
Management and Personnel Office

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.

INTRODUCTION

The Management & Personnel Office (MPO) is constantly endeavouring to find innovative ways by which this Office will be able to respond more efficiently to public service requirements.

Established in the early 1990s, the Management & Personnel Office forms part of the Office of the Prime Minister and is composed of the Resourcing Department, the Employee Relations Department and the HR Systems & Data Management Department.

MAIN ACTIVITIES

During the year under review, the Management & Personnel Office undertook various initiatives, namely the continuous improvement of family-friendly measures, the redeployment process of Maltapost employees returning to the Public Service, the transfer of Gozitan employees to Gozo, and the official launching of the first phase of the Public Service Recruitment Portal. The MPO initiated and implemented a series of new policies; the latest being the implementation of the Legal Notice 51/2007 entitled *Contracts of Service for a Fixed Term Regulations 2007*.

RESOURCING DEPARTMENT

INTRODUCTION

The Resourcing Department is of this year responsible for resourcing functions both within the Public Service as well as across the wider public sector.

The year 2007 saw the continuation of initiatives to enhance the competence of the Public Service in taking a proactive stance in view of the constant changes the Service is undergoing as a result of new legislation and challenges: the exercise for the selection of Senior Principals is planned again for early 2008, in fact the relative call for applications was issued last November. At middle management level, a call for applications for the recruitment of Principals was issued in December. The selection exercises for the recruitment of Clerks as well as for the promotion of Clerks to the grade of Executive Officer have also been planned, which will enable the Service to enhance the support staff structure across the board.

Other important recruitment processes were effected within particular sectors: various posts were filled, and contractual positions created, to increase the complement of medical, nursing and paramedical staff in view of the opening of the new hospital in June; other positions were created in connection with Malta's entry into the Schengen; the horizontal positions of EU Fund Officer and EU Fund Support Officer were created to further enhance the effective management of EU funds; and new positions at headship/senior

management level were designed in line with the Education Reform. Various other contractual positions were created at middle/senior management level within different ministries to enable the efficient and effective administration of tasks and projects linked to the achievement of set goals within each sector.

An additional role entrusted to the Department following the coming into force of Legal Notice 51/2007 entitled *Contracts of Service for a Fixed Term Regulations 2007*, on 15 June 2007, was its involvement in the scrutinisation and evaluation of individual contractual agreements, as well as the analysis of the impact of such regulations, as facilitator in ministries' concordance with this new legislation.

SECTORAL ANALYSIS – PROGRAMMES AND INITIATIVES

Rationalisation of Human Resources

The Resourcing Department, in conjunction with the Ministry of Finance, continued to promote and implement the rationalisation and cost-effective utilisation of human resources within the various sectors with regard to recruitment in ministries/departments in line with standing OPM/Finance directives. This was carried out particularly through: (i) the capacity-building exercises, held every six months; and (ii) the meetings of the Recruitment and Redeployment Advisory Group (RRAG), in respect of recruitment within public sector entities.

Recruitment and Redeployment Advisory Group (RRAG)

The Director (Resourcing) and the Assistant Director (Public Sector) continued to take an active part in the proceedings of the RRAG as Member and Secretary respectively. Four meetings of the RRAG were held in 2007, during which recruitment and redeployment issues were discussed. The main topic throughout the year was the effect of the Fixed Term Regulations in terms of LN 51/2007 on contractees with the Public Service as well as the public sector.

Public Sector Recruitment

During the year in question, 406 (225 in 2006) requests from 60 (49 in 2006) different government-funded entities were processed. 204 requests were for new positions which created 538 new vacancies, whilst a further 202 requests were for replacement of staff which involved 401 employees who resigned or retired from service. In four instances recruitment was made service-wide. The other requests were granted approval by the RRAG for the entities concerned to commence recruitment procedures with the Employment and Training Corporation (ETC).

Following the opening of the Mater Dei Hospital, various requests for recruitment and redeployment of additional staff for the Zammit Clapp Hospital were processed. Twelve new requests for various positions for additional staff were presented which involved 106 vacancies. These requests were given high priority and fast tracked for recruitment through the ETC.

Requests received from the Malta Shipyards Ltd, for the engagement on temporary basis of foreign skilled labour, continued to be fast-tracked to enable this entity to fulfil its contractual obligations.

The Directorate, in liaison with the ETC, also approved the extension of the statutory validity periods of work permits issued to entities that had expired. Approvals for requests for recruitment of personnel on short definite contracts or on a replacement basis, as in the case of casual substitutes, were also given on several occasions after careful consideration.

At the start of 2007 the public sector, that is all government funded entities being either independent statutory bodies or companies with public majority shareholding, totalled 12,385. By the end of September, according to the latest available figures from ETC, the figures declined to 11,546. The total

privatisation of Crowne Plaza (Holiday Inn), Airport Services Co Ltd, Tug Malta and Maltapost accounted for the reduction of the figures by over 800. Also at the end of September the public sector had 1,828 public officers on its books who were either detailed/attached on grounds of public policy or on contract.

Redeployment

Following the enactment in June 2006 of Act No VII of 2006 to amend the Employment and Training Services Act, five requests were processed for the redeployment of employees within the public sector.

EU Recruitment

In 2007, the Resourcing Department was also entrusted with the responsibility of processing of applications for EU-related employment opportunities: the recruitment of Technical Attachés, the Secondment of National Experts, and the engagement of Temporary Agents with diverse EU institutions.

EU Fund Management Related Recruitment

Following the deployment of EU Fund Managers who were appointed as a result of the centrally-operated recruitment process initiated during the latter part of 2006 through a public call for applications, two positions were created to complement the above-mentioned position: EU Fund Officers (Scale 10 maximum) and EU Fund Support Officers (Scale 11). The selection process was again centrally-operated. Since a number of vacancies in these two positions remained vacant, the calls were re-issued in late 2007 with an enhanced remuneration: Scale 9 (maximum) and Scale 11 (maximum) respectively. Incumbents recruited through the earlier calls are also to start receiving the enhanced salary.

