
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION HR OFFICE

Annual Report 2011

MISSION STATEMENT

'To formulate, develop and promote in close collaboration with line Ministries and Departments, progressive human resource policies, strategies and management systems in support of the business of Government and to assist and support line Ministries/ Departments to achieve Government plans and programmes and to render an efficient service to the public.'

The Organisation

The Public Administration HR Office, within the Office of the Prime Minister, is led and coordinated by the Director General (PAHRO), supported by the workings of three important directorates, namely, Resourcing, Employee Relations and HR Systems and Data Management. PAHRO is primarily focused on developing and sustaining its strategic role at the centre of HR Management and across the Public Administration. In 2011, PAHRO continued to progress from the traditional concept of micro HR Management, towards a macro and comprehensive outlook to workforce planning, change management, guidance and support provision to line Ministries and Departments, monitoring the implementation of HR Management in line Ministries and Departments, as well as promoting leadership development.

PAHRO will continue to spearhead the implementation of the provisions of the Public Administration Act, progressive human resources strategies and policies, the increased decentralisation of procedural processes to line Ministries and Departments, and the ongoing streamlining of the business of Government in the field of HR Management.

Main Activities

In 2011, the initiatives and activities undertaken by PAHRO were targeted at addressing specific areas where policy initiation or evaluation was required. PAHRO's human resources, as well as such relevant stakeholders as Directors responsible for Corporate Services and People Management, as well as HR Managers in line Departments focused their quantitative and qualitative skills and competencies on identifying the policy options that would add the most value to policy substance and yield the best effects and results. Other important stakeholders, such as the Public Service Commission, institutions of oversight, as well as Unions positively contributed towards the creation of a healthy consultation process.

The highlights of PAHRO's 2011 programme ranged from the Employee Support Programme, the introduction of the new payroll system and the issuing of electronic payslips, as well as the outreach visits to line Ministries which representatives from each PAHRO directorate held regularly during the course of the year.

The Employee Support Programme continued to sustain the physical and psychological well-being of public employees. The information seminars organised for top management were aimed at fostering a culture of awareness and employee support. The results of the Situation Needs Analysis (SNA) will further assist in the identification of sector-specific problems, with a view to instituting remedial action for securing the well-being of public employees.

The objectives of the outreach visits were multi-fold - to address HR Management issues within the context-specific scenario of each line Ministry; to render decision-making processes more efficient, effective, reliable, accurate and timely; and to support and assist line Ministries in adequately equipping themselves for the upcoming delegation of responsibilities.

This report provides a detailed account of the activities undertaken by PAHRO in 2011.

RESOURCING DIRECTORATE

Introduction

During 2011, the Resourcing Directorate focused on the following tasks:

- Driving forward the initiative for the delegation of certain stages of the recruitment and selection process and the delegation of other Resourcing matters;
- Updating current policies and procedures with the aim of ensuring that these are sensitive to changing needs and/or related legislation and also aiming to increase streamlining and transparency.

Sectoral Analysis – Programmes and Initiatives

Delegation

In line with the provisions of the Public Administration Act and in consonance with the principle of delegation emanating therefrom, proposals were submitted for the consideration of the Public Service Commission to make amendments to Regulations 12 and 17 of the PSC 1960 Regulations with the view of delegating to heads of department the issue of the call for applications. The Commission agreed to these proposals and a Task Force, consisting of PSC and Resourcing officials, was set up to discuss the Action Plan prepared by this Directorate.

In addition to the delegation of the issue of the call for applications, the Action Plan contemplates the delegation of other Resourcing matters, namely the (i) renewal of fixed-term contracts, (ii) promotion after a number of years' satisfactory service, (iii) attainment of indefinite status and (iv) progression/promotion of General Service officers. The Task Force agreed, at the outset, that the delegation of the issue of the call for applications should be the first step taken in the wider delegation programme.

The Task Force concluded its discussions in November. Its workings - consisting of the proposed amendments that need to be made to the PSC 1960 Regulations, the respective amendments to the Public Service Management Code, the templates to be supplied to the line ministries for the purpose of drafting calls for applications and the content of the respective training to be provided to line Ministries - were formally presented to the Principal Permanent Secretary and the Public Service Commission for consideration.

In tandem with the above initiative, outreach meetings were organised regularly between the Resourcing Directorate and line ministries, whereby Resourcing staff visit the HR units of line ministries with a view to ironing out at source problems and issues arising from the line. Apart from hastening the decision making process and avoiding lengthy correspondence between PAHRO and the line, these outreach meetings will also serve to facilitate the Resourcing Directorate's enhanced advisory and support role when the above-mentioned delegation comes into force.

Updates to the Public Service Management Code (PSMC)

Various updates to Chapter 1 of the PSMC concerning resourcing policies and procedures were made to reflect policy changes and to secure the availability of up-to-date information on the on-line version of the Code.

Policy Reviews

- The policy regarding "Postponement, Refusal and Abandonment of Appointment" was reviewed with the aims of (i) making its provisions more sensitive to the provisions regarding notice of termination of employment as stipulated in the Employment and Industrial Relations Act and (ii)

allowing more flexibility to heads of department in the approval, or otherwise, of requests for the postponement of an appointment whilst ensuring that any candidates, whose requests for postponement cannot be met, retain their achieved order of merit for the duration of the validity period of the result. This policy review will streamline the process as well as secure transparency and consistency in dealing with such instances.

- The draft policy, intended to further facilitate mobility across the Public Administration, continued to be reviewed, in line with the Public Administration Act and the Employment and Training Services (Amendment) Act, 2006. The draft policy contemplates the detailing/deployment provisions and the policy of permanent employment with respect to Public Officers moving from the Public Service to Public Sector entities.
- The policy regarding re-employment and re-instatement is being re-written with the aim of streamlining the policy. The criteria used in recommending or otherwise, whether ex-public officers should re-join the Public Service or not is also being revised.
- The policy for the filling of vacancies in Gozo was amended as from 3rd June 2011. Vacancies in the departmental/professional/technical grades within the Ministry for Gozo are now invariably filled through a selection exercise, following a call for applications. Whenever the Ministry for Gozo issues an internal call for applications for the filling of such vacancies, Gozo-resident public officers working in Malta and holding an appointment in the same substantive grade being advertised are allowed to apply laterally. If a successful applicant is moving laterally, irrespective of whether such a move is a result of an internal or a public call, s/he will be transferred to the respective Gozo department/directorate, carrying his/her substantive grade and salary entitlement, including award of increments and progression to higher scales. Whilst ensuring that the “merit principle” stipulated in the Public Administration Act is respected, the policy also ensures that Gozo-resident Public Officers who move laterally from Malta to Gozo are not adversely affected with regard to increments, progression and promotion rights arising from the respective classification agreement.
- A policy guideline was issued to the effect that the engagement/re-engagement of suitable persons beyond age 65 should be invariably made through a direct recommendation to the PSC on a one-year contract basis, renewable, without age limit and subject to the exigencies of the Service. This is subject to the provisos that (i) such option be resorted to after a call for applications, issued in advance and in the normal manner, yields no positive result and (ii) concurrently with the engagement/re-engagement of staff over 65 years, measures should be taken to ensure, as far as possible, that trained understudies capable of assuming the duties of such staff on the expiration of their contract are available. The engagement/re-engagement of persons on a trust basis will be restricted to specific positions fulfilling a non-executive role and involving a trust element (e.g. Advisors).

