

GREEN PAPER ON PUBLIC SECTOR REFORM

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INTRODUCTION

There has been general consensus that the administrative machinery of the State must be improved to meet the demands of a rapidly changing domestic and global environment.

The calls for increase productivity and sensitivity to the consumers of public goods and services, and the growing concerns for value for money are some of the issues raised by the general public, private sector organisations, labour associations and other interested parties both locally, regionally and internationally.

Public managers themselves have also recognised the need that the Public Service must undergo the process of self-assessment and renewal, if the competence of public officers is to be effectively utilised to achieve stated targets.

Thus environmental scanning, ongoing research and experimentation and the creation of a climate of change and innovation infused with decision and creative leadership and management, is essential.

Earlier initiatives aimed at reform within the Public focussed on re-structuring and re-classifying offices within the Public Service, developing and strengthening the technical capacities and capabilities of public officers and the development of an integrated approach to financial management of the business of Government.

The Government plans to take the process further and at a much quicker pace by taking a more embracing approach Public Sector Reform and has therefore place Public Sector Reform as one of its many objectives to be attained during its term of office.

The Paper therefore

identifies some of the problems confronting the efficiency and effectiveness of the Public Service;

identifies the strength of the Public Service;

discusses the implication of these issues;

recommends strategies for reducing these problems and taking the reform efforts forward.

It is therefore hoped that the Green Paper will serve as the basis for much discussion and consultation on issues of Public Sector Reform.

PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

The purpose of the paper is to provide the basis for discussion on the issues relating to the Public Sector Reform agenda. The paper gives an indication of the critical areas of focus and proposed initiatives and strategies.

The paper limits its intervention to the Public Services as defined within the Constitution and as such, parastatal and other government owned enterprises are not dealt with.

It is however recognised that meaningful reform of the operations of the administrative sub-system must also focus on Public Enterprises or Statutory Bodies and other government owned agencies. These will be dealt with separately.

PHILOSOPHY GUIDING PUBLIC SECTOR REFORM

The Philosophy guiding Public Sector Reform is that the Public Service is the key agent in managing the affairs of the island. In this regard it must be concerned with the issues of the socio-economic development and integration of our society.

It must also serve as an agent of innovation and change. In order to be successful in these tasks and to meet the challenges of the ever-changing environment the Public Service must itself undergo changes in its ways of doing business.

All of this is premised on the view that the foundation of the Public Service lies in the separation of policy making from policy implementation and that a neutral and impartial Public Service is essential for the effective implementation of government policies.

In carrying out these functions the Public Service must be guided by the principles of

Professionalism

Impartiality

Neutrality

Accountability

Efficiency

In the quest for a new dynamic role, the Public Service must be staffed with highly motivated employees, supported by the appropriate processes, structures, rewards, sanctions, technical and financial resources.

In this context it is essential that a review be undertaken of the entire administrative systems of the State including the legislative framework within which the Public Service operates.

RATIONALE FOR PUBLIC SECTOR REFORM

The need for Public Sector Reform is driven by a number of imperatives. These can be grouped under the following headings:

Administrative

Social

Technological

Political

Economical

Administrative

Government is concerned about the ability of the State's administrative arm to efficiently and effectively achieve its mandate. Issues of the size of the Public Service and the expenditure on the State Sector are being questioned vis-à-vis whether value for money is provided to the general public.

These concerns have placed a responsibility on the Public Service to adopt modern management methods and practices in conducting and delivering valued goods and services. In this milieu the building of new or re-constituted systems and the decay and abandonment of irrelevant ones is an imperative. Such systems must deal with the issues of accountability and measures aimed at improving productivity in the Public Service.

Social

Increasingly, citizens are demanding greater participation in the affairs of government, as well as quality public goods and services. The call for better governance and transparency in the operation of the State has therefore challenged the post-colonial historical approach to information, communication and citizen-participation. In this context, fostering the development and sustainability of civil society particularly Non-Governmental organisations (NGOs) and other interest groups is critical.

Inherent in this is the concepts of decentralisation and devolution of authority with the involvement of a wider cross-section of society in the decision-making and implementing aspects of the State.

The challenge to the State is to develop responsible and responsive and representative administrative systems.

Technology

The 21st century has been characterised as the information age, as increasingly organisations are harnessing, improving and managing information in order to secure competitive advantages and be more effective and efficient in delivering quality of services.

The harnessing of modern trends in information technology and the development and refinement of management information system, have called into question the existing structure, policies, processes and mode of relationship which exist between the Public Service and other organisations.

Under such conditions the Public Service must develop new and innovative policies, structures and processes in order to respond to its various clientele and to deliver the quality of goods and services expected of a modern public sector.

Political Ideology

The past decade has seen demands made by donor agencies and also other bodies for a reduction in the role of the State, from an active participant in economic activities to a facilitatory and regulatory one.

This together with Government's belief that there are now activities which can be best handled by the private sector and other non-governmental agencies meant that government would divest itself of some of its responsibilities. The partial withdrawal of the State from some activities, necessitates new forms of institutional arrangements to guide the relationship between Government and these agencies.

These arrangements would be fashioned against the socio-economic, cultural and political orientation of our country. Against this background Government still recognises that it has an active role to play in the macro-economic and social development of the country and the establishment of the regulatory mechanism to ensure equity and social justice.

Economical

The changing world economic environment and the formulation of trading blocs have witnessed a decline in the sources of, and quota of aid, grants and other funds made available to developing countries.

The developed countries are also faced with the challenge of utilising their resources in a manner which benefits their citizens. This has also contributed to reduced aid flows to countries like St. Lucia.

The withdrawal of trade preferences to one of our main foreign exchange earners has meant that Government has to operate with decreases in revenue generated. As such countries like ours must seek to mobilise a greater portion of the domestic resources to facilitate the socio-economic development of its citizens. The State must therefore find innovative ways to utilise its resources. Further the international, technical bureaucracies

as part of their conditionalities, have also called for a new and resourceful role for the State's machinery, in order to ensure that funds secured from these agencies, and technical support provided are efficiently and effectively utilised.

It is therefore essential that the Public Service undertake a review of existing policies and procedures. Some of the areas of concerns are:

recruitment and selection processes

structure, functions and operations

relations with the public as well as departmental mechanisms for ensuring efficient and courteous service to the public

accountability, monitoring and evaluation systems

productivity, waste reduction and control

operational cost as well as techniques for measuring performances

human resource development and utilization

changing the organisational culture and continuous organisational review.

BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE

The Public Service of St. Lucia is based upon the concepts of the Westminster Whitehall model of Government which inter alia speaks to a separation of functions between the Executive, Legislature and Judiciary.

These basic concepts have stressed an administrative sub-system which should operate as a neutral and impartial organisation engaging in policy execution and with only a minor role in policy formulation.

The post-independence witnessed the growth in the Public Service as it sought to meet the challenges of the expanding role of the State in the political, social and economic sphere of the country.

In pursuit of its functions the Public Service, possessed a number of features which can be deemed as the strengths of the Public Service. These include:

well defined structures of Ministries/Departments;

clear and unambiguous salary structure commensurate with grades;

high percentage of trained personnel;

internal expertise are available;

career structure and hence opportunities for upward mobility;

wealth of organisational knowledge arising out of the day to day activities of the Ministries and Departments;

continuity – operations continue beyond the life of the party in power;

specialisation of functions at certain levels;

opportunities available for continuous training and development

Over the years, the growth of the Public Service and the over-development of its organisational structure without commensurate improvements in its control and co-ordinating mechanisms coupled with management and supervisory practices have tended to erode the strengths of the Public Service and has led to;

over-concentration of decision-making at the top of the hierarchy;

goal displacement

in flexibility in dealing with day to day problems;

slow response to adopting practices associated with modern management;

rigid adherence to outdated processes, rules and procedures;

duplication of efforts;

enhancement of patterns of behaviour which reduces productivity;

a general sense of insensitivity to the needs of customers of the Public Service.