Meanwhile, a number of other positions related to EU Fund management were created during 2007. These include: Systems Administrator (Managing Authority) (maximum Scale 5) and Projects Manager (Managing Authority) (maximum Scale 5) at the Planning and Priorities Co-ordination Division and Senior Manager (EU Paying Authority) in the Ministry of Finance (maximum Scale 5).

Migration of Services to Mater Dei Hospital

The Department continued to give its support to bolster the human resource capacity at Mater Dei Hospital, both before and after its opening in July. To this effect, and as a result of a number of periodical meetings involving the Department, the Ministry of Finance and Health authorities, a number of posts/positions were created and subsequently filled through calls for applications.

Posting of Calls on the Public Sector Online Recruitment Portal

The front end of the online Recruitment Portal was launched by MIIIT in June and the Support Section of the Departmental Grades Branch undertook new duties in posting calls for applications online thereby enabling the general public to apply from the comfort of their homes at any time of the day. This new task was preceded by training organised by the Data Management and HR Systems Department within MPO for the personnel concerned.

Participation in Capacity Building Meetings

The promotion and implementation of the rationalisation and cost-effective utilisation of human resources with regard to recruitment in ministries, departments and public entities through its participation in capacity-building exercises held amongst MPO, the Ministry of Finance and the line ministry, continued.

Diplomatic Class

A 'notional' letter of appointment was originated to be applicable in cases of appointees in the Diplomatic Class attached in the Cabinet of EU Commissioners in view of the three-year period requirement to serve intra-Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on appointment.

Consultant/Associate Consultant (e-Government Services Implementation) at MIIT

The call for Consultant (e-Government Services Implementation) in the ICT in Government Unit was twice issued during the course of 2007. After failure to fill the vacancies through the first call, a second attempt was made with less stringent eligibility requisites and through the creation of a sub-position of Associate Consultant to cater for candidates who do not fully satisfy the parameters for the position of Consultant.

VAT Inspectors

In order not to lose the experience/training of serving VAT Inspectors even when the Scale 10 ceiling is exceeded and in view of the added burdens which the Division is shouldering, this Department agreed that the ceiling be raised to Scale 8 maximum. A recommendation to this effect by the Department was approved by higher authorities.

Calls Issued Following the Signing of the Agreement on the Education Reform

Following the agreement on the Education Reform signed in 2007 between the Government and the Malta Union of Teachers, a number of calls for applications for filling of posts/positions in the Ministry for Education, Youth and Employment were issued.

In anticipation of the above calls for applications, and in reflection of the thinking behind the creation of the top positions emanating from the said agreement (such as Directors General, Directors and College Principals) this Department had, in conjunction with Chairman, Public Service Commission (PSC), compiled a draft rudimentary call providing for initial appointment of the substantive grade of *Officer in Grade 5* in terms of the Constitution (Art 110) in anticipation of the 3-year contractual appointment to the position of Director General.

Moreover, following the conclusion of the first selection processes, the Department advised MEYE on the drafting of the resulting letters of appointment for Directors General and College Principals.

Officer in Charge Minor Staff Examination

The fifteen candidates who were successful in the examination for the post of Officer-in-Charge Minor Staff held in 2006 were deployed according to priority requests and the letters of appointment issued.

Executive Officer Examination

In liaison with the Director of Examinations and the PSC, an internal call for applications (MPO Circular) for the post of Executive Officer was issued on 27 March. The written examination was held on 12 and 13 June, with a validity period of two years from the date of publication of the final result. Out of 1,096 candidates who sat for the exam, 307 were successful. Marks were also allotted through a Service Credit exercise. The second part of the examination – the interviews - commenced on 18 September and was completed by the first week of November. The official result was issued by the PSC on 20 December.

Clerk Entrance Examination

A call for applications for the recruitment of Clerks in the Public Service was published in the Government Gazette of 3 April 2007. The examination was held under the auspices of the Board of Local Examinations. A total of 970 candidates sat for Part I, held on 27 and 28 June, out of which 382 candidates were successful. Part II – the interview – commenced on 8 October. Out of the 382 candidates interviewed, 344 were successful. The results were published on 26 November.

Senior Principal Selection Exercise – 2007

Following a comparative analysis of middle management officers available in the Public Service, and a 48% reduction in the Senior Principal complement over the last 12 months, a draft call for applications has been prepared and members of the Selection Board nominated for the PSC's approval. For the first time, the Commission directed that all written components should be run under the auspices of the Board of Local Examinations, and that such should be the procedure henceforth. A PSC interviewing Board will then assess successful candidates following a group discussion and individual interview. The examination is set for the second week of February 2008.

Principal Entrance Examination

A public call for applications advertising the competitive examination for entry into the grade of Principal was issued in the Government Gazette of 26 October 2007. The written part of the examination is scheduled for the first week of February 2008.

Changes to Performance Agreement and to Pensions Ordinance

Following the issue of OPM Circular No 7/2007 regarding Amendments to the Pensions Ordinance (Cap 93), proposals devised in conjunction with Director, Policy Development (OPM) were submitted for:

- alterations to the proposed amendment to the Pensions Ordinance in respect of pensionable officers in headship positions (article 8E), in order to address perceived lacunae; and
- changes to the performance agreement of incumbents in headship positions, clarifying that entitlement to a pension under the 1937 Pensions Ordinance based on the salary of the headship position occupied immediately prior to leaving office, is on condition that the last full year of creditable service is performed in this position, or completion of any three-year continuous term in a parallel or higher designation, whichever the higher.

