

# PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION



## CORPORATE PLAN 2013-2015

## **INTRODUCTION**

Grenada Constitution Order of 1973 authorizes the origin of the Office of the Public Service Commission (OPSC). The PSC is an independent body of persons who are appointed by the Governor General in accordance with Section 83(1) of the Grenada Constitution Order (1973) as follows:-

- “(a) the Chairman and two (2) members shall be appointed by the Governor General, acting in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister;
- (b) two (2) members shall be appointed by the Governor General, acting in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister after the Prime Minister has consulted the appropriate representative bodies;”

The Commission serves for a fixed term of three (3) years as stipulated in Section 83 (4) (a) (Grenada Constitution Order 1973). The removal of members may be effected in accordance with Section 83 (5) of the Grenada Constitution Order (1973).

By Instruments of Appointment dated 22nd November 2013, the Governor General appointed the following persons to serve as members of the Public Service Commission for the ensuing three (3) year period:-

- Mr. Derick Sylvester – Chairman;
- Mr. Prescott Swan – Member
- Mr. Hudson Mc Phail - Member
- Mr. Delano Viechweg – Member (Representative of the Grenada Union of Teachers).;
- Mrs. Madonna Harford – Member (Representative of the Public Workers' Union);

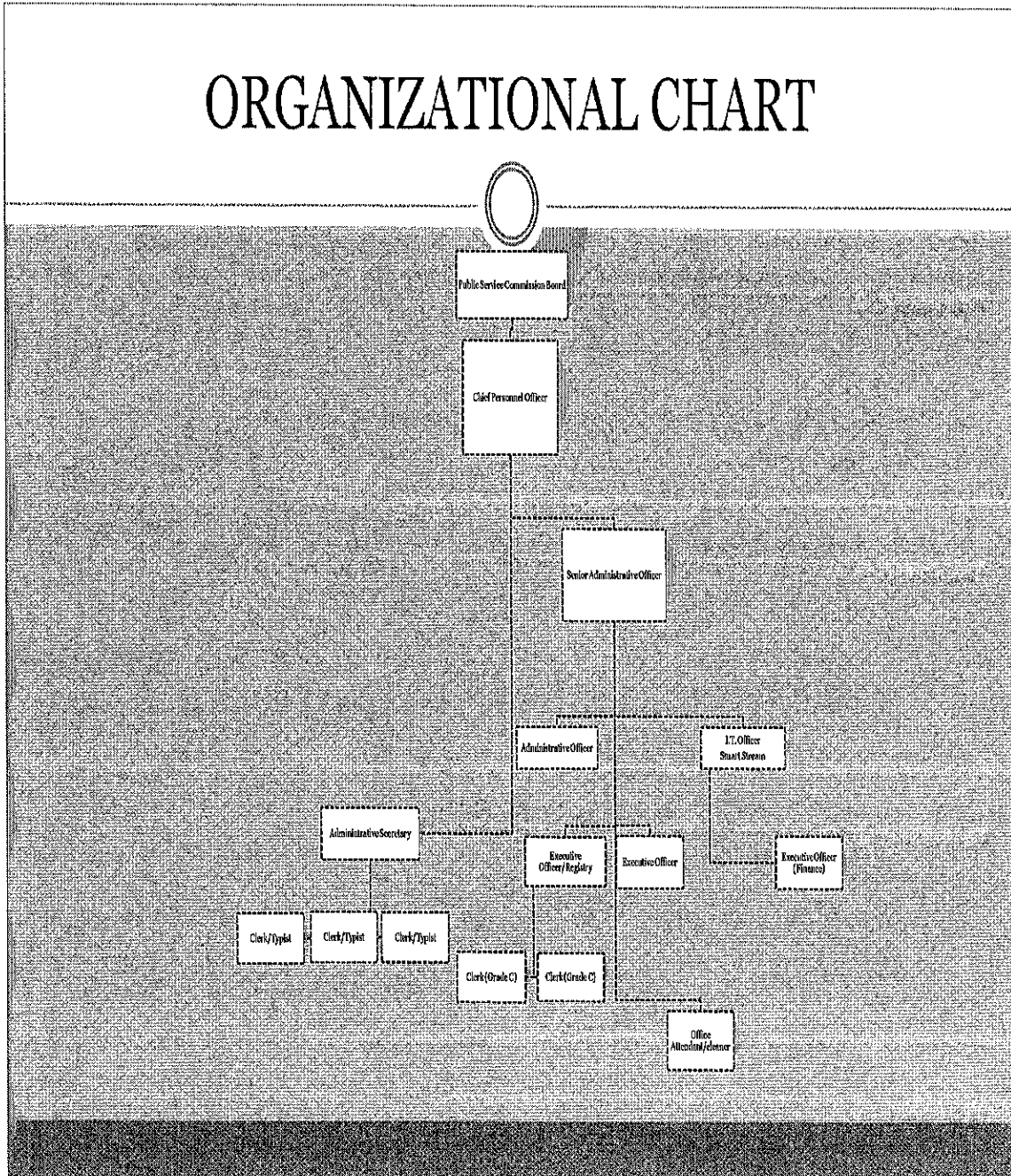
## **MISSION STATEMENT**

To Provide effective and efficient support to the Public Service Commission in the exercise of its functions as set out in section 84 of the Grenada Constitution and to help to secure the best use of personnel resources in the Public Service.

## VISION STATEMENT

The Office of the Public Service Commission aims to achieve greater efficiency and effectiveness by improving the quality of its services to its customers.

## ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



## **ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF**

The Office of the PSC is staffed by fourteen (14) officers occupying the following positions:

Chief Personnel Officer	1
Senior Administrative Officer	1
Administrative Officer	1
Information Technology Officer	1
Executive Officer	3
Administrative Secretary	1
Clerk Grade C	2
Clerk/Typist	3
Office Attendant/Cleaner	1

## **ACHIEVEMENTS**

1. Received approval by the Financial Complex Ltd for the tiling of the ground floor in keeping with a recommendation from the Department of Labour.
2. Final draft revised and sent for legal advise; new target date for implementation was January 2014 in light of need to synchronize with the implementation of the revised staff order which are currently under review.