The impetus for change and innovation is therefore essential.

VISION OF REFORM

The vision of the reform is to:

develop a more effective and efficient Public Service capable of delivering quality service at optimal cost; and is embued with a strong ethical, professional and national development orientation.

In so doing it must be aimed at:

the maximisation of returns from scarce resources through relevant training, the design and establishment of appropriate structures and the introduction of innovative management approaches;

a heightened sense of responsibility with a focus on accountability and productivity;

enhanced self-esteem, job satisfaction and better customer services;

Improved effectiveness of revenue collection agencies;

co-ordination and integration of ongoing actions into a rational plan;

a change in work culture of the Public Service;

a focus on management, leadership and technology;

help eliminate wastage in all its various forms;

STRATEGIC PLANNING

The creation of a new Civil Service must address inter alia the manner in which the overall business of Government is conceptualised and administered. Germane to this is the planning culture which pervades the system.

The current planning culture within the government service is more geared towards an input orientation rather than the achievements of outputs. In this respect planning tends to be of a short-term horizon, and in a sense, disjointed. Insufficient linkages also exist between the plan of the various agencies of government.

The adoption of a strategic planning approach is therefore a necessary prerequisite for a modern Public Service.

Strategies

Strategic Planning is the formal process of making decisions that are intended to affect the future. This requires that all Ministries and departments prepare a clear mission supported by functional objectives. These objectives must be monitored to ensure that the expected results are achieved.

This approach requires the commitment of senior managers and professionals within the various Ministries and Departments, who are expected to be the facilitators of the process.

The process should be facilitated through the establishment of a planning team within each Ministry/Department.

This team should be multi-disciplinary in its approach and should be headed by the Deputy Permanent Secretary or other senior personnel. The team should have the following mandate:

develop and review the mission and core activities of the Ministry/Department;

determine and prioritised activities to be undertaken pursuant to the mission of Ministries/Departments;

develop the strategies for the attainment of organisational objectives;

identify the resources, human, physical, financial and material that are required;

establish time frames for the accomplishment of each activity;

establish the mechanism for periodical review of the achievement of the plan.

The Budget Committee within each Ministry/Department can or should be transformed into the strategic planning team of each Ministry/Department. The institutionalisation of the planning culture within each Ministry requires, discussions and consultations with the staff and their various stakeholders.

In such a milieu it is expected that each Ministry and Department will undertake an assessment of their strengths and weaknesses, and this engage in the process of environmental scanning and self assessment.

The use of retreats can also provide the forum for sharing and exchanging of ideas, clarifying issues and consensus building.

The establishment of the strategic planning team will also provide a ready basis for the development of a National Plan and Strategy as the information generated will be fed into the Ministry responsible for co-ordinating national planning activities.

In this respect regular meetings and consultations will be held between the chairpersons of strategic planning teams of each Ministry/ Department. This forum would serve as an arena for:

sharing and exchanging ideas

identifying areas of conflict and overlap

discussing and harmonising the various strategic plans

Properly executed, the strategic planning process would provide the following benefits:

greater accountability and control

improved operational efficiency

elimination of redundant processes and procedures

development and institutionalisation of a team approach to decision making and problem solving.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONING

Arising out of the strategic planning processes would be the need to develop appropriate structures and relationships to achieve the goals of any given Ministry.

The organisational structure of any entity is among other things expected to reflect

the manner in which work is organised and distributed

authority relationship

communication flows and patterns

These arrangements within the Public Service has led to an organisation that tend to reflect the following:

centralisation of authority

emphasise on careerism instead of commitment and productivity

fragmentation and delays in the flow of communication

a multi-tiered, hierarchical and bureaucratic structure

In its functioning the Public Service has also tended to:

display duplication of efforts and overlapping roles and responsibilities;

discourage a team based approach to the management of the affairs of the State;

display weakness in the implementation of programmes;

assign responsibility to officers without the appropriate authority;

utilised outdated information technology and management information system;

pay insufficient attention to monitoring and evaluation mechanism;

Such bureaucratic pathologies stand in opposition to the flexible, lean, responsive and learning organisation that is required for a new Public Service.

In this context, it is imperative that the structure of the Civil Service be reviewed.

Strategies

Each Ministry will be required to identify;

- the major processes and procedures of each agency
- its main customers of both internal and external
- the relationship between the Ministry and its customers
- enabling legislation in support of these relationships
- structures in support of these relationships
- review these patterns of relationships.

The conduct of these audits would enable Ministries and Departments to identify areas of overlaps and redundancies in their operations. The findings of these reviews would therefore enable Ministry/Department to develop the appropriate structure, systems, policies and procedures to guide its operations, improve the speed of services provided and its relationship with the Public.

In so doing the development and establishment of operations manuals would provide clear guidelines for the conduct and functioning of Ministries and Departments.

The business of organisational designs must also consider the issue of reducing the size of Government where possible and also the introduction of more appropriate structures. In this arena, the concepts and practice of (i) privatising (ii) contracting (iii) corporatising certain government services will be considered.

In considering areas which lend themselves to these intervention, the following criteria would be considered:

- the area should not affect national security and justice;
- there must be sufficient and competent firms or individuals already operating in that area;
- the transactional cost of non compliance should be marginal;
- the area should be one in which performance can be readily measured and monitored.

These criteria are essential in order to ensure quality and cost effective service to the public. Considerations should be given to government facilitating the creation of private sector agencies to carry on the business which was formerly done by the Civil Service entities.

Government's role in this endeavour would be:

to prepare the Articles of Association and Memorandum for the entity

to enter into a three to five year contract with the entity.

The above would ensure a transitional period as the Section/Unit moves from the Civil Service to a private entity. It would also ensure a degree of social comfort for employees of the chosen Departments.

HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT, MANAGEMENT AND TRAINING

A critical aspect of any Public Sector Reform Programme is the focus on human resource development and utilisation.

This aspect is essential as it is the activities of employees which are harmonised in pursuit of the goals of the State. Towards this end, employees of the Public Service must possess the necessary technical, interpersonal and conceptual skills required for effective performance of their functions.

Human resource development and utilisation also requires that employees have the information pertaining to their job, performance expectations, standards and criteria for evaluation. Of importance also is the timely feedback on performance and the establishment of corrective mechanisms.

The management of the human resource is a key component towards improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the public sector. In this context it has been noted that the management of the human resources of the Civil Service is spread between

The Public Service Commission

The Ministry of the Public Service

The Permanent Secretaries and Heads of Departments of the various Ministries

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Public Service Commission

The Public Service Commission (PSC) was established under Section 85 of the Saint Lucia Constitution Order 1978.

Role and Function of the Public Service Commission

The Commission is vested with the power or authority to:

appoint persons to hold offices or to act in offices in the Public Service;

confirm appointments;

exercise disciplinary control over persons;

remove these persons from office when necessary.

The Constitution of St. Lucia also confers unto the Commission the powers to regulate its own proceedings and to delegate any of its powers with the consent of the Prime Minister to any public officer.

There has been the view that the Public Service Commission is a relict of the past and hinders rather than facilitates the proper management of the Civil Service.

The basis on which these views are established are:

limited power and authority of public sector managers to effectively manage the human resources;

lengthy delays being experienced in taking action against officers for various

breaches of codes and conduct;

delays in processing of placement related matters;

Insensitivity to the needs of public sector managers and the apparent lack of regard for some aspect of the human resource needs and constraints of the Public Service.

Strategies

In an effort to improve upon the workings of the Public Service Commission the following will be undertaken:

Revision of the draft list of posts to which appointments can be made under delegated authority;

Regular dialogue between the Ministry of the Public Service and the Public Service Commission;

Increasing the levels of posts to which appointment can be made under delegated authority;

Establishment of Public Service Commission Regulation.