Legal Notice 51/2007 entitled Contracts of Service for a Fixed Term Regulations, 2007

Following the coming into force of LN 51/2007 concerning Fixed-Term Contracts, the Resourcing Department assumed a central role in addition to its existing remit: that of assisting in the implementation of said LN by ministries. Hence:

- The terms, conditions and duties attached to the employment contract of each contractee within the Public Service and wider public sector were scrutinised and evaluated, to determine the applicability of LN 51/2007 in each case, in preparation for the formulation of individual letters for presentation to each contractee informing them of such applicability, to be issued by the relative Permanent Secretary.
- The Director (Resourcing) and Assistant Director (Special Issues, Resourcing) participated in individual meetings between the Principal Permanent Secretary and the Permanent Secretary/Director Corporate Services of each ministry, during which PSs were briefed on the way forward and particular difficulties addressed.
- As part of the Committee set up to address representations related to the above-mentioned letters, comprising the PPS, PS (OPM), Director (DIER), Director (Resourcing), Assistant Director (Special

Issues, Resourcing) and the Union Haddiema Maghqudin, the Department was involved in the process of scrutinising and evaluating such submissions.

- The Department participated in discussions, with the PPS, PS (OPM) and Director (Employee Relations), on new policies and practices and concerning the PSC's involvement, following the Fixed Term LN and following the issue of the pre-15 December letters.
- In the light of Regulation 4 of LN 51/2007, following a meeting with DG (Social Security), payment of Social Security contributions by incumbents of contractual positions is now based on basic pay, that is, the salary of the position, irrespective of whether or not the incumbent has a substantive grade. This, since prior to this LN, the difference between the salary of the higher contractual position occupied by an officer who has a substantive grade, and the salary of his/her grade, was treated as a non-pensionable allowance. Instead, the concept of a non-pensionable allowance is now limited to pension entitlements under the 1937 Pensions Ordinance.

Implementation of New Policies Following PSC Concurrence

- the upgrading of the position of Secretary to the Presidency;
- the issue of appointments as Officer in Grade 5 to officers who have served as Private Secretaries for six years;
- officers on a performance agreement in a Category A position who utilise unpaid leave relating to family-friendly measures, such as parental or responsibility leave, shall henceforth retain their substantive grade of 'Officer in Grade 5' or higher, subject to creditable performance;
- tenure in a comparable grade on completion of six years in the position of Director General or above.

Proposed New Policies Submitted to the PSC

- a system of Succession Planning across the Service;
- the extension of eligibility for Headship positions to include all public officers who hold a substantive grade in Salary Scale 7.

EPSO Questionnaire

An EPSO Questionnaire was compiled on the role played by the PSC and the MPO in selection procedures and interviewing techniques.

Capacity Building of Information Management Units – Steering Committee

A Steering Committee composed of representatives from MPO, MEU, MITTS, MIIIT and CITAC was set up with the brief to address the HR support needs of CIOs following their appointment in February. To this end, Resourcing gathered the necessary data regarding public officers performing ICT-related duties but not officially appointed an ICT position, for analysis by MEU, to identify HR needs which may be sourced in-house. The first four designations, at senior management level - ICT Governance Officer, ICT Applications Officer, ICT Contracts and Services Officer, and Management Information Systems Officer – were agreed upon and a service-wide call for applications was issued. Concurrently, discussions with the Staff Development Organisation are underway with a view to supplementing existing skills with further training.

Salary of Casual Substitutes

Resourcing submitted recommendations for the amendment of the salary clause in the Public Service Management Code specimen contract issued to Casual Substitutes, so that Casual Substitutes may be paid in accordance with an incremental salary scale as appearing in the Estimates of each year (inclusive of COLA and any applicable Collective increases) instead of a fixed minimum point.

'Bridging' of Service of Resigned Nurses on Re-entry

Resourcing participated in the creation of a scheme to attract nurses who had resigned, to rejoin the Public Service, in view of the shortage of nurses in the Service. The scheme centres around the principle of recognition of previous service for salary computation purposes, subject to Classification Agreements thresholds.

Freedom of Information Act

The Resourcing Department submitted its comments and suggestions vis-à-vis the proposed Freedom of Information Act.

MPO Seminar

The Department prepared a presentation on the provisions of LN 51/2007 regarding Fixed-Term Contracts, for discussion during a seminar held by the PPS for Directors, Assistant Directors and Senior Principals within MPO. The presentation linked the provisions of LN 51/2007 to those of the EU Council Directive 1990/70/EC as well as those of the EIRA.

Deployment of Public Officers with Public Entities

During 2007, 25 public officers were detailed with public entities whereas 28 officers had their detailing order revoked as a result of demand driven requests or through officers' selection for posts in the Public Service. The following table shows the number of public officers who, on 31 December 2007, were deployed, attached or detailed with public entities:

Public Entities and Parastatal Organisations	Various	94
Water Services Corporation	Detailed	946
Malta Transport Authority	Detailed	56
Occupational Health and Safety Authority	Detailed	5
Malta Environment and Planning Authority	Detailed	100
Malta Maritime Authority	Detailed	14
Malta Resources Authority	Detailed	5
Malta Standards Authority	Detailed	3
Malta Statistics Authority	Detailed	64
Lotteries and Gaming Authority	Detailed	5
Superintendence Cultural Heritage	Detailed	10
Malta Communications Authority	Detailed	8
Heritage Malta	Detailed	183
Kunsill Malti għall-Isport	Detailed	38
Malta Council for Culture and the Arts	Detailed	27
Kummissjoni Nazzjonali Persuni b'Dizabilità	Detailed	5
Office of the Attorney General	Detailed	37
National Commission for the Promotion of Equality for Men & Women	Detailed	4
Medicines Authority	Detailed	14
National Archives for Malta	Detailed	10
European Union Programmes Agency	Detailed	7
Maltco Lotteries	Deployed	1
MATS Ltd (includes ex-AFM personnel)	Attached	152
Foundation for Medical Services	Deployed	9
MCAST	Deployed	88
WasteServ	Deployed	14
St John Co-Cathedral Foundation	Deployed	2
Barriera Tax Warehouses Ltd	Deployed	3
Foundation for Social Welfare Services	Deployed	9
IPSL	Deployed	1
Foundation for Tomorrow's Schools	Deployed	1
Total		1,915

