

OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN

ANNUAL REPORT BUDGET PERFORMANCE 2016/17

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PART I – ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT

Vision and Mission

Our Vision - To provide all citizens a quality service that upholds their rights to an 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.

Supervising Officer's Statement

It is indeed a privilege for me as the Supervising Officer of the Office of the Ombudsman to submit our first Annual Report on Budget Performance for the fiscal year 2016-2017 in line with the amendment made in the Finance and Audit Act. The report demonstrates the promotion of good governance, transparency and accountability within our department. It also highlights the general performance of our office and the status of the allocated budget throughout the year in review which are depicted through statistical information and narrative part on the different aspects related to our achievement.

I must also stress that our Office has acted very responsibly and exercised all due care and diligence in controlling expenditure on service in respect of which public funds were appropriated. We have throughout the year in review stood guided by the set of principles, rules, laws, regulations and instructions contained in the Financial Management Kit.

We intend to put in place such mechanism which will enable us to identify our strengths and weaknesses as well as the opportunities and potential threats likely to impact on our performance and effectiveness so as to ensure a quality service delivery.

I must also highlight the level of professionalism and dedication displayed by our staff team in achieving our Strategic Direction 2017-2020.

A. Ramtahul
Senior Investigations Officer

Roles and Functions of the Office

Roles and Functions

The Office of the Ombudsman is an independent Public Office which is responsible to carry out investigations in cases of alleged maladministration (including unfairly discriminatory acts) made against public authorities and their officials. The service provided by our office is free of charge.

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 –

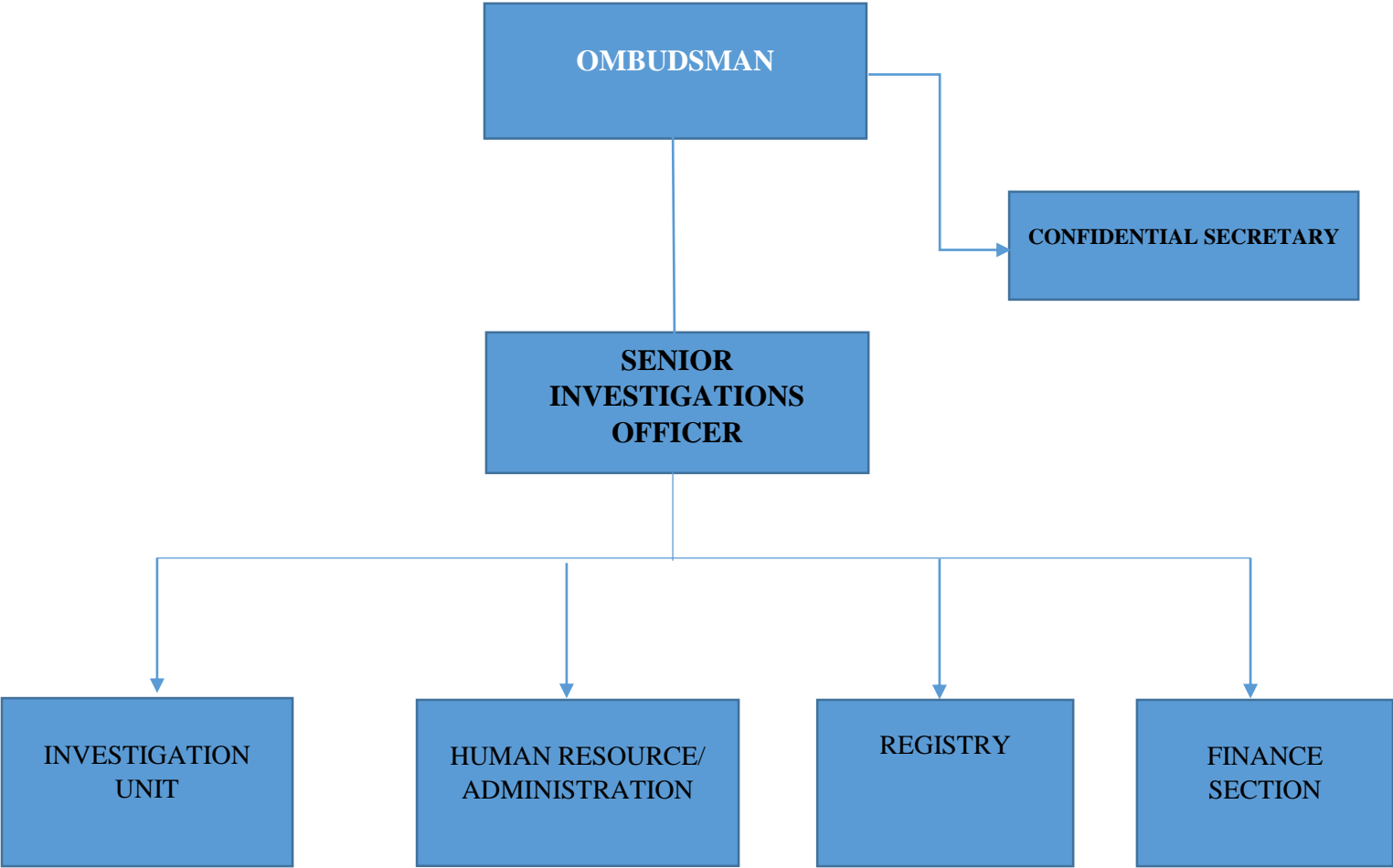
The Ombudsman shall not conduct an investigation in respect of any complaint made under this section where it appears to him -

