

REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS
OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN

Annual Report
on
Budget Performance
2022-2023

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Statement from the Senior Investigations Officer, also Responsible and Accounting Officer

I am pleased to present the Annual Report on Budget Performance of the Office of the Ombudsman for the fiscal year 2022/2023.

The Office met its objectives of delivering an effective complaint-handling services to the public although it recognizes that there is room for improvements for timely resolution of complaints, subject to respecting the legal framework. The Office noted a reduction in its performance in respect of finalization of cases from 73% in the previous year to 61% during the reporting period. The main reasons for this decline are due to the fact that Ministries, Departments, Local Authorities and the Rodrigues Regional Assembly take too much time to respond to our queries. Moreover, it has handled more investigations and seen an expansion of its operational requirements compared to last year. Furthermore, some complex investigations required specialized expertise and resources that are not readily at its disposal.

However, I note with a sense of pride that our Office's performance in respect of other key indicators was consistent and continues on an upward trend.

In 2022-23, out of 850 cases dealt with, which were made up of 677 new complaints received and 173 cases brought forward at the end of financial year 2021/22, we were able to finalise 520 complaints. the remaining 330 cases, were carried over to the current financial year. We noted a 5% increase in the number of complaints lodged before the Ombudsman during the year under review as compared to 641 complaints registered in the previous fiscal year.

In line with our Mission of raising public awareness, our Office has conducted 14 face-to-face outreach sessions whereby members of the public in general were lectured on the role and services offered by the Office. A total of 1190 pamphlets were distributed to participants during these sessions. The Office acknowledges the collaboration and cooperation of all its stakeholders including Citizen Advised Bureau, National Women Council, NGOs and others.

While the Office's services are free of charge, they are not without a cost. Like any other Ministries/Departments, it has faced the inflationary effects caused due to the on-going dispute between countries around the world. Despite the prevailing situation, it has successfully managed the public funds in the most economical and effective manner which has led it to operate within a stable environment. The Office noted a constant improvement in the overall organizational performance calculated on actual expenditures which currently stands as 95%, thus, implying that it did not solicit any additional funds to meet the non-budgeted compensation payable to all staff as well as the impact of soaring prices of goods and services.

The training programme implemented have contributed in improving the quality of work, and delivering value-based services to the public. Besides, it also continued to strengthen relations with international Ombudsman institutions, through its participation in the African Ombudsman and Mediators Association (AOMA) and International Ombudsman

Institute (IOI) seminars/webinars. In this regard, our technical Officers and other support staff attended a series of virtual webinars with a view to further enhancing their investigatory and analytical skills. During the period under review, a total of 22 training courses/webinars were provided to all staff.

The developments in the field of investigations, coupled with the tardy response of Authorities and the high case load and other operational tasks, make it difficult for the Investigations Officers to focus on their investigations and complete them within a reasonable timeframe. The Office should therefore enhance further its governance structure by considering the creation of new position at all levels. This measure will undoubtedly increase the capacity of the Office to resolve cases as well as reduce the time it takes for finalizing them.

The Audit of Accounts carried out at the Office regarding the adequacy and effectiveness of the controls within the institution was confirmed as no major deficiencies in internal control were identified. The Management is more than ever committed to continue the implementation of internal control procedures in order to sustain clean audit outcomes in subsequent years.

The strategic objectives and plans that I envisioned together with the then Ombudsman when I took over as Senior Investigations Officer and Responsible and Accounting Officer was impacted by the limited resources available at our disposal. However, I must acknowledge that the commitment and intervention of the Ombudsman were instrumentals to the Office meeting its goals. I take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to him, for leading the Office with integrity and creating an enabling environment.

A word of appreciation also to all the stakeholders including Ministries, Departments, NGOs, Civil Society and those which have directly or indirectly contributed to our success as an institution. A special thanks to all staff of the Office of the Ombudsman who continue to strive to the best of their ability and capability to deliver an impactful public service to our communities.

The Office looks forward to strongly focusing on lifting its performance through quality, integrity and values, while at the same time continue making good use of the strategic partnership it has built, in order to positively influence changes in public service delivery.

A. RAMTAHUL
Senior Investigations Officer
Responsible and Accounting Officer

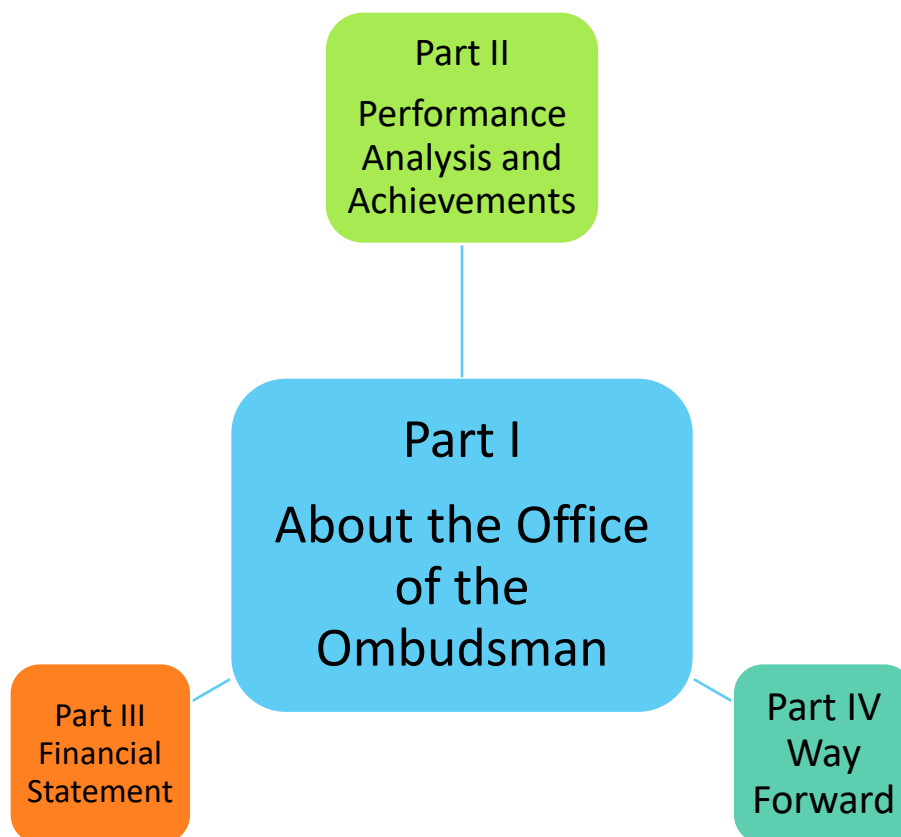
INTRODUCTION

The Annual Report on Budget Performance of the Office of the Ombudsman for financial year 2022-2023 is a statutory requirement under Section 4B of the Finance and Audit Act 1973(Amended) and it has been prepared in line with the guidelines issued by the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development (MOFEPD).