In addition to the above there is the need to provide the supporting policy environment through:

establishment of Code of Conduct

establishment of Civil Service Act

developing and prescribing penalties for breaches of the Codes of Conduct.

It has also been suggested that consideration should be given to the possible amendment to the Constitution of St. Lucia with regards to the role and function of the Public Service Commission.

Such a decision will only be taken following comprehensive discussions with all interested parties, particularly Staff Associations.

Ministry of the Public Service

As one of the central agencies in the Civil Service the role and functions of the Ministry of the Public Service is key to Public Sector Reform initiatives. This Ministry is charged with

determining and making recommendations with regards to terms and employment of officers;

examining and evaluating the staffing, structural, organisational and management proposals of Ministries and Departments and making policy recommendations accordingly;

Collecting, compiling and maintaining proper records on the staffing, structure and organisation of Ministries and Departments and keeping such data current;

Providing information and advice on matters relating to staffing, structure, organisation and management of Ministries and Departments;

Preparing career, recruitment and succession plans, defining measures to attract and retain skilled and experienced personnel, determining causes of undesired staff turnover and recommending appropriate action;

Determining the actual training needs at all levels within the public service and establish a priority among these established needs;

Evaluate the training programmes on their completion to determine their effectiveness.

Keeping and updating regularly the policies, regulations and procedures of the Civil Service as they relate to personnel administration.

In addition, the Ministry plays a role in some aspects of the recruitment process notably the issue of interviews and or initial screening of applicants. This Ministry is also responsible for the processing of applications for Civil Service training of less than six months duration.

The Ministry has generally been viewed as being rigid in its approach and insensitive to the ever changing managerial environment and the demands of other Ministries and Departments.

Public Sector Reform strategy demands that the operating style and centralised activities of this Ministry needs to be reviewed to give greater flexibility to Permanent Secretaries and Heads of Departments.

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Strategies:

The Ministry of the Public Service must shift away from its seeming emphasis on issues of placement and serving as a command centre to one which is geared at providing the supportive service to the various Ministries and Department.

In this context the Ministry should consider devolving some of its responsibilities on issues of

performance appraisals and the applications of the incremental scheme for the Public Service

providing for rental of office accommodation

approval of vacation leave and leave for sporting occasions

maternity leave

In the context of the new era the role of the Ministry of the Public Service as a facilitator, regulator, negotiator, research centre, training and development, counselling and guidance assumes greater importance.

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Facilitator

The facilitatory role of the Ministry of the Public Service should centre on providing advice to the various Ministries and agencies on all matters of human resource development and utilisation, serving as the conduit of information from various Ministries and Public Officers to the Public Service Commission.

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Regulatory

The regulatory function of the Ministry is based upon the principle of fair and organisational justice on all matters pertaining to the issue of training, the condition of service of employees and issues contingent upon this. It is also required that the regulatory function should be aimed at the protection of the integrity of the Public

Service by ensuring that Ministries and Departments adhere to policies enunciated by Cabinet on matters of the governance of the Civil Service.

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Negotiating

The negotiating role of the Public Service is integrally tied with its relationship with the various Staff Associations, in order to ensure that matters pertaining to grievances are handled as expeditiously as possible.

The Ministry would continue serve as the focal point for dialogue and discussions with the Staff Associations on matters pertaining to the overall development of the Public Service. In this context would seek to further strengthen this process by ensuring that staff Associations are consulted on all matter affecting the growth and development of the Public Service.

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Research Centre

The issue of ongoing action and environmental assessment must be part of the ethos of the Ministry of the Public Service. Consequently greater focus will be given to the research role of the Ministry of the Public Service in the following areas:

Issues of organisational efficiency and effectiveness

Development of new management practices and techniques;

The conduct of management audit and other organisational methods and studies;

Research on various incentive schemes and reward systems.

Evaluating the success of any new administrative, human and organisational policies approved by Cabinet.

In this regard the Ministry of the Public Service should be seen as a main source of policy advise to Cabinet on matters of organisational structures and functioning.

Training and Development

Modern management thought and practice recognises that there must be a strong link between the mission and business strategy of an enterprise and its human resource policies in particular the training, human resource development and utilisation aspect.

The Ministry of the Public Service would therefore play the lead role in

Coordinating training activities to ensure that there is no duplication of effort;

Co-ordinating job orientation activities;

Liaising with local, regional and international personnel and organisations in the delivery of training programmes pertinent to the development of the Public Service;

Developing relevant training programmes geared towards improving the productivity and skills enhancing of the Public Service.

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Counselling and Guidance

Another critical role of the Ministry is that of providing counselling and guidance services. The focus would be on providing public officers with instructions on issues of career planning and sustaining and enhancing behaviour that is supportive of the new ethos of the Public Service.

Emphasis will also be placed on providing assistance to public officers whose behaviour and other concerns impact negatively on their performance and the productivity of their Ministry and Department.

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Structure of the Ministry of the Public Service

Pursuant to this emphasis, the Ministry of the Public Service would be adequately staff with the appropriate skills to fulfil its mandate. It is necessary that an organisational review will be undertaken of the Ministry of the Public Service to provide it with the appropriate structure and personnel to sustain the reform effort.

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Other Issues of Human Resource Development and Management

Other aspects of the human resource development function are carried out by a number of Agencies/Ministries/Departments. The training functions considered as long term (over six months) is carried out by the Human Resource Development Department, while training considered to be less than six months is the purview of the Ministry of the Public Service.

Additionally some training is undertaken by a number of line Ministries. There however is a lack of integration and effective co-ordination between the training initiatives of the various agencies engaged in the process.

Some other limitations of the management and development of the human resources within the Public Service are identified as:

Under-utilisation of professional, technical and managerial skills hampers the efforts to successfully implement plans and programmes.

Hierarchical structures, centralised management and non-participatory leadership styles.

Lack of ineffective supervision contributes to reducing the capacity and capabilities of the human resources to function effectively.

The skewness of training towards the middle and upper echelons of the Public Service.

Training and development appears to be geared towards academic skills rather than practical "hands on" training.

No effective review mechanisms for dealing with poor performance.

Identification of the human resource needs of the Public Service is still not systematic and thorough.

Job orientation is still not treated with the priority that it deserves and that there are mixed feelings as to its impact.

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Strategies:

The human resource strategy should therefore focus on improving the capacity of the Public Service to efficiently deliver its mandate, through:

Clearly stated aims and objectives

Managerial capability

Appropriate organisational structures

Development of appropriate rewards and sanctions

Linking individual performance with the organisation plans

Improving the skills and knowledge of employees

Improving and providing incentives for Public Officers to pursue training at their own expense

Integration of human resource training and development activities.

Clearly stated aims and objectives

Clearly stated aims and objectives for each organisation and its constituent parts based on the organisation's overall strategy are necessary. This involves identifying the core areas

that each Ministry/Department must continue to focus on to succeed. These critical success factors (e.g. quality focus, quick response, revenue generation, innovation, customer focus, cost control, learning etc) would be the principal focus of each Ministry/Department and all employees' attention must be focused on them.

Managerial and employee capability

Recruiting and developing managers with the managerial and technical competencies to foster organisational performance and create an innovative team based culture which motivates employees to give of their best should be a priority.

Appropriate organisational structures

This requires clearly defined roles, jobs, authority, and responsibility together with relationships, effective and efficient processes.

The combination of activities or processes each employee is involved in needs to be reviewed to ensure cost effectiveness, quality, and the achievement of delivery targets. Performance measurements should be featured.

Development of Appropriate Rewards and Sanctions

A key element in creating a challenging performance management culture is to reinforce the behaviour consistent with this culture. This is partly achieved by the structure of the compensation package, that is, the level and comparability of base pay, whether and how performance pay is awarded (on individual, team, unit or organisational/performance).

