

REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS

OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN

Annual Report
on
Budget Performance

2020-2021

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Responsible/Accounting Officer's Statement

Despite the impact caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, 2020-21 saw the Office of the Ombudsman come to the end of its three-year strategy 2018-19 to 2020-21 having achieved the majority of its objectives and targets.

I have the pleasure of presenting the Office's 5th Annual Report on Budget Performance for the fiscal year 2020/2021 to the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development in fulfilment of the legal obligation as required under Section 4B of the Finance and Audit Act 1973(Amended) requiring to report on its performance in respect of the previous fiscal year and on its strategic direction in respect of the following 3 fiscal years.

It is well known that COVID-19 has had a significant impact on our health services and on many Ministries and Departments as they have responded to the pandemic. This in turn affected our Office's ability to progress on-going investigations during lockdown period. However, we successfully arranged for the continuity in minimum service delivery by continually receiving and processing e-correspondence. We received around a total of 200 emails from 10 to 31 March 2021, i.e during the closure of Office. Of the total e-correspondence received, we handled 17 complaints and only 6 were assessed to be complaints within our remit and remaining were provided with necessary assistance and service information as they were deemed premature for our Office to investigate.

As Responsible and Accounting Officer, I am satisfied with the effectiveness of the systems of governance, risk management and internal control operating within our Office. The Office has operated in accordance with the relevant financial instructions and requirements at all times. The review of our Anti-Corruption Policy and 100% completion of the KPIs set by the Government in line with the Public Sector Business Transformation Strategy are some examples of the sound operation.

I am proud to state that the Office has been able to manage its resources effectively throughout the financial year 2020-2021. Through the hard work and commitment of our staff, and supervisory and leadership of the Management, the Office has ensured the efficient delivery of a high-quality service to the public in line with its strategic objectives. In addition, we saw a continuous decrease in some of our operating costs due to a 100% increase of e-flimsies and electronic reply of complaints as compared to last year.

It is notable that the Office has consistently performed well for the third consecutive year against the goals set out in its plan. It remains the case that, following reductions in funding due to COVID-19, the Office's resilience to deal with unexpected changes in external demand or fluctuation in internal capacity is limited.

In the midst of these challenges, I am pleased to report a constant improvement in the overall organizational performance calculated on actual expenditures which currently stands as 93%.

2020-21 marked the 51st anniversary of the Office, a highly significant milestone and it coincided with an unprecedented increase in demand for our services. Although the Office was forced to close its doors, the number of complaints received gradually and steadily increased throughout the financial year, meaning that we ended with a 35%

increase in complaints from 538 to 730. Our performance across each of the key performance indicators except for the monitoring and follow up investigations, was commendable. In order to mitigate the risk of virus transmission and protect the health and safety of both our staff and the public at large, we suspended our face-to-face appointments, working session in Rodrigues and awareness raising campaign throughout the island, thus resulting in a decrease of the number of visitors to our Office and distribution of our pamphlets.

I would like to thank all staff of the Office of the Ombudsman for their resilience and hard work in maintaining our service delivery through this challenging period. Their professionalism and commitment have ensured that this Office continues to provide a valuable contribution to administrative justice and public service improvement in the Republic of Mauritius as well as outer islands. Finally, I extend my heartfelt thanks to the Ombudsman for his continued support and understanding as we march towards the achievement of our goals.

Looking ahead, we will continue to listen to, support and engage regularly with our customers to make sure we truly are a customer-centric Office now and into the future.

Mr A. RAMTAHUL

Senior Investigations Officer

Responsible and Accounting Officer

27 October 2021

PART I – ABOUT THE OFFICE

Office Of The Ombudsman Of Mauritius

The Office of the Ombudsman is an independent Public Office which is responsible to carry out investigations in cases of alleged maladministration made against public authorities and their officials. Our service is free of charge and same is accessible to all members of the public.

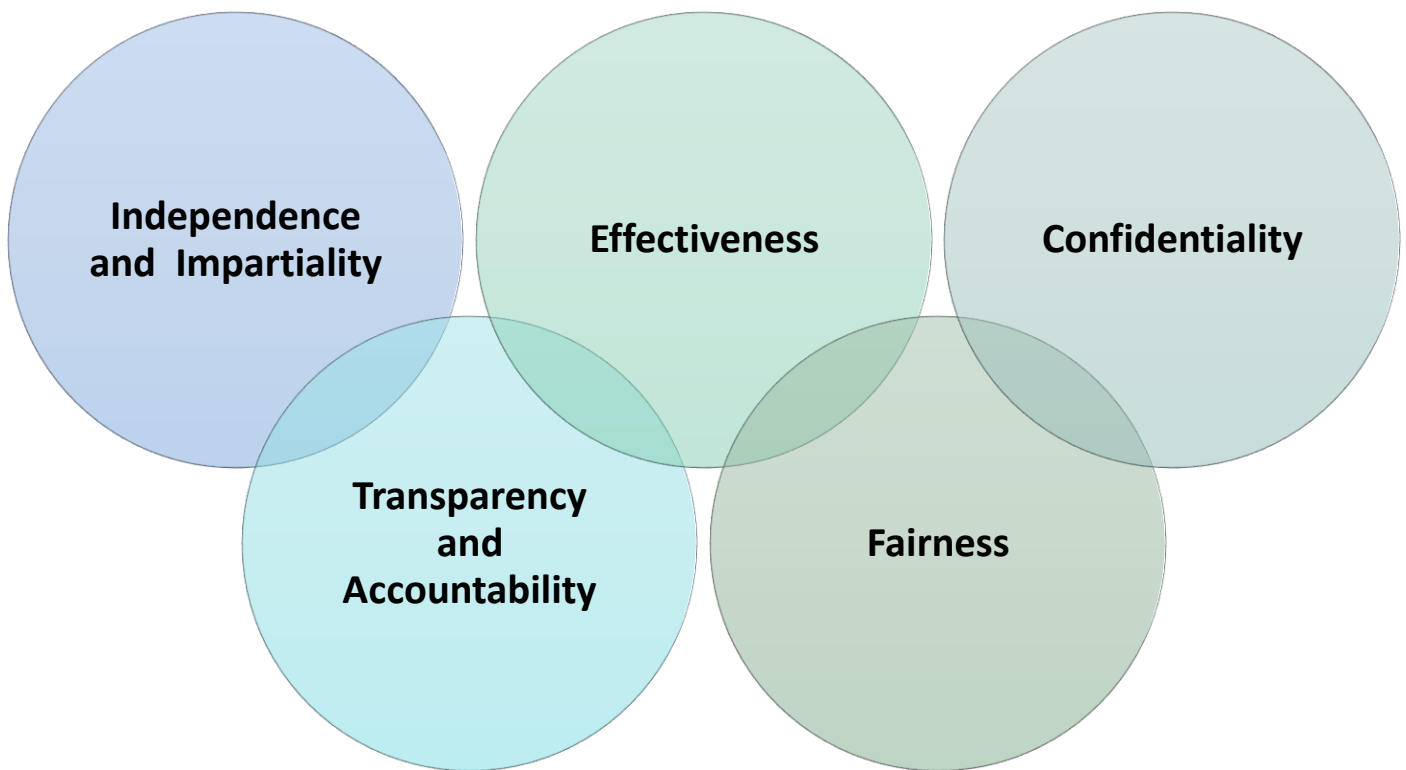
Our Vision

To provide all citizens a quality service that upholds their rights to a just and equitable treatment in accordance with principles of good administration.

Our Mission

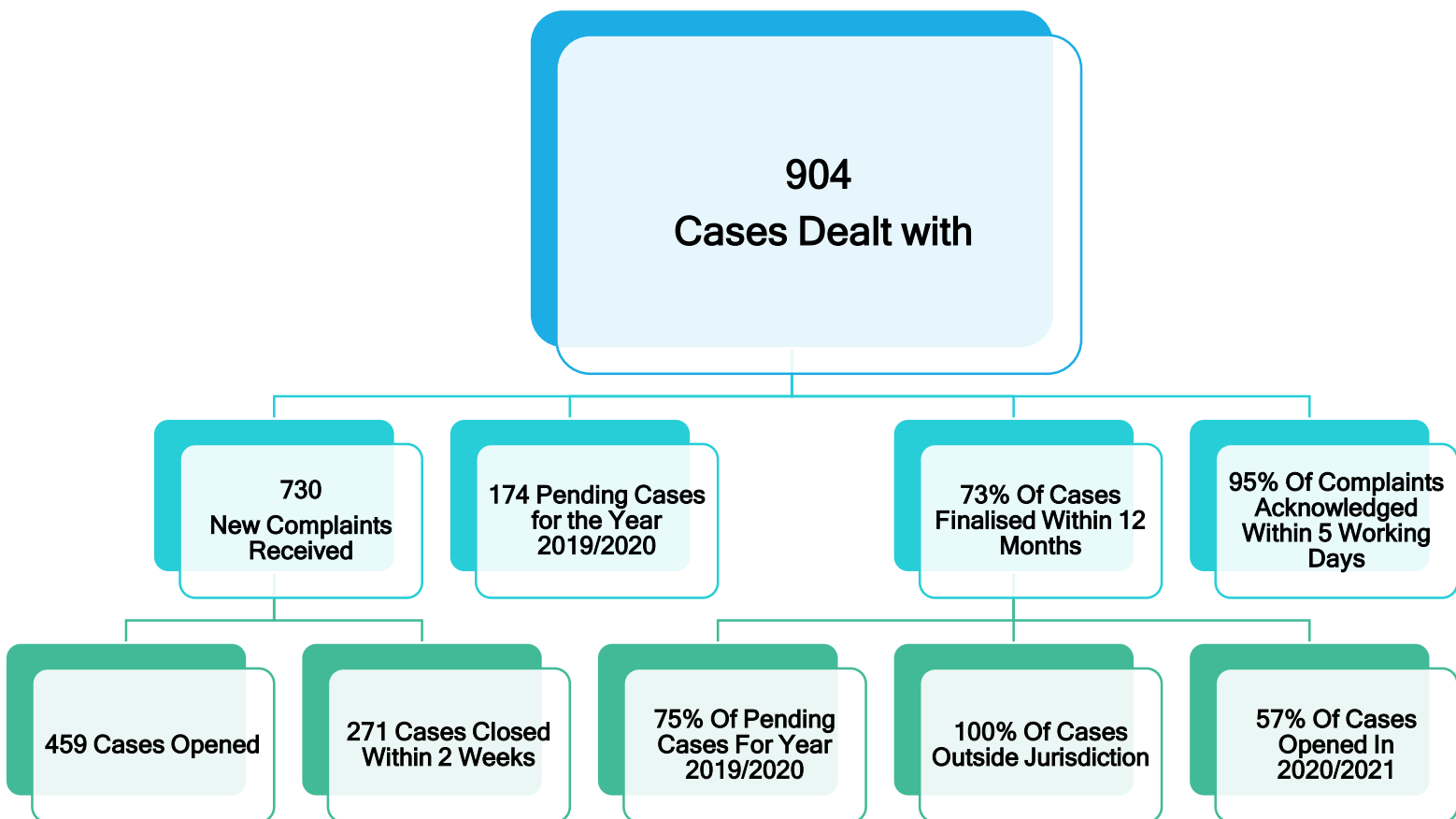
To serve the Mauritian community by addressing issues arising from maladministration in the public sector and redressing wrongs that may be found to have been committed.