Instructions and Guidelines regarding the Recruitment and Selection Process

- Instructions were issued to line Departments drawing attention to the provisions of LN 461/2010 entitled “Temporary Agency Workers Regulations” which came into effect on 5th December 2011. The regulations oblige the user undertaking to make available to the temporary agency worker any information regarding vacancies by displaying such information in a suitable place and in a timely manner. In this light, line departments are responsible to ensure that appropriate mechanisms are in place so that all calls for applications, whether advertised through an internal circular or a public call for applications, are displayed in a timely manner and at a prominent place.
- New arrangements were introduced whereby written letters of reference by Public Officers in favour of other Public Officers are allowed, subject to a number of provisos to ensure that situations of conflicts of interest in the course of a selection process do not arise.

- Detailed guidelines were issued to Selection Boards regarding the award of marks for recognised qualifications submitted by candidates. These guidelines distinguish between (i) those qualifications presented by an applicant which form part of the eligibility criteria and on the basis of which the applicant is considered as being eligible as indicated in the relevant call for applications and (ii) additional qualifications for which marks may be awarded in accordance with the sub-criteria as established by the Selection Board and notified to the PSC.
- Instructions were issued to line ministries to nominate not only selection board members in their recommendations to PSC, but also to concurrently nominate for the PSC's approval substitute members who may be appointed to sit on the board should a conflict of interest evolve.
- Guidelines were issued informing Selection Boards that oral selection interviews may be supplemented with additional mechanisms for the assessment of candidates, subject to the provisos that (i) such mechanisms are to be used as part of the selection process to be undergone by all eligible candidates, and not as a qualifying stage on the basis of which candidates could be excluded from the interview and (ii) PSC approval is sought by the Board prior to the commencement of the actual assessment exercise.

Following consultation with the PSC and the Operations and Programme Implementation Directorate responsible for Data Protection issues, detailed instructions were issued to Selection Boards regarding the retention period of the notes and workings relating to a selection process.

Matters related to the “Contracts of Service for a Fixed Term Regulations”

LN 51/2007 entitled “Contracts of Service for a Fixed Term Regulations”, amended by LN 239/2008 and LN 376/2009, stipulates that where no objective reason to the contrary exists, a definite contract would turn indefinite after four years. A policy regarding the reckoning of periods of paid and unpaid leave in the computation of these four years was drafted. Concurrently, the policy regarding service in the grade is being revised in tandem.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between Government and the UHM on 1st June 2011, whereby public officers appointed ‘Officers in Scale’ by the PSC on the basis of a contractual position which is neither tied to the maximum point of the salary scale of the position, nor incremental, are to be entitled to increments until they reach the maximum of the salary scale of the position on which basis ‘Officer in Scale’ status was attained.

Moreover, the procedure to be adopted so that public officers holding a fixed-term contract may acquire ‘Officer in Scale’ status on the basis of such contract if so entitled in terms of the Regulations was established and communicated to the line Ministries.

Nationality Requirements for Entry in the Public Administration

The draft “Nationality Requirements for Appointments in Public Administration Regulations, 2011” were approved and published by means of Legal Notice 315/2011. The Regulations, aligned to pertinent local/EU legislation, regulate the eligibility criteria for entry into the Public Administration insofar as citizenship is concerned. PAHRO Circular 56/2011, dated 5th August 2011, was issued to announce the Regulations.

Increasing the Participation of Disabled Persons in Employment within the Public Administration

Work continued on the initiative launched during December 2010 with the aim of increasing the participation of disabled persons in employment within the Public Administration. It is being proposed that vacancies be filled in the first instance from the ETC register of disabled unemployed, where possible. The approval of the Public Service Commission was sought to extend the existing delegation of powers allowing departments to recruit directly from the ETC register of unemployed in scale 20 without reference to the Commission, so that departments may recruit directly from the ETC register of disabled unemployed at any level. The Commission's endorsement was also sought to widen the existent 'reasonable accommodation' provision in calls for applications so that where a public examination is required for entry into a post/position, the special arrangements allowed by the University of Malta in the case of disabled persons may be likewise applied where examinations are held for entry into the Public Service.

Centrally-issued Calls for Applications

The Directorate continued to take an active role in the filling of crucial vacancies in various Ministries. Successful applicants from centrally-issued calls for applications were appointed to the positions of EU Fund Managers, EU Fund Officers and ICT Contracts and Services Officers. Calls were issued for the recruitment of EU Fund Officers, Chief Information Officers, ICT Governance Officers, Management Information Systems Officers and ICT Applications Officers for the filling of vacancies across the Public Service.

Matters Related to Recruitment in Other Sectors to Address Particular Exigencies

The Directorate assisted in facilitating, with urgency, the filling of a number of critical vacancies at the Law Courts in order to address the serious depletion of staff at the Courts. Discussions were also held with a view to maximising the experience of officers in certain positions and minimise staff turnover and its negative effect of the operations of the Courts.

The Directorate, in conjunction with PACBU, considered requests from MJHA for the issue of calls for applications for various vacancies relating to the Probation and Parole Directorate and the Correctional Services, arising from the Probation Services and Psychologists' Classes, which to an extent veer from the established Agreements. Discussions were held with the view of satisfying MJHA's demand to issue calls for applications in tune with current needs while ensuring that PACBU's position is fully respected.

The Instrument of Delegation, issued under the provisions of Article 110 of the Constitution, for the re-engagement of retired public officers and engagement of retired persons between the ages 61 and 65, previously applicable to the nursing, midwifery and medical professions within the health sector, was extended to teaching and kindergarten assistant grades and adult educators within the education sector.

Public Sector Recruitment

During the year, 450 requests for the recruitment of staff, and involving 1055 employees, were submitted by 51 different government-funded entities. 159 requests were for the filling of 470 vacancies in new positions, whilst 258 requests were for the replacement of 526 employees who had resigned or retired from the service. 33 requests for the filling of vacancies in new positions, and involving the recruitment of 55 employees for a definite period, were approved in connection with ESF and other EU-funded projects. Approval was granted for the commencement of recruitment procedures with the Employment and Training Corporation (ETC).

The 159 requests in new positions were filled by 254 full-timers and 220 part-timers respectively. Full-time staff who resigned or retired in 2011, and for whom a replacement was required, totalled 298, and a further 228 part-timers were also replaced. EU-funded projects resulted in the engagement of 30 full-timers and 25 part-timers.

In liaison with the ETC, the Department also issued approvals to entities for the extension of the statutory validity periods of work permits which had already expired. Before approvals for extensions of work permits were issued, the Directorate investigated the reasons behind the extension of the selection process and eventual recruitment beyond the stipulated time period.

After careful consideration, approvals to requests for recruitment of staff on short definite contracts or on replacement basis, as in the case of temporary replacements, were also given on several occasions.

