



Ministry of Civil Service Affairs and Administrative Reforms

30 July 2004

Ministry of Civil Service Affairs and Administrative Reforms
Circular Letter No. 41 of 2004
1/330/6/03

From: Senior Chief Executive, Ministry of Civil Service Affairs and Administrative Reforms

To: Supervising Officers i/c Ministries/Departments
Island Chief Executive, Rodrigues Regional Assembly

Schemes of Service

It has been brought to our attention that this Ministry's Circular Letters No. 5 of 1992 and No. 12 of 1993 as well as paragraph 1.1.4 of the Personnel Management Manual which lay down the basic principles for the preparation of schemes of service are not being followed, thus causing much delay in the prescription of schemes of service.

2. It has been noted, on several occasions, that -

- (a) proposals are made for high level posts to be filled by promotion without clear justification, notwithstanding the guidelines provided in this Ministry's Circular Letter No. 12 of 1993;
- (b) proposals for amending existing schemes of service or for the framing of new ones are made in isolation without taking into consideration the schemes of service for other posts in the cadre; and
- (c) filling of vacancies is still being recommended for high level posts in particular, on the basis of schemes of service which were prescribed a long time back and do not meet the present day requirements.

1. With a view to facilitating the processing of schemes of service and ensuring that these are dealt with promptly, the basic guidelines contained in this Ministry's Circular Letter No. 5 of 1992 have been updated in line with the recommendations of the Pay Research Bureau Report 2003 and the Report "Errors, Omissions and Clarifications" of the PRB Report 2003 and are set out at Annex A. A list of the general recommendations made as regards 'qualifications' requirements has been compiled and is at Annex B.

The attention of Responsible Officers is drawn once again on the need for them to -

- (a) ensure that schemes of service are scrutinized and updated as and when required, and particularly, well before vacancies are reported to the Service Commissions;
- (b) carry out an in-depth analysis of their proposals and assess the implications of such proposals on the overall staff structure to which the posts belong. The proposed changes should be fully justified; and
- (c) ensure that high level posts are filled, as far as possible, by way of selection with a view to standardising and rationalising the mode of appointment to posts at similar or comparable levels in different Ministries/Departments, while keeping in mind the specificity of each Ministry/Department.

Responsible Officers are requested to take **urgent action** for the framing/revision of schemes of service to reflect the recommendations contained in the Pay Research Bureau Report 2003 and the Report 'Errors, Omissions and Clarifications' of the PRB Report 2003 in respect of qualifications/duties/conditions of service in line with the guidelines at Annex A.


(K. Ponnusamy)
Senior Chief Executive

Copy to: Secretary to Cabinet and Head of the Civil Service

ANNEX A

Guidelines for Preparation of Schemes of Service

Title of the Post

- (a) The title of the post should be as laid down in the Civil Establishment Order. It should indicate as clearly as possible the function and level of responsibility of the job.
- (b) If a post is to be filled by female candidates or male candidates only, this should be clearly specified in the scheme of service, unless indicated by the title of the post.

Salary

Should be as set out in the Civil Establishment Order.

Qualifications

- (a) Qualifications, experience and personal skills and abilities required of a job holder should be determined only after careful analysis of the job profile.
- (b) Skills and aptitudes required of a job holder, particularly for high level posts, should be clearly specified.
- (c) Qualifications should be correctly and clearly stated. A clear demarcation should be made between those qualifications that are (i) essential and (ii) those which are desirable. Qualifications listed should be as exhaustive as possible.
- (d) (i) In schemes of service where the Cambridge School Certificate with credit in at least five subjects at two sittings is laid down as a requirement, the following formula should be used -
 - “(a) Cambridge School Certificate with credit in at least five subjects including English Language, French and Mathematics or Principles of Accounts obtained at not more than two sittings or
 - (b) Passes not below Grade C in at least five subjects including English Language, French and Mathematics or Principles of Accounts obtained at not more than two sittings at the General Certificate of Education ‘Ordinary Level’ Examinations provided that at one of the sittings, passes have been obtained either (i) in five subjects including English Language with at least Grade C in any two subjects or (ii) in six subjects including English Language with at least Grade C in any one subject or