ONGOING ANCILLARY ACTIVITIES

Data on ongoing ancillary activities is shown on the following table:

General Service progressions from one salary scale to a higher one with the same grade subject to satisfactory performance	
<i>Position</i>	<i>No</i>
Senior Principal (Scale 7 to 6)	1
Principal (Scale 8 to 7)	22
(Scale 9 to 8)	12
(Scale 10 to 9)	19
Assistant Principal (Scale 11 to 10)	134
Executive Officer (Scale 14 to 13)	6
Clerk (Scale 16 to 15)	40
Messenger (Scale 17 to 16)	1

Engagement of Consultants/Advisers on contract processed	
New Contracts	27
Renewals	104
Terminations	17

Movement of Staff to & from Private Secretariats	
General Service Grades	12
Departmental Grades	10
Technical Grades	3
Industrial Grades	3
Others	2

Departmental, Technical & Industrial Grades Appointments	
<i>Position</i>	<i>No</i>
Following public calls for application	1,401
Following selection from service-wide calls	384
Following selection from departmental calls	154
After a number of years service in the grade	45
Renewal of contracts	204
Others	47

Movement of Staff approved by MPO	
General Service Grades	39
Departmental Grades	9
Technical Grades	25
Industrial Grades	-
Others (Maltapost Employees)	16

Category 'A' Appointments	
<i>Position</i>	<i>No</i>
Principal Permanent Secretary	-
Permanent Secretary	-
Permanent Secretary - Designate	-
Director General	14
Director General - Designate	3
Director	27
Director - Designate	3
Others	-
In an Acting Capacity	21
Assistant Director	37

General Service Appointments	
<i>Grade</i>	<i>No</i>
Senior Principal	-
Principal	197
Assistant Principal	36
Executive Officer	9
Senior Clerk	36
Clerk	-

Calls for applications issued for Departmental, Technical & Industrial Grades	
<i>Type of advert</i>	<i>No</i>
Government Gazette	210
Service-wide MPO Circular	159
Department Circular	20

Recommendations to PSC in respect of Departmental/Technical/Industrial Grades	
Local Personnel	496
Expatriate Personnel	66

Movement of Staff within same Ministry approved by respective Permanent Secretary	
General Service Grades	6
Departmental Grades	1
Technical Grades	4
Industrial Grades	13

Pension Files processed by the Department	
Departmental, Tech & Industrial Grades	337
General Service Grades	85

Public Sector Database

A comprehensive database of all vacancy forms for recruitment in the public sector received since May 2005 from the various entities, and the related RRAG decisions taken for each particular case, is being compiled. It is envisaged that by early 2008, the database will be finalised and up-to-date.

The database will serve to facilitate the retrieval of data for each entity and ministry concerned. It will also be useful in the drawing up of statistics, mainly for the National Statistics Office.

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS DEPARTMENT

The prime objective of the Employee Relations Department is to advise 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 Department proposed and implemented the following initiatives.

Public Service Management Code (PSMC)

The 8th edition of the PSMC was published in electronic format. This edition incorporated all the regulations and policies in the sphere of employee relations and resourcing which came into effect up to 31 May 2007. Apart from the updates, this edition displayed all the monetary values in euro as well as in Maltese Liri. This edition was also enhanced by the inclusion of a table of contents at the beginning of the Code and at the beginning of each chapter with direct link to the main text.

Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)

A notice was published in the Government Gazette inviting NGOs to request the release of public officers to work with them, including the renewal of the release of public officers already working with them. To be eligible, NGOs must be established exclusively to fulfil a social or charitable purpose as defined in the Trusts and Trustees Act. The notice required that the applications submitted by NGOs should include a statement setting out the scope of the organisation, a copy of its statute and a proposal detailing a project to which the requested officer would be assigned. The NGOs were required to define the benefits originating from the project and the target deadlines for its completion. The public officers who may be released to work with NGOs may not be higher than Salary Scale 5 and they will be released on special leave with pay, on grounds of public policy for the duration of the project or one year whichever is less with the possibility of renewal.

Following the publication of this notice, 22 applications from NGOs requesting the release of a total of 26 public officers to work with NGOs were received. After evaluating these applications in accordance with the established criteria, 22 public officers were released. Thirteen of these public officers were already released last year.

Overseas Development Assistance (ODA)

Government is committed to fostering an inclusive society, not only locally but also in a global capacity. To promote this aim further and also to conform to our commitments as an EU member state, a policy was introduced which provides that full-time public officers on a substantive appointment may be granted special paid leave on grounds of public policy for one year, renewable yearly to perform overseas development work in countries that are recipients of ODA. The paid leave is granted on the basis of assignments. The number of officers posted on paid leave depends on Malta's ODA budget.

During 2007, a total of 15 public officers were released on this scheme, with an outlay of Lm21,433. The officers served in the following countries: Brazil, Albania, Guatemala, Ethiopia, and Kenya.

Discipline

An audit on the application of the Disciplinary Regulations by line Departments during 2006 was carried out on the basis of the half-yearly returns on discipline submitted by line Departments. The results were collated in a report entitled *Survey and report on disciplinary cases in the Public Service for 2006*. This

report, apart from giving a statistical digest of disciplinary cases initiated in 2006, identifies trends and also compares the 2006 figures with the 2005 figures.