Redeployment

Several requests for the redeployment of employees within the public sector in terms of Art 15A of the ETS Act were processed. These requests involved the redeployment of staff from the GSU to Malta Enterprise [involving 2 staff members], Kalaxlokk to IPSL [2 requests involving 3 staff members], MIMCOL to FMS, and MIMCOL to Transport Malta.

Secondment

Requests for the secondment of public sector employees with Ministries/Departments were processed and effected during the year.

Calls for Expression of Interests

Six (6) calls for an Expression of Interest, on behalf of various entities, were issued from amongst public officers and public sector employees on behalf of various entities. These concerned calls for Executive Secretaries with Local Councils; Medical Officer with the AFM; Supervisors and Enumerators for the Census of Populations and Housing with the NSO; Planning Co-ordinator and New Media and Communications Co-ordinator with the Inter-Ministerial Commission for the 2018 European Capital for Culture; and an Executive Science and Technical Administrative Officer with the MCST.

EU Recruitment

Recruitment at EU level concerned the filling of vacancies in the positions of Technical Attaché and Research Officers in accordance with the Permanent Representation of Malta in the EU (PREU) Staffing Details Document, and the Secondment of National Experts, together with calls for Temporary Agents with EU Institutions.

The employment contracts pertaining to Technical Attaches and Research Officers were revised and the policy fine tuned. Three Model Agreements were agreed to and distributed to all Ministries: Model 1 being applicable in the case of officers who have a permanent employment with the Government (Public Service); Model 2 being applicable in the case of employees of Public Entities who have a permanent employment with the Government (Public Sector); and Model 3 being applicable in the case of officers who are being engaged as Technical Attachés from outside Government.

Deployment of Public Officers with Entities

During 2011, ninety-five (95) public officers were detailed and thirty-three (33) public officers were deployed with Public Entities, whereas thirty-five (35) officers had their detailing order / deployment revoked, as a result of demand-driven requests or through selection processes for posts in the Public Service.

The total number of public officers who, on 31st December, 2011, were deployed or detailed with Public Entities amounted to one thousand, five hundred and fifty-six (1,556) as shown in the tables hereunder:

Public Entity	No. of Detailed Public Officers
Water Services Corporation	570
Authority for Transport in Malta	95
Directorate of Educational Services	25
Directorate for Quality & Standards in Education	5
Enemalta Corporation	2
EU Programmes Agency (EUPA)	2
Heritage Malta	132
Housing Authority	11
Kunsill Malti għall-Isport	32
Lotteries and Gaming Authority	3
Malta Communications Authority	11
Malta Competition and Consumer Affairs Authority	76
Malta Council for Culture & the Arts	20
MEPA	97
Malta Resources Authority	7
Malta Standards Authority	0
Malta Statistics Authority	57
MCAST	1
Medicines Authority	11
National Archives	8
National Commission for the Promotion of Equality	1
National Commission Persons with Disability	5
OHSA	5
Office of the Attorney General	25
Superintendence of Cultural Heritage	7
University of Malta	1

Public Entity	No. of Deployed Public Officers
Barriera Tax Warehouses Ltd	3
Fondazzjoni Centru għall-Kreattività	1
Foundation for Educational Services	1
Foundation for Medical Services	12
Foundation for Social Welfare Services	69
Foundation for Tomorrow's Schools	1
IPSL	1
Local Councils	60
Local Councils Association	0
Malta Council for Science and Technology	2
Malta Enterprise	1
Malta Information Technology Agency	2
Malta National Laboratory	0
Malta Qualifications Centre	0
Malta Tourism Authority	3
Maltco Lotteries	1
Management Efficiency Unit	2
Manoel Theatre	1
MCAST	47
MEUSAC	3
MEUSAC/MCESD (Gozo Regional Office)	1
Office of the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations	1
St. John's Co-Cathedral Foundation	1
WasteServ Ltd	17
Malta Air Traffic Services (MATS) Ltd.	116
TOTAL	347

TOTAL	1,209
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Ongoing Ancillary Activities

During 2011, the following appointments, movements, progressions and promotions were processed by Resourcing – General Service Grades.

Category 'A' Appointments	
Position	Number
In Acting Capacity	17
Assistant Director	32

General Service Appointments	
Grade	Number
Senior Principal	0
Principal	0
Assistant Principal	0
Executive Officer	0
Senior Clerks	0
Clerks	174

Senior Principal From Scale 7 to Scale 6	26
Principal From Scale 8 to Scale 7	33
From Scale 9 to Scale 8	15
From Scale 10 to Scale 9	245
Assistant Principal From Scale 11 to Scale 10	29
Executive Officer From Scale 14 to Scale 13	17
Clerk From Scale 16 to Scale 15	22
Messenger From Scale 17 to Scale 16	0
From Scale 18 to Scale 17	0
Senior Messenger From Scale 16 to Scale 15	0

General Service promotions to a higher grade in terms of the relevant provisions of the Addendum and the 1993 Classification Agreements, subject to satisfactory performance	
Grade	Number
From Assistant Principal to Principal	5
From EO to Assistant Principal	29
From Clerk to EO	2
From Clerk to Senior Clerk	82

Movement of staff approved by PAHRO	
Grade	Number
General Service Grades	46
Departmental Grades	8
Technical Grades	16
Industrial Grades	17
Others	0

General Service progressions to a higher salary scale within the same grade subject to satisfactory performance	
Grade	Number

Movement of staff within the same Ministry approved by the respective Permanent Secretary	
Grade	Number
General Service Grades	8
Departmental Grades	1
Technical Grades	0
Industrial Grades	1

Others	0
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Expressions of Interest	8
Deployment	2

Movement of staff to and from Private Secretariats	
Grade	Number
General Service Grades	2
Departmental Grades	0
Technical Grades	0
Industrial Grades	1
Others	0

Recommendations to the Public Service Commission in respect of Departmental, Technical and Industrial Grades and Contractual Positions	
Local Personnel	387
Expatriate Personnel	10

Pension Files processed by the Department	
Departmental, Technical and Industrial Grades	361
General Service Grades	34

Other Movement of Staff	
Type of Movement	Number
Public Officers appointed as Local Council Secretaries	5
Reversion to former grade in terms of para 1.1.7.2 of the PSMC	5
Re-employment	11
Re-instatement	3

Others	
Assimilations	7 recommendations involving 189 officers
Re-designations	9 recommendations involving 41 officers
Renewals of contract	86 recommendations involving 118 officers

Appointments in Departmental, Technical and Industrial Grades and Contractual Positions	
Method	Number
Following public calls for applications	1866
Following selection from service-wide calls	248
Following selection from departmental calls	53
After a number of years service in the grade	55
Through direct recommendations	1

Calls for Applications – Departmental, Technical and Industrial Grades and Contractual Positions	
Type of advert	Number
Government Gazette	146
Service-wide (PAHRO Circulars)	67
Departmental Circulars	11

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS DIRECTORATE

As established in the Public Administration Act, the Directorate is in the process of assuming a regulatory and monitoring function whilst providing advice to ministries and line departments in the development of effective management of the HR function especially with regard to employee relations. In line with this objective, the Employee Relations Directorate implemented the following initiatives.