Our Values








Highlights




INVESTIGATION



ADMINISTRATION

-  90% of training budget used for capacity building and development of staff
-  Review of our Anti Corruption Policy
-  100% adoption of E-Procurement System
-  Completion of 2 Corruption Risk Assessments
-  100% increase in E-Flimsies

PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY

-  1022 members of Public were provided with service information by Staff
-  Conducted 6 sessions of Awareness Raising Campaign
-  Implemented an Online Complaint Form

Our Five-Year Strategic Plan 2021-2025

At the beginning of 2018-19, we launched a new three-year strategic plan which sets out our vision in delivering value-based public service. We developed the plan with inputs from both our staff and members of the public who use our service as well as the findings of the internal and external survey.

The strategy sets out five objectives and the activity planned in each year to deliver them. In the second year of the strategy, we have achieved much of what we expected to do. Our main objectives and key performance indicators are as follows:

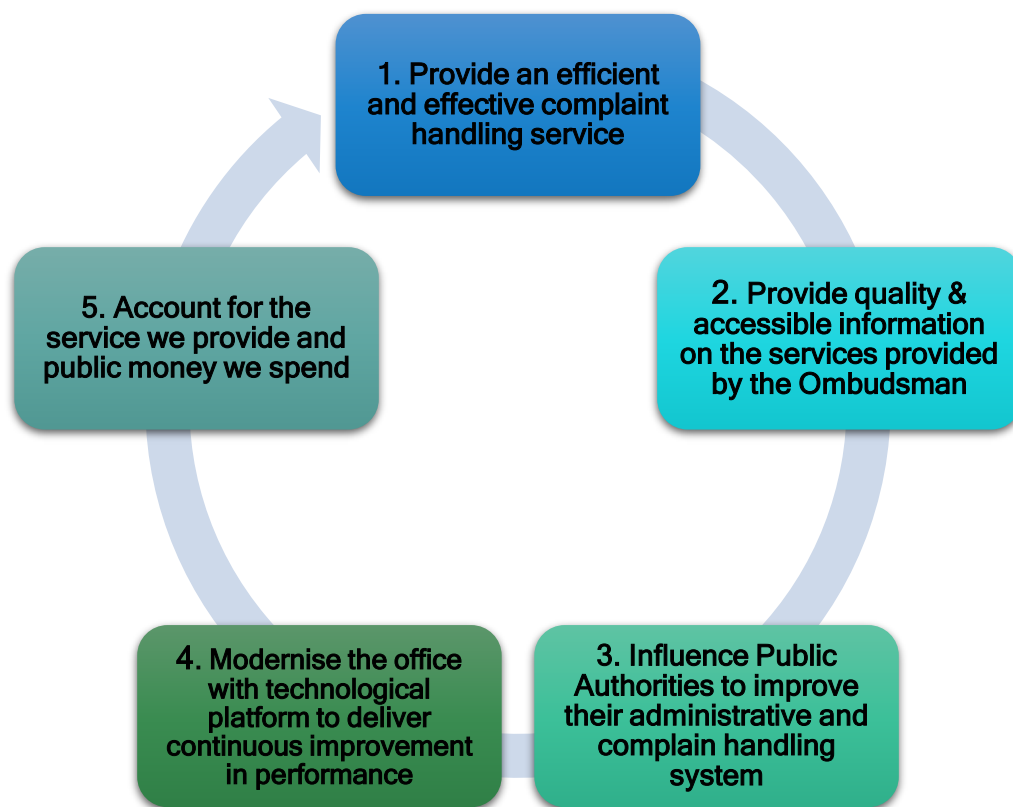


Figure 1 Our Five-Year Strategic Plan 2021-2025

Our Strategic Objectives, Key Performance Indicators and Targets for Next Five Years 2020/2021 to 2024/2025.

KPIs	Targets				
	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
<i>% of cases finalized within a period of 12 months.</i>	70%	70%	75%	75%	75%
<i>% of complaint letters addressed to the Ombudsman acknowledged within five working days.</i>	95%	95%	95%	100%	100%
<i>% of investigation monitored and followed up within 12 months.</i>	100 %	100 %	100 %	100%	100 %
<i>% of complainants' satisfaction survey who provide an average of 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' to our service</i>	85%	85%	85%	95%	95%
<i>Number of outreach activities conducted</i>	12	12	24	24	24
<i>Accounts and Records Audit</i>	By March 2021	By March 2022	By March 2023	BY March 2024	By March 2025

Table 1 Strategic Objectives & KPI for 2020/21- 20242025

Roles & Functions of the Department

The Office has different functions derived from its governing legislation, The Ombudsman Act 1969 and the Constitution of Mauritius which are outlined below: -

- (a) Investigation on maladministration
- (b) Undertaking Own-Motion Investigations
- (c) Making such recommendations to the Department or authority concerned
- (d) Reporting to the President of the Republic of Mauritius.

Our jurisdiction covers the following authorities and officers -

- (a) any department of the Government;
- (b) the Police Force or any member thereof;
- (c) the Mauritius Prison Service or any other service maintained and controlled by the government or any officer or authority of any such service;
- (d) any authority empowered to determine the person with whom any contract or class of contracts is to be entered into by or on behalf of the Government or any such officer or authority;
- (e) the Rodrigues Regional Assembly or any officer of the said Assembly;
- (f) any local authority or any officer of such local authority;
- (g) such other officers or authorities as may be prescribed by Parliament; the **only exceptions** being -
 - (i) the President or his personal staff;
 - (ii) the Chief Justice;
 - (iii) any Commission established by this Constitution or its staff;
 - (iv) the Director of Public Prosecutions or any person acting in accordance with his instructions;
 - (v) any person exercising powers delegated to him by the Public Service Commission or the Disciplined Forces Service Commission, being powers the exercise of which is subject to review or confirmation by the Commission by which they were delegated.

However, **section 97(8)** of the **Constitution** also provides that -

The Ombudsman shall not conduct an investigation in respect of any complaint made under this section where it appears to him -

- (a) that the complaint is merely frivolous or vexatious;
- (b) that the subject-matter of the complaint is trivial;
- (c) that the person aggrieved has no sufficient interest in the subject-matter of the complaint; or
- (d) that the making of the complaint has, without reasonable cause, been delayed for more than 12 months.

Gender Statement

The Top Management is mindful of its statutory obligation to ensure compliance with the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against women as domesticated in our local laws in force in Mauritius.

We, at the Office of the Ombudsman, believe in creating an inclusive environment in which the diverse skills, cultural perspectives and backgrounds of our staff are valued.

Towards achieving this objective and in order to give effect to the above-mentioned Convention, the Supervisors are held accountable to sustaining a workplace climate of equity and fostering an environment where every staff has the opportunity to prosper and enjoy a fair and equal treatment before the law.

Supervisors are also required to demonstrate appropriate behaviour consistent with the Convention's principles and promptly deal with any complaints of harassment or discrimination observed in the workplace.

We encourage the full and effective participation of female staff in the day-to-day affairs of our Office and we treat all our customers irrespective of their gender or physical appearance fairly and equitably.

Bearing in mind the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, we also undertake to provide our service in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities. They are given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use and benefit from our services.

About Our People

- (a) There is an Ombudsman for the Office who is appointed by the President of the Republic of Mauritius and he is empowered under the Constitution 1968 to investigate any action taken by any officer or authority in the exercise of administrative functions of that officer or authority, in any case in which a member of the public claims, or appears to the Ombudsman, to have sustained injustice in consequence of maladministration in connection with the action so taken.
- (b) The Office is administratively headed by the Senior Investigations Officer who is conferred with the duties of both Responsible and Accounting Officer. He also assists the Ombudsman in the conduct of investigations and other legal research and analysis pertaining to complaints.
- (c) We have a small staff team of twenty one (21) personnel consisting of 01 Technical Officer, 17 support staff of finance/general cadre and 03 supplementary officers provided on an adhoc basis to oversee the Human Resources, Procurement and

Safety and Health issues respectively. We recognise that our staff is the most valuable and important asset in achieving the objectives of the Office. The knowledge, professionalism and compassion of our staff play a large role in the perceptions of our service. The breakdown of our staffing structure is depicted below:

Staffing Structure

Sn	DESIGNATION	In Post as at 30 June 2021	Gender		
			Male	Female	
Senior Officials					
1	Ombudsman	1	1	-	<i>Establishment</i>
2	Senior Investigations Officer	1	1	-	<i>Establishment</i>
Technical Staff					
1	Investigations Officer	1	-	1	<i>Establishment</i>
Finance & Procurement Cadres					
1	Principal Financial Operations Officer	1	-	1	<i>Establishment</i>
2	Principal Procurement Supply Officer	1	1	-	<i>Ah-Doc</i>
3	Assistant Procurement & Supply Officer	1	1	-	<i>Ah-Doc</i>
General Services					
1	Office Management Executive	1	-	1	<i>Establishment</i>
2	Human Resource Executive	1	-	1	<i>Ah-Doc</i>
3	Safety & Health Officer	1	-	1	<i>Ah-Doc</i>
4	Office Management Assistant	1	-	1	<i>Establishment</i>
5	Confidential Secretary	1		1	<i>Establishment</i>
6	Management Support Officer	6	2	4	<i>Establishment</i>
7	Word Processing Operator	2	-	2	<i>Establishment</i>
8	Receptionist/Telephone Operator	1	-	1	<i>Establishment</i>
Workmen's Group					
9	Office Auxiliary/ Senior Office Auxiliary	3	1	2	<i>Establishment</i>
	Total	23	7	16	

Table 2 Staffing Structure

Gender Profile of the Staff

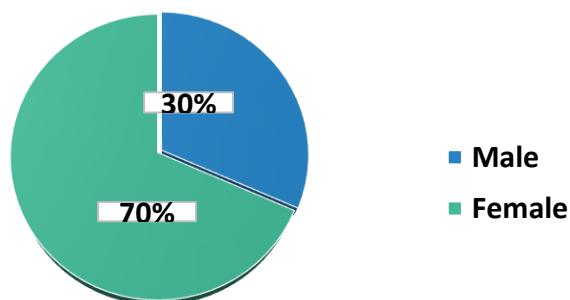


Figure 2 Gender Profile of the Staff

PART II – PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

A. Investigations

In 2020-21, we received a total of 730 complaints, compared to 538 received in 2019-20, i.e a significant increase of 35% from the previous year. Of the total number of complaints received, 459 were assessed to be within our jurisdiction and they were against Ministries/Departments, Local Authorities & Rodrigues Regional Assembly. Remaining were miscellaneous and copies of complaints.

Of the total cases (904) dealt with during the fiscal period 2020-21, the Office has finalised 663 cases (including 130 pending cases as at 30 June 2020), thus representing 73%. Remaining 27% (i.e 241 cases) are still pending as at 30 June 2021.