Improving the Skills and Knowledge of Employees

There is need to intensify the efforts of the Ministry of Public Service to upgrade the skills and qualifications of offices, through:

The provision of the appropriate in-service training programmes aimed at all levels within the Public Service particularly those within the middle management grade.

The training should be geared towards problem solving and improving the performance of the individual employees and consequently that of the organisation.

The adoption of the action learning concept during training seminars and programmes would contribute to creating the linkage between training and organisational performance.

Improving and Providing Incentives for Public Officers to Pursue Training at Their Own Expense

This strategy is important given the ever-declining sources of funding to support overseas training. In this respect Government should undertake to provide or revise this existing policy on study leave with pay by providing full pay for candidates during the duration of their studies. The extension of the tuition refund programme should also be considered.

This approach would ensure that public officers accept some responsibility for their own career development.

Integration of Human Resource Training and Development Activities

The integration of human resource development and training should focus on improving the capacity of the Ministry responsible for Human Resource Development to conduct proper needs-assessment and the planning of the appropriate programmes and projects.

To facilitate this process, it is therefore essential that consideration be given to merging the activities of the Human Resource Development Department and the Ministry of the Public Service with specific reference to training and development as it pertains to public officers. This is key as human resource development should not be divorced from human resource utilisation, but should be fully integrated.

The Establishment of Human Resource Development Units within each Ministry and Department would also facilitate the integration process.

This Unit would be responsible for:

Identification of training needs of their Ministry

Staff development and training

Counselling and guidance

General research in aspects of administrative efficiency and effectiveness

Improving the coordination of efforts at human resource development within the Public Service

Serving as change agents within each Ministry

These units would work with the Ministry of the Public Service in developing policies and procedures to guide the human resource management process. The close linkage between these Units and the Ministry of the Public Service would also serve as a forum for the sharing of ideas and achieving a common understanding of the interpretation and application of the various rules and regulations and enactment guiding the Public Service.

These Human Resource Development Units would be headed by the Assistant Secretary within each Ministry. It is therefore essential that attention be paid to the cadre of persons being appointed as Assistant Secretaries.

Career Planning and Development

The above approach rests on the premise that the Civil Service is still seen as a career for the vast majority of public officers. In this respect, career development and planning is a crucial pillar. This development should have as its focus:

the proper selection, recruitment and placement of officers at the entrance level of the organisation;

a deliberate attempt at organisational socialisation through properly structured induction, orientation and training seminars;

ongoing assessment of the performance of officers through the performance management;

provision of incentives and disincentives to performance;

introduction of a probationary period for all new entrants within the Civil Service and for persons promoted to higher grades.

The benefits of the new Human Resource Development and Management approach are as follows;

Integration of organisation vision with the human resource strategy;

More efficient and effective use of all human resources

Establish and re-enforce a new culture and ethos

Organisational development and individual growth can be easily monitored.

Application of the above strategies would create a cadre of responsible, knowledgeable and well-motivated public officers, the spill-off effect of which would be a more efficient and productive Public Service.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

The management of performance encompasses the entire organisational effort in achieving greater productivity within an organisation. An analysis of the processes, procedures and practices of performance management within the Civil Service has revealed the following:

No uniformity in standards set for performance;

Roles not clearly defined;

Overlapping responsibilities;

Performance management tend to focus primarily on performance appraisal;

Little correlation between successful performance and rewards systems;

Absences or limited mechanism for taking action against poor performers.

Successful performance management requires:

Establishing priorities for each Ministry and Department;

Defining the goals and objectives of each programme and its expected output;

Establishing performance standards and measurements;

Establishing, monitoring and evaluative mechanism;

Performance appraisals system;

Establishing incentives for outstanding performers;

Applying of corrective action to guide behaviour.

Appraising Performance

Performance appraisal systems encompass a number of interrelated activities, such as performance appraisal, counselling and guidance, rewards and sanctions.

These activities:

Provide managers with feedback on the progress and achievements;

Identify areas of work systems that have quality problems;

Measure the extent to which present processes and outputs meet the established quality standards and objectives;

A number of deficiencies within the existing system have been identified. Some of these are:

High degree of subjectivity in the appraising of employees;

Insufficient follow up on issues highlighted during the appraisal of employees

System is too mechanical and does not facilitate the climate for greater productivity;

The interpretation and application of the factors used within the performance appraisal system differs among supervisors.

Performance evaluation did not play a significant role in determining the Training Priority needs of the Civil Service nor who should be selected for training.

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Strategies

The strategies to address these issues should centre on:

Development of performance evaluation processes and procedures;

Training and communication, management climate;

Use of Performance Appraisal Systems a developmental tool.

Development of New Performance Evaluation Processes and Procedures

The development of this initiative should be through the establishment of a Committee.

This team should comprise:

Representative of the Unions representing Civil Servants;

Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of the Public Service

Permanent Secretary of any Ministry under consideration.

This Committee should report in four months. The purpose of this Committee should be to review the current process and to make recommendations on the introduction of new processes and procedures.

In anticipation of this process each Ministry would be required to establish its own in-house team to examine its own specific case and submit its recommendations to the Committee.

The appraising of employees should extend to all levels of the Civil Service including the Permanent Secretaries and Heads of Department.

This group of officers have traditionally not been evaluated. The new Civil Service culture should require that the performance of all employees be periodically assessed. In this respect the following strategy is proposed for the evaluation of Permanent Secretaries and Heads of Departments.

Support for the Minister

The idea here is since the Minister is responsible for the broad goals of any particular Ministry then it is the duty of the Permanent Secretary to provide support for such initiatives once enunciated by Government;

Policy

This includes advice to Minister and contribution to broader Government policies;

Communication and Public Relations

This factor should cover efforts at improving communication within Ministries and action taken to improve communication with the public and other clientele;

Financial Management

Prudent use of financial resources allocated to the Ministry

The introduction of initiatives to reduce expenditure

The degree to which Permanent Secretaries adhere to circulars from the Ministry of Finance.

Human Resource Management

This general heading should cover:

Efforts at human resource planning, succession planning, performance evaluation

The extent to which a Permanent Secretary complies with directives and circulars from the Ministry of the Public Service.

Achievements of stated goals and objectives

This pertains to the degree to which the stated goals and objectives as listed in the programmes of Ministries and Departments are accomplished.

Evaluation of such officers should be done using a Review Panel comprising:

The Permanent Secretary of Finance;

Cabinet Secretary;

Permanent Secretary of the Public Service;

Minister of Permanent Secretary under review;

Chairman of the Public Service Commission.

Parliamentary Commissioner

The purpose of this Review is also to establish specific objectives against which Permanent Secretaries' performance will be assessed.

Salary increases should be awarded to Permanent Secretaries based upon the degree of attainment of established goals and objectives.

The effects of assessing Permanent Secretaries should persuade these officers to give greater attention to evaluation of staff under their supervision.

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Training and Communication

Training should have as its principle foci the following:

Performance appraisal as a supervisory tool;

Performance evaluation interviews

Performance evaluation systems

Counselling and guidance

Problems associated with performance appraisal.

This training should be aimed initially at persons designated as Human Resource Coordinators within the various Ministries, but should be extended to all Supervisors within the Civil Service. The use of an external facilitator should enhance this process.

In the long-term the continuity in training should be handled by the officers designated as Human Resource Coordinators who should serve as resource persons.

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Management Climate

i. Between the Ministry of Public Service

Improving this climate requires constant dialogue and consultation matters;

At two levels:

meetings between the Permanent Secretaries and the Ministry of Public Service, where broad policy discussions can be taken, and the linkages between policies identified and established. In this respect the Committee of Permanent Secretaries should be an institution of the Public Service.

monthly meetings between the Chief Personnel Officer and Human Resource Coordinators.

ii. Within Each Ministry

This aspect is crucial to the sustainability of the process as developing and institutionalising a new performance evaluation system requires a supportive internal management climate.