The Employee Relations Department also continued to extend support to line departments in the management of disciplinary cases. This was done in the following ways:

- issued directives and advice to line departments on the interpretation, management and processing of disciplinary cases;
- regularly monitored the application of the Disciplinary Regulations in departments and the necessary corrective action was taken accordingly;
- participated in a seminar on the Disciplinary Regulations organised by the Customer Services Department for officers in top and middle management positions of the Gozo General Hospital;
- consulted with the Public Service Commission on the interpretation of a number of provisions of the Disciplinary Regulations.

The Department produced a policy document entitled *Guidelines for Commander, Armed Forces of Malta regarding the suspension of AFM personnel involved in criminal cases*. This policy outlined the procedure that the Commander, AFM should follow when a soldier is arraigned in Court charged with a criminal offence and when the soldier is convicted or acquitted of a criminal charge. This document also outlines the rights and obligations of the soldier whilst he is on suspension and it lists the offences which warrant the suspension of the soldier.

Re-Integration in the Public Service

The Public Service Commission approved a policy document drawn up by the Employee Relations Department entitled *Policy on the Re-integration of public officers*. This policy outlines new parameters for the re-instatement of public officers who had retired on medical grounds and the re-employment of public officers who either resigned or were dismissed on disciplinary grounds.

This policy provides for the setting up of a Board known as the *Re-integration Board*, which will have the function to recommend to the PSC the re-instatement or the re-engagement of ex-public officers, according to the new parameters.

Privatisation of Maltapost

Following consultations held with the *Union Haddiema Magħqudin*, an agreement was signed on the *Absorption of Maltapost public officers within the Public Service structures*. This agreement granted to the public officers who (i) reverted to the Public Service in 2003, the right to be absorbed within the public service structures; (ii) reverted to the Public Service after the full privatisation of Maltapost, the right to continue to benefit from the salary that they are earning from Maltapost and also the right to be absorbed within the public service structures; and (iii) reverted to the Public Service after the dissolution of Posta Ltd the right to be granted the salary which they earned with Posta Ltd. A side letter was also submitted to UHM outlining the methodology that MPO will follow in the absorption of these public officers.

Treasury Pension Rights

Two separate legal notices were published declaring MITTS Ltd and the Lotteries and Gaming Authority as public entities falling under Article 8A of the Pensions Ordinance. By virtue of these legal notices, service with these two public entities will be reckoned as service with Government. Thus, the pensionable public officers who are deployed with MITTS Ltd and also those pensionable officers detailed with the Lotteries and Gaming Authority will, on retirement, be entitled to a Treasury pension based on the analogous public service grade, capped at Salary Scale 3, if they take up permanent employment with these two entities.

The Department participated in two Classification Boards set up by the Ministry of Finance in terms of Article 8B of the Pensions Ordinance, to carry out the classification exercise necessary to establish the analogous grade upon which the Treasury pension of the public officers who had taken up permanent employment with the Malta Statistics Authority and the Lotteries and Gaming Authority, should be based.

Conditions of Service

The following conditions of service were introduced:

- part-time employees whose engagement with Government is their principal employment were granted all the rights and duties of whole-time employees; all the conditions of service applicable to whole-time public officers were extended also to part-time public officers. This implies that part-time public officers are now entitled to all the leave benefits and allowances, including Sunday pay on a *pro-rata* basis but not to the payment of overtime, unless they work longer hours than the stipulated 40 hour week. Certain benefits however, may not be applicable to them for objective reasons. These employees have also the right to apply for vacancies as long as they satisfy the relevant criteria;
- all government employees may avail themselves of 14 weeks paid maternity leave instead of the 13 weeks paid and one week unpaid leave, if at least one week of the maternity leave extends beyond 1 January 2008;
- the starting salary of officers who progress from one scale to another within the same grade on the basis of years of satisfactory service should not be less than the third step of the new scale. In the case of serving officers who enter a higher scale as a result of academic achievement or on obtaining a warrant, these will be placed on the minimum of the new scale tied to the level of the qualification/warrant obtained.

Other Measures

During the period under review, the following action was taken by the Employee Relations Department:

- notified all employees in the Public Service and public sector, by means of an OPM Circular, that they may, on voluntary basis, donate to the Eden Foundation, 10c per week which will be deducted directly from their salaries;
- invited employees, by means of an OPM Circular, to contribute on a voluntary and once only basis the sum of Lm2 from their salary towards the 34U Campaign to help replace the 3,000 trees which were vandalised;
- issued a number of advertisements in the local newspapers and distributed posters about the family-friendly measures available in the Public Service which were published in a brochure that was produced with co-funding from the European Social Fund;
- drew the attention of Heads of Department, by means of an MPO Circular, that the Private Guards and Local Wardens Act precludes public officers above scale 6 from holding a licence as a Security/Private Guard.

Surveys

In order to plan new policies and also furnish information on different aspects of HR management, the following surveys were carried out:

- the salaries which are to be paid to AFM personnel and to police officers in 2008;
- the remuneration payable to the chairpersons and members of government boards and committees and the number of sittings held by these Boards during 2006;
- the number of officers who are on unpaid leave and on study leave; and
- the number of employees who availed themselves of the various family-friendly measures as on 1 November 2006.

Industrial Relations

As part of the restructuring taking place at MPO, the Industrial Relations Unit has been placed within the Employee Relations Department.

The Industrial Relations Unit continued to cultivate the good relations that exist between Government as an employer and the various unions representing the employees of the Public Service.

In order to maintain this relationship, the Unit maintained a pro-active approach in the management of industrial relations. To facilitate this pro-active approach, various meetings were carried out on a regular basis with the unions which meetings proved to be fruitful in curtailing unwarranted escalation of industrial disputes.