Complaints Received for the Financial Year 2020-2021

Complaints Received For The Financial Year 2020-2021	
Cases Opened	459
Cases Outside Jurisdiction or Premature	271
Total	730

Table 3 Complaints Received For the Financial Year 2020-2021

Comparative Table of Complaints Received Year on Year			
	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Complaints Received	615	538	730

Table 4 Comparative Table of Complaints Received Year on Year

Complaints Received Year on Year

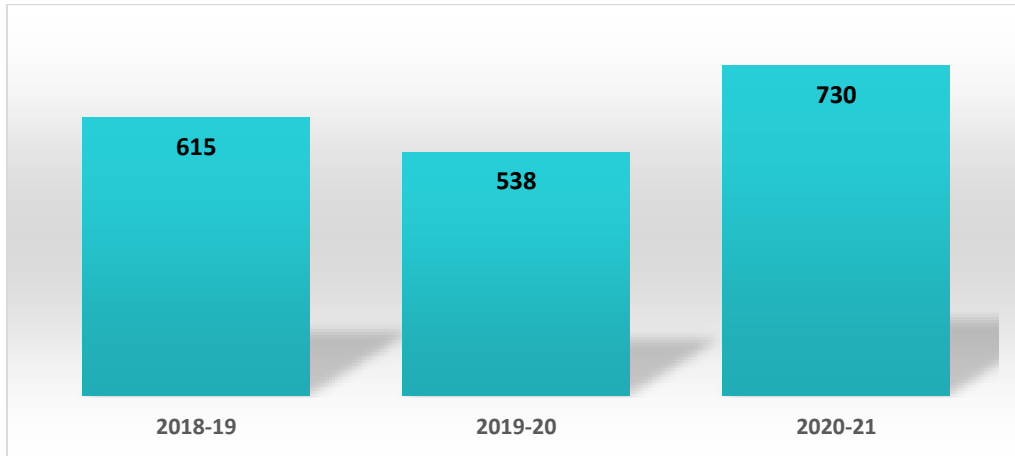


Figure 3 Complaints Received Year on Year

Cases Investigated For the Financial Year 2020-2021

Cases Investigated for The Financial Year 2020-2021	
Ministries/Departments	254
Local Authorities	94
Rodrigues Regional Assembly	111
Pending Cases as at 30 June 2020	174
Total	633

Table 5 Cases Investigated For the Financial Year 2020-2021

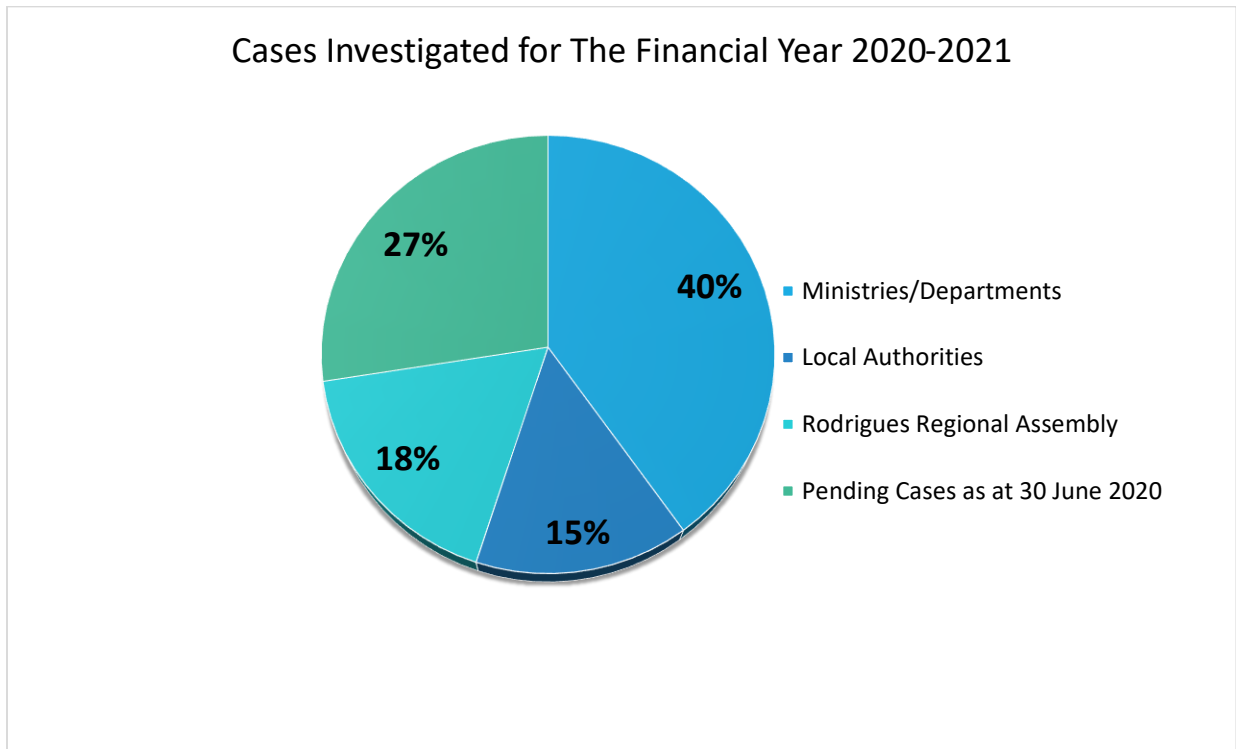


Figure 4 Cases Investigated for the Financial Year 2020-2021

Case Investigated Year on Year

Cases Investigated Year on Year			
	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
Ministries/Departments	218	213	254
Local Authorities	121	81	94
Rodrigues Regional Assembly	47	27	111
Pending Cases Previous Year	136	154	174
Total	526	475	633

Table 6 Cases Investigated Year on Year

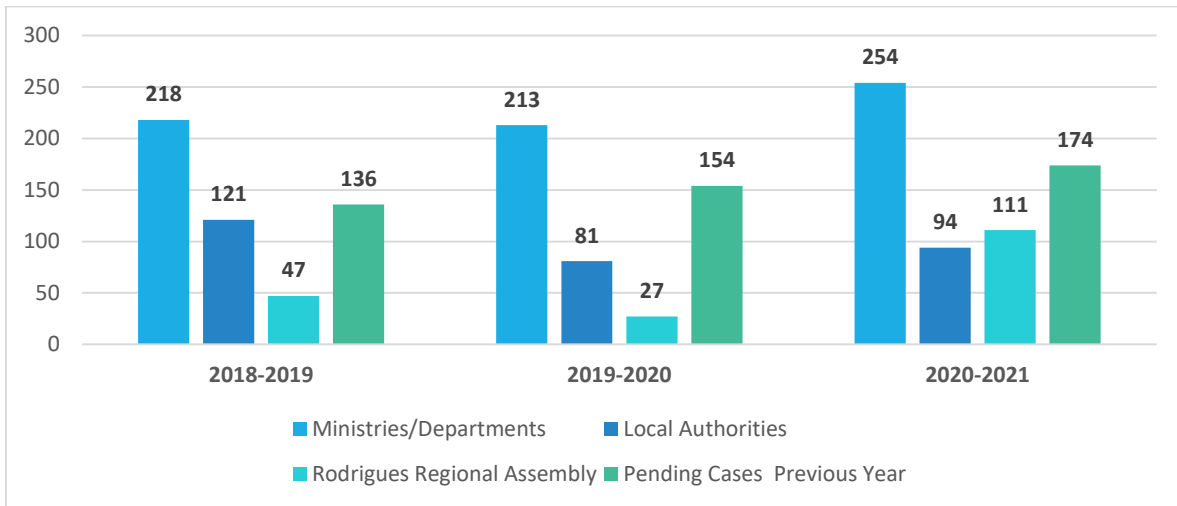


Figure 5 Cases Investigated Year on Year

Cases Finalised During the Financial Year 2020-2021

Cases Finalised during the Financial Year 2020-2021	
Cases dealt with	904
Cases finalised	663
Cases pending as at June 2020	241

Table 7 Cases Finalised during the Financial Year 2020-2021

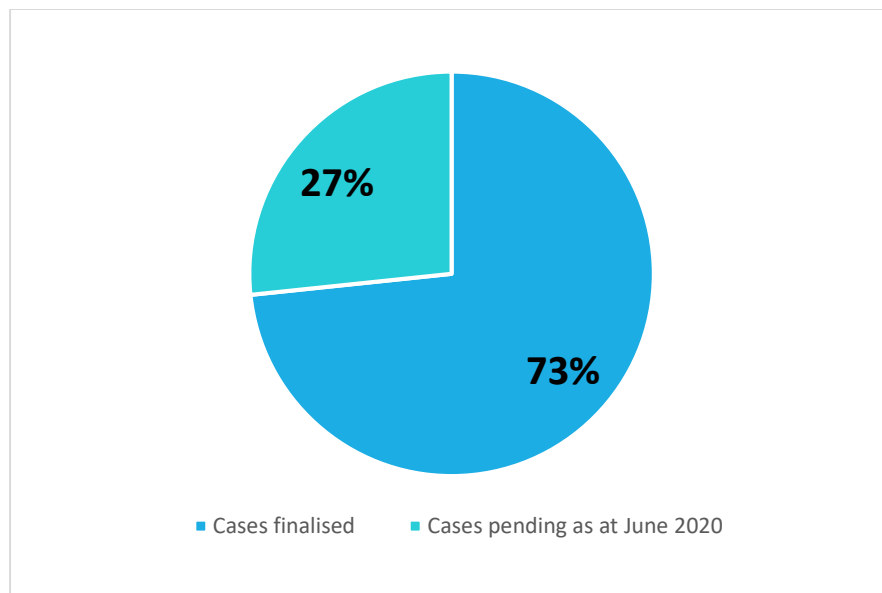


Figure 6 Cases Finalised during the Financial Year 2020-2021

Key Performance Indicator	Target	Result
% of cases finalised within a period of 12 months	70%	73%
% of investigation monitored and followed up within 12 months	100%	90%

Finalised Cases dealt with

A. Cases outside Jurisdiction

Cases Outside Jurisdiction		
	No	%
Cases Finalised within 2 weeks	271	100%

Table 8 Cases outside Jurisdiction

B. Cases Investigated for the Year 2020/2021

Cases Investigated for the Year 2020/2021		
	No.	%
Cases Finalised	262	57%
Pending June 2021	197	43%
Total	459	100%

Table 9 Cases Investigated for the Year 2020/2021

C. Pending Cases Previous Year

Pending Cases Previous Year		
	No	%
Finalised	130	75%
Pending as at 30 June 2021	44	25%
Total	174	100%

Table 10 Pending Cases Previous Year

Timeliness of Finalised Cases dealt with for The Financial Year 2020-2021

Timeliness Of Intake Cases Finalised For The Financial Year 2020-2021	
Within 6 months	555
Beyond 6 months	108
Pending	241
Total Cases	904

Table 11 Timeliness of Finalised Cases dealt with for The Financial Year 2020-2021

