vital source to be valued, motivated, developed and accomplished to achieve the Ministry/Department/Organisations’ mission and objectives. Within the proposed transformation process, it is fundamental to match individuals’

competencies with the job they have to do and bridge competency gap for current and future roles through training. Hence the need for appropriate training interventions.

## Training Interventions

**9.19** We are hereunder recommending some training and development interventions, as expatiated in the 7<sup>th</sup> Report of the Central Pay Commission which we believe is of relevance in the transformational process and which should be adopted by the MCSAR/Civil Service College/Public Sector Organisations in the framing of their training policies.

- **Entry Level Training:** To be imparted to all employees before they are assigned duties/responsibilities of any post after recruitment.
- **Mid-Career Training:** A career-linked training to be provided to all employees at various levels/stages of their career before they are promoted to positions of higher responsibilities.
- **Short Term Thematic Training:** To be made available to employees preferably once in two years with an objective to build their professional competencies in relevant themes and to inculcate desirable Personal Attributes.
- **Customised Training:** An intensive programme specifically designed for officers working in a particular domain/sector with the objective of providing deeper knowledge, latest developments and understanding of the small practices and also to facilitate experimental learning and sharing.
- **Orientation Training:** To be provided to employees, who have been posted to a new Ministry/Department, with the objective of familiarising therein with the grades and overall functioning of the concerned Ministry/Department.
- **Long-Term Training:** To facilitate officers, especially the new generation to upgrade their knowledge and skills in the sector having relevance to their current or future assignments, by requiring higher qualification either locally or on line or abroad, thus enabling them to contribute higher performance in the service.
- **Workshops/Seminars/Conferences:** Middle or Senior level officers should be given opportunities to attend National and International Workshops/Seminars/Conferences to acquaint themselves with relevant knowledge, latest thinking and technological developments/devices.
- **Pre-retirement Training:** To assist officers who are 55 years and above to cope with the world outside active employment within the Public Service.
- **Overseas Training:** For officers in the professional grades to broaden their horizon, in such cases, the Responsible Officer should stand guided by the

provision of guidelines set by Ministry of Finance and Economic Development.

**Concluding Note**

9.20 We hold the view that to give training more prominence and valuing the civil servants' needs, it is imperative to have the commitment of Elites/Responsible Officers who should, in this endeavour, facilitate the proper implementation of Training programmes to ensure officers/employees improvement and commitment, attitudinal changes and acquiring new skills and knowledge.

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