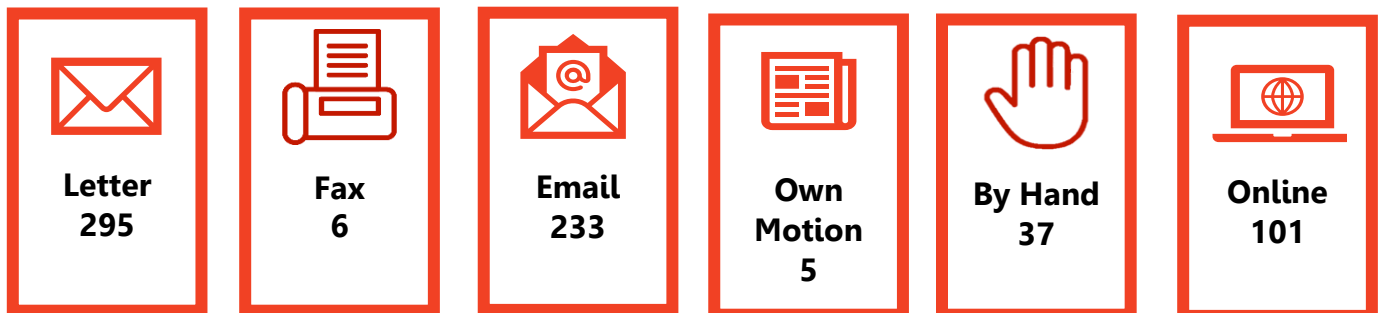
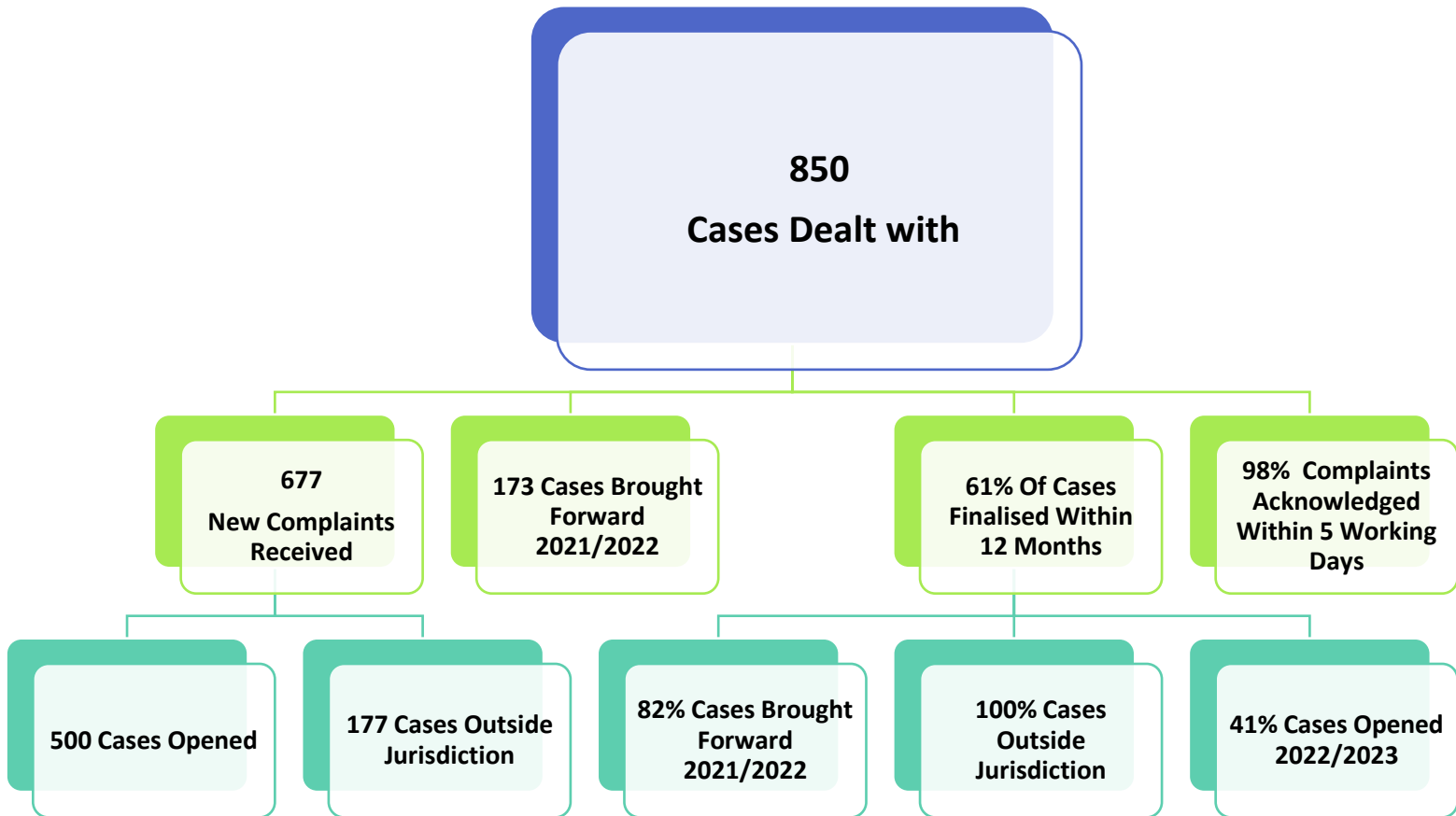
The Report provides an overview of the Office’s financial performance and achievements for the period under review.