3. Reviews of some processes, for example, the Registry.
4. Stakeholder Consultations - The Commission began its term of office with meetings held with stakeholders, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Finance, Immigration Department, Customs Department and Administrative Officers. Through those meetings, the Commission was able to share its intentions and expectations and got an appreciation of the concerns of those stakeholders.
5. The Commission was also able to make recommendations for improvement in some areas including the late processing and consequent late payments to temporary teachers is an area where marked improvement was realised. There is still room for improvement in this area.
6. Computerisation of Personnel Records - In 2012, the Office of the PSC submitted a proposal for funding under the Regional Electronic Government Integration Project (EGRIP), for the computerisation of

personnel records for all public officers including teachers, in the human resource module of Smart Stream (Government's electronic software used for financial and HR management).

The proposal met the approval of the donors and the process which started in 2007 was implemented in August 2013. Four (4) Data Entry Clerks were employed to execute the project under the guidance of Ms. Tishanna Felix, Executive Officer.

To date, electronic files have been created on all public officers and individual personal files were created for each teacher. Thus the practice of filing information on teachers by school has ended thereby facilitating easier access and quicker decision making. The process of updating the personnel records continues.

Realizing that the process would not complete when the projects ends in January 2014, budgetary allocation for an additional year was made for the continuation of the project. To date, the project id on hold due to severe financial hardship.

7. Recruitment/Selection - New qualification requirements for appointments in the Public Service were established by the Department of Public Administration in November 2010.

The Commission sought to ensure that all appointments were made in accordance with the stipulated requirements.

Officers who were appointed to act in positions for which they did not qualify prior to the establishment of the policy, were considered for confirmation. However, this was done on the condition that they did not move beyond a specified point in the salary scale until they acquire the requisite qualifications for the positions.

Where it became necessary to appoint an officer to act in a vacant position for which he/she was not qualified, the Commission effected the appointment on the condition that the officer would not be considered for confirmation in the position until he/she acquires the requisite qualification.