Attention should be paid to the fostering of a team concept within Ministries and Departments to deal with personnel management-related issues.

Efforts at improving the management climate should focus on:

developing a participative leadership style;

linking of individual and organisational objectives;

a climate of openness, mutual respect and trust;

fairness and consistency.

Some of the measures which can achieve the above are:

holding of monthly meetings between supervisors and subordinate staff on all matters affecting the organisation;

constant, free and honest communications between all levels of employees within a Ministry.

The establishment of this new philosophy should begin as an immediate activity as this is clearly required for the improvement and acceptance of a new performance evaluation system.

STANDARDS SETTING AND QUALITY CONTROL

Performance Management also involves the elements of standards setting and quality control. In this context efforts would be made at developing quality standards for all aspects of government operations. These should be derived from the vision, mission statements and programmes of the various Ministries and Departments.

Quality is used in the indirect sense of production of quality of goods and services and improving all operations and activities pertaining to Government.

The search for improving quality requires that all systems and procedures of the Public Service be reviewed to identify areas of redundancies and their subsequent elimination.

Quality service also involves both qualitative and quantitative improvements. Qualitative improvements should focus on:

Reliability

Responsiveness

Timeliness

Courteousness

Integrity

Readiness to assist

Accuracy of information

Flexibility

Strategies:

A statement as to what each Ministry/Department aims to achieve and with what resources;

The expected quality of the services provided such as e.g. waiting time, accuracy of information.

Documentation of the various processes and activities of each Ministry and the communication of such to both the internal and external client of each Ministry/Department.

The identification of a suitable officer or officers to ensure those standards is adhered to.

Control mechanism for ensuring the adherence to standards. Such control mechanisms would include both reward and sanctions for poor performance.

Commitment of management personnel and the political directorate to quality and the implementation of quality programmes.

ISSUES OF PRODUCTIVITY

Allied to the business of quality improvement is also that of productivity, as poor and low productivity is a cost to the State.

The matter of productivity improvement would address the following:

Human Resources

Systems and Procedures

Organisational Structure

Management Style

Work Environment

Materials, Equipment and Technology

Waste Management

Human Resources

The ability for the Public Service to achieve its performance goal is dependent upon the quality of its human resources, as it is the activities of employees which are coordinated. It is therefore important that:

That employees are provided with the necessary training in the areas related to their work

There is matching between employees' abilities and the job

Performance standards are set for the organisation and employees

A healthy working environment be created within Ministries and Departments

Encourage effective communication between the management and staff

Systems and Procedures

Improving productivity within the Public Service requires that efforts be taken to review all systems and procedures in order to identify

Areas of redundancies

Areas of overlap

Duplication of efforts

Areas that lend themselves to quantitative analysis and the establishment of quantitative measures

Organisational Structure

The organisational structure is one of the main instruments through which the activities of individuals are coordinated, and has an impact on productivity, therefore it is essential that appropriate structures be developed.

The appropriate structure would ensure that:

Functions of Divisions, Sections and Units are properly defined to avoid duplication of effort;

Co-ordination of functions of Ministries in a manner which complement each other;

Facilitate the free flow of information and resources between and within Ministries.

Management

A key aspect in the quest for increased productivity is the role functions and influence of managers within the Public Service. It is therefore a condition that such officers play a critical role in the planning and determination of the goals and vision of their respective Ministries and create a working environment which is based upon positive work values of integrity accountability and discipline.

Work Environment

The environment within which work is done also plays its part in increasing productivity as such attention should be placed on the design, layout and the provision of basic office supplies and equipment.

In short, attention should be placed on the ergonomics of the work place.

Materials, Equipment and Technology

Officers must also be provided with the basic tools, materials, equipment and technology to carry out their work/function. Faulty equipment and tools can reduce the level of expected productivity.

Waste Management

Another feature of productivity is the reduction of areas of wastage. This wastage presently exists in the areas of:

Stationery and supplies

Furniture and equipment

Unofficial telephone calls

Allocation of office space

Government vehicles

Lighting system in some buildings

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Strategies:

Such wastage can be significantly reduced if appropriate measures are applied. These include:

proper monitoring and control of stationery and supplies

development of a computerised inventory system.

monitoring of furniture and equipment as well as repairing of old furniture.

standardisation of office space allocated to departments.

establishment of a telephone system which facilitates personal identification, numbers (PIN) for monitoring and debarring calls.

Monitoring and control of government vehicles and parts.

Installation of switches per a standardised number of lights.

Application measures of performance evaluation as alluded to previously.

Increasing productivity within the Public Service also suggest:

a degree of measurement of productivity;

the establishment of productivity indicators;

the translation of organisational productivity measures and standards into individual productivity.

In so doing, it is essential to:

identify main output of Ministry/Department

establish productivity indicators based upon the main output identified

collect information with regards to productivity

The same process can be utilised for establishment of productivity levels for the individual employee or group of employees.

ORGANISATIONAL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

The creation of a new Civil Service requires a change in the existing climate and culture. The measures discussed so far will foster the environment for facilitating a new Civil Service culture. This however can only be sustained if efforts at addressing the human aspects of the organisation are undertaken and officers are instilled with new work values.

Leadership

The new Civil Service culture requires a leadership cadre that is also infused with a national ethos, well trained and experienced and has demonstrated abilities over the years in their field of endeavour. A critical aspect of this is the human relations and conceptual skills which are vital for organisational success.

The same set of qualities is required for the middle level ranks of the Civil Service, if we are to sustain the new culture. In this scenario the issue of career development, selection and training of the management cadre is critical.

Such training should be geared towards providing these officers with the relevant skills in modern management practices, and also provide an understanding of the environment within which the Civil Service operates specifically the legal and economic environment.

An implied purpose of the training would also create a cadre of persons who share a common vision. The introduction of qualifying examinations for movement into these ranks should also be considered. The emphasis of leadership is therefore paramount for it is through innovative leadership which is mission driven and also concerned with the human aspects of the organisation can administrative reform be truly achieved.

Organisational Justice

Employees operate best in an environment of trust, respect, organisation, discipline and participation. The above factors speak to developing an environment in which decision on human resource management, placement and development are deemed or perceived as just equitable.

In this context, care would be taken to ensure that reasons (subject to legislation) are provided for all decisions affecting the well-being of employees. The passage of the Administrative Justice Act should greatly facilitate this process. Request for training and other staff related matters should also be dealt with in a transparent and equitable manner.

Key Values

The new Public Service must encompass a new set of values. These values should ensure probity, stability and professionalism in the conduct of the business of the State. The new culture to be established should include the following values:

Personal values

Customer-focussed values

Leadership values

Professional values

Productivity and Quality values

Personal Values

This speaks primarily to the inculcating of the work ethic, attitude and skills which are desirable for successful performance within the organisation and would also address the expectations of employees. Consequently measures aimed at;

improving human resource development and management capacities of employees;

developing a more appropriate reward system

establishing codes of conduct.

would contribute towards improving and enhancing the personal values of employees.

Customer-Focussed Values

The aim of the Public Service is to provide quality goods and services. In this milieu, customer values would focus on

speed in delivery of service

accessibility

openness

public redress

non discriminatory practices

The establishment of a complaints desk would greatly enhance the customer focus of the Public Service.

Professional Values

The professional values would speak to the issue of on-going staff development and the development of self-correcting mechanisms. This ethos which recognises that accountability and the continuous search for excellence is seen as part of the professional values which must pervade the Public Service.

The strategies for assimilating these values should focus on

training courses

seminars

publications

appropriate reward and sanction.

The introduction of these provisions and their success also rest with the employees of the Civil Service of whom much is expected. Consequently it is expected that staff would adhere to established codes of discipline and conduct. The issue of punctuality and the responsiveness of staff to the needs of the customers of Government services, and the respect for Government's assets must be part of the psychological contract between public officers and their employer.