- (c) "An equivalent qualification acceptable to the Public Service Commission."
- (ii) In schemes of service where the Cambridge School Certificate with credit in less than five subjects at two sittings is laid down as a requirement, the formula to be used should be on the same lines as at paragraph (d) (i) above and the number of credits required should be specified.
- (iii) In schemes of service where the 'qualifications' requirement is a Cambridge School Certificate with a credit in English Language, a "Note" in accordance with this Ministry's Circular Note No. 18 of 2000 should be included immediately after the Cambridge School Certificate requirements as follows –
- "Candidates not possessing a credit in English Language at the Cambridge School Certificate will also be considered provided they possess passes in at least two subjects at 'Principal Level' and one subject at 'Subsidiary Level' as well as the General Paper obtained on one certificate at the Cambridge Higher School Certificate Examinations."
- (iv) In schemes of service where a Cambridge School Certificate and a Cambridge Higher School Certificate are laid down as a requirement, a "Note" should be included to provide for the Cambridge School Certificate to have been obtained prior to the Cambridge Higher School Certificate.
- (v) In schemes of service where a Cambridge Higher School Certificate and a degree are laid down as a requirement, a "Note" should be included to provide for the Cambridge Higher School Certificate to have been obtained prior to the degree and for consideration to be given also to candidates who as at 30 June 2003 possessed a post Cambridge School Certificate degree provided they additionally hold a Master's Degree or a postgraduate diploma in the relevant field, as follows –
- "Note**
Qualification at ... (Cambridge Higher School Certificate) above should have been obtained prior to qualification at ... (degree) above. However, candidates who, as at 30 June 2003, did not possess the qualification at ... (Cambridge Higher School Certificate) above, will also be considered provided they hold –
- (a) a Cambridge School Certificate or Passes obtained on one certificate at the General Certificate of Education "Ordinary Level" either (i) in five subjects including English Language with at least Grade C in any two subjects or (ii) in six subjects including English Language with at least Grade C in any one subject or an equivalent qualification acceptable to the Public Service Commission; and

- (b) a Master's Degree or a postgraduate diploma from a recognised institution (in the field/one of the fields) at ... (degree) above or an equivalent qualification acceptable to the Public Service Commission.

Qualification at (a) under 'Note' should have been obtained prior to qualification at ... (degree) above and at (b) under 'Note'."

- (e) Once academic qualifications have been prescribed for an entry post in a cadre, they should not as a general rule be repeated for higher posts in that cadre.
- (f) Where different qualifications are proposed, these should be equivalent to one another. Care and objectivity should be exercised in weighing and balancing different sets of qualifications. In case of doubt, advice should be sought from the National Accreditation and Equivalence Council or the Mauritius Qualifications Authority, as appropriate, before any proposed scheme of service is submitted to the Ministry of Civil Service Affairs and Administrative Reforms for consideration.
- (g) Qualifications should, as far as possible, be capable of valid proof.
- (h) The upgrading/lowering of qualifications of a post has an incidence on the salary grading of the post. Therefore, any lowering of qualifications or change in qualifications should be fully justified.
- (i) Schemes of Service should not contain any conditions which might encroach upon the constitutional prerogatives of the Service Commissions.
- (j) In schemes of service where training is mentioned, it is necessary to indicate clearly the type of training.
- (k) Age limit should be specified, if necessary.
- (l) If holding a "substantive appointment" is to be a condition for eligibility to a post this should be mentioned in the scheme of service.
- (m) For employees in the Workmen's Group, it is advisable to state clearly whether appointment should be limited to serving officers on the establishment of the Ministry/Department concerned or it should be open to serving officers in the Service.

Duties

- (a) The duties should be defined in relation to organisational goals and objectives. They should be derived from an analysis of what work needs to be done and tasks that have to be carried out by the job holder if the purpose of the organisation or of an organisational unit is to be achieved.

- (b) They should reflect, as succinctly as possible, the specific demands of the job taking into consideration the level of responsibility, the qualifications, experience and personal attributes needed to carry it out.
- (c) Duties should be as comprehensive as possible, covering all aspects of the job to be done.
- (d) Duties should be updated regularly to fit present day requirements.

General Observations

- (a) In devising new schemes of service, provisos may be inserted to safeguard the interests of serving officers. Such provisos should be limited in time and should in no way cause prejudice to the scheme of service proper.
- (b) Where serving officers are already eligible for consideration under the core qualifications laid down in a scheme of service, it is not in order to include provisos to give them priority of consideration.
- (c) Jobs, whether new or existing, should be designed/redesigned in such a way so as to fit the existing structure of the Ministry/Department concerned.
- (d) In cases of restructure or the creation of new organisations, submissions of schemes of service to the Ministry of Civil Service Affairs and Administrative Reforms should invariably be accompanied by an organisation chart.
- (e) There should be only one scheme of service for one grade in a Ministry/Department, although there may be a number of posts in the same grade under different Divisions of the same Ministry/Department. If it is considered desirable that vacancies in the Division be filled by officers from that Division only, then the necessary provision regarding qualifications and duties appropriate to the Division should be made in the scheme of service.
- (f) A scheme of service should not be amended/ reviewed in isolation. When reviewing a scheme of service for a post in a cadre, it is necessary to consider whether the scheme of service for other posts in the same cadre need not be reviewed simultaneously.
- (g) Any request for a review of a scheme of service should be supported by the reasons therefore.

Extracts

**Pay Research Bureau Report 2003 and
Report 'Errors, Omissions and Clarifications' of the PRB Report 2003**

List of General Recommendations relating to Schemes of Service

Public Sector Computerisation

Recommendation 4

2.11 We additionally recommend that wherever appropriate:

- (i) scheme of service should be amended particularly where the job requires computer skills to give preference to candidates who are computer literate or who are holders of relevant IT competencies;

Other Recommendations

2.12 It is also recommended that:

- (a) staff should be required to perform all IT related activities directly or indirectly related to their job in the context of the e-government strategy and the implementation of government programme;

Experience, Skill and Competency

Recommendation 2

2.16 We recommend that for posts requiring technical qualifications which are scarce, candidates lacking part of these technical qualifications but having acquired a minimum of 10 years' relevant experience/competence and such competence has been recognised by an approved body as sufficient to make good for the lack of the technical qualification, should be given consideration for appointment to the said posts.