- (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.

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 Ombudsman Act 1969 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 also consists of a Senior Investigations Officer who is responsible for the day-to-day administration and management of our affairs. He is also the Accounting and Finance Officer of our department and assists the Ombudsman in the conduct of investigation.
- (c) We have a small staff team of twelve (12) personnel and the breakdown of which is mentioned in the staffing structure below. The staff team have a singular commitment to achieving what the Parliament has asked us to do – at the highest level of quality and the least cost to the Mauritian taxpayers. The staff team support the office in the effective implementation of its objectives and in strengthening our strategic focus, communications, governance and service delivery.

ORGANISATION STRUCTURE



STAFFING STRUCTURE

Sno	Designation	In Post as at Oct 2017	Remarks
	Senior Management/Technical Staff		
1.	Ombudsman	01	
2.	Senior Investigations Officer	01	
	Workmen's Group – General		
1.	Financial Officer/Senior Financial Officer	01	
2.	Office Management Executive	01	
3.	Office Management Assistant	01	
4.	Office Supervisor	01	
5.	Management Support Officer	04	
6.	Confidential Secretary	01	
7.	Word Processing Operator	01	
8.	Office Auxiliary/Senior Office Auxiliary	02	
	Total	14	

PART II – ACHIEVEMENTS & CHALLENGES

Major Achievements

A breakdown of the number of complaints/requests received against the Ministries/Departments, Local Authorities, Rodrigues Regional Assembly and others for the period under review is depicted below:-

Case Intake - July 2016 – June 2017

Ministries/Departments	-	242
Local Authorities	-	66
Rodrigues Regional Assembly	-	18
Miscellaneous cases	-	<u>142</u>
TOTAL		<u>468</u>

Decisions Taken for the period of July 2016 to June 2017

	Cases for financial year 2015	July 2016-June 2017	Monitoring of Cases
Ministry/Department	5	268	100 %
Local Authority	8	72	100 %
Rodrigues Regional Assembly	5	26	100 %
Total	18	366	

453 Complainants attended at our office for advice for the period of July 2016 to June 2017.

Status on Implementation of Key Actions

Key Action	Key Performance Indicator	Target (as per Budget Estimates)	Result
Initiating action upon receipt of a complaint	Number of working days within which action is initiated	5 days	100 %
Follow up on implementation of all remedial measures recommended	Percentage of remedial measures monitored	100%	100 %

