Parlimentary Series No :492

Name of the Institution : Department of Fisheries & Aquatic Resources

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)

Parliamentary Series No :- **492**

Name of the Institution :- **Department of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources**

Presenting observations of the Hon. Minister and the steps taken with regard to the reports tabled by the Committee on Public Accounts in terms of Standing Order NO.119 (4) in Parliament.

Part 1 :79.00

Shortcomings identified by the report	**Measures taken by the institute to rectify the shortcomings /current position**
Register of Risk has not been maintained up to date.	Register of Risk was not maintained for the year 2023 but the same is being maintained for the years 2024 and 2025.
There had been instances where it was reported that answers had not been sent to all the audit queries of the Auditor General within one month after receiving such audit queries	These audit queries have been answered within the following time frames. **Audit Query** — **Date answers given** I) Provision of multi-day fishing vessels under 50% subsidy to improve fish catch and fish quality. — 11/06/2024 II) Creation of an artificial marine ecosystem in coastal waters — 21.01.2025 III) Inspection of the lagoon demarcation project under the lagoon development program. — 04.03.2024 IV) District Fisheries Office Negombo-Audit Inspection — 19.12.2024 V) Diyawara Diriya Loan Scheme-Implementation of budget proposals 2011 — 13.08.2025 VI) Site Inspection for the installation of demarcation posts to mark the lagoon boundaries of the Chilaw Lagoon. — 24.06.2024 VII) Evaluation reports for the third quarter of 2025 — 01.03.2024 VIII) Answers to the Annual Detailed Management Audit in accordance with Section 11(2) of the National Audit Act, No. 19 of 2018, on the activities of the Fisheries Reward Fund, including its financial statements, for the year ended 31.12.2022 . — have not been provided

	Further be informed that all audit queries are now being answered within the relevant time frames.
There had been instances where internal audit queries were not answered within a month	These audit queries have been answered within the following time frames. **Audit Query** — **Date answers given** I) Audit report on process inspection — 19.06.2025 II) Audit inspection of District Fisheries Office, Mannar -2023 — 26.11.2024 III) Audit inspection of District Fisheries Office, Kalmunai-2023 — 07.10.2025 IV) Issue of receipts (Gen 176) — 14.02.2024 Further be informed that all audit queries are now being answered within the relevant time frames.
The recommendations on surpluses, deficiencies and the other recommendations revealed at the annual stores verification had not been implemented within the stipulated time frame.	Due to reasons such as staff shortage and fuel crisis in 2023, it was not possible to implement the recommendations of the stores verification within the stipulated time frame. At present, the recommendations related to the stores verification, auction activities, etc. are being carried out within the stipulated time frame as per the Financial Regulations.
The state emblem had not been painted on all vehicles.	The state emblem has been painted on all vehicles by 10.03.2026.
The balances that should have been adjusted as revealed in the bank reconciliation statements had not been settled within a month in terms of the F.R.	The amount of Rs. 195,500.00 included in the unidentified receipts is a direct bank deposits, and those receipts have been settled as follows. **Date** — **Receipt No** — **Amount (Rs.)** — **Month settled** 18.07.2023 — U.I.R/07/18 — 30,000 — June,2024 02.08.2023 — U.I.R/08/02 — 5,000 — August,2024 09.08.2023 — U.I.R/08/09 — 75,000 — August,2024

	01.09.2023 U.I.R /09/01 500 June,2024 11.09.2023 U.I.R/09/11 35,000 June,2024 13.10.2023 U.I.R/10/13 10,000 June,2024 27.10.2023 U.I.R/10/27 40,000 June,2024 ----------- 195,000 =======
After utilization of provisions allocated to an object class in terms of F.R.94 (1), commitments had been incurred exceeding such provisions remaining at the end of the financial year.	The relevant officials were educated to take steps to prevent the occurrence of such shortcomings in the future.
There were outstanding loan balances remaining for more than a year.	A sum of Rs. 123,776.59 out of the distress loan balance due from the Development Officer having the Employee No.5668 has been recovered by now and the surety of the relevant loan has been informed by the letter dated 27.03.2026 to settle the remaining portion of the outstanding balance.
As regards the lapsed deposits in the General Deposit Account, action had not been taken in accordance with F.R. 571.	**6000-0-0-16-0-47** **Description** **Amount(Rs.)** **month of settlement** I) Ceylon Fishery Harbour Corporation 23,614.70 August 2024 II) Pio Fiber Glass Industries 38,200.05 August 2024 III) Chief Engineer Dept.of Building Baticaloa 22,974.05 January 2024 IV) President Mannar District 43,623.97 August 2024 V) MPS construction 19,341.08 January 2025 VI) Chief Engineer Dept.of Building Baticaloa 17,842.25 January 2025 VII) MPS Construction 8,301.63 January 2025 VIII) MPS Construction 14,465.13 January 2025 XI) Eco Engineers 157,700.00 January 2025 ---------------- **346,062.86** ==========