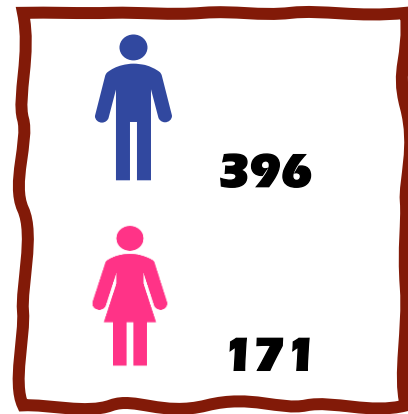
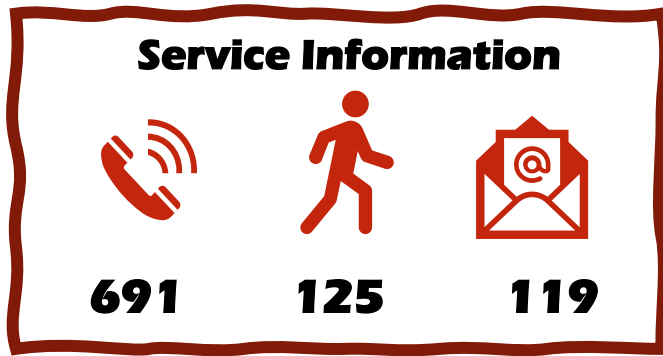
STRUCTRE OF THE REPORT

The Report comprises four Parts as follows:






Highlights





PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY

-  935 members of Public were provided with service information by Staff
-  14 Awareness Raising Campaigns
-  22 Capacity Building Programme

PART I
ABOUT THE
OFFICE OF THE
OMBUDSMAN

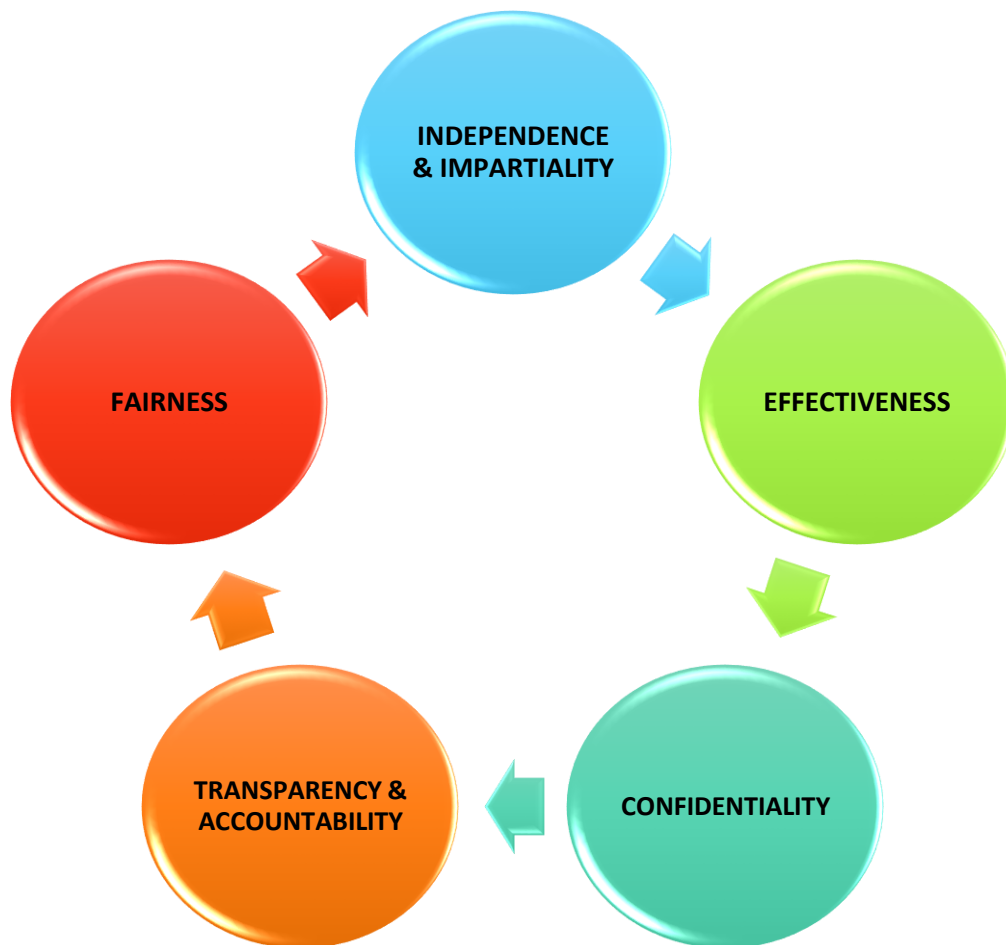
VISION

- To be an effective Constitutional Office that addresses administrative injustices and promotes principles of good administration.

MISSION

- To improve public service by investigating and reporting alleged maladministration by public authorities and by raising public awareness.

VALUES



STRATEGIC PLAN 2021-2025

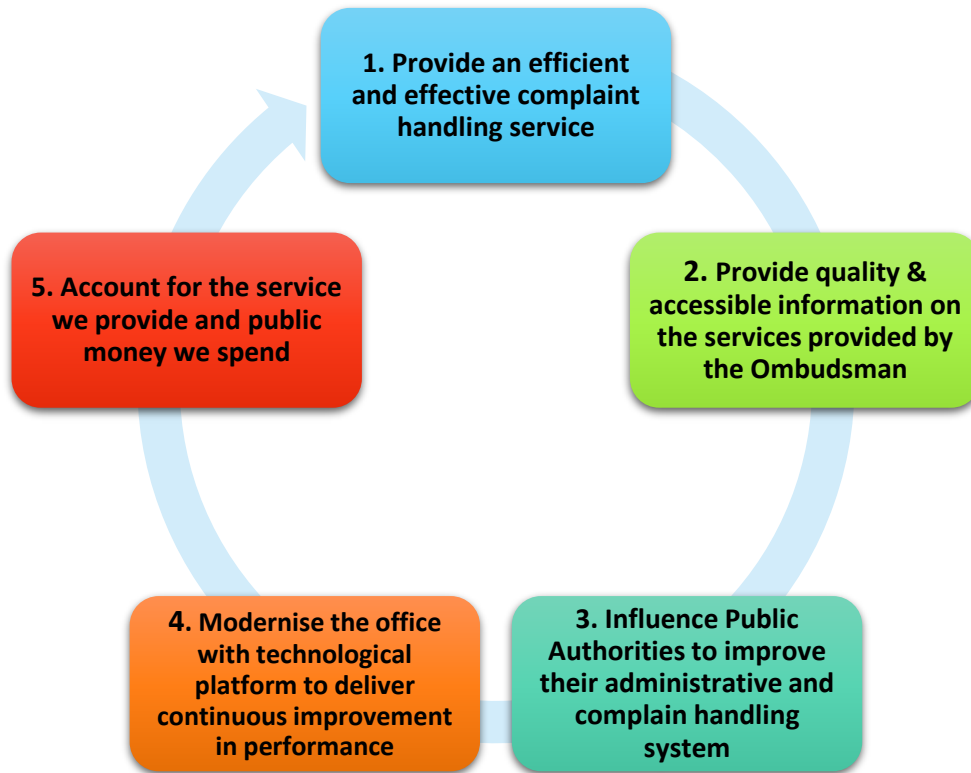


Figure 1 Strategic Plan 2021-2025

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

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

Table 1 Strategic Objectives & KPI for 2020/21- 2024/25

ROLE AND FUNCTIONS

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 is accessible to all members of the public.

