

LOCAL AUTHORITIES

INTRODUCTION

1. Established under the Law, the Local Authorities in Mauritius governed by the Local Government Act 2011, provide a gamut of services to the residents of their respective jurisdictions as well as to economic actors operating within these jurisdictions. Seen from a broad perspective, Local Authorities in Mauritius consist of Urban Councils and Rural Authorities. Rural Authorities, in turn, comprise the District Councils and the Village Councils.
2. Improving the overall quality of life of people remains the essence of Local Authorities. To this end, they promote the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of the local community. These, together with their responsibility for roads as well as the public sanitation, constitute the statutory duties of Local Authorities. In these contexts, the continuum of activities performed within each Local Authority is regulated by provisions which are intertwined in the various acts of parliament.
3. The activities of the Local Authorities are coordinated and supervised by the Vice Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Local Government and Disaster Risk Management (MLGDRM), the objectives of which, are to enhance local democracy and promote economic well being, amongst others. Besides the coordination duties, the MLGDRM is also engaged in the harmonisation of the services provided at Municipal and District Council levels. At the strategic level, the Ministry is responsible to bring amendments to statutory provisions to empower the Local Authorities to operate more effectively and efficiently. The role of the other stakeholders in the sector are hereunder described.

The Local Government Service Commission

4. Providing the Local Authorities the necessary human resource complement rests with the Local Government Service Commission which plays an important part in this process. To this effect, it recruits, promotes, disciplines and dismisses staff.

The Unified Local Government Service Board

5. Created under Section 68 of the Local Government Act 2011, the Unified Local Government Service Board (ULGSB) is chaired by the Permanent Secretary of the MLGDRM. The Board is vested with powers in relation to the redeployment of staff and filling of temporary vacancies. In short, it ensures a continuous provision of human resources to the Local Authorities. The administration of the ULGSB rests with the Secretary of the Board which is filled by assignment of duties of an officer not below the level of Deputy Permanent Secretary. This provision is adequate and **we are maintaining it.**
6. The Bureau has observed that Management of the different Councils often make requests for the creation of grades which already exist in the Local Authorities. In line with its function, we consider that it would be more appropriate for the ULGSB to look

into such requests. We believe that this practice would contribute towards limiting a proliferation of such grades in the Local Authorities.

Structure of Local Authorities

7. The Urban Councils comprise the four Municipal Councils of Beau Bassin-Rose Hill, Curepipe, Quatre Bornes and Vacoas-Phoenix, and the City Council of Port Louis. Whereas the Rural Authorities consist of the seven District Councils, namely: the District Council of Black River, Flacq, Grand Port, Moka, Pamplemousses, Rivière du Rempart and Savanne and 130 Village Councils, which are regrouped under the seven District Councils.
8. Municipal Councils as well as District Councils organise their activities under six departments which are as follows: Administration Department, Finance Department, Land Use and Planning Department, Public Infrastructure Department, Public Health Department and Welfare Department. While each Local Authority is under the responsibility of a Chief Executive who is the Accounting Head, the various Departments are led by a Technical Head who reports to the Chief Executive.

Local Authorities Finance

9. For the running of their organisations, each Urban as well as Rural Authority receives a grant as aid from the Government, which is their main source of income. This forms part of the budget of the MLGDRM and is distributed in monthly instalments. The Village Councils, on their part, obtain their income from the District Council under which they fall. Besides, the Municipal Councils and the District Councils are empowered to raise funds locally, through the imposition of fees on Building and Land Use Permits, Trading Licences, Markets, Cemeteries, Traffic Fees and Advertisement.

Structure of the Report

10. In 2016, we reviewed the presentation of the Report on Local Authorities (Volume 2 Part III) as many problems were reported by our stakeholders and other users stating that the EOAC Report has led to some confusion and it was not user friendly. However, from feedback given by them, the reviewed presentation which was in force prior to 2013, was in order. So, we are maintaining the current structure of the Report for Local Authorities.
11. The introductory part deals with broad issues that concern all Local Authorities. Actually, there is a harmonisation in terms of hierarchies across all Local Authorities, mostly on alignment with what is obtainable in the Civil Service. We are dealing with the general literature and recommendations for each department of the Municipal Councils immediately after the introduction. Then, issues specific to each Municipal Council are discussed, followed by the relevant salary schedules. Thereafter, the respective literature and salary schedule for the District Councils are also provided.