Improvements in the appraisal processes and the various incentives also should stimulate Civil Servants to give fully of their best.

COMPENSATION, INCENTIVES AND REWARDS

A critical aspect of any organisation is its reward system. This includes the compensation paid for the satisfactory performance of the duties assigned to an employee and the incentives both monetary and non-monetary for performance over and above what is expected.

The existing compensation plan of the Civil Service which was introduced in 1992 sought to address the following (i) the multiplicity of grades and salary scales which existed at the time, and (ii) the difference that existed between the various broad groupings or classification bands of the Service. In so doing, this new plan encompassed the following:

established benchmark qualification and experience requirements for each post/grade within the Civil Service;

equated salaries throughout the Civil Service;

provided flexibility in the promotion of officers

streamlined the various classification and pay scales of the Service.

The plan was further enhanced through the creation of specific salary scales for Senior Managers within the Civil Service (Grades 21-19). The overall emphasis of this new plan was to create a Civil Service that would:

attract and retain competent and motivated employees and individuals;

serve as a motivator to public officers;

develop a leadership cadre capable of leading the Public Service into a new era;

inculcate a work culture that emphasised performance and engendered a sense of purpose.

Criticisms of the plan were that it created a culture, which valued qualifications or certification higher than experience and or demonstrated ability. Additionally the changing organisational structures of Ministries and Departments over the past years have called into question the classification of certain posts within the Civil Service. These factors appeared to have limited the ability of the compensation system to achieve the above objectives. An essential part of the reform process would be an examination of the existing classification and pay plan.

Incentives

The Civil Service must incorporate a system of incentives, which provides meaningful reward for the excellent performers within the organisation and also to serve as a motivator for achieving organisational goals.

Incorporated within the existing compensation plan for Civil Servants is an incremental system. This system forms part of the salary scale utilised within the Government Service. The assumption here being that persons would enter at the minimum of a given salary scale and would progress through this scale with annual increments up to the maximum of the scale.

The general feeling is that the existing system does not serve as an incentive to induce performance as:

the quantum of increment is rather small;

the ad hoc manner in which performance appraisal are done;

the unwillingness on the part of some supervisors to give an employee a score which is deemed as unacceptable;

there are hardly any establish performance goals to be achieved that are known to employees;

persons who are at the maximum of the salary scale do not benefit from any increments.

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Strategies

Given the concerns expressed, it is proposed that a new incremental/incentive scheme be developed which will, among other things:

Link performance to the actual attainment of specified goals and objectives

Serve as a meaningful incentive to Civil Servants

Enable officers who are at the maximum of the scale to also benefit.

The new increment scheme must take into account the collective bargaining framework which has to some extent rendered the existing incentive scheme irrelevant.

Consideration is also being given to developing an incentive scheme, based upon revenues generated by revenue collection agencies

Expenditure control

Satisfactory performance of the members of staff falling within the respective departments.

In pursuit of the above it is recommended that a Committee comprising the following persons be established:

Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance

Cabinet Secretary

Permanent Secretary, Ministry of the Public Service

Representative of the appropriate Staff Associations/Union

Permanent Secretary of the Ministry concerned.

This Committee should discuss and determine the percentage increases in revenue to be generated by each revenue agency. In determining the levels of increases the following should be considered:

rates of inflation

rates of economic growth

distribution of goods traded and services rendered

legislation

work programme of agencies

Implementation of Programme

The percentage increase to be achieved should be made known to each revenue-generating agency at the beginning of each financial year. One month before the end of the financial year, an assessment should be made as to whether the goals have been achieved.

Once this has been achieved, the surplus revenues should be divided as follows:

30% to Consolidated Fund

30% to revenue generating agency

40% to remainder of the Civil Service.

Officers will receive these incentives based upon the satisfactory performance of their duties as attested to by the performance appraisal scores.

This scheme should serve as a further incentive for revenue collecting agencies to pursue the collection of revenue and also serve as a motivator for agencies to remain within their budgetary allocation.

The scheme also has the advantage of creating the climate for innovations and change in the way the business of the various government agencies are done.

Non-Monetary Rewards

In addition to monetary incentives the issue of showing appreciation of the efforts of employees would be addressed, although through non-monetary rewards. This recognition would

convey a sense of achievement to deserving employees;

encourage higher performance;

re-enforce desirable behaviour.

The development of the recognition system would be approach at two levels

Ministry/Department

Civil Service

Ministry/Department Level

At this level each Ministry/Department would establish clear criteria towards giving recognition to deserving persons within their Ministry/Department. These criteria would be established based upon discussions with the staff of each individual Ministry/Department. In this context, the performance measurement and standards development of each Ministry and Department should be used as a guide.

The recognition can be given in the following forms:

Letters of appreciation

Publicity in Civil Service Newsletter

Selection of Worker of the month.

Civil Service Level

At this level a choice would be made to the Civil Servant of the year for each Ministry and then an overall "Civil Servant of the Year." The current criteria established by the Ministry of the Public Service would be used as a guide. The forms of recognition which would be given can take the following form:

Gifts

Medals and awards

Additional leave

The institutionalisation of this process requires its acceptance by the employees of the Public Service. The criteria established and the rewards to be given should be made known to all employees of Ministries and Departments. Consequently, there will be wide discussions on the recognition scheme before it forms part of the new Civil Service culture.

The support of managers in the Public Service is also extremely important as the extent to which the scheme is accepted is the degree to which it will be implemented within their Ministry/Department. The views of the Staff Associations will also be sought on the matter.

BUDGET

The Budgetary Process

A fundamental aspect of the performance productivity nexus is the need to link future performance and productivity to the allocation of public resources. The key to this is the Budget. The National Budget of the Government of St. Lucia as passed by Parliament is the principal instrument by which a country allocates its resources among competing programmes and to a large extent reflects the Government's expenditure priorities.

Some issues critical to the formulation and implementation of the Budget as identified are:

The capability of the budget system to reflect priorities, to analyse and cost programmes realistically, allocate cash and control expenditures in a way that makes managers accountable and provide timely and accurate financial and accounting information;

Inadequate or weak linkage between the medium term economic, the Public Sector Investment Programme and the budget process.

Late responses to the budget call;

Planning for recurrent expenditure seldom takes into account the recurrent cost of capital expenditure

There is a strong tendency for the budget to drive the planning process rather than vice-versa.

Budget are also a short term orientation and not multi year

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Strategies

Given the issues identified the need to develop a new budgetary model is imperative. In this respect the current move to the Programme Budgetary model is such a step.

Programme Budgeting Model

This model requires Ministries and Departments to define their objectives and expenditure as government programmes and to establish priority areas for funding. The programme budgeting system provides for and requires a direct relationship between the implementation plans, input cost, expected output and financial needs.

It also requires that Ministries establish their priorities, targets, and performance standards both qualitatively and quantitatively.

The implementation of the programme budgeting systems requires a re-orientation of the Accounting arms of the various Ministries/Departments with the shift away from simply recording expenditure to one of monitoring and evaluating the expenditures on programmes. It also requires that officers that are versed in the appraisal of projects and the appreciation of the link between recurrent and capital expenditures.

This will also require a switch from the annual approach to the budget to a multi-year focus. Thus bringing the budgetary process in harmony with the long term orientation of strategic planning.

Linkages of Budget And Strategic Planning Concepts

The adoption of the Integrated Planning concepts by Government will contribute significantly to enhancing the coordination and strengthening links between strategic planning and the budget. Under such conditions the budget will emanate out of the plans and programmes of Ministries and Departments.