Employee Support Programme (ESP)

In line with the objectives of government to promote the physical and psychological wellbeing of its employees, PAHRO launched the project entitled Employee Support Programme for Public Employees, ESF 4.97 co-funded through the European Social Fund, Operational Programme II, Cohesion Policy 2007-2013.

Operating a budget of €670,000, the Programme is designed to deal, on a short term basis, with a broad range of difficulties such as work related stress, mental health and emotional stress, marital and family concerns, bereavement and terminal illness, addictive behaviour and disability issues. The support is provided in partnership with the programme's six partners, namely: the Foundation for Social Welfare Services (FSWS), Hospice Movement, National Commission for Persons with Disability (NCPD), OASI Foundation, Richmond Foundation and Cana Movement.

During the first quarter of the year, ten (10) information seminars for top management officials within the Public Administration were held. These half day seminars were intended to introduce, inform and explain the concept of the Programme and the scope of the project, as well as to encourage a culture of employee support in the Public Administration, whilst promoting the services offered by the ESP Unit.

Another major component of the project is the Situation Needs Analysis (SNA) which is being carried out to analyse and identify the psycho-social and disability issues across the Public Administration. During the current year the SNA was initiated across seven (7) ministries. The studies in respect of four ministries were concluded by the end of the year, followed by the issuance of the respective analysis and recommendations. A total of six (6) training sessions on specific psycho-social and disability issues were delivered by partner organisations to middle management and eighteen (18) Awareness Raising Sessions to employees. These training sessions were planned according to the specific needs of each ministry identified through the SNA. Furthermore, in each of these four (4) ministries a thirty-two hour training programme for HR Officers and officers with people management responsibilities was conducted

Operations within the ESP Unit were officially launched on the 14 February 2011. With a total of eighty-eight (88) public employees accessing the Unit for support, the majority of employees accessed the Unit with the aim of receiving support for mental and psychological health issues. The majority of employees accessed the Unit for personal reasons, which were affecting both their personal and working life.

Statistics

Table showing the age brackets of the employees accessing the ESP Unit, with the majority of employees falling in the 40-49 age bracket.

Age bracket	No of employees accessing the Unit
18-29	16
30-39	22
40-49	25
50-59	24
60+	0

Table showing the civil status of the employees accessing the ESP Unit, with the majority of employees accessing the Unit were married.

Civil Status	No of employees accessing the Unit
Single	28
Married	43
Separated	15
Widowed	0
Other	1

Table showing the grade/scale bracket of employees accessing the ESP Unit, with the majority of employees coming from the bracket between scales 11 and 20.

Salary Scales	No of employees accessing the Unit
11-20	61
8-10	18
5-7	7
1-4	1

Table showing the civil status of the employees accessing the ESP Unit, with the majority of employees accessing the Unit were married.

Civil Status	No of employees accessing the Unit
Single	28
Married	43
Separated	15
Widowed	0
Other	1

Family-Friendly Measures

Consistent with Governments' policy of promoting family-friendly measures to assist officers to achieve a balance between their career and their family life, the Employee Relations Directorate took the following initiatives:

- In line with Government's policy to promote breastfeeding, the conditions of work of breastfeeding employees were facilitated through the introduction of a new policy aimed at addressing the needs of breastfeeding employees, through the temporary adjustment of the work environment and/or the hours of work. The policy provides for the provision upon request of adequate, clean and private facilities for the expression of milk/breastfeeding, whilst allowing breastfeeding employees a maximum of one hour each working day for the expression of milk without incurring any loss of pay. Moreover, during the first 26 weeks from confinement breastfeeding employees may request temporary alternative working arrangements closer to home.
- The parental leave policy was revised to include eligibility to foster parents, whilst extending the applicability up to the time the respective child reaches eight years of age. The revised policy also enables parents to reserve up to a maximum of four months from their parental leave entitlements to be utilised in periods of one month at a time until the child is eight years old. Another amendment which was introduced provides for the suspension and postponement of parental leave in those instances where the employee is recalled for duty in the public interest in agreement with the employee concerned, without forfeiting the balance of unutilised parental leave which may be utilised up to the time when the child reaches eight years of age.
- The applicability for the utilisation of the five year career break was revised and extended for the care of children under eight years of age.

Political Participation

Directive 5 entitled 'Political Participation and Communication with the Media' was issued on 1st June 2011, under the Public Administration Act. The aim of this directive was to (i) regulate political participation by public officers with a view to reconciling the political impartiality of the Public Service with the personal rights of public officers; (ii) regulate communications with and through the media by

public officers; and (iii) establish similar provisions for the employees of government entities and agencies. In order to encourage active participation in the political well-being of the country most of the posts in the Public Service were classified as politically free. Public officers who hold a politically free post will be free to indulge in politics and political debate. This list of posts which were classified as politically restricted was published along with the said Directive.

Public Service Management Code (PSMC) and other Manuals

An updated consolidated version of the PSMC was published on 7 March 2011. This update addressed revisions pursuant to the coming into force of the Public Administration Act and included a number of policy updates. Subsequent to the issuance of this consolidated version, updates to the PSMC were included in the online updates document.

Throughout the year, work was initiated on the review and updating of a number of information manuals particularly the Allowances Manual and the Family Friendly Measures Manual. Work was also initiated on the drafting of a manual aimed at providing basic information to recruits. Moreover, the Directorate initiated the identification of a number of policies to be included in a manual in the Maltese language.

PSMC Review Committee

The PSMC Review Committee was set-up in February and tasked to review the PSMC with a view to consolidate, streamline policies, simplify policies to ensure reader-friendliness and address particular areas which could be potentially leading to inconsistent interpretations or problematic to implement. The Committee's remit did not include the introduction of new conditions of employment or the broadening of existing conditions stipulated in the PSMC.

As part of this holistic exercise, the Committee held weekly meetings and consulted PAHRO's Directorates, Directors responsible for HR matters and HR Managers and Trade Unions participating in the Collective Agreement negotiations. These consultations were intended to capture the perspectives of the respective stakeholders on the subject. Trade Unions were invited to nominate a contact person with whom the Committee was to liaise and discuss matters related to this exercise. The Permanent Secretary, Ministry for Gozo was invited to nominate a contact person to discuss and co-ordinate with the Committee the review of the PSMC from a Gozitan perspective. Meetings with the nominated persons were held.

The submissions received were assessed and considered. The report is in its final stages.

Other new policy initiatives and policy updates

Throughout the course of the year, the Employee Relations Directorate introduced a number of new policies and policy updates with a view to better address the needs of today's Public Administration and its employees, whilst ascertaining that the Public Administration is at the forefront in the implementation of innovative HR policies and in being a model employer.

- Following consultations with the Ministry of Education, Employment and the Family and il-Kunsill Malti għall-iSport, the Employee Relations Directorate launched the 20/20 Sports Training Scheme. This policy is aimed at meeting the needs of public employees who participate as athletes in international sporting events. Through this scheme, identified employees are released for up to a maximum of 20 hrs per week for training purposes. Such an arrangement is for a period not exceeding 12 calendar months which may be renewed by further periods should circumstances be favourable to further improvement in the applicant's performance. Approval of applications is subject to the authorisation of the Permanent Secretary responsible for Sports. Whilst benefiting of

this scheme, employees are entitled to receive their basic salary, with allowances payable on a pro-rata basis.

