

Submission of Observations of Hon. Minister and steps taken with regard to the reports tabled by the Committee on Public Accounts in terms of Standing Order No.119(4)

Submission of observation with regard to the reports tabled by the Committee on Public Account in terms of Standing Order No:119 (4) and the steps taken in that regard.

Parliamentary Series No: 492

Name of the Organization: Department of Government Information

Deficiencies identified	Actions taken by the organization to rectify the deficiencies and the current status
01. Annual action plan had not been prepared.	The action plan for the year 2023 has been prepared and submitted to the Ministry of Health and Mass Media on 12.01.2023. The action plan for the coming year for government institutions should be prepared and submitted before 15th December of the current year, but due to various reasons, it was not possible to prepare the action plan for the year 2023 before the due date. However, from the year 2024 onwards, steps have been taken to submit the action plan before 15th December as scheduled.
02. Answers had not been sent to all the audit queries of the Auditor General within one month after receiving such audit queries.	There is some delay in replying by the divisions and the divisions have been directed to reply promptly to the audit queries.
03. The required number of Audit and Management Committee meetings had not been held per year.	An internal audit unit has been established in the department since June 2023 and currently audit and management committee meetings are being held properly.
04. Information about purchases of assets and disposals relating to year 2018 had not been submitted to the Comptroller General's Office in terms of Paragraph 07 of the Asset Management Circular No. 01/2017 of 26.06.2017.	Information regarding assets purchased and disposed of from the year 2024 has been duly submitted to the Comptroller General on due date.
05. The relevant reports had not been submitted to the Auditor General by the due date after conducting Board of Survey in accordance with F.R. 756 (6) within the time frame mentioned in paragraph 11.1 of Part 1 of Public Finance Circular No. 01/2020 dated 28.08.2020.	The Board of Survey reports related to 31.12.2023 were submitted to the Auditor General on 09.09.2024. The Board of Survey reports related to 31.12.2024 has also been submitted to the Auditor General on 13.06.2025.
06. No actions had been taken for the recommendations on excesses and shortages & other recommendations revealed by the Board of surveys.	Arrangements are being made to finalize the solutions related to the Board of Survey 2024.
07. The balances in arrears exceeding 1 year had not been settled.	Since administrative measures to recover the debt have failed, letters have been sent to the Police Headquarters requesting the necessary assistance in this regard, in accordance with the notice issued in an attempt to recover the debt from his two sons, who are heirs and who are working in the Police Department, on the advice of the Secretary to the Ministry of Health and Mass Media, after considering the income report of Mr. O.C.L. De Silva.

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08. The ad hoc sub imprests issued as per F.R. 371 had not been settled within one month from the completion of the task.	At present, the settlement is being done within one month after the completion of the task.
09. Performance agreements covering the entire staff had not been drafted or entered.	As per Public Administration Circular No. 02/2018 dated 24.01.2018, a requirement to sign performance agreements had been introduced for the performance evaluation of staff. However, I agree that it had not been prepared for this department. Although the relevant work to prepare it was initiated by the year 2023, the Public Administration Circular 02/2018 (I) dated 30.11.2023, paragraph 03, has amended Circular 02/2018 as follows. Paragraph (1) of Public Administration Circular 02/2018 is hereby amended and accordingly, it is no longer necessary to sign “Annual Performance Agreements” as mentioned in the said circular. Therefore, the said Annual Performance Agreements were not signed.
10. Out of the training opportunities planned, the extent of training opportunities granted, was less than 50%.	In the year 2023, 13% of the officers of this department were provided with 12 hours of training opportunities and 2.38% with 6 hours of training opportunities. The provision of these training opportunities has been minimal and was affected by the circulars on cost management and the lack of training requests from officers. Similarly, in the year 2024, 37.19% of officers completed 12 hours of training opportunities and 17.58% of officers completed 6 hours. There was more scope for providing general training opportunities to officers that year. In the year 2025, 24.70% of officers completed 12 hours of training and 11.95% of officers completed 6 hours of training. This also included technical training essential to the activities of the department in the year 2025.
11. The audit opinion about the accounts of the institution had been a qualified opinion/disclaimed opinion/ an unfavorable opinion.	A subordinate opinion was given in relation to the year 2023.

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