Qualification Requirements at Entry Level

Recommendation 3

2.18 We recommend that for grades requiring five credits at Cambridge School Certificate together with two subjects at "A" level or the Cambridge Higher School Certificate, candidates who have obtained the five credits at Cambridge School Certificate at two sittings should also be considered. However, the Cambridge School Certificate should be prior to the "A" level.

Recommendation 3A

11C

We recommend that the Ministry of Civil Service Affairs and Administrative Reforms may, particularly in areas where there is difficulty of recruitment and high turnover rate, extend, on a case to case basis in consultation with relevant parties, the recommendation of having the number of credits required at not more than two sittings to:

- (a) posts where a Cambridge School Certificate with five credits is required;
- (b) posts requiring less than five credits at the Cambridge School Certificate; and
- (c) posts where appointment is made from among serving officers

provided that the candidate has obtained at least the Cambridge School Certificate or the equivalent General Certificate of Education "O" Level at one of the two sittings.

Nationalisation of Qualification at Degree Level**Recommendation 4**

110

We recommend that the qualification requirements for entry grades requiring a degree should henceforth be a post "A" level degree in the relevant field. This does not apply to grades where a post SC degree has been deemed equivalent to a post HSC Diploma in the scheme of service e.g. in the Education Sector.

We, however, recommend that candidates who as at 30 June 2003 possessed a post SC degree should also be considered provided they additionally hold a Master's Degree or a Post Graduate Diploma in the relevant field.

Qualification Requirements for Grade-to-Grade Promotion**Recommendation 5**

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We recommend that where two or more qualifications are specified for promotion, an officer in the service at the level immediately below who possesses the whole of the higher/highest qualification but lacks part of the lower qualification/s, should also be considered for promotion, unless another additional qualification is also required for the promotional post.

Recommendation 5A

- B.12 B We recommend that where appointment is made by selection from among serving officers possessing a post "A" level or post HSC Degree, consideration should also be given to serving officers possessing a post SC or post "O" level Degree provided they additionally hold a Master's degree or a Post Graduate Certificate or Diploma in the relevant fields.

Alternative and Equivalent Qualifications**Recommendation 6**

- B.14 We recommend that alternatives to a prescribed qualification should as far as possible be of the same level and in the same subjects that are required for the post.
- B.15 We also recommend that where a post SC degree has been deemed to be equivalent to a post "A" level Diploma in a scheme of service, candidates who hold a degree but lack part or the whole of the SC qualification should also be considered for appointment in scarcity areas e.g. Oriental Language Teachers.
- B.16 We further recommend that when a candidate has been recruited on the basis of qualifications deemed to be equivalent to the prescribed qualifications in the scheme of service, this equivalence should continue to be considered for promotion posts as if the incumbent possesses the required qualifications.

RODRIGUES REGIONAL ASSEMBLY**Specific Conditions**

- B.22 A We recommend that where the salaries of identical/comparable grades in the Rodrigues Regional Assembly have been aligned on those of the Civil Service of the Island of Mauritius, the schemes of service of these grades should, wherever relevant, be amended along the lines of counterparts in the Civil Service.

Promotion**Recommendation**

- B.3.9 We recommend that:
- (a) class-to-class promotion should invariably be made on the basis of selection; and

- (b) grade-to-grade promotion should be determined on a case to case basis and the mode of promotion explicitly mentioned in the relevant schemes of service.

3.10

We further recommend the following promotion framework as a guideline for determining the promotion procedure for grade-to-grade promotion:

- (a) for grades at lower levels, where physical and technical skills can be developed through long practice and for grades with duties of same nature requiring mainly increased experience for the performance of the job, promotion could be made on the usual basis on the recommendation of the Supervising Officer;
- (b) for jobs at the middle level, where some decision-making ability, leadership qualities and skills on the job are required, seniority alone should not be depended upon but that along with seniority, merit must be given due weight and attention;
- (c) for jobs at higher levels, such as, first in command or second in command, appointment should be made by selection from suitable and qualified candidates at the appropriate levels from the same cadre or from another cadre that has branched out from the main cadre;
- (d) the selection exercise, both for middle and higher levels, should not necessarily be a competitive examination but could consist of an assessment of training received and experience; length of service; an oral examination; a performance test; a factor based on recorded service ratings; a factor based on formal in-service training courses successfully completed; a written objective test; or any combination thereof; and
- (e) where a selection exercise has been made for one of the levels of a cadre, appointment to the next grade could be made on the basis of seniority, i.e. in a cadre of four levels or more, selection could be made for the first and third levels or for the second and fourth levels: e.g. if an Assistant has been chosen through selection, the Deputy could be appointed on the basis of seniority and merit etc. This should not preclude selection at two successive levels where the need is felt.