Pertinent Issues

Alignment of Schemes of Service

12. In its previous Reports, the Bureau has highlighted the need for alignment of schemes of service of grades in Local Authorities on corresponding levels as in the Civil Service.
13. However, it has been observed that there are quite a few schemes of service which have not been amended despite our repeated caution. It would not be appropriate if recruitment in these grades is made on the basis of schemes of service which do not reflect the last recommendations of the Bureau. In the circumstances, the **MLGDRM should, as a matter of priority, ensure that all schemes of service are amended to reflect the recommendations contained in the Report as well as those relevant provisions currently in force in the Civil Service.**
14. **We are also reiterating that wherever the salary of grades in Local Authorities have been aligned on those of corresponding levels in the Civil Service, the schemes of service of these grades should be prescribed along similar lines as their Civil Service counterparts, to the extent applicable.**

Revision of Allowances

15. In general, in the context of an overall review, the quantum of all allowances is normally revised. With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting unfavourable economic and financial state of the country, we could not adopt the same course of action for this Report. **Instead, we have intelligently focussed more on salary revision, given that benefits are attached thereto and have revised allowances marginally where needed.**
16. It may happen that following the revision of salaries, the quantum of an allowance which is computed on the initial salary point of a salary scale, turns out to be lesser than what officers were drawing with the previous Report. **In such cases, officers in post as at the eve of the publication of the 2021 Report should continue to draw the higher quantum on a personal basis.**

Restyling of Grades

17. The Bureau has equally noted with much concern that a few grades have been restyled by Management of a few Local Authorities, without following the proper channel. It is worth pointing out that restyling of grades is considered only in the wake of a general review or acceded to with the approval of the High Powered Committee (HPC). In this context, **the Bureau holds that all requests for restyling should imperatively be submitted for consideration by the Bureau, through the parent Ministry and the Ministry of Public Service, Administrative and Institutional Reforms (MPSAIR).**
18. **The MPSAIR should ensure that the appellations of grades are strictly in accordance with our recommendations or as approved by the HPC.**

Vulcaniser

19. In the context of this review exercise, the Secretary, ULGSB has submitted that difficulties are being encountered by the Local Government Service Commission for the filling of the post of Vulcaniser in Local Authorities. The Bureau has been further apprised that the years of experience in the trade required for being eligible for appointment to the grade of Vulcaniser was the main reason. Following an analysis of the request, the Bureau considers that the requirement of 10 years of experience is not in line with what obtains across the public service and is making appropriate recommendation.

Recommendation 1

20. **The Bureau recommends that the scheme of service of the grade of Vulcaniser be reviewed and aligned with those currently prescribed for similar grades in the Civil Service to reflect the appropriate qualifications, responsibilities and duties.**

Driver (Roster)**Driver, Heavy Mechanical Unit (Roster)**

21. The grades of Driver and Driver, Heavy Mechanical Unit exist in the Local Authorities *in tandem* with those of Driver (Roster) and Driver, Heavy Mechanical Unit (Roster). Management submitted that for an enhanced efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of services, only the grades classified as working on a roster basis should prevail. We are agreeable to the proposal and making appropriate recommendations to that effect.

Recommendation 2

22. **We recommend that the salary scale of the grades of Driver (Roster) and Driver, Heavy Mechanical Unit (Roster) in the Local Authorities should be as below:**

Rs 16005 x 260 – 17825 x 275 – 18925 x 300 – 19525 x 325 – 21475 x 375 – 22225 x 400 – 23425 x 525 – 26050 x 675 – 27400 x 825 – 29050

Driver (Roster)

Rs 17825 x 275 – 18925 x 300 – 19525 x 325 – 21475 x 375 – 22225 x 400 – 23425 x 525 – 26050 x 675 – 27400 x 825 – 31525

Driver, Heavy Mechanical Unit (Roster)

23. **We further recommend that the grades of Driver and Driver, Heavy Mechanical Unit be made evanescent and their respective salary scale should be as below:**

Rs 15485 x 260 – 17825 x 275 – 18925 x 300 – 19525 x 325 – 21475 x 375 – 22225 x 400 – 23425 x 525 – 26050 x 675 – 27400

Driver (Personal)

Rs 17565 x 260 – 17825 x 275 – 18925 x 300 – 19525 x 325 – 21475 x 375 – 22225 x 400 – 23425 x 525 – 26050 x 675 – 27400 x 825 – 30700

Driver, Heavy Mechanical Unit (Personal)

24. **Incumbents in the grades of Driver (Personal) and Driver, Heavy Mechanical Unit (Personal) should be given the option to join the grades of Driver (Roster) and**

Driver, Heavy Mechanical Unit (Roster) respectively and on joining, be granted one increment subject to the top salary of the grade.