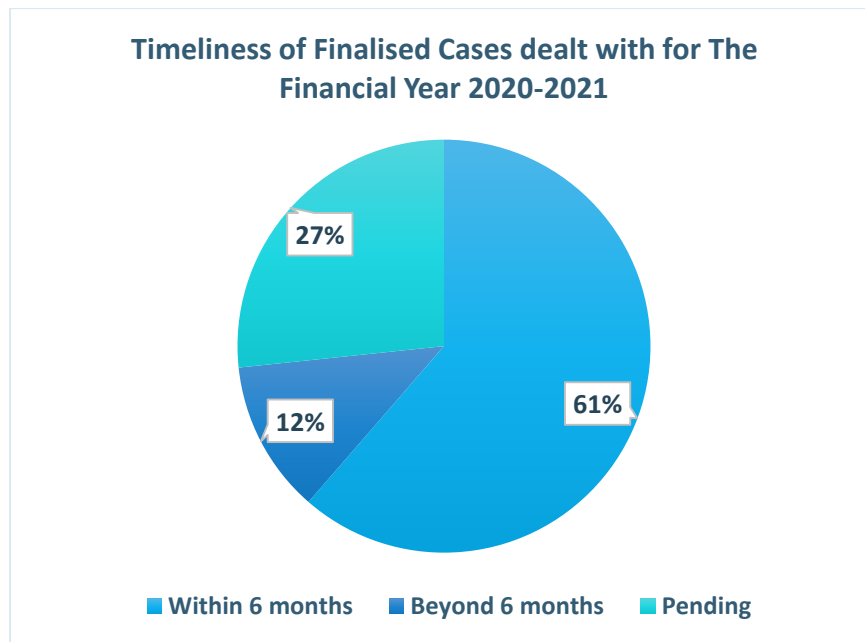


Figure 7 Timeliness of Finalised Cases dealt with for The Financial Year 2020-2021

Timeliness of Finalised Cases dealt with Year on Year			
Decision Taken	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
Within 6 months	356	412	555
Beyond 6 months	12	3	108
Pending	154	174	241
Total Cases	522	589	904

Table 12 Timeliness of Finalised Cases dealt with Year on Year

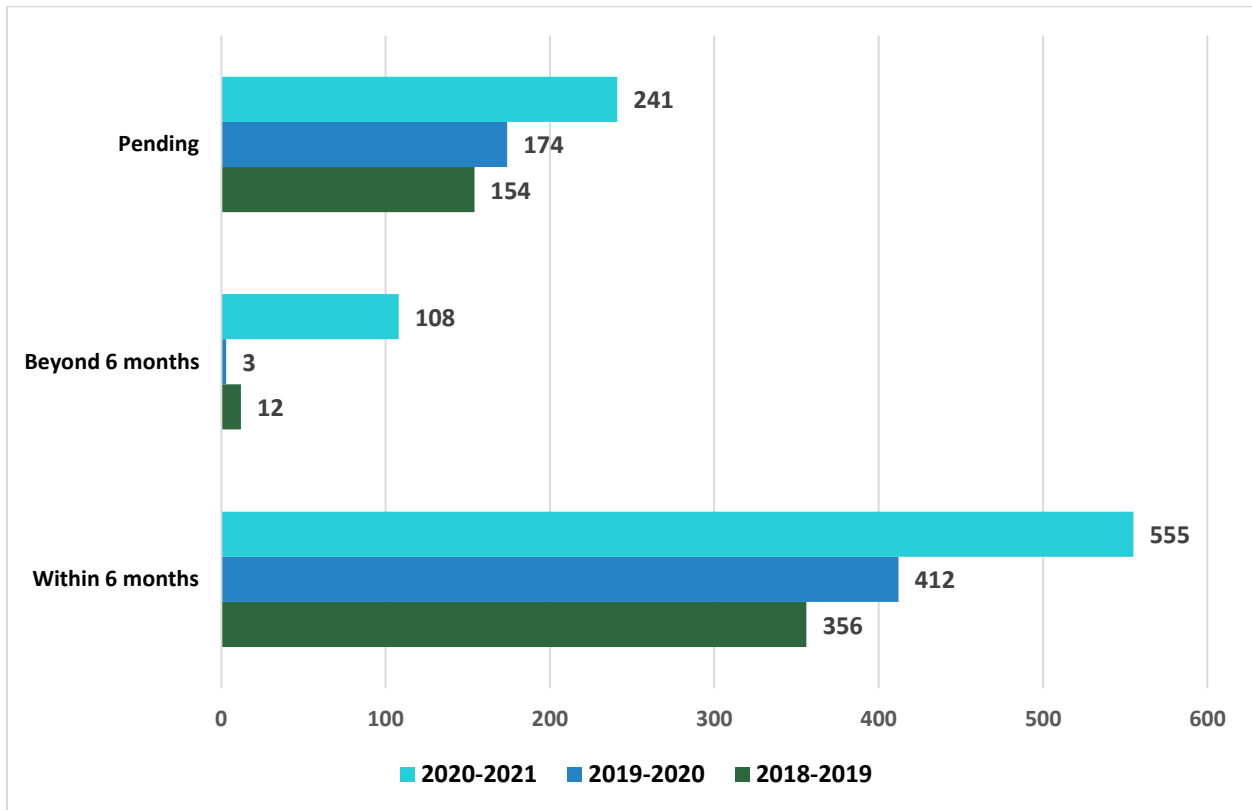


Figure 8 Timeliness of Finalised Cases dealt with Year on Year

Acknowledgement of Complaints Received for the Financial Year 2019-2020

Timeliness of complaints acknowledged during Financial Year 2020-2021	
Complaints acknowledged within 5 working days	615
Complaints acknowledged beyond 5 working days	28

Table 13 Timeliness of complaints acknowledged during Financial Year 2020-2021

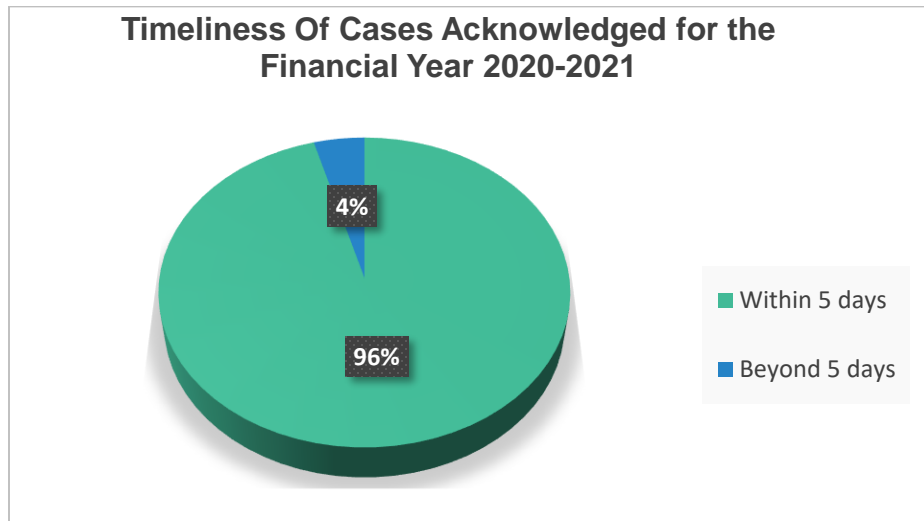


Figure 9 Timeliness Of Complaints Acknowledged During Financial Year 2020-2021

Comparative Table – Acknowledgement of Complaints Year on Year

Acknowledgement of Complaints Year on Year			
	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
Complaints acknowledged within 5 working days	296	374	615
Complaints acknowledged beyond 5 working days	22	26	28

Table 14 Acknowledgement of Complaints Year on Year

Comparative Table –Percentage of Acknowledgement of Complaints Year on Year

Acknowledgement of Complaints Year on Year (%)			
	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
Complaints acknowledged within 5 working days	93.0	93.5	96
Complaints acknowledged beyond 5 working days	7.0	6.5	4

Table 15 Acknowledgement of Complaints Year on Year (%)

Key Performance Indicator	Target	Result
% of complaint letters addressed to the Ombudsman acknowledged within five working days	95%	96 %

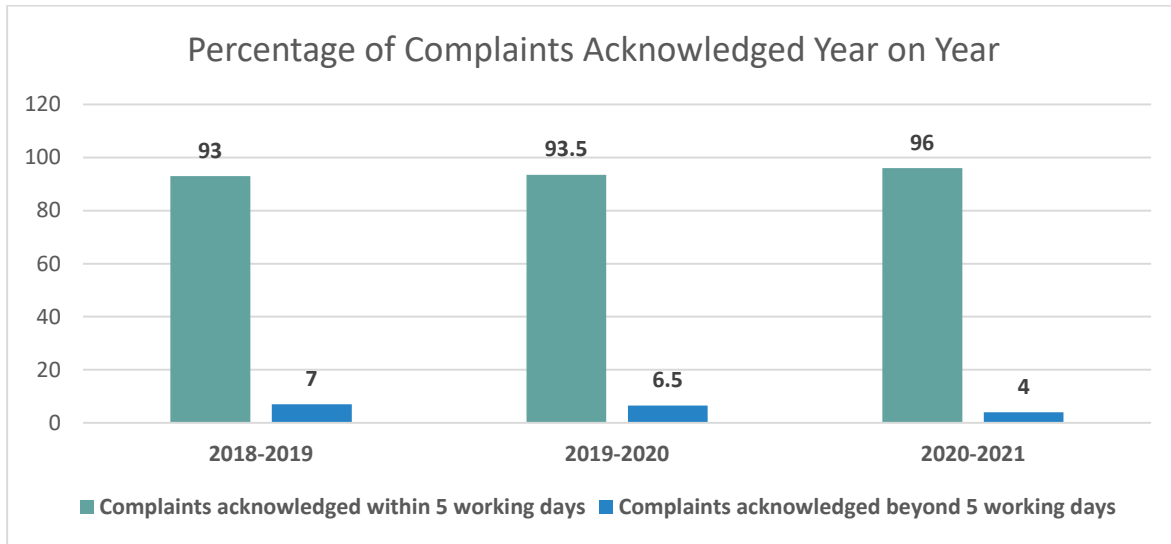


Figure 10 Percentage of Complaints Acknowledged Year on Year

Demographic Profile of Complainants/Visitors

Demographic Profile of Complainants for the Financial Period 2020-2021		
	Complaints Received	Visitors
Male	528	181
Female	147	36
Total	675	217

Table 16 Demographic Profile of Complainants for the Financial Period 2020-2021

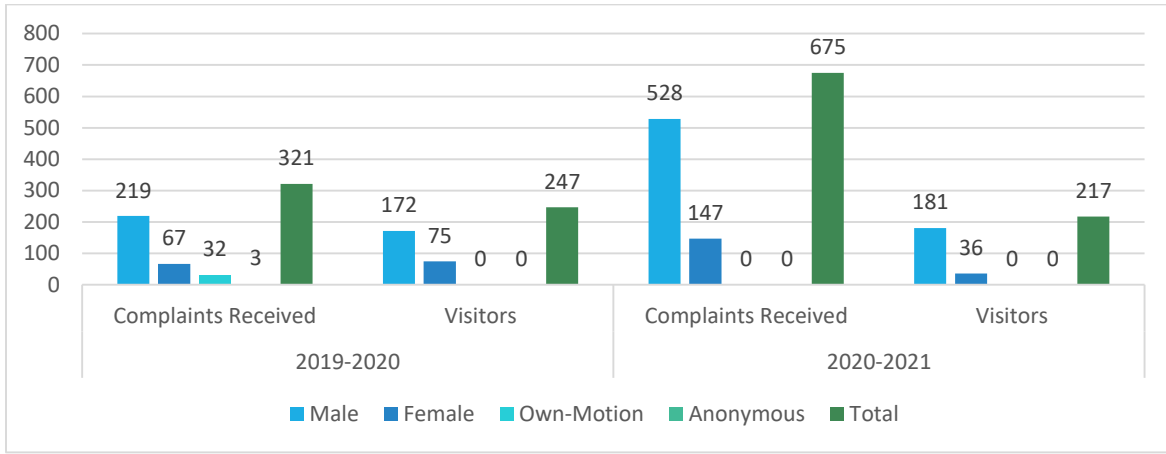


Figure 11 Demographic Profile of Complainants for the Financial Year 2019/2020 & 2020/2021