The Commission continued the process of advertising and interviewing for vacant positions to ensure the best fit for jobs. Performance Appraisal review was a major consideration in the appointment of officers.

In keeping with Government's current policy on hiring, the Commission adhered strictly to the requirement for clearance by the Department of Public Administration for the filling of vacant positions.

Staff Development - The Public Service Commission facilitated the delivery of in-service training by way of presentations on the Role and Function of the PSC and on the PSC Regulations (SRO 27 of 1969).

### **Mentorship Programme**

In the interest of developing uniform methods of processing Personnel matters throughout the Service, the Public Service Commission took a decision to assign Personnel Officers and Human Resource Managers to the office of the Commission for short periods. This exposure was designed to assist in their understanding of the requirements for the processing of matters for the attention of the Public Service Commission. The attachments also served to deepen the knowledge and understanding of officers in matters such as calculation and processing of vacation leave eligibility, calculation of allowances, the application of the Public Service Commission Regulations (SRO 27/1969), Labour Code, Staff Orders and Collective Agreements between Government and workers representative bodies.

### ***Waste Reduction***

At its inaugural meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2010, Waste Reduction was highlighted as one of the areas which the Commission identified as needing serious attention.

The Commission was particularly concerned about the level of tardiness in the communication process with respect to matters being brought to the attention of the Commission. In an effort to address the concerns, the Commission initiated meetings with key stakeholders including the Permanent Secretaries and Heads of Department, the Accountant General, Senior Managers Board, Audit Department and the Head of the Waste Reduction Unit. The Commission highlighted its concerns and made recommendations for addressing issues such as overpayments to public officers, tardy submissions for the grant of no

pay leave, misuse of government property for private purposes for example, vehicles and telephones, exorbitant payments for overtime and underutilisation of staff.

The Commission was concerned about protecting Government against incurring avoidable expenditure and in this vein, concerted efforts were made as follows:-

### ***Conduct of Audits***

A number of audits and investigations were commissioned and were conducted by the Audit Department and other select committees. Recommendations which emanated from the audits/investigations were conveyed to the relevant Ministry/Department for follow-up action and implementation. Audits were conducted as follows:-

- Investigation into the operations of the Produce Chemist Laboratory, Ministry of Agriculture
- Operations of Road Officers, Ministry of Works
- Disposal of Parts from the Tyrrel Bay Coast Guard, Carriacou
- Ministry of Carriacou and Petite Martinique Affairs

### ***Leave Management***

Efforts were made to discourage the practice of officers amassing leave in excess of the maximum accumulation. Ministries/Departments were written to and advised to request officers to utilize such leave in accordance with Staff Order No. 108. Officers were requested to submit a plan for the utilisation of their excess leave.

Leave accumulated by a number of officers was therefore brought within the approved limits.

The practice of granting vacation leave against future leave earnings was discontinued to safeguard against possible financial loss in the event that the officer exited the Service prior to the leave deficit being covered.

More careful attention was paid to ensure that salaries were not paid during periods of no pay leave.

### ***Abandonment of Office***

The Commission spared no time in initiating the process for declaration of abandonment of office once information was brought to its attention.

### ***Mandatory Retirement***

The Commission sought to ensure adherence to Section 43 (1) of the PSC Regulations by retiring officers who attained the compulsory retirement age.

Requests were made of Ministries/Departments to forward the names and certificates of birth of officers who were nearing the mandatory retirement age to ensure their retirement in keeping with the Regulation.

Rehiring of officers beyond the compulsory age was avoided and Ministries/Departments were advised to adopt measures for proper succession planning.



Representation was made to the Ministry of Finance to address the practice of retired officers who were rehired receiving both salary and retirement benefits simultaneously.

### ***Management of Contracts***

Prior to assuming office in November 2010, contracts to be issued by the Commission for established posts were executed by contractees and an official(s) at the respective Ministry/Department. In accepting full responsibility for contracts executed on its behalf, the Commission effected a new process whereby contracts are to be signed by contractees and the Chief Personnel Officer acting on behalf of the Commission.