25. The salary scale of the grade of Driver, Heavy Mechanical Unit (Roster) has been reviewed further to an evolution in the duties performed by incumbents. In this respect, **we hold that the provision at Chapter 20 paragraph 20.17 (v) of Volume 1 regarding conversion be applied.**
26. The grades of Driver (Personal), Driver, Heavy Mechanical Unit (Personal), Driver (Roster) and Driver, Heavy Mechanical Unit (Roster) have not been inserted in the salary schedule of the respective Councils as they appear under different departments across the Local Authorities. **We hold that the MLGDRM, in consultation with the ULGSB and Management of the different Councils, should decide under which department the grades should appear, based on operational requirements. Thereafter, the Ministry should write to the Bureau for the obtention of the appropriate salary code of these grades.**

Duties of General Worker and Handy Worker

27. The Bureau has been apprised during consultative meetings that in most Local Authorities, General Workers are called upon to perform additional duties which normally belong to other grades, namely Office Attendant, Caretaker, Handy Worker and Tradesman, among others. We consider that this practice should be ceased the moreso, a trade test is required to perform a few of these extra duties devolving upon the other grades, whilst a General Worker is called upon to perform simple duties where no specific skill/competency is required.
28. In the same breath, owing to a lack of staff or unfunded posts, Handy Workers are equally being requested to carry out duties befalling incumbents in the grades of Gardener/Nursery Attendant, Office Attendant, Receptionist/Telephone Operator, Stores Attendant and Tradesman's Assistant, on a regular basis. It is worth highlighting that the grade of Handy Worker is meant to be a polyvalent one, whereby incumbents are called upon to perform a series of duties requiring little or no skill/competency.
29. In view of the above, the Bureau considers that it is the responsibility of Management to ensure that the duties being performed by employees in the grades of General Worker and Handy Worker are consistent with those prescribed in their respective schemes of service.

Performance Criteria

30. As per existing provisions, officers in various grades are allowed to benefit from movement beyond their top salary subject to satisfying the conditions laid down below:
- (i) they should have drawn the top salary for at least 12 months;**
 - (ii) they should have been efficient in their performance during the preceding year; and**

(iii) they should not be under report.

31. The conditions are directly linked to performance. Hence, wherever these have to be met under specific recommendations, they should be referred to as **“Performance Criteria”**.

Special Professional Retention Allowance

32. The Special Professional Retention Allowance (SPRA) was introduced in the 2008 Report (EOC Report 2009) in order to curb recruitment and retention problems in scarcity areas such as Engineering/Architecture/Quantity Surveying fields. This provision was maintained in consecutive PRB Reports and was extended to other grades requiring applicants thereto to be registered with a Professional Body.
33. In the context of the 2016 PRB Report, the survey carried out by the Bureau revealed that there was no serious recruitment and retention problem in the Engineering/Architecture/Quantity Surveying fields. On the contrary, it was found that the labour market had an over-supply of qualified candidates in these fields. Hence, in the last Report, the Bureau decided to waive the provision for the payment of the SPRA. Nevertheless, the provision for eligible officers in post as at 31 December 2015 was maintained up to 31 December 2016.
34. It was further recommended that those officers who:
- (i) leave the service prior to the age at which they may retire without the approval of the appropriate Service Commission should refund the totality of the SPRA paid to them; and
 - (ii) retire from the service on reaching the age at which they may retire without the approval of the appropriate Service Commission or thereafter, should refund only that part of the SPRA which they would have earned under this scheme after reaching the age at which they may retire without the approval of the appropriate Service Commission.
35. For this review exercise, it has been reported that officers who have benefitted from SPRA and who fall under categories of paragraphs 34 (i) and (ii) above are still being required to refund the allowance as mentioned therein when they are leaving or retiring from the service. As the provision of SPRA no longer exists and there is no scarcity of such candidates on the labour market, we are reviewing this provision.