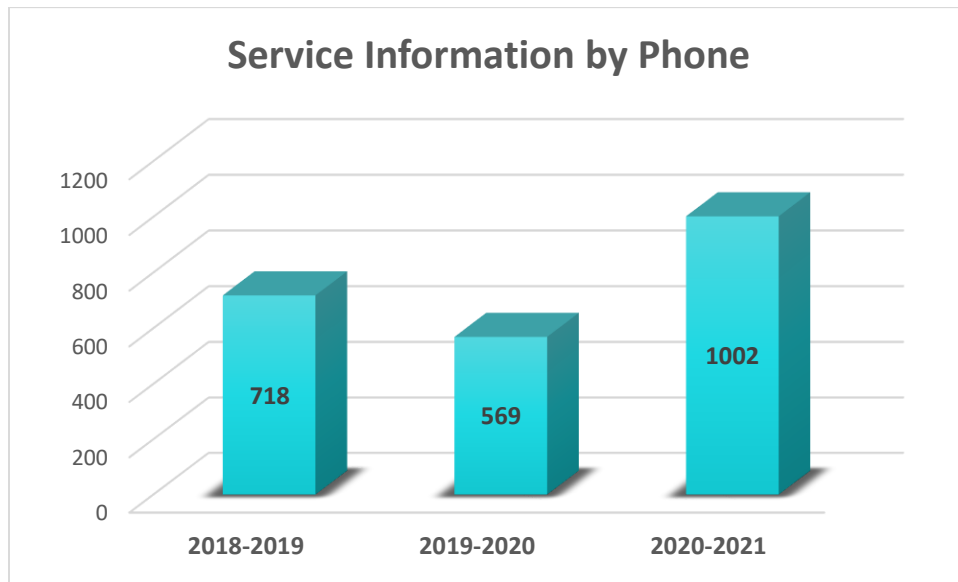


Figure 12 Service Information by Phone

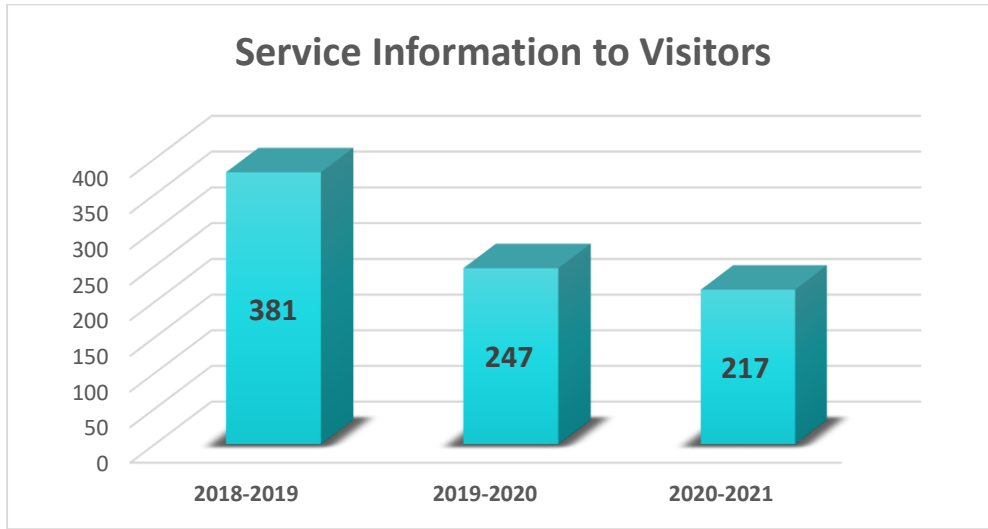


Figure 13 Service Information to Visitors

Disability	
Disabled	16
Not disabled	349
No data available	278
Total	643

Table 17 Disability

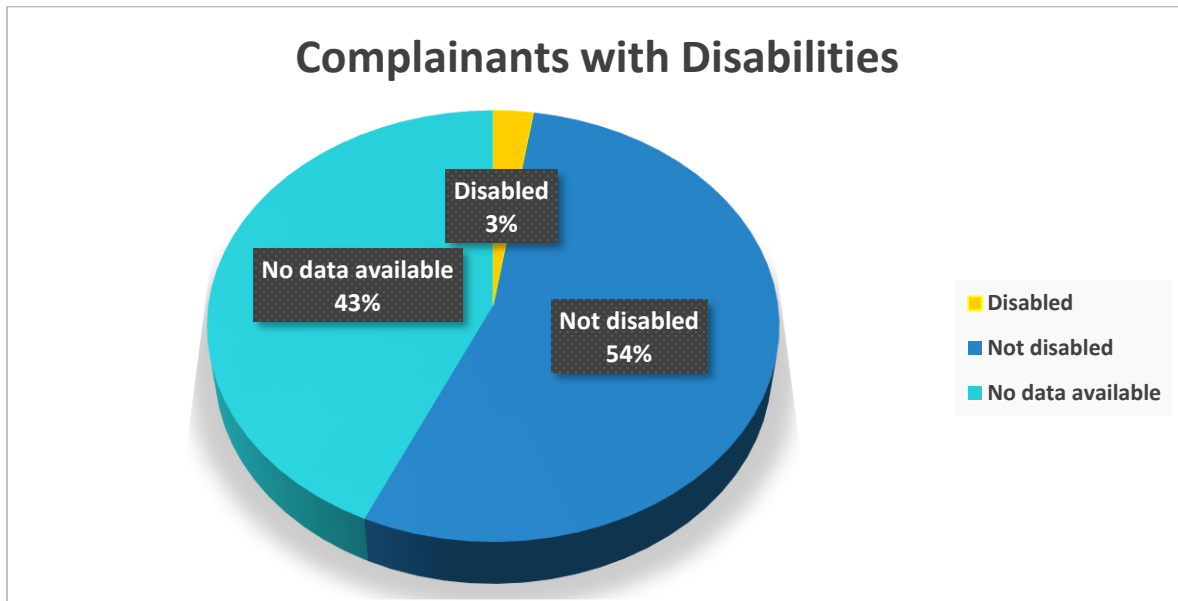


Figure 14 Complainants with Disabilities

B. Administration

I. Responding to the coronavirus crisis and its impact on our service/work

In 2020-2021, we moved rapidly from a predominantly office-based organization to one that is able to offer the minimum service continuity while working largely at home from 10 March to 30 April 2021. This meant fundamental changes to the way we operate, including using technology and providing support in entirely different ways.

Despite the many challenges that the pandemic presented, we successfully issued a public notice through our website regarding the measures taken to continue receiving complaints and how we can be contacted for service information or assistance. This yielded into positive outcome as we were able to process around 200 e-correspondence related to administration, financial and complaints and attended to approximately 20 phone enquiries regarding complaints.

However, it is also true to highlight that due to the closure of our Office, we were unable to progress on-going investigations, process complaints received on the eve of lockdown and could not be accessible to persons who have no IT facilities. We unwantedly suspended our scheduled awareness raising campaign, working trips to Rodrigues and face-to-face appointments until further notice.

As the situation evolved, it became clear that the pressure on certain emergency public services such as health, police etc.. in dealing with the pandemic would impede our ability to operate as normal. In these difficult and unprecedented times, we did not want to add further pressure on these public authorities or risk diverting their resources away from handling the pandemic. To support the national response, we therefore adopted a flexible approach in pursuing our on-going investigations between 10 March till 30 April 2021. We continued to receive new complaints, provide service information and assistance through email or by phone. The Office performance and decrease observed in some of the statistics were largely due to the effect of the pandemic.

The following were achieved during the lockdown of the coronavirus pandemic:

- (a) Received and processed 200 e-correspondence;
- (b) Attended to 17 complaints, opened 6 new cases within our jurisdiction and provided service information to remaining;
- (c) All complaints were acknowledged within 5 days;
- (d) Processed our Budget Estimates and HR requirement for 2021/2022;
- (e) Attended 20 phone enquiries regarding services offered to public
- (f) Compilation of statistics for Annual Report and
- (g) Updating of complaint record.

II. Health, Safety and Environmental Issues

We are committed to supporting the health and well-being of our staff as well as visitors. The Office's Safety and Health Officer regularly inspects and assesses the standard of safety and sanitary measures in place in order to identify any risk and hazards. The Office strictly comply with all sanitary protocols as advised by the Ministry of Health and Wellness.

Moreover, staff have undergone appropriate health and safety training in order to enable them take the necessary preventive action during an emergency situation. We also organized both in-and-out door team building exercise so as to promote camaraderie and enhance the motivational level of staff.

Some of the activities are displayed at **Annex II**

III. Training & Development

The Office recognizes that providing relevant training and development opportunities is vital in supporting and caring for its staff. Virtual trainings, seminars and webinars have become practically commonplace over the past year as a safe and preferred way to facilitate learning opportunities. Collectively our staff have participated and attended a range of trainings and webinars relevant to their fields. A list of training and webinar attended is enclosed at **Annex I**.

IV. Risk Management, Citizen Oriented Initiatives & Good Governance

Responsible and Accounting Officer

The Senior Investigations Officer is both the Responsible and Accounting Officer of the Office in terms of the Public Service Commission Regulations and the Finance and Audit Act 1973. He is responsible for the sound governance and effective internal control of the Office. In performing his duties effectively and efficiently, he is assisted by the Head of Sections.

Top Management Meeting

The Ombudsman and the Senior Investigations Officer regularly meet to discuss on the vision, mission and strategic objectives of the Office. They also review the operational performance of the Office and take appropriate decision in the putting in place of adequate systems to achieve value for money service.

Performance Monitoring Meeting

It goes without saying that connecting with others was different in 2020-2021 than in previous year but also more important to do than ever. This was certainly true for the way we reached out to members of the public, participated in meetings and engaged with colleagues.

Many of the coordinating meetings chaired by the Senior Investigations Officer on a monthly or quarterly basis took place virtually in order to limit contact with Officers and reduce the risk of transmission of the virus. A breakdown of the meetings held is depicted below: -

- (a) Safety, Health and Welfare Meeting - 04;
- (b) Performance Monitoring Meeting - 08;
- (c) Assets Management Meeting - 02;
- (d) Budget Performance Meeting - 02;
- (e) Procurement/Needs Committee - 05 and
- (f) Transformation Implementation Committee - 02.

IV. Internal Audit

The objective of Internal Audit is to provide independent, objective assurance and consulting services designed to add value and improve the Office's operations.

Internal audit is an appraisal function established within the Office to independently examine and evaluate the internal controls, risk management and governance processes and report to the Responsible and Accounting Officer.

We consider that internal controls are sufficiently robust to be confident that risks are proactively identified, mitigated and escalated as required, that ensure adherence to by the appropriate staff and monitor compliance.

This year the internal auditing was disrupted due to the closure of the Office and same was still on-going at the end of the financial year. As a compliant organization we would work on the recommendations in order to further enhance our control system.