Other Internal Developed KPI's

The following additional Key Performance Indicators are put in place to ensure a quality service delivery and customer satisfaction:-

- (a) Training facilities - 100 % of staff
- (b) Schedule Maintenance Program of equipment – 100 % of equipment
- (c) Provides service accessibility to all complainants.
- (d) 100 % availability of resources for effective service delivery

Risk Management, Citizen Oriented Initiatives & Good Governance

In order to ensure consistency in service delivery and customer satisfaction, the Top Management has put in place different coordinating meetings which address issues likely to affect both the internal and external environment of our office and take all necessary remedial action. These meetings are:-

- (a) Safety, Health and Welfare Meeting;
- (b) Performance Monitoring Meeting;
- (c) Assets Management Meeting and
- (d) Budget Performance Meeting.

These meetings are convened on a monthly or quarterly basis which aim at the followings:-

- (i) Upgrading our work environment and welfare facilities;
- (ii) Enhancing the safety and security of both our staff and customers;
- (iii) Improving our processes to provide customer satisfaction;
- (iv) Reviewing the health and safety matters for compliance to existing laws and regulations;

- (v) Ensuring optimal exploitation and better management of our assets and
- (vi) Enhancing accountability and good governance.

Moreover, the top management believes in the constant capacity building of its workforce to ensure quality service and to that end the staff have been provided training courses on the followings aspects:-

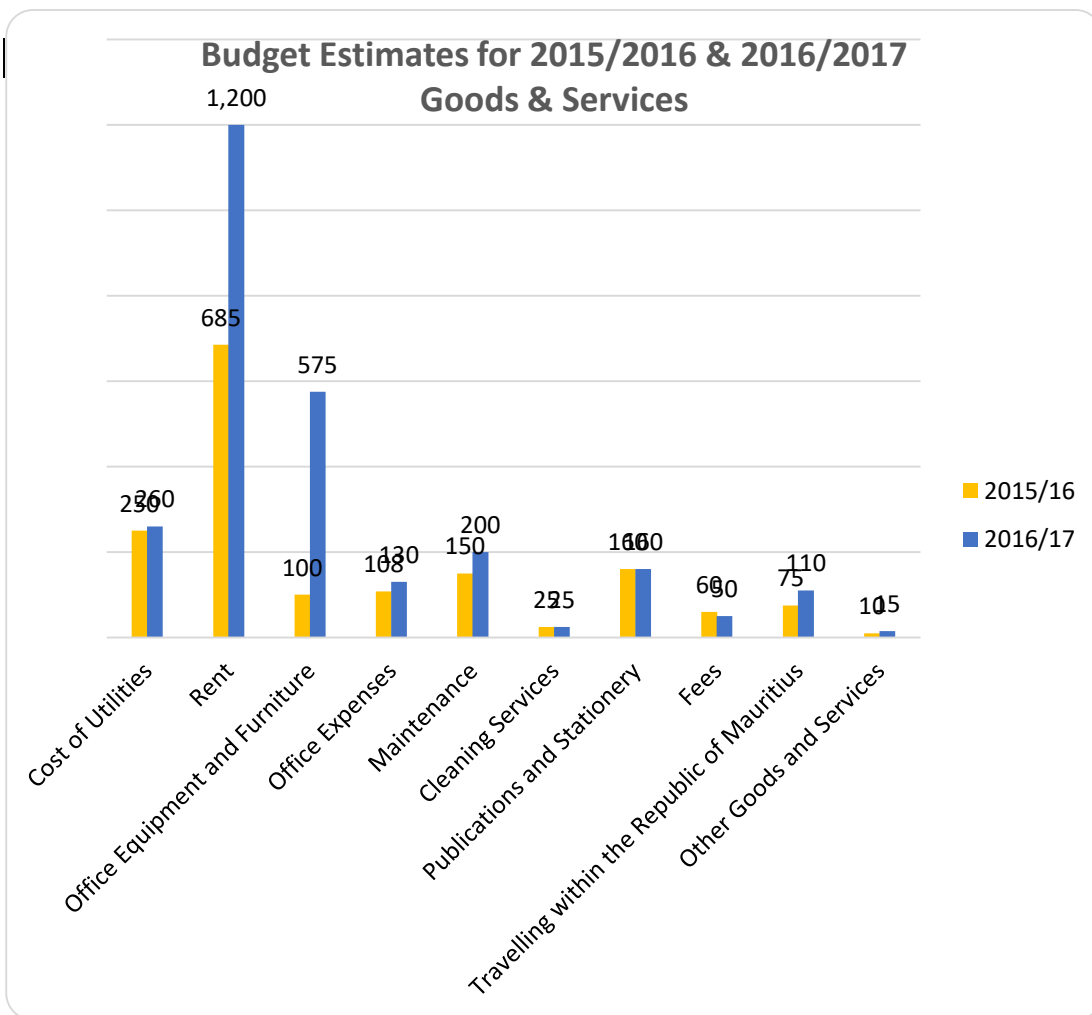
- (a) Code of Ethics and Good Governance
- (b) Customer Service Excellence
- (c) Basic Communication Skills
- (d) Safety and Health at Work
- (e) Handling difficult customers
- (f) Statutory interpretation
- (g) Team building and bonding
- (h) Managing Resources
- (i) Communication and interpersonal skills