Recommendation 3

36. **We recommend that officers who have benefitted from the Special Professional Retention Allowance up to 31 December 2016 and are leaving or retiring from the service will no longer be required to refund the sum obtained as allowance.**
37. **We further recommend that all officers who have left or retired from the service as from 01 January 2021, and who have been required to refund the allowance, should be reimbursed the amount refunded by them.**

Training for Officers in the General Services

38. The Bureau is reiterating the provision for relevant and work-related courses for officers of the General Services in order to keep abreast of latest development in their fields and develop their skills and competencies for improved service delivery.

Course for Clerical Officers

Recommendation 4

39. We recommend that the MPSAIR, in consultation with the MLGDRM and the Local Authorities, should mount and run appropriate training programmes for incumbents in the grade of Clerical Officer to render them skilled and polyvalent.

Advanced Course for Office Management Assistants

Recommendation 5

40. We recommend that the MPSAIR, in consultation with the MLGDRM and the Local Authorities should mount the Advanced Course in Effective Office Management and Supervision for incumbents in the grade of Office Management Assistant.
41. We further recommend that on successful completion of the Advanced Course in Effective Office Management and Supervision, incumbents in the grade of Office Management Assistant should be granted one increment, subject to the top salary of the grade.

Advanced Course for Higher Executive Officers

Recommendation 6

42. We recommend that the MPSAIR, in consultation with the MLGDRM and the Local Authorities should mount the Advanced Course in Effective Office Management and Supervision for incumbents in the grade of Higher Executive Officer.
43. We further recommend that officers in the grade of Higher Executive Officer, in post as at the eve of the publication of this Report, who have successfully completed the Advanced Course in Effective Office Management and Supervision, be allowed to move incrementally in the Master Salary Scale up to salary point Rs 47675 on a personal basis, provided they satisfy the performance criteria as described above.

Advanced Secretarial Course

Recommendation 7

44. We recommend that the MPSAIR, in consultation with the MLGDRM and the Local Authorities should make arrangement for Confidential Secretaries of Local Authorities to follow the Advanced Secretarial Course.

45. **We further recommend that on successful completion of the Advanced Secretarial Course, the Confidential Secretaries should be granted one increment, subject to the top salary of the grade.**

Miscellaneous

46. The provisions made under the Chapter 'Workmen's Group- General' in Volume 2 Part I of this Report as per the Table below, should also apply to incumbents in the Workmen's Group-General on the establishment of the Local Authorities:

Conditions/Allowances	Paragraph	Recommendation
Collection and deposit of keys at Police Stations	41.37	7
Making and Serving Tea/Coffee	41.201	40
Washing of Towels/Tablecloth/Curtains	41.203	41
Bulk Photocopy	41.206	42
Cleaning of Lavatories	41.208	43
Surveillant <i>formerly Security Guard</i>	41.210	44

Remuneration for Part Time Workers

47. Whilst determining the revised salaries for employees in part-time positions, the Bureau took into account, among others, that incumbents in almost all quarters have been paid the full amount of the interim allowance of Rs 1000 monthly, since January 2020 as approved by the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development. We consider this increase to be disproportionate vis-à-vis employees working on a full-time basis.
48. **As a result, we have brought necessary adjustments, based on the actual number of working hours, prior to arriving at the recommended rates. In so doing, the remuneration drawn by certain incumbents prior to the Report becoming effective, may prove to be higher than that recommended in this Report. In such cases, the incumbents should continue to draw the difference between what they are actually drawing and the revised salary as an allowance. This allowance should erode with the subsequent grant of salary compensation.**

Salary Codes

49. We are, hereunder, providing for salary codes for the Municipal and District Councils:

Municipal Councils	Code
(i) Port Louis	PL
(ii) Beau Bassin-Rose Hill	BH

(iii)	Curepipe	CE
(iv)	Quatre Bornes	QB
(v)	Vacoas-Phoenix	VP

	District Councils	Code
(i)	District Council of Black River	BR
(ii)	District Council of Flacq	FQ
(iii)	District Council of Grand Port	GP
(iv)	District Council of Moka	MA
(v)	District Council of Pamplemousses	PS
(vi)	District Council of Rivière du Rempart	RR
(vii)	District Council of Savanne	SE

The codes for the different departments within each Municipal Council as well as District Council are as follows:

	Department	Code
(i)	Administration	AM
(ii)	Finance	FI
(iii)	Public Infrastructure	PI
(iv)	Land Use and Planning	LP
(v)	Welfare	WL
(vi)	Public Health	PH

The code for the Village Councils is as follows: VC