- In consultation with il-Kunsill Malti għall-iSport, the policy regarding the granting of paid leave to attend international sporting activities locally and abroad was revised. This leave has now been extended to include international sports activities held locally and attendance by officials of National/Local Sports Organisations at mandatory conferences and meetings. The policy has been extended to provide for paid leave for participation at ten international sport events held abroad, and unlimited paid leave for the actual participation in international sport activities held locally. Moreover, the policy provides for special paid leave to cover travel and attendance at mandatory conferences and meetings.
- The policy providing for the release of employees to work with voluntary organisations was reviewed and this policy is now applicable to all public employees. In order to reduce the burden on voluntary organisations, these organisations are no longer required to identify and nominate up to a maximum of three potential employees for release. The new policy requires PAHRO to issue an expression of interest on a bi-annual basis enabling public employees to register their interest to be released to work with a voluntary organisation.
- The policy on acting allowance was reviewed. A clear demarcation was established between those officers who are performing acting duties concurrently with their normal duties and those officers who are performing acting duties but not performing their normal duties. It has been decided that an acting allowance should only be reserved to Heads of Department and to holders of other offices with statutory powers that are required by law as per Schedule 2 of the Public Administration Act. In respect of other officers holding headship positions a substitution allowance should be paid.

Discipline

The Employee Relations Directorate continued to extend its support to line departments in the management of disciplinary cases. This was done in various ways, namely:

- the issuing of directives, advice and letter-circulars to line departments on the interpretation, management and processing of various types of disciplinary cases;
- the regular auditing of the application of the Disciplinary regulations in line departments and the undertaking of corrective action, whenever necessary;
- consultation with the Public Service Commission on the interpretation of a number of provisions of the Disciplinary Regulations;
- the delivery of lectures to newly appointed Clerks and Local Councils Secretaries on the salient features of the Disciplinary regulations, which lectures were organised by the Centre for Development research and Training; and the participation in seminars and for a for Directors responsible for HR matters, HR managers and officers responsible for the processing of disciplinary cases in line departments on certain aspects of the Disciplinary Regulations;

In collaboration with the Public Service Commission, a draft Legal notice was drafted proposing a number of amendments to the current Disciplinary Regulations. Amongst the amendments that were proposed was that each Ministry will have a Standing Disciplinary Panel composed of former public officers from which

Heads of Department would select members to sit on the Disciplinary Boards. A new concept that these amendments will introduce is the concept of forced leave. The other amendments are intended to delegate more disciplinary authority to line Ministries, to include a number of rulings given by the PSC in the past months and to fine-tune certain provisions.

In order to enable Heads of Departments to take immediate action in respect of officers under their responsibility who are undergoing criminal proceedings, instructions were issued to the police authorities to inform the respective Head of Department about a criminal case involving a public officer within 24 hours from the date that the officer is actually arraigned in Court.

A letter-circular was issued to Directors responsible for HR policies stating that corrections to attendance sheets that are made through the use of correcting fluid or any concealing material, is highly irregular and should cease immediately. When amendments to attendance sheets, by way of corrections to the signature and/or arrival/departure times, are required, these should be crossed out and a fresh entry at the side or above, as the case may be, is to be included. Any adjustments to attendance sheets must be signed and authenticated by the senior officer in charge. This circular also pointed out that tampering with attendance sheets may lead to criminal proceedings being instituted against the officer involved.

Client Support Unit

The Client Support Unit embarked on an on-going process aimed at strengthening the two-way communication with line Ministries through outreach meetings with the respective Directors responsible for HR management and HR Managers. These meetings served to address pending HR issues and to identify any policy areas requiring clarification or adjustment, with a view to facilitate the resolution and streamlining of issues and processes.

The Unit served also as the first point of contact for both line ministries and employees requiring assistance with the interpretation of policies pertaining to the remit of the Employee Relations Directorate.

Correctional Services Officers

Following a claim submitted by the Prisons Officers Association Malta, approval was granted so that the period from the date when a Trainee Prisons Officer is engaged up till the date the same officer is formally appointed as Guard be reckoned as service for pension purposes, provided that upon engagement as Trainee Prisons Officer, the officer concerned was assigned the full range of duties pertaining to the grade of Guard and that the officer concerned only attended the training course on his rest days.

Permanent Employment

From an exercise which was carried out by the Employee Relations Directorate, it resulted that there were 19 pensionable public officers in 3 different entities who will attain either 60 or 61 years of age by the end of 2011 and 2012. As these officers were detailed after the 1 April 2002, the entities concerned were requested to offer permanent employment to these officers. In this way, these officers would benefit from a Treasury pension computed on the analogous Public Service grade and not on their substantive grade. It has also been decided that even the detailed pensionable public officers who had been medically boarded out or deceased, whilst still in employment, should be considered as having taken up permanent employment with their entity, one (1) day prior to their retirement or demise, as the case may be. By virtue of this decision even these officers or their heirs, would benefit from a Treasury pension computed on the analogous Public Service grade. The officers who accepted the offer were permanently employed with their entities in terms of the relevant legislation setting up the entity.

Statistics

Tables showing the total number of cases handled by the Employee Relations Directorate during 2011.

Cases handled by Employee Relations Directorate	
Conditions of Service	1262
Discipline & Staff Welfare	403
Pensions	182
Total	1847

Cases of conditions of service handled	
Deputising Allowance	12
Qualification Allowance	45
Allowance	80
Paid/Unpaid Leave	82
Cultural Leave	97
Remuneration to Gov Boards & Committees	5
Medical Boards	86
Trade Union Activities	73
Overseas Development Aid	23
VOs	81
Unpaid Leave - EU	62
Gender Issues	104
Others	512
Total	1262

Table showing the number of disciplinary cases that were initiated in 2010 by line Departments.

Disciplinary case	
Regulation 18 Admonishment	197
Regulation 19 Summary Warning	730
Regulation 20 Minor	79
Regulation 20 Serious	134
Total	1140

HR SYSTEMS AND DATA MANAGEMENT DIRECTORATE

The functions of the HR Systems and Data Management Directorate for the year under review included the following:

- Finalising the transition from Payper to the new HR/Payroll system and making the preparatory groundwork for the staggered integration of HR modules.
- Analysis and reporting of the data captured through the Skills Profiling Exercise carried out throughout the Public Administration and monitoring updates of the captured data.
- Implement the Performance Management Programme (PMP) to improve employee performance against approved output and pre-determined quality standards, while striving to improve the Programme as well;
- Improving the competence of Human Resource Management through regular Fora for Human Resource Managers and Directors of Corporate Services;
- Administration and support of the MPO/PAHRO website, the Public Service Recruitment Portal and the HR Managers' restricted area on the Public Service Intranet;
- Collecting and collating data regarding employment within Public Sector organisations and, for this purpose, maintaining an adequate database.
- Performing a feasibility study on the possibility of introducing Childcare Arrangements in the Public Service.
- Performing the annual surveys and any ad hoc surveys as may be required.