It plays an important role in strengthening democracy, the rule of law, good administration and the protection and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms throughout the island as well as the outer islands such as Rodrigues and Agalega. Given its broad mandate and position as interlocutors between civil society and the public authorities, the Office main functions are to hold the authorities accountable, promote a culture of rights and support and represent members of the public who claim having suffered from discrimination and prejudices or received poor services or hardly any services.

The Office has different functions derived from its governing legislation, the Constitution of Mauritius and the Ombudsman Act 1969 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.

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

- A. The Office consists of three officials namely the Ombudsman, the Senior Investigations Officer and the Investigations Officer. The Ombudsman is appointed by the President, acting after consultation with the Prime Minister, the Leader of Opposition and such other persons, if any, as appear to the President, acting in his own deliberate judgment, to be leaders of parties in the National Assembly. He is the Supervising Officer of the Office.
- B. The Offices of the staff of the Ombudsman are public officers and consist of that of a Senior Investigations Officer, Investigations Officer, and other officers as set out in the Organisation chart below. The Senior Investigations Officer is the Responsible and Accounting Officer and is responsible for the day-to-day management of the Office under the supervision of the Ombudsman.

ORGANISATION CHART

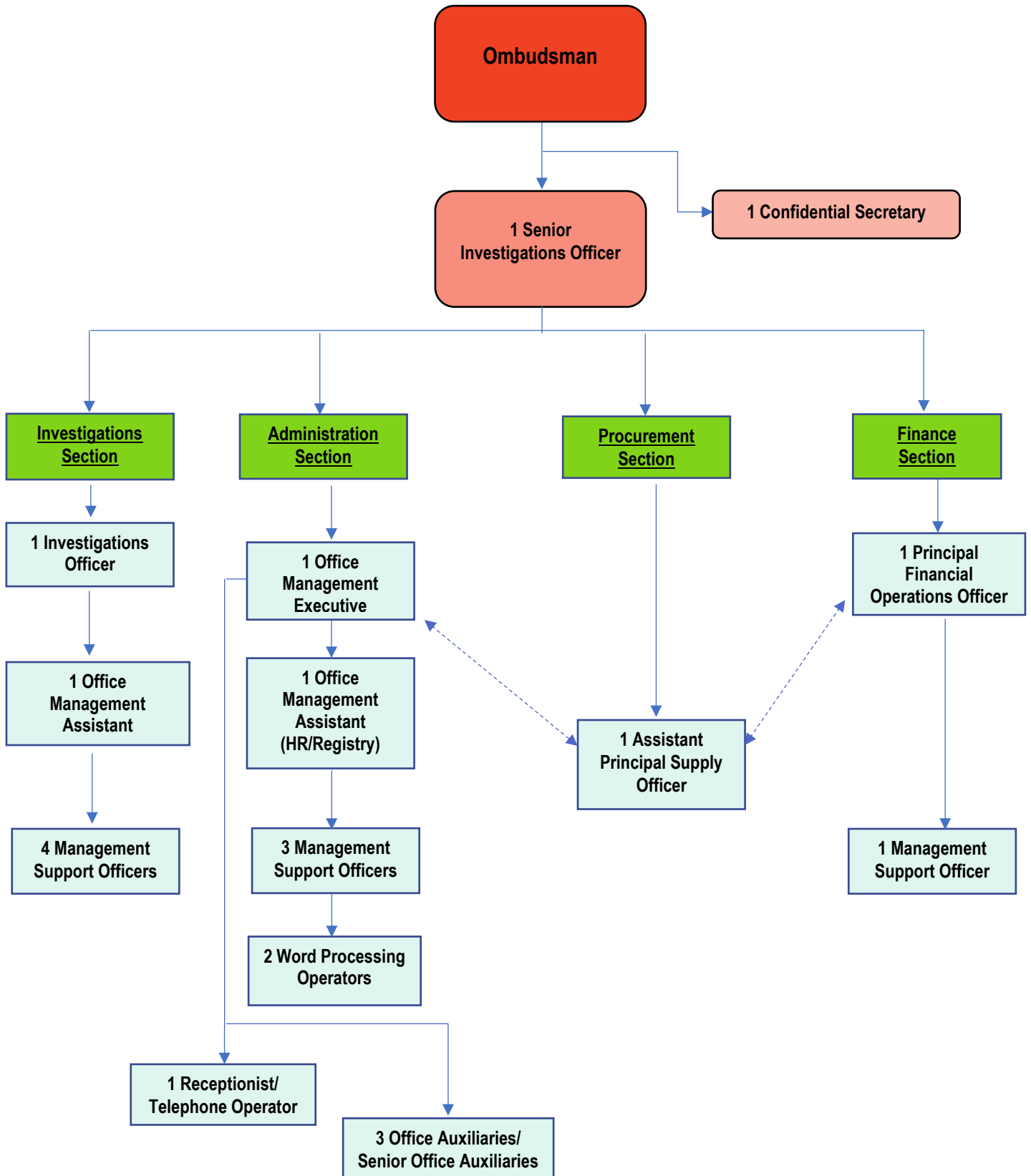


Figure 2 Organisation Chart

Training

The Office provided the following training courses, webinar and seminars to its staff for the period under review:

<u>Organising Body</u>	<u>Training Courses</u>
Civil Service College Mauritius (CSCM)	Capacity Building and Capability Development Programme for Support Staff
	Capacity Building and Capability Development Programme for Frontline/ Supervisory/Technical Grade
	Training on Report Writing
	Training on Handling Difficult Customers
	Training on Gender Mainstreaming
	Training on Tender preparation and Evaluation
	Professional Development programme for WPOs/ SWPOs
	Training on Registry Procedures
	Training on Public Sector Financial Management
	Training Programme on Writing effective minutes of meeting
	Induction Course for WPO
Induction Course for OMA	
Ministry of Public Service, Administrative and Institutional Reforms (MPSAIR)	Training Programme on Safety and Health at the work place for MSOs & OAs/SOAs
	Fire Safety and Fire Risk Management for members of Fire Warden Team
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, RI and ITD (Human Rights Division)	National Mechanism for Reporting and Follow up (NRMF)
IT Security Unit (ITSU)	Awareness Session on IT Security

Table 2 Training Courses

WEBINARS/SEMINARS

<u>Organising Body</u>	<u>Webinars/ Seminars</u>
AOMA/AORC	Showcasing Sectorial Ombudsman (Municipal, Police and Military Ombudsman)
IOI	IOI Ombuds day
AOMA/AORC	- Dealing with Challenging Behaviour
AOMA/AORC	Mediation/Alternative Dispute Resolution
IOI	- Training on 'Crisis Communication'
AOMA/AORC	Show casing Higher Education Ombudsman

Table 3 Webinars/Seminars**Gender Statement**

The Senior 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.