During the period under review, the Industrial Relations Unit was involved in the negotiation and successful conclusion of the following:

- Addendum with MUMN regarding the Nursing and Midwifery class
- Memorandum of Understanding with UHM regarding the Paramedics class
- Agreement with UHM regarding the Pharmacist class
- Agreement with UHM regarding the Scientific class
- Agreement with UHM regarding the Medical class
- Agreement with GWU regarding the Assistant Veterinary Support Officers
- Agreement with UHM regarding Judicial Assistants
- Addendum with GWU and UHM regarding the Messengerial class
- Agreement with UHM regarding Care Workers
- Agreement with MUT regarding the Education class
- Addendum with GWU and UHM on the Industrial and Supervisory class
- Agreement with MAM on the Medical class
- Memorandum of Understanding with UHM on the School Secretaries
- Amendment to the Classification and Grading of Legal class.

Clause 5.2 of the Collective Agreement for Employees in the Public Service established a conciliatory structure with a view to encourage the prompt and amicable resolution of any potential difference between the Government and the unions. During the period under review both this Unit and the unions made case of this structure which proved beneficial in maintaining and fostering harmonious industrial relations.

In this respect, the conciliatory structure facilitated mutual agreement between Government and the unions on the following issues: (i) agreement on the paramedic class; (ii) working hours of Ambulance Drivers in Gozo; and (iii) attendance registration of Nursing Aides.

The Industrial Relations Unit embarked on the design and creation of a database as regards all the 65 sectoral agreements presently in force in the Public Service. The availability of reliable information which is retrievable in a timely manner is a critical tool in the bargaining process. This database is also being utilised as a management tool to ensure a holistic approach in the wider ambit of human resource management.

Statistics

The following tables show the number of cases handled by the Employee Relations Department during 2007.

Cases handled by Employee Relations Dept	
Conditions of Service	1,509
Discipline & Staff Welfare	416
Pensions	76
Total	2,001

Disciplinary cases initiated in 2006 under the 1999 Disciplinary Regulations by line departments	
Description of Punishments	No
Regulation 18 Admonishment	129
Regulation 19 Summary Warning	307
Regulation 20 Minor	165
Regulation 20 Serious	104
Total	705

Cases of Conditions of Service handled	
Unpaid Leave	301
New/Review of Allowances	30
Cultural Leave	39
Medical Boards	221
Re-instatements/Re-employment	12
Union Activities	274
Deputising Allowance	74
Qualification Allowance	35
Boards and Committees	20
Release of Officers to NGOs	22
Gender Issues	67
Release of Officers to work with EU Institutions	46
Overseas Development Aid	15
Others	353
Total	1,509

HR DATA & SYSTEMS MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

In May 2007, the *Directorate of Policy & Planning* was renamed *HR Systems & Data Management* assuming such functions as the strategic management of Human Resources data.

This Department aims to further develop and maintain a service-wide comprehensive human resource system with a view to providing regular, accurate, timely and qualitative information for optimal planning. It also aims at implementing and developing further the Performance Management Programme (PMP) whilst improving employee performance against approved output and predetermined quality standards. This Department organises and maintains fora for Human Resources Managers, aimed at keeping them abreast with new developments and policies. Systems for the effective implementation of teleworking across the Public Service, the introduction of modern mechanical and/or electronic systems for the purpose of recording attendance, the introduction of flexible working hours across the Public Service, and the control of the abuse of sick leave, all fall under the administrative remit of this Department.

The HR Systems & Data Management Department undertakes research with a view to keeping abreast with new developments in the field of HR. For this purpose an adequate library is maintained. The Department is also responsible for the development and maintenance of the MPO website/s and the Online Recruitment Portal.

Activities undergone by HR Systems & Data Management during 2007

For the year under review, the functions of the HR Systems and Data Management Department included the following:

- offered support to line departments who are using the Human Resource Information Management System (HRIMS);
- finalised the preparatory work for the new HR/Payroll system which will replace the present systems;
- implemented the Performance Management Programme (PMP) to improve employee performance against approved output and pre-determined quality standards, while striving to improve the Programme as a whole;
- the final preparations and launching of the Public Service Recruitment Portal;
- improved the competence of Human Resource Management through regular fora for Human Resource Managers and the resumption of fora for Directors Corporate Services;
- provided continuous support to line departments on matters concerning organisational structure, staff complimenting and other HR functions; and

- the dissemination of information to public officers and the general public on recruitment opportunities within the EU institutions and agencies.

Performance Management Programme

During the first quarter of the year, the Department introduced a new initiative, whereby annual PMP compliance audits were carried out by HR Managers within their respective ministries. This exercise proved fruitful (with results roughly comparable to those produced by the previous system in use) and also provided important insights on fine tuning to address the delays experienced in completing this exercise.

A PMP quality audit for General Service Grades within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was carried out during the year. Owing to the ongoing restructuring of the Ministry, several of the PMP documents were not finalised. PMP documents submitted by the Resourcing Department were also regularly reviewed for their quality content. For promotion/progression purposes, a total of 440 documents pertaining to General Service Class employees were audited. The attention of 149 supervisors was drawn in view that PMP assessments were found weak. Areas for improvement were suggested. This implies that roughly 34% of documents were deemed unsatisfactory in one area or another; marking a slight increase over the previous year.

During December, this Office undertook a review of the effectiveness of the current Performance Management Programme. To extend its reach and effectiveness, several proposals regarding both the structure of the document and the process of the Programme as a whole were put forward.

Fora for Directors (Corporate Services) and Human Resources Managers

In November, the HR Systems and Data Management Department held one Forum for Directors (Corporate Services). The session treated the proposed developments in the Public Administration Bill. It was agreed that further sessions of the Forum would be held on an *ad hoc* basis.

Eight Human Resources Managers Fora were held throughout the year. The following topics were discussed: Setting the agenda; Improvements to the Performance Management Programme; Euro Changeover and its implications; Getting to know FHRD and its services; Issues related to SDO courses; Public Administration Bill; and Creative thinking for the Public Service.

