Parliamentary Series No: 79

Name of the institution: Ministry of Public Administration, Local government and Provincial councils

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

Parliamentary Publication Series - 79

Name of the Institution - Ministry of Public Administration, Provincial Councils and Local Government

Weakness identified by the Committee	Measures taken by the Institute to rectify such weaknesses/ current situation
Part One	
First, second and third pass words applicable to the computer software for the preparation of salaries of the public service as per Public Accounts Circular No. 171/2004 dated 11.0.2004 have not been changed once in every three months.	Action has been taken to change first, second and third pass words applicable to the computer software for the preparation of salaries of the public service
Daily running charts and monthly summary reports have not been submitted to the Auditor General for pool vehicles..	Daily running charts of pool vehicles have been submitted for internal auditing and they have now been submitted to refer to the Auditor General
Government emblem has not been painted on every government vehicle.	Government Emblem has not painted on several vehicles belonging to the Ministry and action has been taken now to paint them on such vehicles
Expenses have been born exceeding the limits of provisions	Provisions have been made in 2022 on quarterly basis and on 01.10.2022 the head of the Home Affairs Division has been transferred from 409 to 130. Accordingly, the expenses born under head 409 from 01.01.2022 to 30.09.2022 under the head and subjects in relation to Appropriation Act No. 30 of 2021 have been transferred to head 130. Even though it is shown by the treasury printouts expenses have been made exceeding the limits of provisions in October 2022, it is informed that action has been taken to rectify it during the final quarter of 2022.
There were loan balances remaining unsettled for more than one year.	Action has been taken to write off the loan balances within the limit of Chief Accounting Officer, which have been identified as loans which cannot be recovered, with the approval of the Chief Accounting Officer, except those against which legal action has not been initiated as per interim provisions in Public Finance Circular No.01/2024 dated 29.05.2024 and also to refer the loan balances, of which the limit has been exceeded, to General Treasury to write off them. Other loan balances are being recovered. Further action is being taken according to the legal instructions on the loans against which legal action has been initiated.

	District Secretariats The loan balance in arrears to the value of Rs. 13,891.50 at Distruct Secretariat, Badulla is applicable to four officers and these officers have been attached in 2015 to the Ministry of National Policies, and Economic Affairs and later the recovery of loan balances of the officers attached to Ministry of Infrastructure Facilities and Development has been credited to head 104011. Later it has been informed that the issues have arisen as aresult of settling loan balances only based on the balance of the remaining loans and it is informed that action is being taken to make relevant rectifications. Further a loan balance of Rs. 17,500 is applicable to two officers and they have been transferred in 2015. At the time of settling the loan balances of 2016, it has become problamatic to decide the head, to which the credt is to be made, as a result of changing heads. Later, Rs. 12 500 has been credited to the revenue of the government by the Ministry of Agriculture by way of recovering two installments as Rs. 6250 and kindly note that it has been informed such installments will be settled recovering them from the revenoe of the government. Further a loan balance of Rs. 403,582 is applicable to four officers and settling of such balances should be made by the District Secretariat , Kandy. It is informed that the District Secretariat has notified that action will be taken by the Disctrict Secretariat , Badulla to settle them. The loan balance of Rs. 94,684.00 relevant to District Secretarit, Rathnapura is applicable to officers served in the District Secretariat and Divisional Secretariats under the Ministry of Economic Dvelopment in 2015. As a result of reshuffling Ministries at that time, all officers have been attached to the Ministry of Upcountry new villages infrastructure facilities and Commmunity Development. and National Policies and Economic Development. It is informed that theDistrict Secretary has notified that difference among the loan balances has occurred Due to a fault occurred in settling loan balances between the Ministry of Upcountry new villages infrastructure facilities and Commmunity Development and Ministry of National Policies and Economic Development. Further, it is informed that instructions have been given to the District Secretary, Rathnapura to take action promptly to settle the loan balances of the officers serving at present under the Estate Infrastructure Facilities Developmetnt Division of the Ministry of Water Supply and Estate