New HR/Payroll System for the Public Service

The new Payroll system was successfully implemented on the live environment from the first pay of January, 2011 and all payroll calculations are now being undertaken by the new system. Following the successful implementation of the two pilot sites, all Ministries and departments were gradually incorporated during the year.

Training was given to payroll officers, in line departments, who will be using the Employee Payment Screen (EPS). This web-based module is the main system through which payroll amendments are made by line departments.

The new electronic payslips feature, successfully introduced in tandem with the implementation of the new payroll, is functioning, well and there were positive remarks regarding the new payslip design, which offers more details than the previous 'printed' payslip. All other payroll-related reports, such as departments' paylists, are also being sent to line departments electronically.

An absences module, which is meant to complement the present payroll system, is being tested, and is scheduled to be implemented, service-wide, during the first quarter of 2012.

Skills Profiling

Following the Data Collection phase of the Skills Profiling Exercise, this Directorate analysed and reported on the data collected for both Public Service and Public Sector (two different reports).

The data analysis for the Public Service included an analysis of compliance, Education (School Leaving Certificates, Highest Level of Education and ECDL) and Work Preferences (Preferences regarding Teamwork, preferences regarding working indoors vs working outdoors, and preferences regarding job mobility).

Following this first report, this office has conducted further analyses in these areas:

- An analysis of the Qualifications of officers in General Service Grades and officers in Industrial Grades
- Counts of different qualifications, categorised by areas of study and by the Level of the qualification
- Analysis of qualifications relevance to the present posting
- In-depth analysis of the Job Mobility questions.

The final version of the report for the Public Service was submitted on the 5th April 2011.

The data analysis of the Skills Profiles of Public Sector Organisations included analyses of Respondents by demographics (Gender, Age Groups and Average Ages), Education (School Leaving Certificates, Highest Level of Education and ECDL), and Work Preferences. This report included also counts of different qualifications, categorised by areas of study and by the Level of the qualification.

The final version of the report for Public Sector Organisations was submitted on the 27th June 2011.

Performance Management Programme (PMP)

During March 2011, this Directorate initiated the annual Performance Management Programme (PMP) Quantity Audit for Public Service employees. This annual exercise is undertaken in order to ensure that PMPs covering the period 1st January to 31st December 2011 have been drawn up for all eligible employees. The audits were finalised on 15th June 2011. A report was compiled to establish the 2011 PMP Compliance Rate for each Ministry.

In the meantime, discussions were held with the Director, Quality Assurance, MEEF regarding the re-implementation of the Teachers' Performance Management and Development Programme (PMDP), which the Directorate intends to implement in the new scholastic year for newly recruited Teachers.

Fora organised by the Directorate

In order to strengthen the communication between the Directorate and the line Ministries, and to further improve the competence in HR Management with the various stakeholders, seven fora for Directors (Corporate Services) were organised during the year. Topics ranged from Flexible Work Arrangements for Public Employees to the Revision of the Policy on the postponement of appointments.

The Directorate also organised a forum for HR Managers and two joint fora for DCSs and Chief Information Officers (CIOs) and for DCSs and HR Managers respectively.

Human Resources Working Group (HRWG)

This Directorate represented the Maltese Public Administration in the HRWG Meetings held during this period. The first two meetings were held in Budapest (28th February – 1st March; 24th – 25th May 2011), organised by the Hungarian Presidency. The themes that were discussed included: Use of EU Structural Funds for administrative capacity building measures reforming ESF; Generation shift in Public Administration; Career Opportunities for Women in the Civil Sector; Integrity policies in the civil service; Women to top positions within the Central Administration; Mobility in the Public Sector, and; Future of Social Dialogue within EUPAN.

The meetings under the Polish Presidency took place on the 12th – 13th September 2011 in Warsaw and on the 17th – 18th November 2011 in Cracow. The themes that were discussed during these two sessions included: Flexicurity Policy – Flexible working time arrangement; Effectiveness of Good Governance and Ethics – Evaluating Reform Outcomes in the context of financial crisis; The future of employment status in the National Public Services; The Role of Think Tanks in supporting decision making processes; Effectiveness of ethics and trust measures; Coordination, cooperation and collaboration at Top Executives level; Social Dialogue, and; Building image of public administration.

Casual Substitutes Scheme Audits

An audit of the Casual Substitutes Scheme was conducted in all ministries between November and December 2011. The objectives of this audit are to ensure that the process laid down in the Public Service Management Code is being followed, to clarify any difficulties encountered by line and to ensure that the relevant payroll measures are adhered to. Issues identified in the audits were discussed with the HR section of each ministry and corrective action was taken in each case.

Before the actual audits took place, two processes were carried out by the HR Systems and Data Management Directorate. The first process consisted of data collection concerning the Casual Substitute Officers and their twinned officers from each line ministry, whilst the second process consisted of checking the received data against the Payroll Data to ensure that the twinning concept and the payroll policies in connection with this scheme are being adhered to.

Data Management

Teleworking Data Submission

As from January 2011, Government departments and entities with detailed/deployed public officers were requested to submit a monthly teleworking return. The aim of this exercise is to collate and update statistics about the number of public officers on teleworking arrangements for each month, together with the monthly variations (new teleworkers, terminations, and pending requests during the month) for each department and entity. From the received data, a monthly teleworking statistical report for each ministry is compiled.

Gozitan Employees Returns Database

During 2011, a monthly exercise was initiated through which, data concerning public officers residing permanently in Gozo and working in Malta were inputted in a new database. This information was compiled from the data in the Employment Returns submitted by line ministries' HR departments. The Employment Returns were cross-checked with the HR System before being inputted in this new database. Addresses were also verified and updated as necessary.

Presentations

ILO Delegation

The Assistant Director (HR Systems and Data Management) delivered a presentation during a visit by an International Labour Organisation delegation. The delegation included representatives from the Public Administrations of Malawi, Afghanistan and Nigeria. The presentation gave a historical overview of the Directorate and continued with extensive details regarding the Directorate's data management functions.

Standing Committee for Family Affairs

On the 10th October 2011, the Assistant Director (HR Systems and Data Management), together with the Assistant Director (Special Projects – Employee Relations), delivered a joint presentation on Family-Friendly Measures in the Public Administration to the Standing Committee for Family Affairs. The Presentation included historical details regarding milestones in the implementation of Family-Friendly Measures, the different measures available to parents and to all employees, and statistics regarding the take-up of Family-Friendly Measures in the Public Service and Public Sector entities.