Strengthening the Link between Budget and Planning Arm of Ministries and Departments

Greater emphasis will be placed on the strengthening of the linkages between the planning and budgeting arms of the various Ministries and Departments, and by extension greater coordination and linkages between the Budget Division and Planning

Division of the Ministry of Finance and Planning. In this context efforts will be made to ensure that the units are staffed with officers who possess the necessary skills.

Greater Autonomy to Line Ministries

In essence, the management of the budget and finances are centrally controlled by the Ministry of Finance as cash is released through warrants approved by the Ministry of Finance and channelled through the individual Ministry. The central control of cash and expenditure reduces the ability of Permanent Secretaries to manage and achieve the task. On the other hand the centralisation aids in the monitoring of expenditure flows and exerts some form of financial discipline on Ministries.

The results-oriented approach to the budget however requires that Permanent Secretaries and Heads of Departments have greater autonomy in the management of the resources at their disposal. **It is therefore proposed that each Ministry be given a bank account to which funds are lodged. Under this arrangement, Permanent Secretaries will assume the full responsibility for the management of funds entrusted to them. Ministries will not be allowed overdraft facilities. Consequently, Permanent Secretaries must manage with the funds provided to them.**

Training and Retraining of the Staff of Accounts, Planning and Budget

The above proposal has implications for both the accounting and auditing aspects of Government.

Accounting

The system will require accounting personnel who are skilled in the art of private sector accounting as an essential aspect of the plan is the timely reconciliation of Bank Statements. In this respect an assessment of the existing accounting personnel with the various Ministries will be undertaken to identify areas of strengths and weaknesses. The results of this exercise will enable the effective deployment of staff and the development of the appropriate training programmes.

Auditing

A critical shift is also required in the role of the Accountant General's Office more, specifically the Department's pre-audited functions would require revisiting.

It is therefore proposed that each Ministry be provided with an Internal Audit Section appropriately staffed. These internal auditors would be answerable to the Office of the Accountant General. Changes may also be required in the Finance Act of 1997.

Budget

The new approach to Budgeting and Planning would require a stronger emphasis on policy analysis and implications of policies for the budget. The relevant training in this area would be provided in these areas.

ACCOUNTABILITY, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Accountability in its broadest sense means the acceptance of responsibility, and the obligation to answer for one's action to an authority that may impose a penalty for a failure.

The review of the processes, procedures and structures that supports and provides for accountability has indicated that to a large extent that these mechanisms are either weak or ineffective. A number of reasons have been advanced for this. These include:

Absence of or failure to apply Rules and Regulations pertaining to accountability;

Absence of or a weak system for monitoring actions and deviations from stated procedures and deviations from stated procedures and policies;

Weak, ineffective and sometimes poor supervisory and management practices;

Failure or unwillingness to apply corrective measures and sanctions;

Unclear roles and responsibilities of certain public officers;

Overlapping responsibilities;

A general feeling that accountability is the responsibility of Permanent Secretaries and Heads of Departments.

Given the above a culture of responsibility and accountability does not form part of the ethics of some Ministries.

Strategies

In the quest for increased accountability within the Public Service the following approaches will be adopted:

Providing clearly defined Rules and Regulations governing all activities of Ministries and Departments;

Clearly defined duties and responsibilities for officers with respect to their roles within the various organisations;

Establishing and enforcing penalties for deviation from accepted policies and procedures of Ministries and Departments;

Enhancing and strengthening of systems and organisations engaged in monitoring actions.

In fulfilment of the above approaches, attention will be focused on

Strengthening the Department of Audit with the capacity to undertake comprehensive audits of government's institutions. Additionally all efforts will be made to ensure that the Public Accounts Committee is made fully operational.

Officers who are entrusted with powers to institute penalties and fines under various pieces of legislation will be mandated to enforce such sanctions as provided for under existing legislation.

The activation of the Integrity Commission and the strengthening of the Office of the Parliamentary Commissioner will also aid in achieving accountability.

An area of accountability which would receive particular attention is the institutionalisation of the quarterly allocation meetings with the Ministry of Finance and Planning and the recently instituted biannual work programme meetings with the Prime Minister.

Accountability would be facilitated by the adoption of the following:

At the beginning of each financial year each Minister should define in clear terms the general policy objectives and specific programmes which the Ministry is expected to implement during the year;

Each Permanent Secretary is to submit a quarterly report to the Minister, with a copy to the Ministry responsible for the Public Service and Finance and Planning Personnel, on the operations and achievements of their Ministry;

Each Ministry is to prepare an annual report on its operations and achievements to be laid before Parliament at the beginning of each financial year;

Responsibility for the preparation of reports is to be personally assigned to the Deputy Permanent Secretary or if there is none in post, to the Assistant Secretary.

In the context of the issue of accountability and performance a firm stance is to be adopted in relation to discipline and conduct.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation are important elements in the process of accountability.

evaluation and monitoring can be used to:

attain a reduction of uncertainty around specific issues;

facilitate consultative mechanisms;

serve as a type of filter to ensure the consistency of the policies adopted by managers with the management culture that is envisioned by the government;

help focus on the positive thus enabling one to look at the most effective way of solving the problems identified in the review process.

It is therefore essential that mechanisms for ensuring monitoring and evaluation are undertaken. These would be facilitated through:

the holding of regular meetings between Heads of Departments and their staff;

development and institutionalising reporting systems within Ministries and Departments.

COMMUNICATION PROCESS

All effective organisations require an efficient and effective communication system. This is essential as the gathering, transmittal and sharing of information is a critical element for institution building. It can be said however, that the communication process within the Civil Service is fragmented at various levels.

This is in part due to

The legacy of secrecy which still affects the Civil Service.

The extent that information which is public knowledge is treated as official secret.

Policies, procedures and other such information which are relevant to the conduct of the business of Ministries and Departments are not seen or communicated to most of the persons to whom they pertain.

Other aspects of the communication process identified are:

Ineffective use is not made of information technology.

Delays in transmitting information to the Public in particular the answering of correspondence

The duplication of effort

Poor customer service

Insufficient feedback to internal and external customers

The lack of clear definition of roles

Overlapping roles and responsibilities.

Communication with various public is also of concern as, to a large extent, the general public is largely unaware of:

the location of; and

the services provided by various agencies of Government.

Indeed access to Government Ministries and Departments are usually hampered by the state of telephone systems within the Public Service. Access is made even more difficult by the frequent changes of location of government offices and the lack of information on the telephone numbers for accessing these institutions. There are instances where such numbers have been changed, but these were not reflected in the Government listings as contained in the telephone directory.

Strategies

Given all of the above, efforts must be made to

Improve telephone access to various Government Departments

Ensure that the public is made aware of the various telephone numbers for accessing Ministries.

Establishment of a computerised management information system within each Ministry and Department.

Counter Services

The issue of Communication with clients of Public Service must also address the quality of counter service provided to recipients of the Public.

Counter services are generally left to junior officers, who in most cases lack both the organisational knowledge and interpersonal skills required for such a critical and demanding function.

The resultant effects of the above is usually

Insufficient and sometimes inaccurate information being supplied to the public;

Insensitivity to customers;

Delays in providing services to the public

Poor perception of the Ministry or Department concerned;

Strategies

Some of the strategies for improving counter services of Government's Ministries and Departments are as follows:

Counter service should be provided by experience public officers

Such persons should be knowledgeable about the operations of their Ministry and also that of central government;

Officers responsible for providing counter service should be specifically chosen and provided with the necessary orientation;

Officers providing counter services should be provided with name tags;

A senior officer within each Ministry should be directly responsible for handling queries and provide explanations to issues raised at the counter by the Public;

Consideration would be given to reviewing the queuing system used within the Government Service.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Increasingly the world of business is being driven by the speed of information. The technology to support this is also developing at a rapid rate. Competitive advantages, cost reduction and efficiency are now being achieved through the effective leverage of information.