	Infrastructure Facilities and to settle the loan balances of those, hwo have been transferred, communicating with their new service stations. There are two loan balances to the values of Rs. 158,420 and 79,700 at District Secretariat, Killinochchi and Rs. 13,000 out of the balance of Rs. 158,420 has been recovered and it has been informed that a complain has been made to police to recover the remaining balance. The officer connected to the loan balance of Rs. 79,700 has gone abroad and it has been informed that a letter has been sent to the Department of Immigration and Emigration requesting necessary information.
Part Two	
Action has not been taken to make agreements with the inclusion of whole staff for performance appraisal	Action is being taken to prepare performance agreements so as to include the whole staff.
The audit opinions on the accounts of the institute were at the adverse or disclaiming level.	The audit opinion of the Ministry is a qualified opinion. The Accounting Officer for the revenue account is the Secretary of the Ministry of Public Administration, Home Affairs, Provincial Councils and Local Government and it is informed that the audit opinion of the Ministry has made as a qualified opinion as a result of defects in the financial transactions made to the revenue account from other institutes (Department of Ayurveda)
Recommendations of the Auditor General have not been implemented.	Action has been to implement these recommendations by 2024.
The statements of assets and liabilities of all officers have not been submitted.	All the officers have been informed to submit statements of assets and liabilities and constant follow up actions are taken in this regard.
Action has not been taken to transfer the officers completed the maximum service period at one and the same work place.	In the face of the economic crisis arisen in the country in 2022, officers, who have not made requests for transfers, were not transferred and action has been taken to transfer the officers, who have requested such transfers, considering their requests and making necessary adjustments as far as possible. It has become difficult to make transfers due to following reasons: Most of the service stations are located in Colombo and suburban areas, the requests made by officers to serve at service stations close to their places of residence due to economic crisis or at popular service stations, reluctance of officers to serve at certain service stations even after the completion of five years. However,

	considering the above facts as far as possible, action has been taken to transfer the officers, who have requested such transfers, and further the officers, who have completed the service of five years at one and the same service station. It is hereby informed that action is now being taken to follow measure accordingly in making annual transfers in 2025.

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S. Alokabandara

Secretary,

Ministry of Public Administration and Provincial Councils, Local Government

Parliamentary Series No: 79

Name of the institution: Registrar General Department

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

Parliament Publications Series No. 79
Department - Registrar General's Department

	Shortcomings and directions pointed out by the Committee on Public Account	Current Progress (Financial Year 2022)
1	The consumer goods register has not been kept up to date.	Customer material register is being maintained up to date.
2	The risk register has not been kept up to date.	The Internal Audit Division has updated a Management Audit Department circular style risk document for the years 2022/2023 as a basis for preparing the audit plan.
3	For every audit query raised by the Auditor General have not been answered within a month.	Steps have been taken to submit replies as soon as possible.
4	Cases where internal audit queries were not answered within a month have been reported.	Arrangements are being made to send replies to internal audit queries by due date.
5	The information about assets purchased and embezzled in the year 2018 has not been submitted to the Comptroller General's Office, according to paragraph 7 of Asset Management Circular No. 1/2017 dated 26.06.2017.	Information will be provided up to-date.
6	The recommendation on excesses, deficiencies and other recommendations revealed in the Annual Commodity Survey have also not been implemented within the prescribed periods.	Recommendations have been implemented in due course.
7	National emblem has not been painted in all vehicles.	It has now been completed.
8	Log books for each vehicle has not been maintained on an up to-date basis.	A log book for each vehicle is being maintained on of up to-date basis.
9	Proper arrangements have not been made according to F.R, regarding government vehicle accidents.	Necessary actions are being proceeded according to F.R. regarding government vehicle accidents.

10	After utilization of the provisions made for an expenditure item in accordance with the F.R. 94(1), the remaining appropriation limit at the end of the year had been used, and the liabilities had been reached to exceed the limit.	The Internal Audit Division has updated a Management Audit Department circular style risk document for the years 2022/2023 as a basis for preparing the audit plan.
11	There were outstanding loan balances dating back more than a year.	Recoverable loan balances are still being recovered and full recoveries have also been made. Proceeding to obtain formal approval to write off uncollectible loan balances as per FR Circular 01/2024 dated 29.05.2024, and to take all measures before the end of the year.
12	Regarding the overdue deposits in the general deposit account, no action has been taken as per F.R. 571.	Regarding overdue deposits in the general deposit account have been dealt with as per F.R 571.
13	The sub imprest issued in terms of F.R. 371 has not been settled within a one month of completion.	From the year 2024, taking steps to settle the relevant work within one month.
14	Staff had been recruited beyond the sanctioned limit.	Some of the development officers recruited to the public service have also assigned to this department and requests have been made to the Department of Management Services by the Ministry of Public Administration requesting that those officers be included in the department's Approved staff and to give approval.

Part Two

1	Documents have not been maintained documenting the complaints submitted regarding non-provision of the requested information and the actions taken in this regard.	The relevant register is maintained.
2	The website maintained by the institution has not allowed the public to post complaints or compliments.	The Website has incorporated appropriate technical measures for the public to record enquiries, complaints, suggestions and compliments. Accordingly, there is a reference (Inquire, Complaints & Suggestions form) for public enquiries, complaints and suggestions, through which public references are received by e-mail. This facility has been provided in all three languages.
3	There was no system in place to monitor or evaluate the implementation of the organization's Citizen Client Charter.	Work is in progress.
4	Performance contracts were not drawn and contracted including the entire staff.	Work is in progress.
5	The audit opinion on the company's accounts was at a subordinate level/ disclaimer level/ adverse level.	Necessary activities are being carried out to reach a favourable level of audit opinion on the company's accounts.
6	All the officers had not submitted asset liability statements.	The list of officials who have been given assets and liability documents and the list of officials who have not been given have been forwarded to the Bribery or Corruption Investigation Commission on 19.07.2024.