PART III - FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Budget Estimate for 2015/16 & 2016/17 – Goods & Services

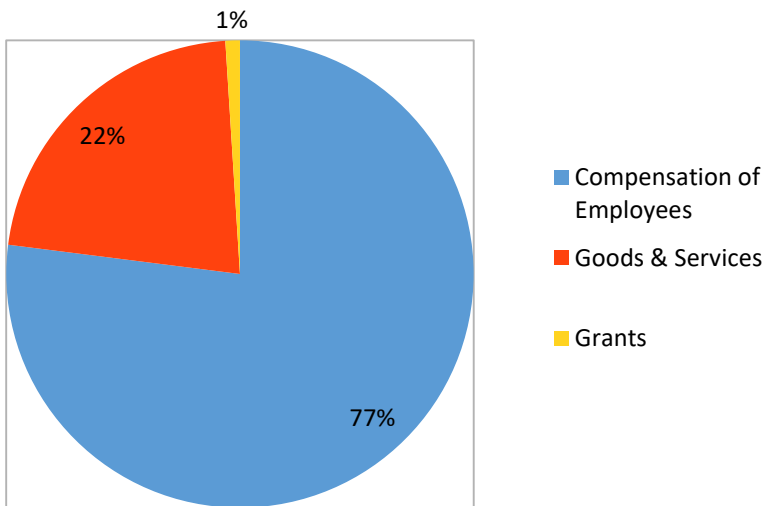
GOODS & SERVICES	2015/16	2016/17
Cost of Utilities	250	260
Rent	685	1,200
Office Equipment and Furniture	100	575
Office Expenses	108	130
Maintenance	150	200
Cleaning Services	25	25
Publications and Stationery	160	160
Fees	60	50
Travelling within the Republic of Mauritius	75	110
Other Goods and Services	10	15