V. Environmental Initiatives

We are committed to reducing our impact on the environment and continually look for ways of doing this. In 2020-2021, we continued to undertake the following activities:

- (a) Reduced energy consumption by encouraging staff to switch off electrical equipment when not in use, resulting in broadly same amount of energy usage as compared to last year.
- (b) Encouraged staff to explore the use of the electronic shared folder, thus reducing the need for printing and reply to the complainant through email.

- (c) Engaged with staff to maintain e-Archiving of outgoing correspondence that support paperless working environment and reduce the need for paper files.

These initiatives have contributed significantly in reducing our administrative/operational cost and maintaining a healthy working environment for all our staff and visitors.

Records show that e-flimsies have increased to 100 % thus saving papers and printing cartridges, around 1069 replies to complainants were made through emails representing a decrease in postage cost and a constant amount of energy consumption observed compared to previous year.

C. Public Service Delivery

I. Investigations Section

The Investigations Section comprises of technical Officers and support staff who have been trained to provide the first point of contact with the Office. These Officers play an important role in providing valuable service information to members of the public who claim they have been victim of maladministration. Where the Officers assessed that the nature of the complaint is outside our remit, complainants are guided or assisted on other avenues available for their redress. Complaining to our Office is a free service and the types of complaints we receive are many and varied.

In **2020/21**, the Investigations Section received and attended to **1022** phone calls from members of the public who solicited our assistance, which is a significant increase of **86%** as compared to last year. Moreover, we have assisted and guided **217** complainants who visited us for help. The decrease in the number is due to the fact that the Office was closed for 2 months and that we have suspended our face-to-face appointments to mitigate the risk of spreading/contracting the virus and ensure no disruption is caused to our service delivery.

II. Awareness Raising Campaign

As mentioned above the advent of COVID-19 has forced us to suspend most of our outdoor activities and face-to-face appointments. Consequently, we conducted only 6 awareness raising campaign jointly with Citizens Advice Bureau around the island, i.e below our scheduled target of 12.

During 2020-2021, we distributed a total of **720** pamphlets to the public in general, a significant decrease compared to last year.

Given the uncertainty caused by the COVID-19, we envisage to look into the possibility of launching our virtual awareness raising campaign in the next financial year. We know

this approach would not enable us to reach the whole population i.e elderly with no IT facilities etc., but it would still be very beneficial to others.

III. Customer Satisfaction

Throughout the year we ask members of public who have contacted or visited our Office for assistance to tell us about their experience regarding our service.

The survey gathers feedback on a number of areas, including:

- **Overall satisfaction with our customer service;**
- **Overall satisfaction on service information received, and**
- **Overall satisfaction of visitors.**

In 2020-2021, the Office was opened to the public from July 2020 to 09 March 2021 as our island was considered as COVID-19 free and safe. However, the resurgence of the virus as from 10 March 2021 has forced the Government to impose sanitary emergency lockdown and the Office closed its doors till end March 2021. View the rapid transmission of the virus, we decided to suspend all our face-to-face appointments with the public but we continued to remain accessible through phone and email from the first phase of re-opening till the end of the closing year. Inevitably, we continued to receive less visitors during the pandemic period and **212** members of the public visited our Office for assistance, out of whom **199** responded positively to our Customer Feedback Survey whilst the remaining did not participate to the exercise - **19%** increase as compared to last year.

Overall Satisfaction with Our Customer Service

We ask the public in general to give us an indication of how satisfied they are with the level of customer service we provide, i.e. facilities put at their disposal for comfort, welcome, etc...

The survey found that **86 %** of the public who filled in the survey form were satisfied with the customer service. However, we observed that none of those who expressed their dissatisfaction, did indicate the area which requires improvement which has convinced us to believe that they are unjustified or merely irrelevant to the survey.

Overall Satisfaction with Service Information

We also ask the public to indicate their overall satisfaction with regard to the Service Information received from us during their visits.

Of all those who filled in the survey, **91%** unanimously expressed their full satisfaction with regards to the service information obtained from us whilst the remaining **9%** stated that same was partly met or related to subject other than the service information.

Overall satisfaction of visitors

Generally, all the visitors leave our office satisfied and the majority of them are largely positive about the contact they have with our staff. However, there are very few who believe that we should provide a rapid intervention or that we fail to understand their grievances, or are not happy as they cannot meet Senior Officers or that the outcome of our investigations into their complaints was not in their favour. We noted a score of **98%** of visitors who were satisfied when they left our Office.

In summary, the general comments received from members of public are as follows:

- (i) Complainants are happy with the communication they have with our Office,
- (ii) Complainants say that they find our staff polite and considerate, professional and helpful.
- (iii) Some also feel that the investigations take too long to be completed.

General Observation

Overall score of % of complainants' satisfaction survey which provide an average of 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' to our service has continued to remain steady for the majority of visitors.

There has been a slight decrease in satisfaction among those individuals i.e., **92%**, as compared to last year's result of 99.7%. We have given due consideration to the suggestions/comments and some of them do not objectively reflect the intended outcome as they are irrelevant to the context of the survey.



Figure 15 Customer Satisfaction

Key Performance Indicator	Target	Score
% of complainants' satisfaction survey which provide an average of 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' to our service	85%	91.80%

Some extracts of the comments/ feedbacks from complainants are produced below verbatim:

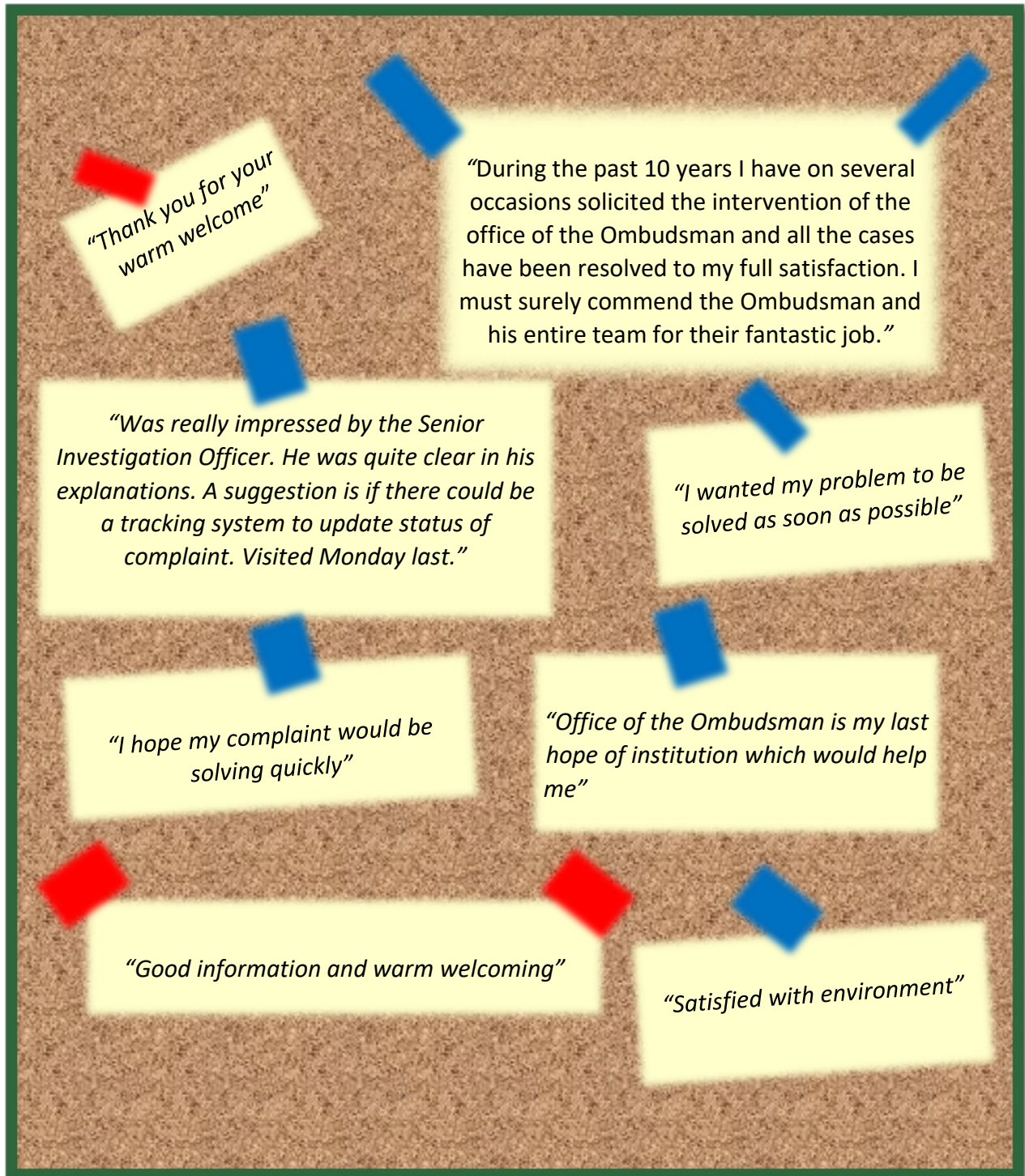


Figure 16 Extracts of the comments/ feedbacks from complainants

PART III – FINANCIAL STATEMENT

2020/2021 was yet another challenging financial period for the Office as we have to manage the impact of the resurgence of Covid-19 and other unforeseen expenditures within our limited funds. However, consistent application of our internal policies has contributed immensely to enable some savings and allowed us to meet the unplanned cost.

Like other Ministries/Departments, the impact of Covid-19 pandemic on our operational and financial activities meant that we were not able to progress all planned activities such as annual working trip to Rodrigues and awareness raising campaign around the island. We continued to reprioritize our available funding to respond to the pandemic but the challenging operating environment led to an underspending of our estimated budget.

Although we have all the necessary mechanism in place to monitor and review the risk which can impact financially on our service delivery, we consider a key risk to the Office is the global economic situation and variability in market prices. It relates to risk that changes in market prices, such as foreign exchange rates and interest rates, will affect the fair value of assets and liabilities or future cash flows of the Office's results of operation.