Appendices

Appendices A to D show:

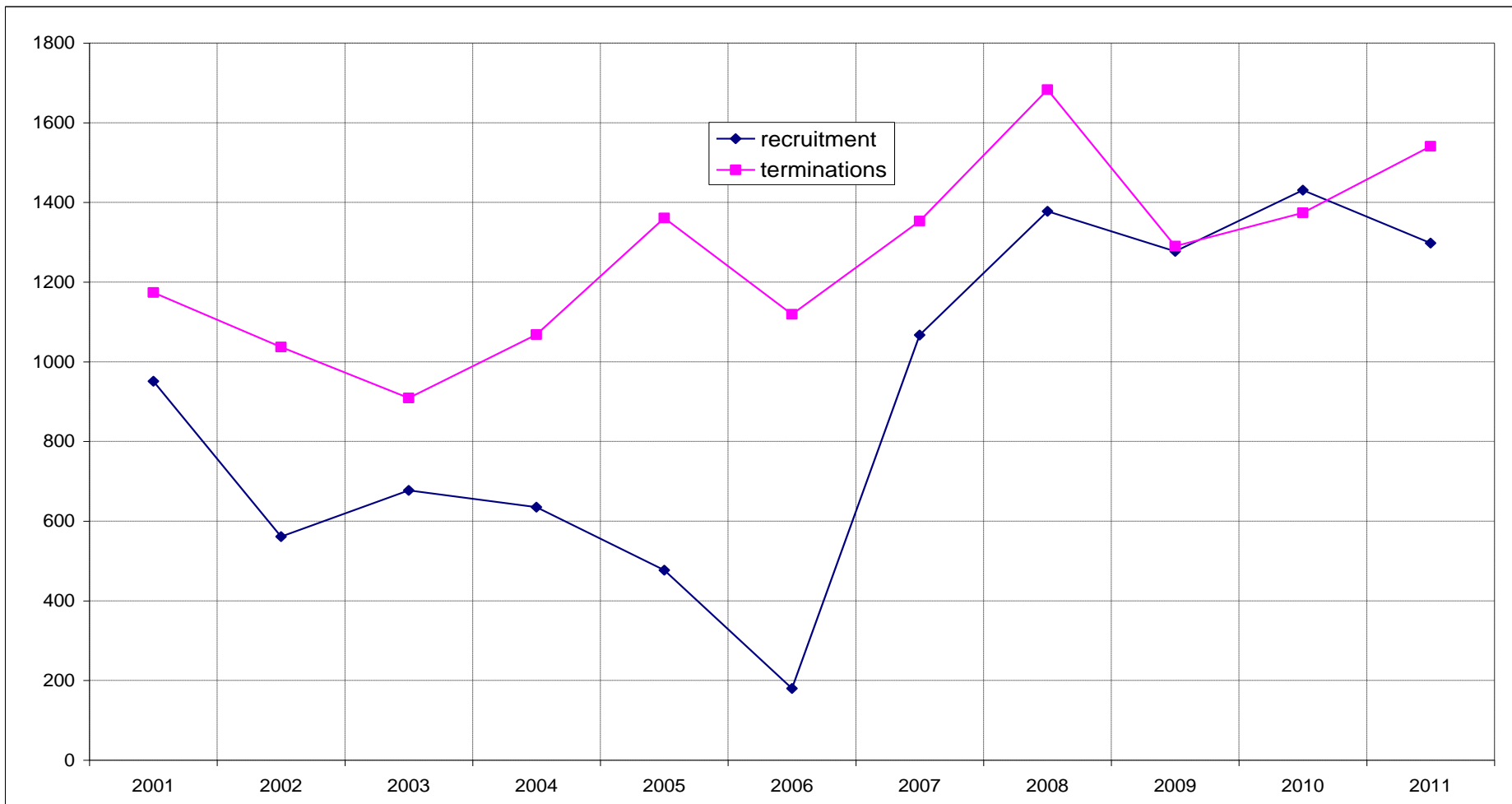
- A Comparison report - Public Service Workforce - end December 2010 against end December 2011;
- B Recruitment against Terminations in the Public Service 2001 – 2011;
- C Distribution of Public Service employees by Category and Gender as on December 2011;
- D Average age by Grade and Gender in the General Service Class as on December 2011;
- E Comparison between causes of terminations from the Public Service during 2011;
- F PMP compliance by Ministry during 2011.

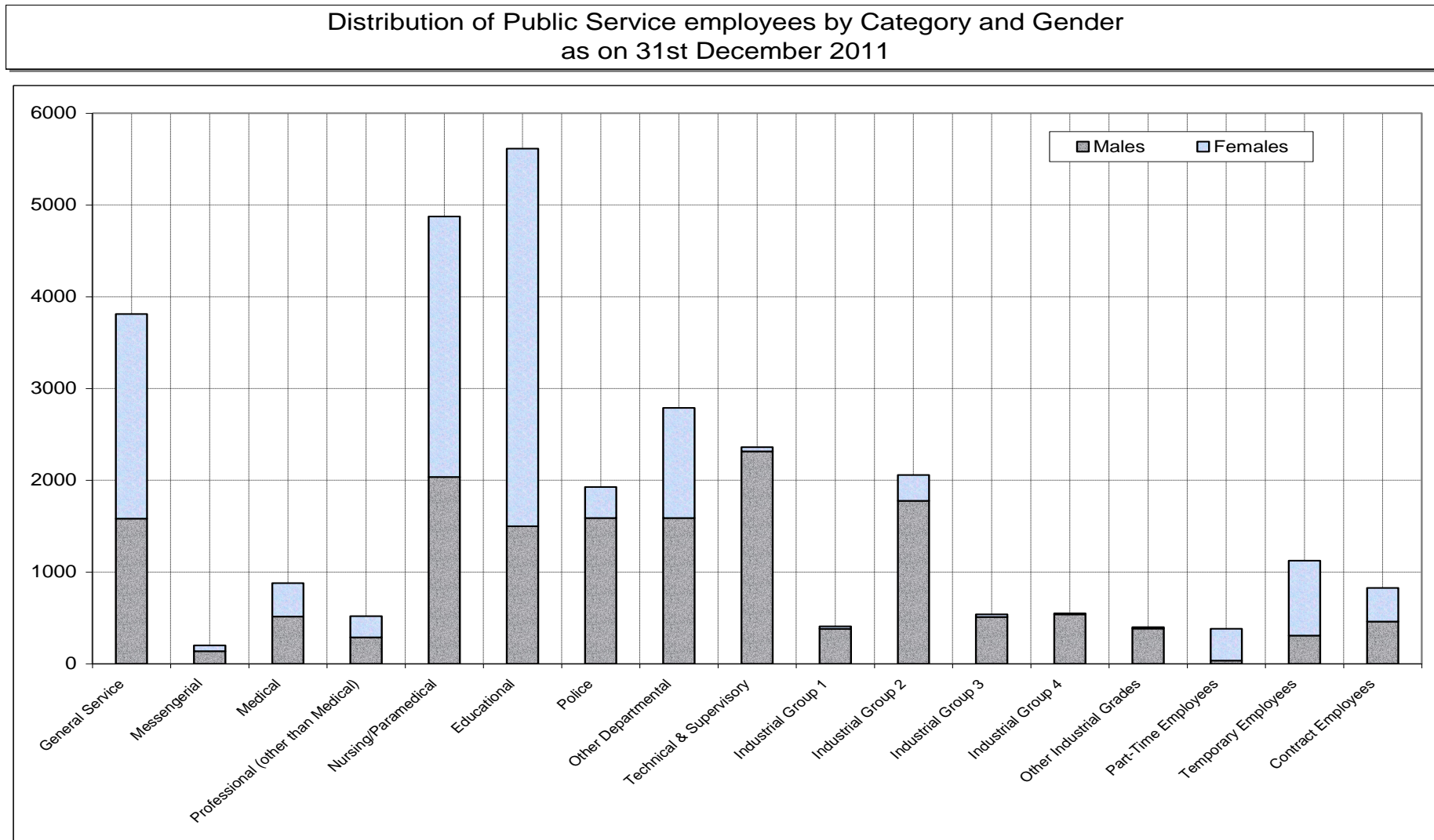
Doreen Ellul
Director General
Public Administration HR Office