PART II

PERFORMANCE

ANALYSIS

AND

ACHIEVEMENTS

A. Investigations

In 2022-23, we received a total of 677 new complaints, compared to 641 received in previous financial year, i.e an increase of 5%. Of the total number of complaints received, 500 were assessed to be within our jurisdiction and they were against Ministries/Departments, Local Authorities & Rodrigues Regional Assembly. Remaining 177 were Miscellaneous and Copies of Complaints i.e those assessed to be outside our jurisdiction, premature, matters before a Court, complainants did not exhaust remedies available or simply that they do not have sufficient interest in the subject-matter.

Of the total cases (850) dealt with during the fiscal period 2022-23, the Office has finalised 520 cases (including 141 pending cases as at 30 June 2022), thus representing 61%. Remaining 39% (i.e 330 cases) were carried forward to the financial year 2023-2024.

Complaints Received for the Financial Year 2022-2023

Complaints Received for The Financial Year 2022-2023	
Cases Opened	500
Cases Outside Jurisdiction or Premature	177
Total	677

Table 4 Complaints Received for the Financial Year 2022-2023

Comparative Table of Complaints Received Year on Year			
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Complaints Received	730	641	677

Table 5 Comparative Table of Complaints Received Year on Year

Cases Investigated for the Financial Year 2022-2023

Cases Investigated for The Financial Year 2022-2023		
Ministries/Departments	357	53%
Local Authorities	99	26%
Rodrigues Regional Assembly	44	6%
Pending Cases as at 30 June 2021	173	15%
Total	673	

Table 6 Cases Investigated for the Financial Year 2022-2023

Case Investigated Year on Year

Cases Investigated Year on Year			
	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Ministries/Departments	254	237	357
Local Authorities	94	77	99
Rodrigues Regional Assembly	111	17	44
Cases carried forward from Previous Year	174	241	173
Total	633	572	673

Table 7 Cases Investigated Year on Year

Cases Finalised During the Financial Year 2022-2023

Cases Finalised during the Financial Year 2022-2023		
Cases dealt with	850	
Cases finalised	520	61%
Cases pending as at June 2023	330	39%

Table 8 Cases Finalised during the Financial Year 2022-2023

Key Performance Indicator	Target	Result
% of cases finalised within a period of 12 months	70%	61%
% of investigation monitored and followed up within 12 months	100%	100%

Finalised Cases dealt with

A. Cases outside Jurisdiction

Cases Outside Jurisdiction		
	No	%
Cases Finalised	177	100%

Table 9 Cases outside Jurisdiction

B. Cases Investigated 2022/2023

Cases Investigated 2022/2023		
	No.	%
Cases Finalised	204	40.8%
Cases carried over to 2023/2024	296	59.2%
Total	500	100%

Table 10 Cases Investigated 2022/2023

C. Cases Brought Forward 2021/2022

Cases Brought Forward 2021/2022		
	No	%
Finalised	141	81.5%
Cases carried over to 2023/2024	32	18.5%
Total	173	100%

Table 11 Cases Brought Forward 2021/2022

Timeliness of Finalised Cases dealt with 2022/2023

Timeliness of Cases Finalised 2022/2023		%
Within 6 months	413	48
Beyond 6 months	107	13
Cases Carried Over to 2023/2024	330	39
Total Cases	850	100%

Table 12 Timeliness of Finalised Cases dealt with 2022/2023

Timeliness of Finalised Cases dealt with Year on Year			
Decision Taken	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Within 6 months	555	594	413
Beyond 6 months	108	115	107
Pending	241	173	330
Total	904	882	850

Table 13 Timeliness of Finalised Cases dealt with Year on Year

Acknowledgement of Complaints Received for the Financial Year 2022/2023

Comparative Table – Acknowledgement of Complaints Year on Year

Acknowledgement of Complaints Year on Year			
	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Complaints acknowledged within 5 working days	615	557	568
Complaints acknowledged beyond 5 working days	28	4	10
%	96	99	98

Table 14 Acknowledgement of Complaints Year on Year

Key Performance Indicator	Target	Result
% of complaint letters addressed to the Ombudsman acknowledged within five working days	95%	98 %