S. Alokabandara

Secretary,

Ministry of Public Administration and Provincial Councils, Local Government

Parliamentary Series No: 79

Name of the institution: Department of Multi-purpose Development Task Force

Submission of observations of the Hon.Minister in charge of the institutions 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 Number: 79

Name of the Institution : Department of Pensions

Shortcomings identified by the committee	Action taken by the Institution to rectify the shortcomings / current status
PART 01 1.)Non-submission of answers within one month period for all the audit queries raised by the Auditor General	Since the defects pointed out by the audit queries, which are sent by the Auditor General, should be rectified informing them to the District Secretaries, Divisional Secretaries and other institutions connected to Department of Pensions and further it takes considerable time to answer the audit queries calling clarifications and answers, a delay in answering is observed. Following are the reasons for such situation. i. It is required to refer every audit query issued in relation to the Divisional Secretariat to the relevant Divisional Secretariat and in the meantime the audit queries received by the Department of Pension should be submitted to the relevant Division before submitting a complete answer for the matter. ii. Since the Divisional Secretaries have been informed first to rectify each and every defect pointed out in the audit query, which can be rectified within a short period, and then to send answers along with the documents required for verification, it takes considerable time for rectifications. iii. It has to call particulars on excess pension payments, which occur due to the death or any other reason of the pensioner and due to other reasons and to include them in the answer for audit query. iv. Making further verifications on the accuracy of the given answers comparing with the data base of pensioners and other relevant documents, if there are un cleared queries further, collect information through Whatsapp, Email or Fax. v. Answers have been submitted within a short period for most of the audit queries issued in relation to the Department of Pensions after making required rectifications. The delay occur in making answers for the audit queries made by the Auditor General and Internal Auditor has been discussed in the audit and management committee meetings of the Ministry and Department and further the Secretary of the Ministry of Public Administration has informed all District and Divisional Secretaries to make answers in proper manner. In addition to the above, actions have been

	taken to discuss these matters at the meetings of District Audit & Management committees through the representatives of the Department of Management Audit, who participate in the meetings of District Audit & Management Committee. However, discussions have been made in the meetings of Audit & Management Committee regarding the interim answers.
2.)Non-submission of answers for the internal audit queries within one month.	11 internal audit queries have been raised for year 2022. Answers have been made for 09 queries before the lapse of three months form the date of the receipt of query and answers for other 2 queries had been received getting more than 4 months. However all queries had been answered before the 3rd of January 2023. In the meantime Divisional Secretaries and respective District Secretaries have been informed to make answers promptly to the audit queries.
3).Non- settlement of interim ad hoc imprest within one month from the completion of the task as per FR 371	In year 2022, interim adhoc imprest has been taken to spend on fuel to continue the departmental activities. In this time period sometimes had to face very hard and long process through several institutions to obtain fuel because of the deficiency of fuel and economic crisis held. Then a delay had been occurred when settling those advances. But relevant officers have been instructed to settle the advances as soon as the task is finished and an effective internal control system has been introduced. However in the year 2023 all interim ad hoc advances have been settled within a month after the relevant task is finished according to FR 371.
Part 02 6).Non Preparation of a human resource plan according to the circular 02/2018 dated 24th January 2018 by the Min. of Public Administration.	Even though a human resource plan has not been prepared as per the Public Administration Circular No. 02/2018 dated 24.01.2018 for year 2022, a training plan has been prepared for the officers of the Department. Training programmes had been conducted depending on the training requirements of the officers of Department through online system because of Covid 19 pandemic. Further 19 training programmes including 14 online training programmes have been conducted in year 2023 on the payment process of pension for the benefit of the officers in charge of the subject serving in other government offices connected to the Department of Pensions and the officers serving in District and Divisionsla Secretariats attached to the Department of pensions. Number of participants of such programmes was 5,127. Further, opportunities have been given to the officers of the Department to participate in 20 training programmes depending

	on the requirement of the subject. Action has been taken during year 2023 to conduct 22 training programmes on payment of pensions at various government institutions engaging the officers of the Department as Resource Persons. A training plan including 27 training programmes has been prepared according to the requirements for year 2024.

S. Alokabandara

Secretary,

Ministry of Public Administration and Provincial Councils, Local Government