The Civil Service too, is affected by the rapid development in these fields. Indeed our ability to play the (a) mediatory (b) regulatory and (c) facilitating role will depend largely upon the quality and speed of information at our disposal. In this environment it is imperative that the Civil Service develops the strategy to meet the demands which will be placed upon it. Such strategies should include:

the development of the appropriate management information system and policies

strengthening the information technology capacity of the Civil Service through networking.

(d) Integrating and sharing of information among Ministries/Departments

Offering efficient online service to Government Departments in the initial phase and to citizens and business sectors in the latter stages.

The above will be facilitated through the establishment of a Committee on Information Technology. This Committee would have the following responsibilities:

assess the information technology needs of the Civil Service;

appraise and recommend proposals for the acquisition of information technology;

prepare guidelines and criteria for the selection of equipment and software;

develop the appropriate training programme to facilitate the process;

co-ordinate efforts in creating a Public Service data base and networking among government workers.

ENABLING LEGISLATION

Reforming the Public Services also requires that the legislation which facilitates the functioning of the Public Service be reviewed.

In this respect specific attention should be paid to the Legislation and Acts

i. Finance Act

ii Customs Act

iii. Land Development/Interim Control Act 1971

iv. Local Authorities Ordinance

v. Audit Act

Government has already made amendments to the Interim Land Development Act to ensure a more efficient operation of the Development Control Authority. The legislation will be further modified to enable more concrete action on issues before the Authority.

Attention will also be given to the structure and composition of Boards and Authorities which assist the Public Service in performing their functions. The establishment of a Public Service Act would also be pursued.

Government will also review the Pensions Act. The principal Act, which was enacted in 1967, has undergone a number of amendments over the years.

These amendments dealt principally with (1) additions or subtractions to the offices that are deemed as pensionable, (2) reduction of the age and conditions to which one can be entitled to a pension.

No thorough assessment however has been done on the Act in terms of (1) reviewing methods used in calculating pensions and gratuities (2) the provision of the Pensions vis-à-vis that of the National Insurance Scheme and (3) conformity of the Act with modern thought on pensions funds and human resource development and management.

PUBLIC AND CITIZENS PARTICIPATION

The issue of greater transparency and governance is enhanced through greater participation of Civil Society in the affairs of Government.

In this regard the current efforts at decentralisation of government services, is a mechanism for citizens' participation. Increasing citizens' participation is also facilitated through increased participation of community based organisations, the private sector and other social partners in the affairs of the State.

Consideration will therefore be given to the establishment of a permanent Consultative Committee comprising

representatives of the Private Sector

representatives of Non-Governmental Organisations

representatives of Public Officers

Such forum would serve as a vehicle for exchange and sharing information and policy advice on matters pertaining to the social and economic development of the State.

The establishment of the office of Privatisation and Private Sector Relationship speaks to the issue of strengthening the link between the Public Service and the Private Sector organisations. To enable the community groups and such organisations to effectively participate in the business of Government, it is essential that they are properly constituted and possess the necessary skills and capacities to do so. Towards this end, Government will seek to strengthen these organisations through (a) provision of management and administrative training (b) providing logistical and financial support to these bodies.

The development of these bodies would not only revive the spirit of patriotism, but also provides another instrument through which public policy can be delivered. The participation of Civil Society will also be enhanced by ensuring that Boards, Commissions and Authorities are as representative as possible. The following strategies will also play a major role in this process:

press briefing

publication of magazines and pamphlets

establishment of Complaints Bureau will also assist in ensuring feedback and exchange;

Public Consultations.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

The implementation of the Reform will as much as possible be Ministry specific. In that regard the responsibility for initiating the reform within each Ministry/Department would be that of the Permanent Secretaries and Heads of Department.

To facilitate this process it is recommended that each Ministry should establish its own Internal Reform Committee. This Internal Reform Committee should be broad based and include representatives of all Sections within the said Ministry/Departments. The Committee will be responsible for research and organisational assessment of the various processes, procedures and structures of their respective Ministries/Departments and explore strategies for increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of their Ministry/Department. Additionally the Internal Reform team would serve as a consultative body and liaison with the Ministry of the Public Service and the Office of Public Sector Reform.

Consideration should also be given to the establishment of Change Teams within each Ministry. These Change Teams can either be the Internal Reform Committee or a subset of it. It is however essential that the team develops the necessary skills to enable its members to act as facilitators and so assist the Ministry of the Public Service and the Office of Public Sector Reform in providing support to the Ministries and Departments as they proceed to implement various aspects of the Reform.

Priority will be given to workshops for key managers and facilitators. These workshops will have specific performance objectives such as:

Changing the culture from administration to performance management:

How to improve performance of a Ministry/Department as an organisation;

How to improve performance of individual public officers;

How to improve cross-ministerial/departmental co-operation, co-ordination, collaboration;

Addressing issues of accountability and determining performance indicators;

The importance, development and communicating of a Ministry's and Department's Mission /Statement;

Budgetary controls and efficiency audits/checks.

Utilisation of Staff:

Identification and development of a profile of skills;

Development of interpersonal skills;

Work-plans and assessment of productivity;

Records management;

Managing conflict

Leadership and team-work

Improving Customer Service:

What standards can the public/individual users expect;

How can complaints and redress be institutionalised;

Training for front-line staff;

Development of a Code of Conduct.

Improving information systems:

Identification of Information requirements for the key activities of a Ministry/Department;

Identification from the above information requirements generated:

the information which can be shared across Ministries/Departments;

the technologies needed to establish an improved system;

Identification of training skills needed by staff to implement an information system based on the above;

Identification of the organisational changes which the above will involve and some of the current practices/activities which will become obsolete.

Managing change:

Identification/analysis of where the organisation is, where it wants to be and an examination of changes needed in working practices to bridge the gap;

Methods of communicating and involving all levels of staff in the process of change;

Setting out clearly defined and measurable performance objectives;

Monitoring and evaluating the change process.

Role of the Ministry of the Public Service

The Ministry of the Public Service is a critical player in institutionalising the Reform Initiative. In this respect it is expected that this Ministry will

Develop policies which are common to all Ministries and Departments;

Serve as a clearing house for information;

Provide technical advise to the various reform teams;

Ensure organisational equity and justice in the issue of public sector reform.

Role of the Office of Public Sector Reform

The responsibilities of the Office of Public Sector Reform is to:

Ensure the coordination of all reform initiatives;

Serve as a research arm on all areas of public sector reform;

Monitor and evaluate the efforts at reform taking place in each Ministry/Department;

Secure and arrange for various consultancies on public sector reform;

Provision of training, workshops and seminars on issues of public sector reform;

Information dissemination on all aspects of public sector reform.

Role of Trade Unions and Staff Associations

The Trade Unions and Staff Association representing employees of the Civil Service are major groups in the process of initiating the acceptance of the Reform Process. It is therefore essential that representatives of the workers be represented on each Internal Reform Committee. This action of its own would recognise the role of the Trade Unions as equal partners in the strides towards creating a new Civil Service. It is also anticipated that the various Staff Associations would continue to be represented on various Committees and or Commissions dealing with matters pertaining to the general management of the Government Service.

Committee of Permanent Secretaries

The Committee of Permanent Secretaries is also a critical player in the Reform Process and will serve as a consultative forum for the ongoing reform initiatives and for discussion on issues which call for common action and provide much needed input on the resolution of problems and issues arising out of the implementation stage. The Committee will also serve as a mechanism for the dissemination of activities on the reform initiative.

Cabinet of Ministers

The Cabinet of Ministers would provide the highest level of guidance and leadership needed for the Reform efforts. It would therefore:

Review results of ongoing initiatives

Provide resources and support

Give broad policy guidelines in keeping with government's policy.

Make recommendations to Parliament for the modification and enactment of new legislation pertaining to the structure and functioning of the Public Service.

In this respect regular consultations would be held between Cabinet and the various agencies engaged in reform efforts.