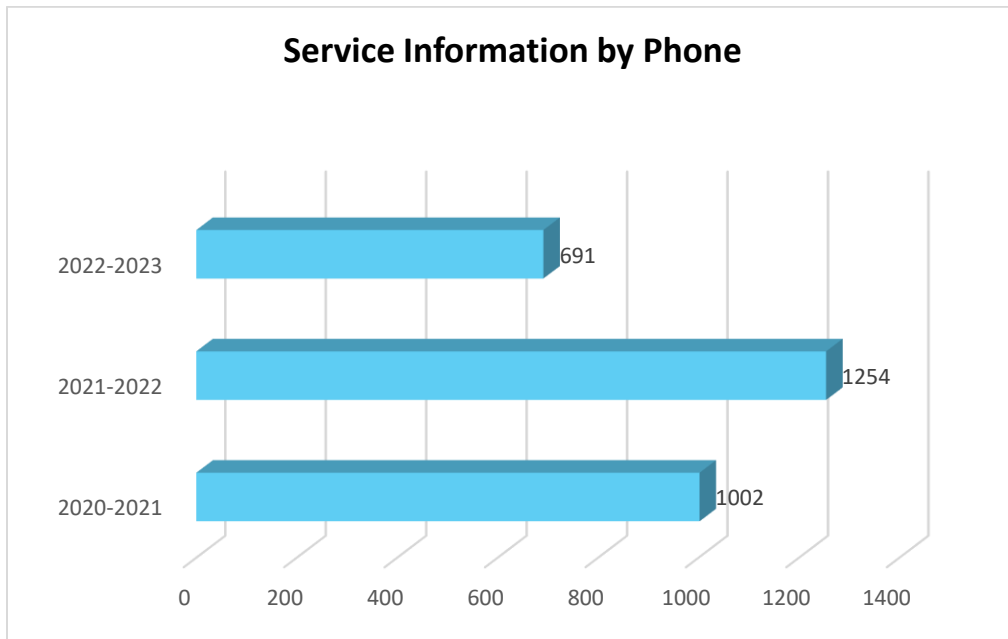


Figure 3 Service Information by Phone

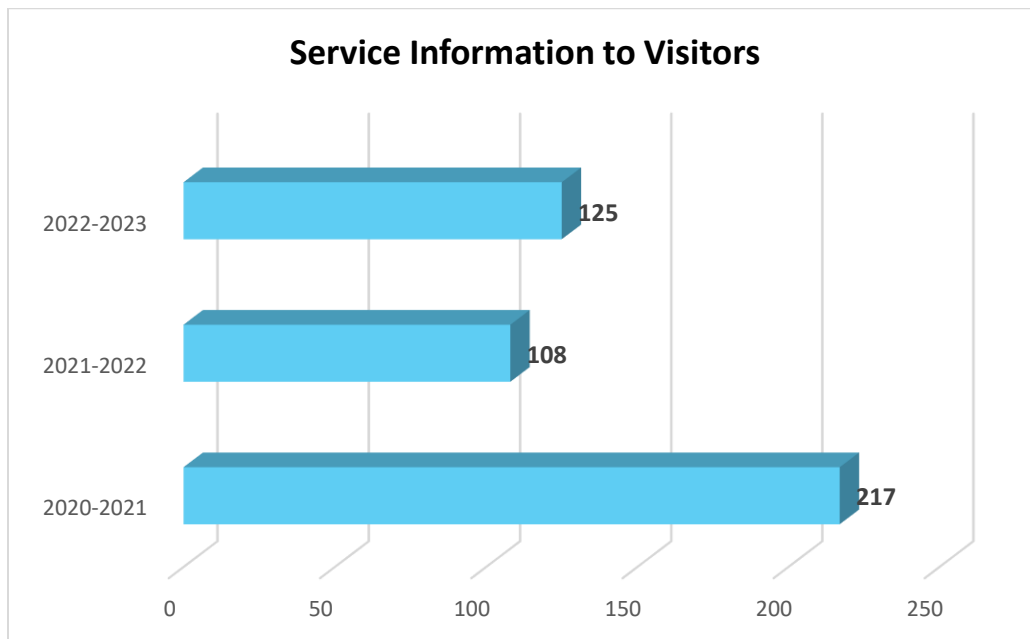


Figure 4 Service Information to Visitors

N.B A total of 935 (691 phone, 125 visitors & 119 email) members of the public were provided with service information.

Disaggregated Data

Understanding the diversity of the complainants who use the services of the Ombudsman can help us identify barriers to complaining and steps we can take to support the public particularly the vulnerable groups such as elderly persons or persons with disability. Records available indicate that the demographic profile of complainants has remained broadly similar to the previous year.

The data below except for gender (i.e computed on a total of 677 complaints received), represents scores for the new intake cases (i.e 500) excluding miscellaneous, copies of letters, anonymous and own-motion for the financial year 2022/23.

Disaggregated Data	%
Male	58.5%
Female	25.3%
Not specified	16.2%
18 – 30 yrs	4.0%
31- 45 yrs	25.0%
46 – 59 yrs	17.6%
60 and above	18.4%
Not specified	35.0%
Disabled	3.8%
Not disabled	62.4%
Not Specified	33.8%
Public Officers	25.6%
Private Entities/Individuals	18.2%
Retirees	10.0%
Not Specified	46.2%

Table 15 Disaggregated Data

B. Awareness Raising Campaign

In line with the Paris Principles, the Office continued to undertake outreach activities and to engage with a number of stakeholders.

During the reporting year, there was very effective engagement with the various Women's Associations around the island and National Youth Civic Service, facilitated by the National Women Council and the Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Sports and Recreation respectively. The Office's moto is to ensure that it reaches every group of persons, with the aim of increasing the range of people accessing the Ombudsman's services. The interactions with the participants generated very positive feedback. By the end of the financial period, our Office has conducted a total of 14 awareness raising sessions around the island.

C. Customer Satisfaction

In 2022-23, **125** members of the public visited our Office for service information and assistance, and **95** of them, who were at their first visit participated in our Customer Survey.

Specifically, we wanted to know whether they were satisfied with our customer service. The survey gathers feedback on the following areas of concern:

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

Overall Satisfaction with Our Customer Service

We asked 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 **98 %** of the public who filled in the survey form were satisfied with the customer service.

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, **99%** unanimously expressed their full satisfaction with regards to the service information obtained from us.

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.

All the **52** visitors were very satisfied with the customer service obtained from our Office, i.e., the highest score of **98.5%**.

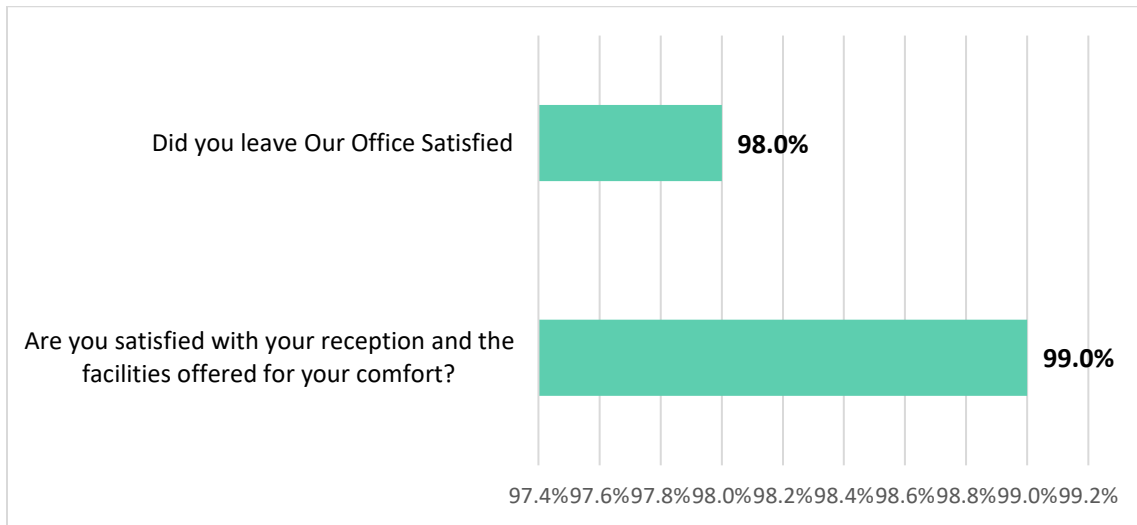


Figure 5 Customer Satisfaction

Key Performance Indicator	Target	Score
% of complainants' satisfaction survey which provide an average of 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' to our service	85%	98.5%

PART III

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

2022/2023 has seen the Office achieved a sound and consistent financial performance. Of particular note, the overall actual expenditure for the reporting period was approximately 5% less than estimated - despite the effects of the soaring prices of commodities due to inflation.