6000-0-0-16-0-64

Description	Amount (Rs)	Month settled
I) Five persons including S.L. Rihan - the remaining amount under the subsidy scheme	12,531.00	Credited to the Government revenue in March 2024
II) W.A.Nuwan Fernando- remaining Amount under the subsidy scheme	14,982.64	Credited to the Government revenue in March 2024
III) B.S.K.Perera	26,250.00	Credited to the Government revenue in March 2024
IV) R.P.Sumith Priyantha	41,666.00	Credited to the Government revenue in March 2024
V) K.Krishna Moorthi	3,077.32	Credited to the Government revenue in March 2024
VI) Assistant Director-Kalutar	98,482.84	Credited to the Government revenue in August 2024
VII) Nalin Chamila	9,000.00	Credited to the Government revenue in August 2024
VIII) Assistant Director-Trincomale	42,069.00	Settled in March 2024
IX) Assistant Director -Chi	2,711,535.00	Settled in March ,April 2024
X) South Eastern Economic Development	5,000,000.00	*
XI) Magistrate’s Court-Puttalam	66,900.00	Credited to the Government revenue in August 2024

	8,026,493.80	
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* The deposit of Rs. 5,000,000.00 relating to the South Eastern Economic Development

	(Y M Yaseer) was deposited by the relevant beneficiary on behalf of boat number IMUL-A-0062 KMN and since the construction of that boat has not yet been completed, that amount was also withheld.
The balance in the cash book as at the end of the year under review had not been remitted to the Department of Treasury Operations on the due date as per the relevant provisions in the circular.	The difference of Rs. 117,000.00 between the value remitted to the Treasury as at 31 December 2023 and the cash settlement in Form A.C.A.03 of the financial statement is that of an unidentified receipt of Rs. 117,000.00 directly credited to the official bank account of the Department for revenue collection in the year 2023. This difference has been identified and rectified by now.
The ad hoc Sub- Imprest issued in terms of F.R.371 had not been settled within one month of completion of the task.	All officers have been apprised. Currently, action is being taken in accordance with F.R 371.

Part : 38.00

Shortcomings identified by the report	**Measures taken by the institute to rectify the shortcomings /current position**
The institution had not identified sustainable goals according to its scope. The targets to be achieved to materialize the identified sustainable goals had not been determined. Indicators had not been set to gauge the progress in implementing the identified sustainable development goals.	Although the above indicators had not been shown in the Annual Performance Report-2023, having identified the said mistake, the same has been correctly shown in the performance reports prepared for the years 2025 and 2026.
No methodology had been framed to monitor or evaluate the implementation of the Citizens' / Clients' Charter of the Institution.	Additional Director General has been appointed to monitor the Citizens' Charter. As online system is being introduced for the implementation of some functions, efforts are underway to update the Citizens' Charter accordingly in 2026.
The Human Resources Plan to be duly prepared in accordance with the provisions of Public Administration Circular No. 02/2018 dated 24th January 2018 had not been prepared. A minimum of 12 hours of training for more than 50 percent of the staff per year had not been guaranteed by the prepared Human Resources Plan. The number of training opportunities provided from the planned training opportunities was less than 50%. Performance agreements with the entire staff had not been prepared and entered into. The number of training opportunities provided out of the planned training opportunities was less than 50%.	The Human Resources Plan for the years 2024, 2025, and 2026 has been prepared while Performance Agreements have also been prepared and entered into.
The audit opinion on the accounts of the institution was at the level of subject/disclaimer/adverse.	The audit opinion on accounts of the institution is neither disclaimer nor adverse but a qualified opinion has been provided for the year 2023.

In accordance with paragraph 12.01 of the Public Finance Circular No. 02/2020 dated 28.08.2020, 03 performance indicators had not been identified enabling to gauge the progress of the institution so as to clearly outline its role.	Both quantitative and qualitative data are based on identifying performance indicators for gauging the progress. When quantitative data is presented as a percentage, qualitative data is difficult to identify in specific and measurable ways, and can be measured as a decrease or increase in the current situation compared to the previous situation.

16/6/2026

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