Percentage of Budget Estimates – 2020/2021

Percentage of Budget Estimates - 2020-2021	%	Estimates 2020-2021 Rs 000
Compensation of Employees	74%	10,703
Goods & Services	25%	3,687
Grants	1%	110
Total	100%	14,500

Table 18 Percentage of Budget Estimates - 2020-2021

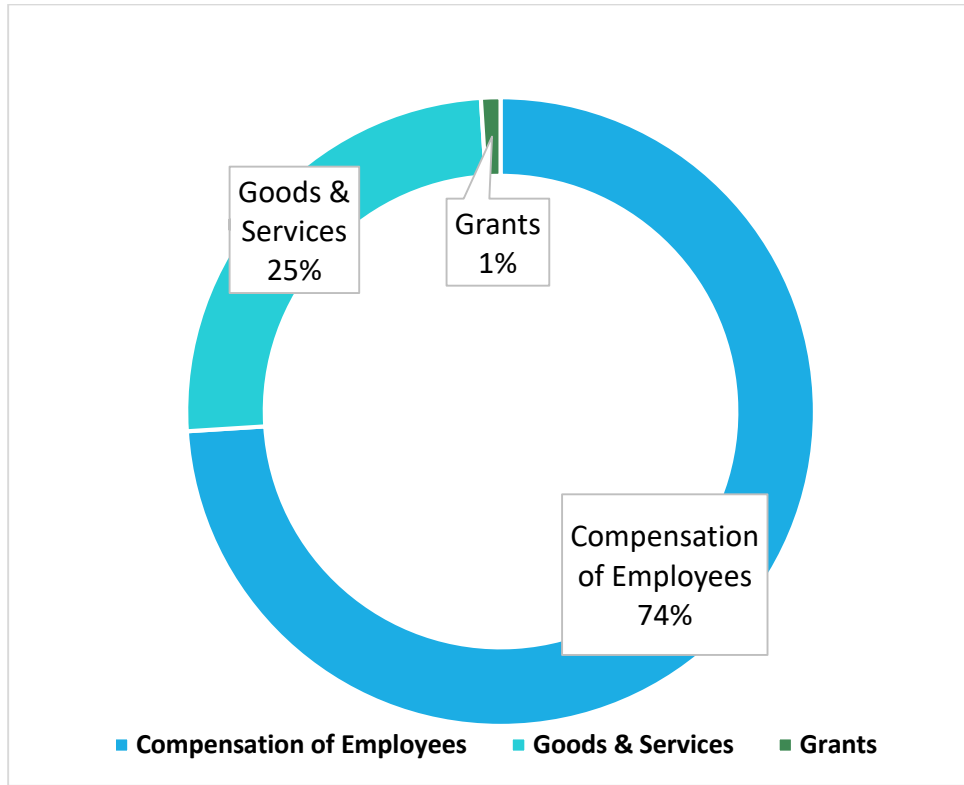


Figure 17 Percentage of Budget Estimates - 2020/2021

Budget Estimates and Actual Expenditures for the Year 2020/2021

	Estimates Rs 000	Actual Rs 000
Total Expenditure	14500	13490
% of Actual Expenditure over Estimated Expenditure	100%	93%

Table 19 Budget Estimates and Actual Expenditures for the Year 2020/2021

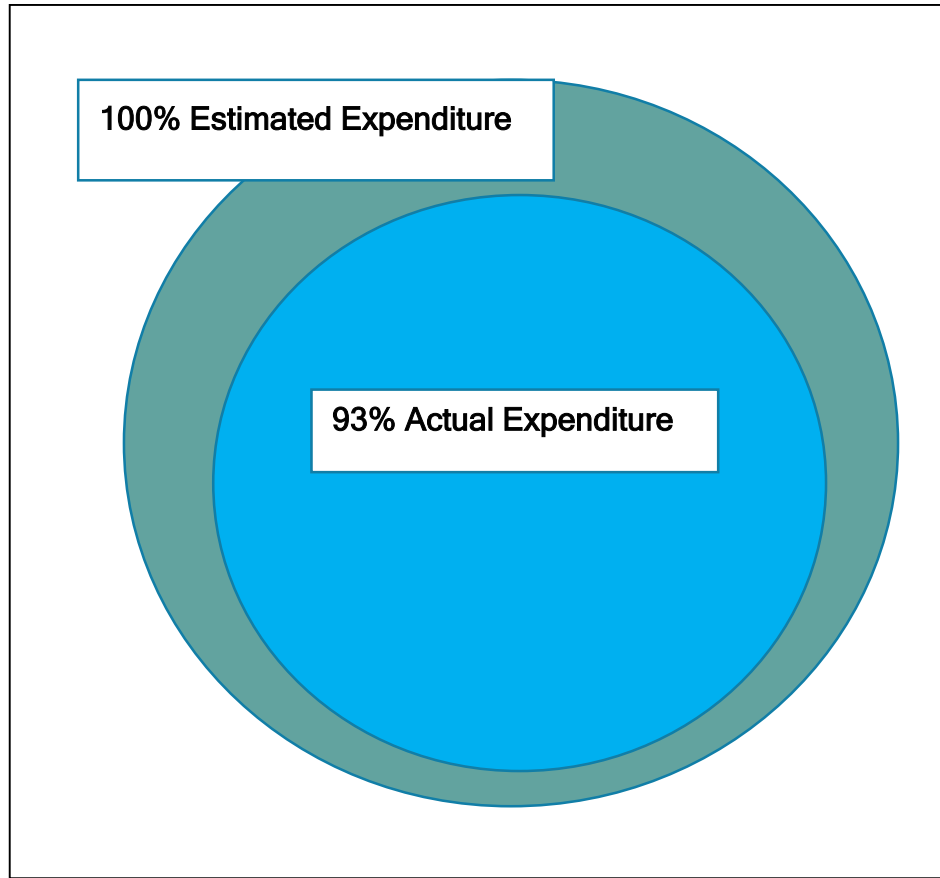


Figure 18 Budget Estimates and Actual Expenditures for the Year 2020/2021

Comparative of Year on Year of Estimates & Actual Expenditures

Year	Actual Recurrent Expenditure	Estimated Recurrent Expenditure	% of Actual Expenditure over Estimated Expenditure
2018-2019	14600	13558	92.86%
2019-2020	15200	14025	92.27%
2020-2021	14500	13490	93%

Table 20 Comparative of Year on Year of Estimates & Actual Expenditures

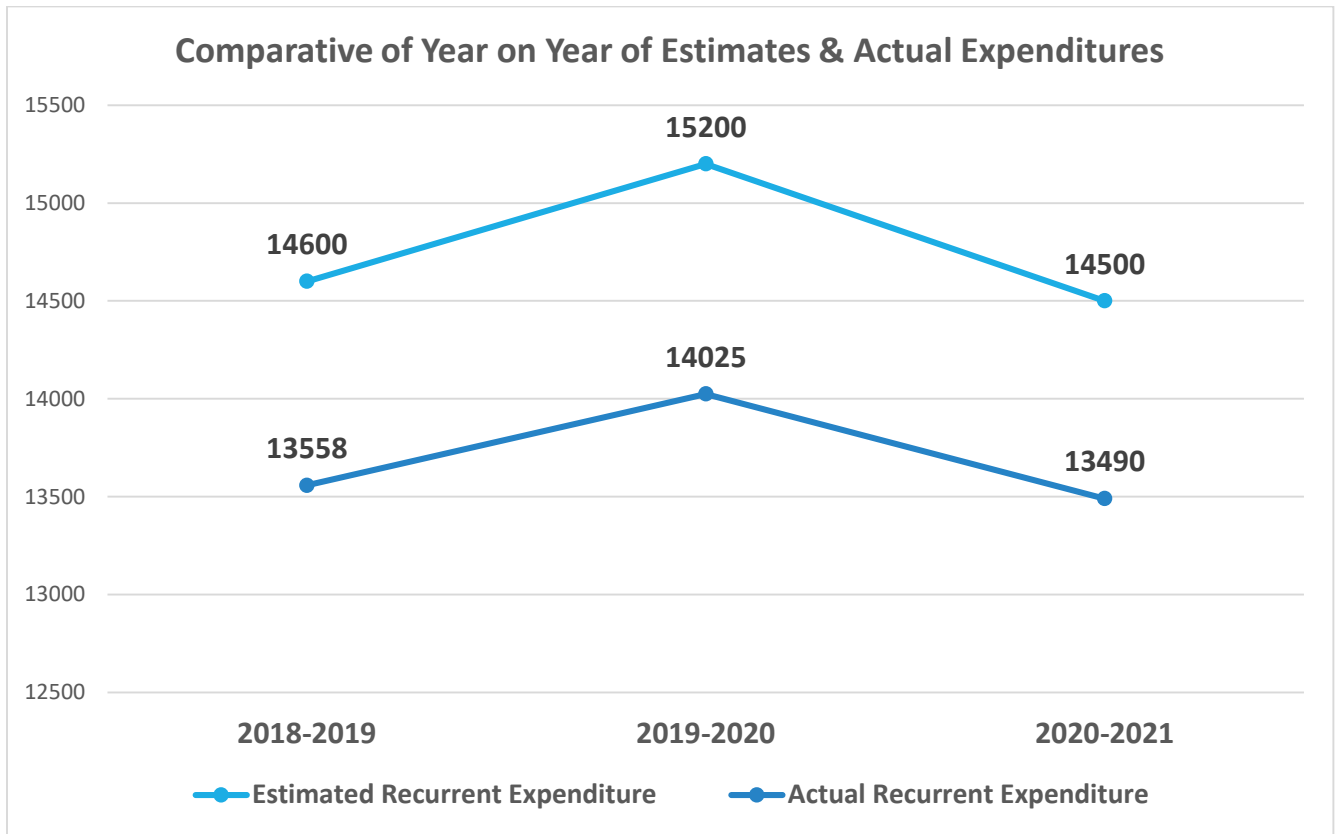


Figure 19 Comparative of Year on Year of Estimates & Actual Expenditures

Budget Estimates and Actual Expenditures for the Year 2020/2021

Item No.	Goods and Services	Estimates Rs	Actual Rs
22010	Cost of Utilities	470,000	396,160
22030	Rent	2,196,000	2,191,370
22040	Office Equipment and Furniture	130,000	84,890
22050	Office Expenses	155,000	124,650
22060	Maintenance	265,000	195,480
22070	Cleaning Services	6,000	5,130
22100	Publications and Stationery	280,000	219,950
22120	Fees	35,000	17,000
22170	Travelling within the Republic of Mauritius	100,000	0.00
22900	Other Goods and Services	50,000	25,630
	Total	3,687,000	3,260,260

Table 21 Budget Estimates and Actual Expenditures for the Year 2020/2021

Analysis of Major Changes

Estimates		Rs 000	Rs 000	Rs 000
Item No.	Details	2018/19 Estimates	2019/20 Estimates	2020/21 Estimates
	Recurrent Expenditure	14,600	15,200	14,500
21	Compensation of Employees	10,463	11,053	10,703
21110	Personal Emoluments	9,568	9,968	9,683
0.001	Basic Salary	7,493	7,683	7,944
0.002	Salary Compensation	100	260	284
0.004	Allowances	775	775	775
0.006	Cash in lieu of leave	600	600	-
0.009	Bonus	600	650	680
21111	Other Staff Costs	815	995	995
0.002	Travelling & Transport	700	750	750
0.1	Overtime	100	220	130
0.2	Staff Welfare	15	25	25
22	Goods and Services	4,027	4,037	3,687
22010	Cost of Utilities	620	620	470
22030	Rent	2,192	2,196	2,196
22040	Office Equipment and Furniture	400	205	130
22050	Office Expenses	145	180	155
22060	Maintenance	260	260	265
22070	Cleaning Services	-	6	6
22100	Publications and Stationery	185	325	280
22120	Fees	45	55	35
22170	Travelling within the Republic of Mauritius	150	150	100
22900	Other Goods and Services	30	40	50
26	Grants	110	110	110
	Total	14,600	15,200	14,500

Table 22 Analysis of Major Changes

Comparative Table of Statements of Revenue and Expenditure

Head/Sub/Head of Expenditure	2019-2020		2020-2021	
	Estimates	Actual	Estimates	Actual
	Rs 000	Rs 000	Rs 000	Rs 000
Compensation of Employees	11,053	10,670	10,703	10,170
Goods and Services	4,037	3,265	3,687	3,260
Grants	110	90	110	60
Total	15,200	14,025	14,500	13,490
%	92%		93%	