### ***Confidentiality***

The Commission recommended that an Affirmation/Oath of Secrecy be included in the redrafted Staff Orders to ensure greater confidentiality among public officers. A sample of a proposed Agreement (Appendix 1) was submitted and the recommendation was accepted.

### ***Terms and Conditions for the Commission's permission for Engagement in Private Business for Remuneration***

Terms and conditions to guide the engagement of public officers in private activities for remuneration were introduced.

Permission was granted to officers only upon their agreement, in writing, to the terms and conditions of their private engagement. Permanent Secretaries

and Heads of Department were required to provide annual reports on officers' adherence to the Terms and Conditions. See appendix 2.

During the period under review, three (3) applications for permission to engage in private gainful activities were denied given the potential for conflict of interest to arise.

### ***Counselling Services***

Recognising that a number of the disciplinary matters that were treated stemmed from domestic and other social problems, the Commission identified the need for a structured programme for the provision of counselling services for public officers.

The process was initiated through a meeting with the Department of Public Administration and a prospective facilitator. The Department of Public Administration was requested to identify a core group of officers who would meet with the facilitator to identify issues and develop a framework for a programme. To date discussions have been inconclusive.

## **CHALLENGES**

### **Resource Constraints**

#### *Staffing*

The administrative arm of the Public Service Commission is challenged by inadequate staffing which adversely affects the effectiveness with which the office operates. The Registry and Leave Management Sections are particularly challenged as the staffing provision is grossly inadequate.

The staffing complement and composition need to be reviewed to provide stronger support to the Chief Personnel Officer.

### *Accommodation*

The office accommodation is grossly inadequate. The Registry section of the office is particularly challenged by inadequate space to accommodate staff and records. The storage and management of records to facilitate easy retrieval and research is a challenge. A large volume of files were left in the building now occupied by the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank, following the relocation of the office in the aftermath of Hurricane Ivan. Despite repeated requests from the ECCB Office to remove the files, the office of the Public Service Commission has not been able to comply due to very limited storage space.

This results in severe restriction whenever there is need to research records that are stored at the ECCB office which hinder quick decision-making. The limited accommodation contributes in large measure to the staffing problems.

### **Non-adherence to Personnel Regulations**

#### *Performance Appraisal*

The Performance Appraisal Report is considered by the Commission in making appointment and promotion decisions as the Commission places importance on

a merit based system of appointment. The appraisal system is important to the management and development of the public service as it informs on officers’:-

- ability to perform in the current post
- readiness for promotion
- developmental needs

The non adherence to the requirement for preparation of performance appraisal reports which results in:-

- i. the Commission being obliged to appoint officers by default whether they performed or not (**Suit No. 13 of 1997: Christelene Henry VS. the Public Service Commission**).
- ii. the failure to meet the requirements of the Collective Agreement between the Public Workers Union and Government, which provides for performance based pay.

### **Administrative**

The Public Service Commission inherited a number of inadequacies in the administrative system in the Public Service which resulted in the tardy processing of matters and in Government incurring avoidable expenditure. The Commission is very concerned that it is often used as a ‘scapegoat’ by a number of Ministries/Departments who blame the Commission for inaction on matters which, in some instances, have not been brought to the attention of the Office of the Chief Personnel Officer.

Some of those inefficiencies include:

- late processing of recommendations for the reappointment of temporary teachers on a yearly basis, which results in the non payment of salaries during the Michaelmas term to a large number of teachers. While there has been marked improvement the process still leaves room for improvement.
- submission of applications for no pay leave which result in officers receiving salary payments for which they are ineligible. The Commission observed instances where no effort was made to recover those overpayments even if they were brought to the attention of the Accountant General.
- heavy leakages of public funds due to apparent inefficiencies in the financial management system. Examples which have been brought to the Commission's attention include:
  - i. the mismanagement of contracts
  - ii. overpayment of salaries
  - iii. misappropriation of funds
  - iv. unauthorized payment to officers on no pay leave

## **PRIORITIES**

1. Digitization of Public Service Commission operations/records
2. Continue Computerization of Personnel Records
3. Implementation of revised Public Service Commission Regulations