Human Resources Information Management System (HRIMS)

The current system continued to be maintained and updated since the installation of a new HR System is still pending. Various users were added to the system, and several bug-fixing exercises were undertaken by MITTS personnel. The system was also updated for euro compliance.

Various data entry exercises were undertaken by this Department, mainly the keying in into HRIMS of the employment history of all public service employees. Data were retrieved from updated Personal Record Sheets (PRSs) obtained from line departments.

Several high-level meetings were held to establish the way forward for a new HR/Payroll System for the Public Service. This led to a submission for the procurement and implementation of a fully integrated HR system to the Core ICT Advisory Committee (CITAC). The document that was submitted in October included the investment plans, inflows and outflows, costings and an implementation schedule for this project. The Department of HR Systems & Data Management will focus on the formulation of the tender document, once clearance from CITAC is obtained.

MPO Website

The MPO website, mpo.gov.mt registered a total of 33,506 hits during 2007; 15,316 were one-time users, 10,377 were first-time users while 7,706 were repeat users. 90% of these hits were of local origin, while 9% were from European Union countries and 1% from the United States.

The most popular pages according to the number of page loads were:

www.mpo.gov.mt

www.mpo.gov.mt/employeerelations.html

www.mpo.gov.mt/resourcing.html

www.mpo.gov.mt/hranddatamgt.html

Statistics showed the following duration periods on the website: 11% exceeded one hour; 14% lasted from five minutes to an hour; and the remainder spent less than five minutes.

174 MPO Circulars were published on the website's *Internal Calls* section.

Human Resources

Director HR Systems & Data Management participated in two HR Working Group meetings (HRWG) on 17-18 September and 20 November, held in Lisbon and Brussels respectively. The topic under discussion was performance and competency review. Several questionnaires were distributed to selected personnel within the Public Service. A final report on the findings was presented at the end of the Portuguese Presidency.

Other Matters/Activities

- Director HR Systems & Data Management participated regularly in the Re-Employment Board.
- In December, Director HR Systems & Data Management participated in the OPM/MPO Organisational Strategic Review undertaken by the Management Efficiency Unit. This exercise was meant to prepare OPM and MPO to meet the challenges which would eventually be brought about by changes in legislation.
- The ongoing work on the Recruitment Portal for the Public Service finally gave results half way through the year. Final trials and adjustments to the Portal were made during the first quarter of the year. At the same time, it was presented to the Public Service Commission whose consequent recommendations were immediately implemented by this Department. About 70 employees from across the Public Service were given hands-on training on the Portal by Assistant Director (HR Systems & Data Management). Training was held at the Staff Development Organisation. Following these preparations, the Portal was officially launched on 4 June at a press conference attended by Minister Austin Gatt during which Assistant Director (HRSDM) gave an extensive overview of the advantages of the system. Initial response to the Portal was good.

EMPLOYMENT STATISTICS

Appendices A to C show:

- A Public Service Workforce (inc. govt employees seconded/detailed to public entities) December 2006/2007
- B Distribution of public service employees by category and gender as on December 2007
Average age by grade and gender in the General Service Class as on December 2007
- C Employees who terminated their employment from the Public Service January-December 2007
PMP compliance by Ministry during 2007

ANTHONY J VELLA

Acting Director General, MPO

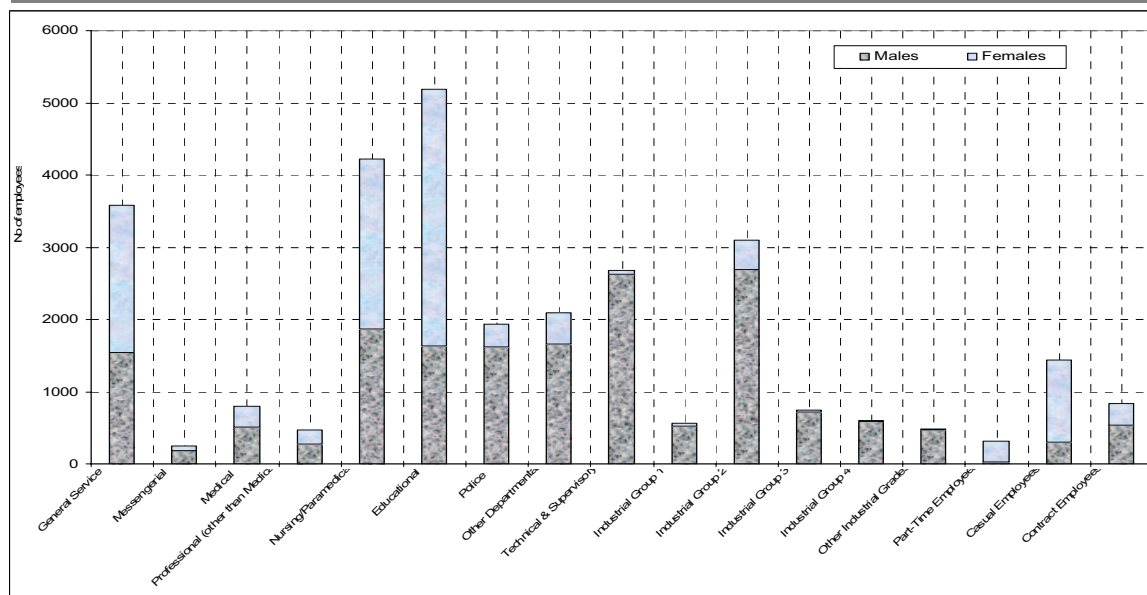
APPENDIX A

Public Service Workforce
(including government employees seconded/detailed to public entities)
December 2006/2007