Table 23 Comparative Table of Statements of Revenue and Expenditure

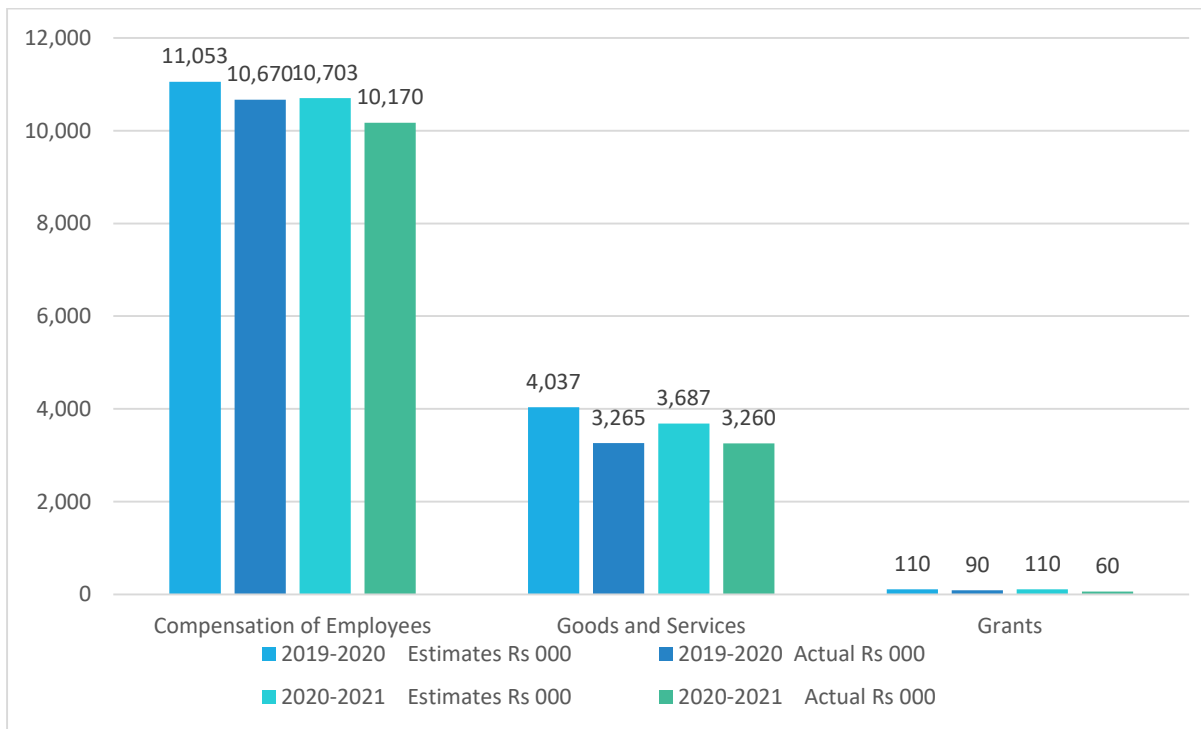


Figure 20 Comparative Table of Statements of Revenue and Expenditure

Details of all Virements effected during Financial Year 2020/2021

Virement Certificate	From	To	Amount (Rs)
No.1	22040001 - Office Equipment	22060003 - Maintenance of Plant & Equipment	20,000.00
No.2	21110001 - Basic Salary	21110002- Compensation	29,000.00
TOTAL			49,000.00

Table 24 Details of all Virements effected during Financial Year 2020/2021

Notes to Virement

Virement No.1: The repairs of the defective parts of our photocopy machine was expected to be undertaken during the Financial year 2019/20, but due to lockdown measures enforced, the parts could not reach Mauritius. The cost of repairs was taken into consideration in our proposed Budget Estimates for the Financial year under review but same was not considered by Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MOFED). Therefore, we ran short of funds in the voted item to meet the cost of repairs of photocopy machine amounting to RS 76, 000.

Virement No.2: Provision for the payment of compensation for the year 2021 to public Officers could not be estimated during the preparation of Budget Estimates 2020/2021. Therefore, following approval of the Government for the payment of compensation 2021, the need for additional funds was felt to meet the recurrent expenditures. Subsequently, savings made under item 'Basic Salary' was reallocated to item 'Compensation'.

PART IV – WAY FORWARD

The Covid-19 pandemic had a significant impact on most public sector organization in 2020-2021. This impact, along with a cut in our budget will undoubtedly affect our ability to meet our customers' expectations in terms of timeliness in resolution. We consider that 2021-2022 will be a period of recovery and stabilization from COVI-19 and its effect on public sector services. We endeavour to maintain the same level of commitment, professionalism dedication in order to ensure consistency in public service delivery and their satisfactions.

We also undertake to deliver our statutory functions in line with legislative requirements and our published service charter as well as performance targets. The well-being of both our colleagues and visitors will continue to be our top priority and to achieve this, we will continue to assess and review the sanitary protocols in place so as to ensure its effectiveness and efficiency during this uncertain time.

In general, we propose to implement the following Strategies and policy actions over the next five years:

A. Awareness Raising Campaign

In a bid to continue our effort and initiative of raising the awareness of the whole public, we will, subject to sanitary protocols imposed by the Government, resume the working cooperation and collaboration with Citizens Advice Bureau so as to educate the general public on their rights and make it easier for them to find and use our service. We also plan to explore the possibility of introducing and promoting virtual sessions of awareness raising campaign in the next financial year 2021/2022 in order to reduce travel and face-to-face contacts with members of the public.

B. Anti-Corruption Policy

The Office is committed to preventing dishonesty and corruption from occurring, to having appropriate systems of detection and correction in place and to maintaining an anti-corruption culture. To achieve this, we will comply with the requirements of our Policy and will constantly assess the Office's overall vulnerability to corruption by conducting more Corruption Risk Assessment during the next financial period.

C. Resources

Learning and development will be a key focus in the years ahead as we implement our new working processes and equip our staff with the right skills and knowledge to deliver a high-quality service. Our team do an incredible great and challenging job, often engaging with distressed people, many of whom have suffered harrowing ordeals. Therefore, we will continue to offer the relevant training to our staff so that we deliver our objectives efficiently and effectively.

As we are mindful of the current economic situation around the globe, of which Mauritius has not been spared and we also recognize that resourcing the public sector is increasingly challenging as our country experienced GDP falls during the previous and current financial period. However, it is undeniable slashing of budget, while understandable within the context of a depressed economy, does not bode well for the fight against maladministration and will have a devastating impact in our efforts to deliver value-based public service to our citizens. Therefore, we plan to recruit one additional Investigations Officer to further improve the timeliness of finalizing investigations.

D. Disaggregated Data – Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)

As part of the Office initiatives in the pursue of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) journey, we embarked into a data collection enhancement program in order to capture disparities in relation to vulnerable groups, as well as ensuring that the specific needs and rights of those groups can be captured and addressed. In 2020-2021, we have made notable progress in compiling a disaggregated complainant data by sex, age, disability and geographic location and other characteristics relevant in our local contexts.

We envisage to continue improving our database in order to tag the nature of complaints investigated according to different SDGs concerned. It will enable the Office to identify areas of SDG implementation where complaints are more prevalent, or being received more systematically, thus identifying key challenges in, or barriers to, SDG as well as Government Programme implementation.

E. Digitalization of Public Service

The Office has since the past three years been digitalizing its service delivery and today we are affording the opportunities to members of the public to lodge a complaint through our online Complaint Form and Customer Feedback Form available in the Office's website which is more convenient and less costly. The implementation of e-Procurement System at the Office in 2020-2021 is again a step forward in the pursuit of transforming the way of doing business in an efficient and effective manner. The uncertainty in the domain of

health and safety has triggered a new mode of operation namely homeworking in both the public and private sectors. We therefore, look forward to assess the feasibility of implementing other technological tools and equipment which will further enhance our remote working without any disruption and provide value-based public service delivery.

F. Quality Assurance

We have designed our Quality Assurance process to assess and enquire on any service failure or shortcomings. The Quality Assurance Team together with the internal control will examine, on a quarterly basis, a randomly selected sample of tasks undertaken to ensure that we are operating in line with our service charter and processes.

OUR STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2021-2025

- (a) Ensure that administrative action and decision taken by Ministries/Departments, Local Authorities and the Rodrigues Regional Assembly is fair and reasonable;
- (b) Uphold the rights of aggrieved citizens to a fair and equitable treatment in accordance with Principles of good administration;
- (c) Act as a shield for any administration against unfounded allegations/averments and;
- (d) Work closely with the public, make our services accessible and provide solutions;
- (e) Be the most trusted institution in creating transparent, responsive and accountable public service.

ANNEX I – List of Webinar & Training during the Financial Year 2020-2021

SN	Webinars	Participants
1	UN Resolution on Ombudsman and Mediator Institutions - AORC	Senior/Technical Officials
2	Side event on Building Transparent , Accountable and Inclusive Institutions - UN Department of Economic and Social Affair	Senior Officials
3	Systemic Investigation - AORC/IOI	Senior/Technical Officials
4	Facilitated Discussion: Recalcitrant Respondents - AORC/AOMA	Senior Officials
5	Virtual meeting with foreign experts on ‘Assessment of the Disability Sector under UNCRPD	Senior Official

Appendix for Training		
SN	Training/ Lecture	Participants
1	Side event at UNGASS Against Corruption 2021 on “ Building Transparent , Accountable and Inclusive Institutions” - United Nations	Senior Officials
2	National Mechanism for Reporting and Follow up (NMRF) - Human Rights Division	Senior Officials
3	National Mechanism for Reporting and Follow up (NMRF) - Human Rights Division	Senior/Technical Officials
4	“Workshop Human Rights “ - Human Rights Division	Senior/Technical Officials
5	Anti-Corruption Policy - ICAC	Senior Officials/ Technical Officials/ Finance Cadre/ General Service Cadre
6	Health and Safety: Briefing on Roles and Responsibilities of Fire Warden Team	All Staff
7	Health and Safety: Briefing on Risk Assessment and Fire Emergency Guidelines	All Staff
8	Health and Safety: Safe Techniques and Manual Handling	All Staff
9	E-Procurement System (3 Sessions)	Procurement Cadre
10	Workshop on Breast Feeding	General Service Cadre
11	Training Programme on Safety and Health in the Workplace	General Service Cadre
12	Training Programme on First Aid	General Service Cadre
13	Training Session on the use of KPIs features on the MIS	General Service Cadre / Procurement Cadre
14	Training Programme for Support Staff(Level 2)	General Service Cadre
15	Training Programme for Support Staff(Level 2)	General Service Cadre
16	Training Programme on “Writing Effective Minutes of Meeting”	General Service Cadre

17	Training Programme on “Registry Procedures”	General Service Cadre
18	Training Programme on Risk Management	General Service Cadre
19	Training Programme on Safety and Health in the Workplace	General Service Cadre

ANNEX II – PICTURES OF ACTIVITIES



Christmas at the Office



Team Building and End of Year Lunch



Domino Competition



Uno Competition



Winners of Competition



The Ombudsman, the Senior Investigations Officer and all staff aligned in the corridor of the main entrance to welcome the delegation Voice of the Disabled People International



Training Safety & Health at the Office



E- Procurement Launching and Training



Anti-Corruption Committee

ANNEX III– Awareness Raising Campaign



ANNEX IV– Organizational Structure