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 – 2022/2023

Percentage of Budget Estimates - 2022-2023	%	Estimates 2022-2023 Rs 000
Compensation of Employees	74%	12,085
Goods & Services	25%	4,190
Grants	1%	125
Total	100%	16,400

Table 16- Percentage of Budget Estimates - 2022-2023

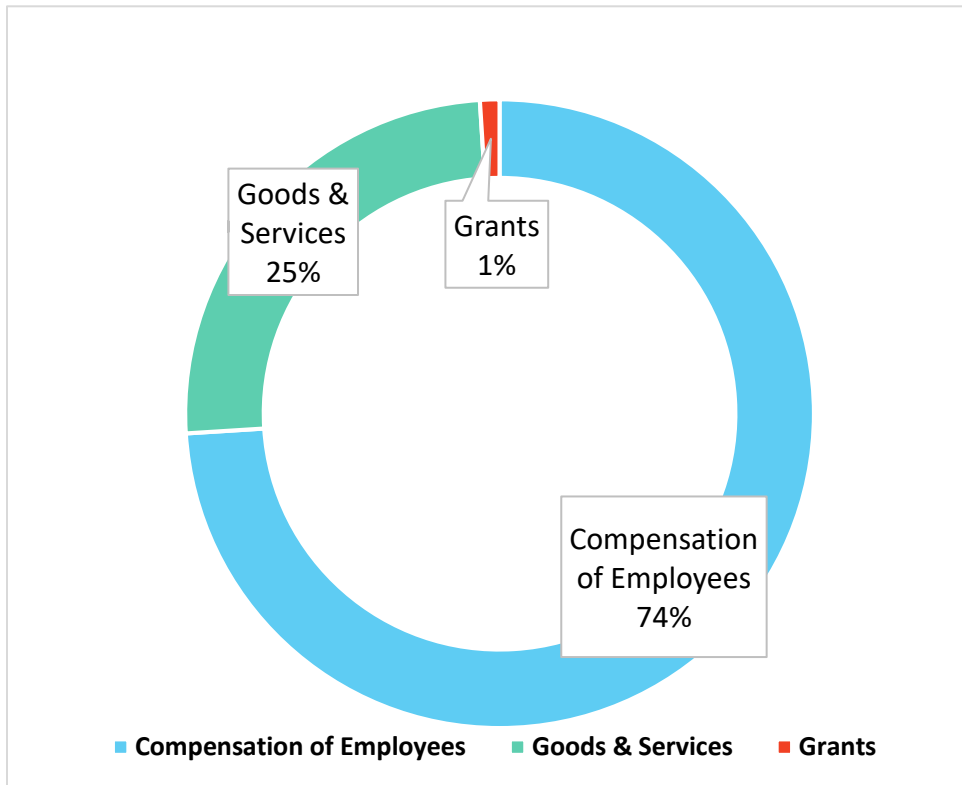


Figure 6- Percentage of Budget Estimates – 2022/2023

Budget Estimates and Actual Expenditures for the Year 2022/2023

	Estimates Rs 000	Actual Rs 000
Total Expenditure	16400	15572
% of Actual Expenditure over Estimated Expenditure	100%	94.95%

Table 17 - Budget Estimates and Actual Expenditures for the Year 2022/2023

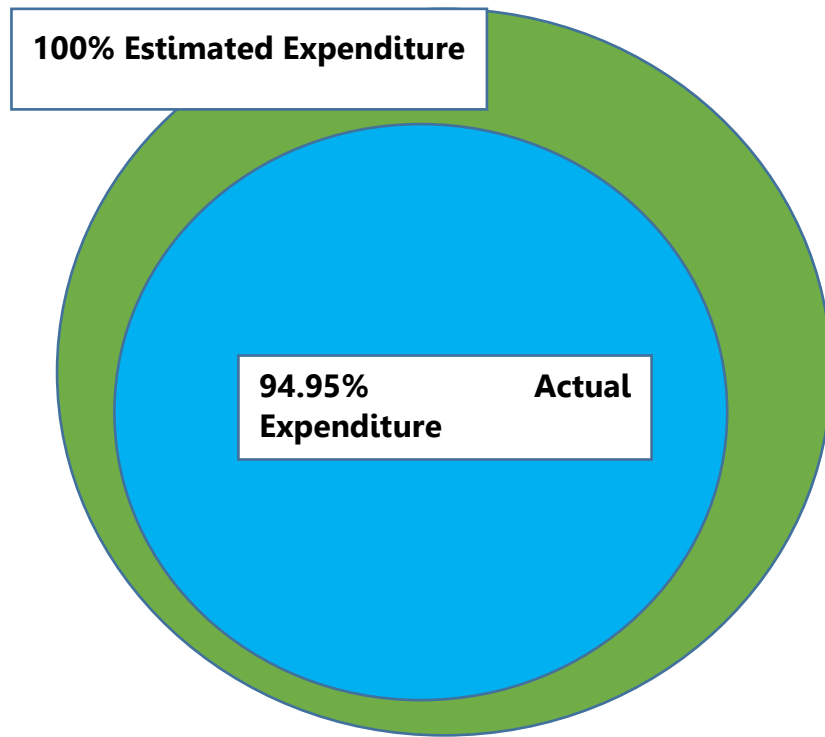


Figure 7- Budget Estimates and Actual Expenditures for the Year 2022/2023

Comparative of Year on Year of Estimates & Actual Expenditures

Year	Estimated Recurrent Expenditure	Actual Recurrent Expenditure	% of Actual Expenditure over Estimated Expenditure
2020-2021	14500	13490	93.00%
2021-2022	15300	13996	91.47%
2022-2023	16400	15572	94.95%

Table 18- Comparative of Year on Year of Estimates & Actual Expenditures

Budget Estimates and Actual Expenditures for the Year 2022/2023

Item No.	Goods and Services	Estimates Rs	Actual Rs
22010	Cost of Utilities	435,000	377,447
22030	Rent	2,340,000	2,337,472
22040	Office Equipment and Furniture	260,000	231,315
22050	Office Expenses	160,000	153,550
22060	Maintenance	425,000	200,306
22070	Cleaning Services	10,000	5,313
22100	Publications and Stationery	250,000	287,790
22120	Fees	30,000	34,700
22170	Travelling within the Republic of Mauritius	230,000	156,060
22900	Other Goods and Services	50,000	50,310
	Total	4,190,000	3,834,262