Percentage of Budget Estimates – 2016/17

Compensation of Employees	77%
Goods & Services	22%
Grants	1%

% of Budget Estimates - 2016/17

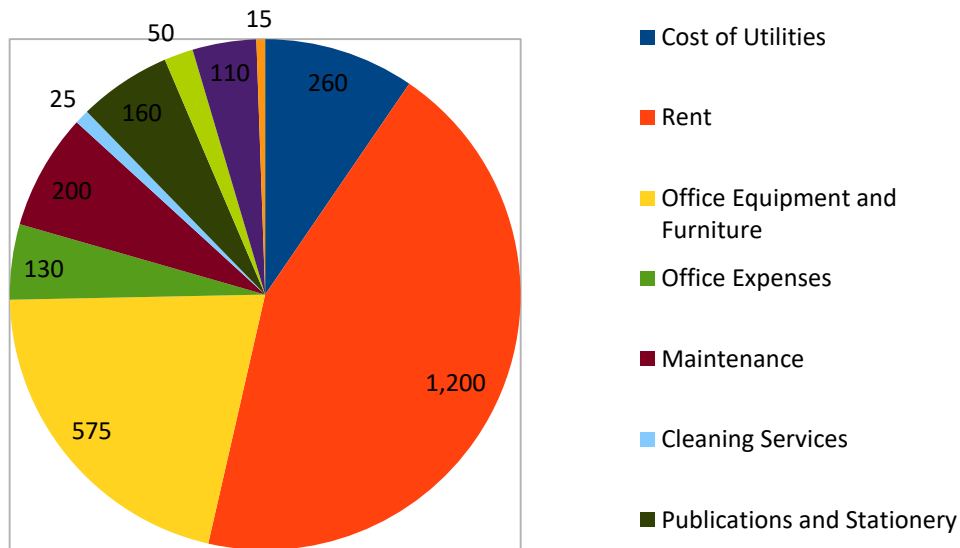


Estimates 2016/17

	22	Goods and Services	000
22010		Cost of Utilities	260
22030		Rent	1,200
22040		Office Equipment and Furniture	575
22050		Office Expenses	130
22060		Maintenance	200
22070		Cleaning Services	25
22100		Publications and Stationery	160
22120		Fees	50
22170		Travelling within the Republic of Mauritius	110
22900		Other Goods and Services	15

2,725

Estimates 2016/17 Goods & Services

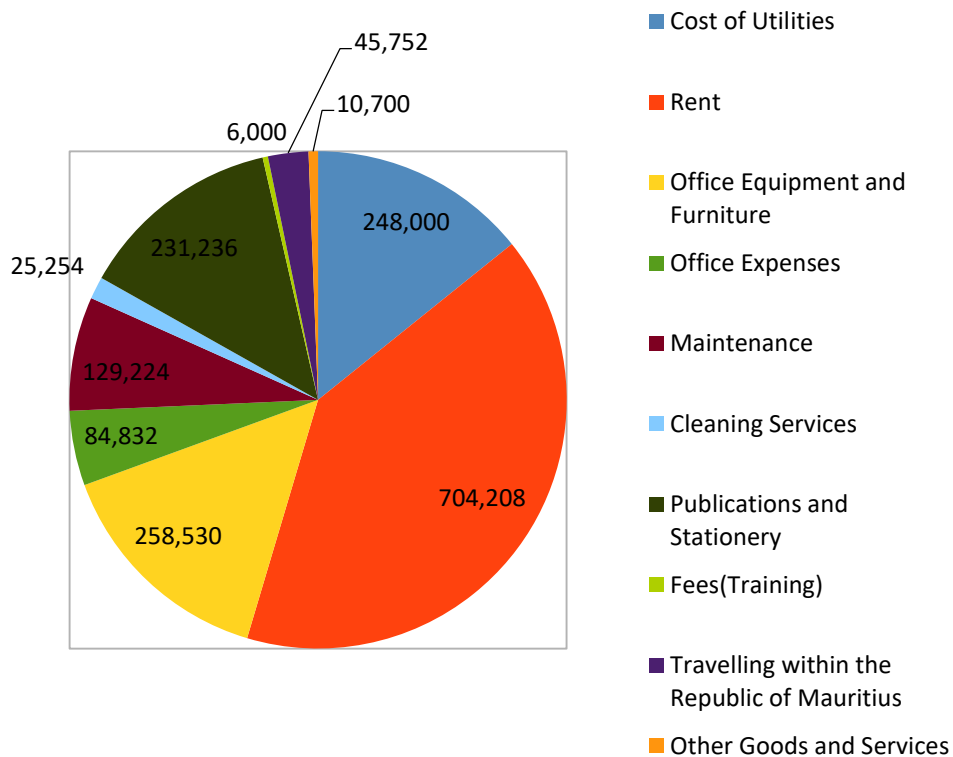


Actual Expenditure for 2016/17

22	Goods and Services		
22010	Cost of Utilities	248,000	
22030	Rent	704,208	
22040	Office Equipment and Furniture	258,530	
22050	Office Expenses	84,832	
22060	Maintenance	129,224	
22070	Cleaning Services	25,254	
22100	Publications and Stationery	231,236	A*
22120	Fees(Training)	6,000	
22170	Travelling within the Republic of Mauritius	45,752	
22900	Other Goods and Services	10,700	
		1,743,736	