Appendix 'A'

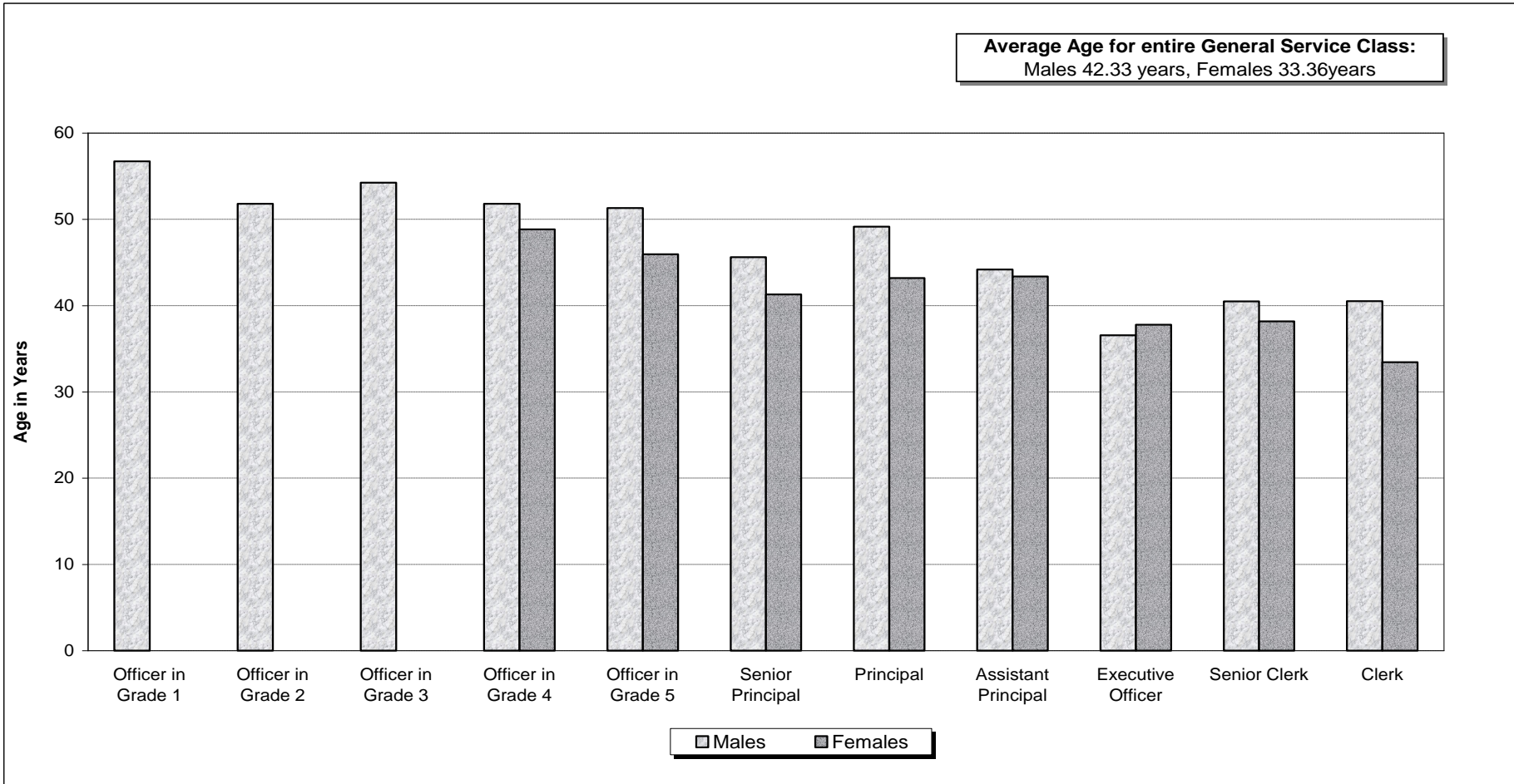
Public Service Totals Including AFM uniformed personnel and Public Service employees seconded/detailed to authorities/public entities December 2010/2011			
Category	Dec 2010	Dec 2011	
Full-Time Public Service Employees			
Administrative & Clerical	3661	3707	
Messengerial	170	193	
Police Force	1922	1928	
Technical	1971	1926	
Professional (Other than Medical)	448	465	
Nursing/Paramedical	4815	4871	
Medical	833	869	
Educational	5190	5612	
Other Departmental Grades	1885	2531	
Industrial	3810	24705	3557
			25659
Armed Forces (Uniformed)			
Regular	1569	1550	
Revenue Security Corps	110	73	
Reserve	51	50	
Volunteer	34	1764	25
			1698
Temporary Employees			
Part-Time	438	381	
Temporary	1457	1123	
On definite contract - local & expatriates	705	807	
Trainees	1	2601	1
			2312
Public Officers with Authorities/Public Entities		1403	1328
GRAND TOTALS		1403	30997

**Recruitment against Terminations in the Public Service
2001 - 2011**

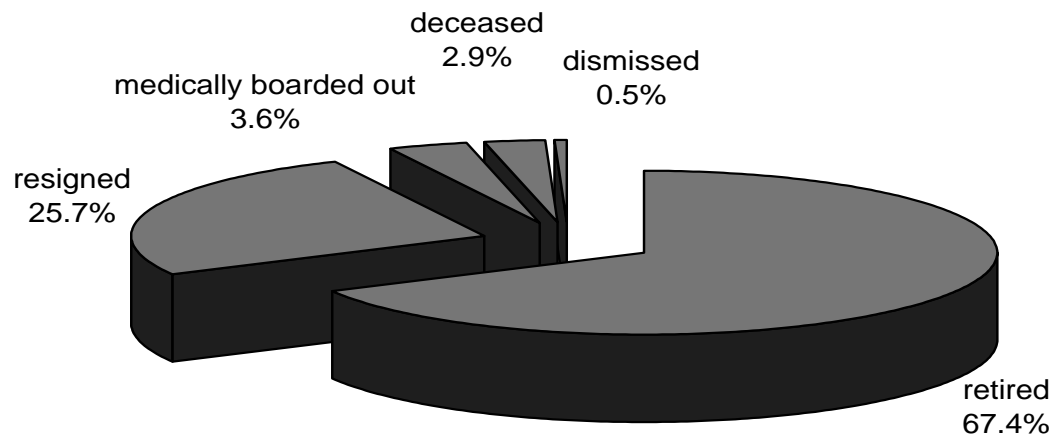




General Service Class
Average Age by Grade and Gender
as on 31st December 2011
(all grades shown substantively)



Employees who terminated their employment from the Public Service
January - December 2011



**Performance Management Programme
PMP Compliance of Employees in the General Service Class - 2011**