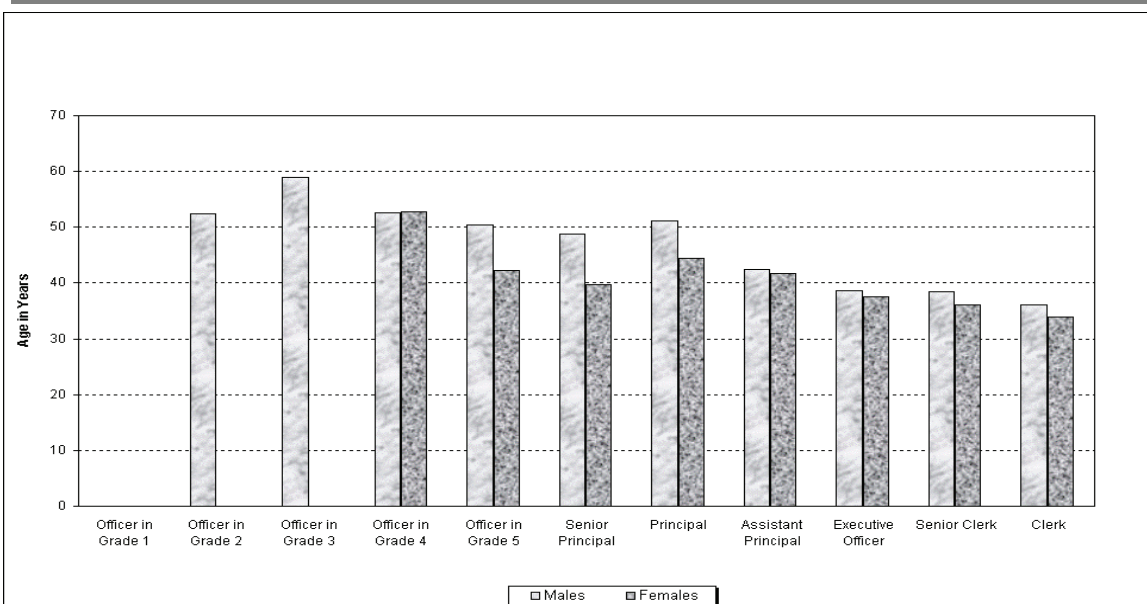
Category	Dec 2006	Dec 2007		
Full-time Employees in Government Departments				
Administrative & Clerical	3,529	3,427		
Messengerial	261	227		
Police Force	1,759	1,937		
Technical	2,155	2,105		
Professional (Other than Medical)	446	423		
Nursing/Paramedical	4,045	4,217		
Medical	775	781		
Educational	5,222	5,186		
Other Departmental Grades	1,886	1,785		
Industrial	<u>5,145</u>	<u>25,223</u>	<u>4,826</u>	<u>24,914</u>
Armed Forces (Uniformed)				
Regular Force	1,454	1,495		
Revenue Security Corps	133	132		
Reserve Force	54	47		
Volunteer Force	<u>38</u>	<u>1,679</u>	<u>31</u>	<u>1,705</u>
Temporary Employees				
Part-Time	317	315		
Casual	1,217	1,432		
On contract (Local and Foreign)	<u>757</u>	<u>2,291</u>	<u>823</u>	<u>2,570</u>
Public Officers with Authorities/Public Entities		1,778	1,783	
GRAND TOTAL	<u>30,971</u>		<u>30,972</u>	

APPENDIX B

Distribution of Public Service employees by Category and Gender as on December 2007

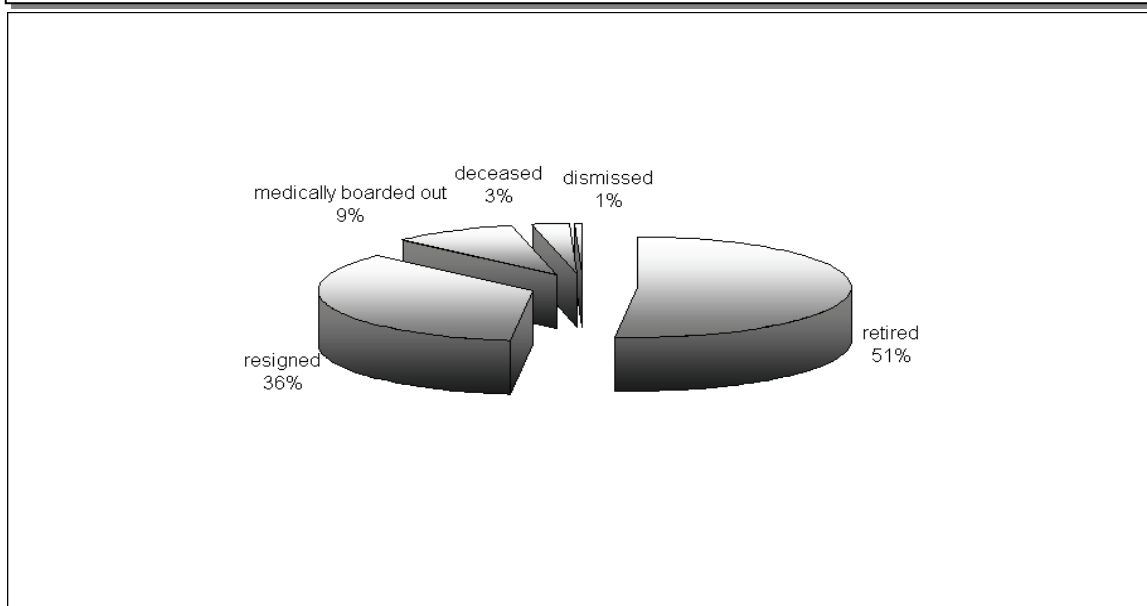


Average age by Grade and Gender in the General Service Class as on December 2007



APPENDIX C

**Employees who terminated their employment from the Public Service
January - December 2007**



PMP Compliance by Ministry during 2007