Table 19- Budget Estimates and Actual Expenditures for the Year 2022/2023

Analysis of Major Changes

Estimates		Rs 000	Rs 000	Rs 000
Item No.	Details	2020/21 Estimates	2021/22 Estimates	2022/23 Estimates
	Recurrent Expenditure	14,500	15,300	16,400
21	Compensation of Employees	10,703	11,448	12,085
21110	Personal Emoluments	9,683	10,408	10,970
0.001	Basic Salary	7,944	7,943	9,110
0.002	Salary Compensation	284	405	110
0.004	Allowances	775	800	450
0.006	Cash in lieu of leave	-	560	500
0.009	Bonus	680	700	800
21111	Other Staff Costs	905	900	975
0.002	Travelling & Transport	750	775	850
0.1	Overtime	130	100	100
0.2	Staff Welfare	25	25	25
21210	Social Contribution	115	140	140
001	Cont.to Nsf	115	140	140
22	Goods and Services	3,687	3742	4190
22010	Cost of Utilities	470	450	435
22030	Rent	2,196	2196	2340
22040	Office Equipment and Furniture	130	75	260
22050	Office Expenses	155	185	160
22060	Maintenance	265	270	425
22070	Cleaning Services	6	6	10
22100	Publications and Stationery	280	255	250
22120	Fees	35	30	30
22170	Travelling within the Republic of Mauritius	100	225	180
22900	Other Goods and Services	40	50	50
26	Grants	110	110	125
	Total	14,500	15,300	16,400

Table 20- Analysis of Major Changes

Comparative Table of Statements of Revenue and Expenditure

Head/Sub/Head of Expenditure	2020-2021		2021-2022		2022-2023	
	Estimates	Actual	Estimates	Actual	Estimates	Actual
	Rs 000	Rs 000	Rs 000	Rs 000	Rs 000	Rs 000
Compensation of Employees	10,703	10,170	11,448	10,642	12,085	11,632
Goods and Services	3,687	3,260	3,742	3,203	4,190	3,834
Grants	110	60	110	151	125	106
Total	14,500	13,490	15,300	13,996	16,400	15,560
%	93%		91.47%			94.95%

Table 21- Comparative Table of Statements of Revenue and Expenditure

PART IV

WAY FORWARD

OUR STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2021-2025

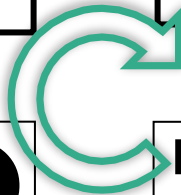
Strategic Direction	Enablers
Ensure that administrative action and decisions taken by Ministries/Departments, Local Authorities and the Rodrigues Regional Assembly are fair and reasonable	Drive systemic improvement in public service providers through our interventions
Uphold the rights of aggrieved citizens to a fair and equitable treatment in accordance with Principles of good administration	Promote good public administration Undertake investigations on our own initiative
Act as a shield for any administration against unfounded allegations/averments	Set aside frivolous or vexatious complaints Close complaints at assessment stage if statutory requirements not met
Work closely with the public, make our services accessible and provide solutions	Raise public awareness of our role and powers through outreach activities Ensure our service is free of charge Guide complainants on the procedures to follow and regularly provide update of their complaints
Be the most trusted institution in creating transparent, responsive and accountable public service	Work with public without discrimination Explain the reasons for our decisions Publish service information and administrative shortcomings on our website, make recommendations and public Reports Measure our performance against a set of key performance indicators (KPIs)

- The Office derives its mandates from the Constitution and is subject only to the Constitution and other legislation.
- Overarching oversight institution
- Knowledgeable, competent and experienced staff
- Diversity and Professionalism
- Team work
- Accessible to the public

S

- Limited number of staff
- Limited funds to determine its objectives and strategies
- No trained staff to facilitate communication with persons with disabilities

W



O

- Raise public awareness and promote human rights
- Capacity building and development of staff
- Engage with International and Regional Ombudsman Associations to share best practice and lessons learned
- Foster relation/co-operation with Ministries, Departments, Local Authorities, Rodrigues Regional Assembly, NGOs, Civil Society etc.
- Optimize the exploration of IT tool in ensuring an effective and efficient service delivery

T

- Complexity of complaints
- Timeliness in resolution due to limited staff and tardy response from Authorities.
- Inflationary effects on its operation

Paris Principles

The General Assembly (GA) of the United Nations has adopted and endorsed the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights known as the Paris Principles in its resolution 48/134 of 20 December 1993. The GA has continuously stressed the importance of the financial and administrative independence and stability of the Office of the Ombudsman in order to enable it to perform its mandate in an effective and efficient manner.

In a recent Resolution (75/186) adopted by the GA on 16 December 2020, the latter had, amongst others, strongly encouraged Member States to endow the Ombudsman with State support and protection, adequate financial allocation for staffing and other budgetary needs and all other appropriate means, in order to ensure the efficient and independent exercise of his mandate and to strengthen the legitimacy and credibility of his actions as mechanisms for the promotion and protection of human rights and the promotion of good governance and respect for the rule of law.

Moreover, the GA has, amongst others, encouraged the Ombudsman to operate, as appropriate, in accordance with all relevant international instruments, including the Paris Principles and the Venice Principles, in order to strengthen his independence and autonomy. **It is pertinent to mention that the Paris Principles and Venice Principles provide for a mandate to protect human rights but due to the insufficient scope of the mandate and other constraints such as inadequate human resources, this Office is unable abide by these Principles. The Office highly recommend the Government of Mauritius to consider amending and aligning the enabling legislation in line with both the Paris and Venice Principles.**

The Office values and supports its staff and is committed to creating an equal, diverse and inclusive workplace. As other independent institutions, the Office is also committed to be an equal opportunities employer in order to enable it to retain and provide a better career prospect for its key resource. Furthermore, the mandate of the Office requires due diligence to prevent errors and omissions. We therefore consider that investments in training and development of our staff is a priority.

In its oversight role, the Office will continue to strengthen collaboration with all public authorities within its jurisdiction as well as other stakeholders with a view to influencing improvements and systemic change in public administration. It will strive to promote the values of good administration which it upholds such as transparency, good governance, good communication, right to complain about or seek recourse of unfair decisions, timeliness in service delivery, lawful exercise of power and fairness in the public sector

and bring any dysfunction to the attention of Authorities concerned and the Head of State and the National Assembly through our Annual Report for any remedial or corrective action.