*Note: Rs 90,000 was reallocated to item of Publications for payment of press communique in connection with Bid for the renting of Office Space.

Actual Expenditure 2016/17



Analysis of Major Changes					
Estimates			Rs 000		Notes
Item NO.	Details	2015/16 Estimates	2016/17 Estimates		
Recurrent Expenditure		10,700	12,300		
21	Compensation of Employees	8,957	9,440		
21110	Personal Emoluments	8,262	8,582		
.001	Basic Salary	5,952	6,562		
.002	Salary Compensation	101			
.004	Allowances	725	775		
.005	Extra Assistance	470	100		
.006	Cash in lieu of Leave	513	600		
.009	End of year Bonus	502	545		
21111	Other Staff Costs	640	800		
.002	Travelling & Transport	620	640		
.100	Overtime	15	150		
.200	Staff Welfare	5	10		
21210	Social Contributions	55	58		
22	Goods and Services	1,623	2,725		
22010	Cost of Utilities	250	260		
22030	Rent	685	1,200	A*	
22040	Office Equipment and Furniture	100	575	B*	
22050	Office Expenses	108	130		
22060	Maintenance	150	200		
22070	Cleaning Services	25	25		
22100	Publications and Stationery	160	160		
22120	Fees	60	50		
22170	Travelling within the Republic of Mauritius	75	110		
22900	Other Goods and Services	10	15		
26	Grants	120	135		
26210	Contribution to International Organisations	120	135		
Total		10,700	12,300		

*Note :

A. Provision was made for the rental of new office and purchase new furniture in connection with the relocation of office.

B. The Office of the Ombudsman was established since 1970 & has since then occupied the actual premise (Baroda Bank Building)

Statements of Expenditure

Head/Sub-Head of Expenditure (Rs million)	2015-2016 Actual	2016-2017 Estimates	2016-2017 Actual
Compensation of Employees	8,675	9,440	9,237
Goods and Services	1,467	2,725	1,744
Subsidies	-	-	-
Grants	91	135	92
Social Benefits	-	-	-
Other Expense	-	-	-
Acquisition of Non-Financial Assets	-	-	-
Acquisition of Financial Assets	-	-	-
Total	10,233	12,300	11,073

PART IV – WAY FORWARD

Trends and Challenges

It has been a remarkable year, as our office has been able to help many people in resolving a wide array of issues related to public maladministration and it is equally true that we have noted an increase in the number of complaints during the past financial year which will undeniably affect us financially. However, with our endeavour to promote public accountability and transparency through the demonstration of strong leadership and managerial capability as well as the support of our highly committed staff, we are sure that we will be successful in overcoming these challenges to meet our objectives and ultimately deliver a quality service which meets the needs of our customers. But on the financial perspectives the aforementioned trend will inevitably impact on our budget estimates such as publication and postage fees and other inter related expenditures.

We intend to focus on the following strengths and opportunities to overcome our weaknesses and mitigate the potential threats:-

- (a) Enhance our efficiency through training and increase the capability of our equipment;
- (b) Ensure effective complaint handling;
- (c) Collaborate and cooperate with public authorities to reduce the delay in attending to complaints;
- (d) Mitigate the risk factors representing real danger in the smooth investigating process and our working environment;
- (e) With the emerging challenges we intend to capitalise on our dedicated and professional staff to meet our objectives.

Strategic Direction

Our Strategic Direction 2017-2020

- (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.