

MINISTRY OF FINANCE, ECONOMIC PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

CIRCULAR No 3 of 2023

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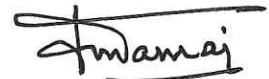
20 June 2023

From: Financial Secretary

To: Supervising Officers-in-Charge of Ministries/Departments and Accounting Officers

Financial Instructions No 1 of 2023 – Building Plans Committee

1. The purpose of this Circular is to inform you of the steps for seeking approval of the Building Plans Committee (BPC) by Ministries/Departments for the construction of new Government buildings and/or extension/upgrading works with a cost estimate of Rupees Five million (Rs 5M) or above, exclusive of VAT.
2. It is to be noted that Financial Instructions No 1 of 2023 - *Building Plans Committee* clarifies that approval for construction of Government buildings is given on the cost estimate based on the approved preliminary drawings. These instructions are in line with the provisions of the Capital Project Process Manual in respect of first stage financial clearance given by Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development (MOFEPD).
3. The enclosed Financial Instructions also establishes the composition and functions of the BPC and the procedures to be followed in case of change in scope or cost estimate for the construction of new Government buildings and/or extension/upgrading works.
4. Financial Instructions No 1 of 2023 - *Building Plans Committee* has been finalised after consultation with the Director of Audit and necessary clearances sought from the State Law Office. These instructions will replace the existing corresponding provisions contained in the Financial Management Manual, *as per Annex I*, and they will eventually be included in the Financial Management Kit.
5. You are requested to ensure compliance with the enclosed Financial Instructions No 1 of 2023 – *Building Plans Committee*.



**D. D. Manraj, GOSK
Financial Secretary**

Copy to:

- (i) Secretary to Cabinet and Head of the Civil Service
- (ii) Director of Audit
- (iii) Accountant-General
- (iv) Director, Financial Operations
- (v) Director, Procurement & Supply
- (vi) Director, Internal Control

Corresponding provisions – Financial Management Manual

| SN | Financial Instructions Issued | Remarks |
|-----------|--|---|
| 1 | Financial Instructions No 1 of 2023 – <i>Building Plans Committee</i> | Replaces the following provisions in FMM 1990: Chapter 20.2 – Paragraphs 64 to 69 (Building Plans Committee) |

Financial Instructions No. 1 of 2023 – Building Plans Committee

Introduction

1. Ministries/Departments should invariably seek the approval of the Building Plans Committee prior to the construction of any new Government Building¹ and/or extension/upgrading works.
2. The Building Plans Committee (BPC) is a Committee set up under the Ministry responsible for the subject of National Infrastructure. The BPC approves project proposals for the construction of new Government buildings and/or extension/upgrading works with a cost estimate of Rupees Five million (Rs 5M) or above, exclusive of VAT.

Composition and functions of BPC

3. The BPC shall consist of:
 - (a) the Accounting Officer of the Ministry responsible for the subject of National Infrastructure or his/her representative not below the grade equivalent to that of a Deputy Permanent Secretary, as Chairperson;
 - (b) Director (Architecture) or his/her representative;
 - (c) Director (Civil Engineering) or his/her representative;
 - (d) Director (Quantity Surveying) or his/her representative;
 - (e) Director (Mechanical Engineering) or his/her representative;
 - (f) Director, Energy Services Division or his/her representative;
 - (g) a representative of the Ministry responsible for the subject of Finance; and
 - (h) any other member that the BPC may co-opt.
4. The BPC shall meet as often as is necessary and a representative of the client Ministry/Department shall be in attendance. The Accounting Officer shall designate an officer to act as Secretary to the BPC.

¹ Building has the same meaning as in the Building Control Act

5. The main functions of the BPC are to:
- (a) examine all project proposals, including projects under Framework Agreement, relating to the construction of new Government buildings and/or extension/upgrading² works, which have a cost estimate of Rupees Five Million (Rs 5M) or above, exclusive of VAT;
 - (b) ensure that the project proposal is compliant with the Building Control Act and any other relevant legislations and guidelines;
 - (c) ensure that the scope of works is adequate and the project meets the client requirements;
 - (d) ensure that the proposed architectural design is economical, functional, green, climate resilient, rainwater harvesting, energy efficiency and disability-friendly, taking into consideration the aesthetic aspect;
 - (e) check the implementation plan of the project;
 - (f) ensure that the materials to be used are as per the acceptable norms and standards as specified;
 - (g) ensure that the site selected is suitable for the type of building proposed;
 - (h) bring an element of standardisation of Government buildings within a particular sector and across the different sectors; and
 - (i) examine any other requirements that may be deemed to be necessary for the implementation of the project.

Steps for seeking approval

6. The process for a client Ministry/Department to obtain approval for the construction of new Government buildings and/or extension/upgrading works is described hereunder.

Step1: Preparation of preliminary design & full set of drawings

7. A client Ministry/Department should prepare a preliminary design for the construction of new Government buildings and/or extension/upgrading works.
8. The client Ministry/Department may seek the assistance of the Ministry responsible for the subject of National Infrastructure (MNI) or appoint a Consultant, where required, for the preparation of preliminary design. The client Ministry/Department should submit the requirements of the project together with the location, contour and site plans to the Director, (Architecture) of MNI or the Consultant.

² Exclude projects/works that do not require drawings

9. Upon approval of the preliminary design by the client Ministry/Department, MNI or the Consultant appointed by the client Ministry/Department should proceed with the preparation of a full set of preliminary drawings.
10. MNI or the Consultant should seek clearances from the Ministry of Health and Wellness, Ministry of Housing and Land Use Planning, Mauritius Fire and Rescue Services and any other relevant Authorities as may be required for e.g. Central Water Authority, Central Electricity Board, Traffic Management and Road Safety Unit, Wastewater Management Authority, etc.
11. A preliminary cost estimate should be prepared based on preliminary drawings by the Quantity Surveying Section of MNI or the Consultant appointed by the client Ministry/Department.

Step 2: Financial clearance

12. Upon receipt of clearances of relevant Authorities, MNI or the Consultant should request the client Ministry/Department to seek financial clearance from the Ministry responsible for Finance (MOF). The cost estimate should be based on the approved preliminary drawings of the building.
13. Upon receipt of financial clearance, the client Ministry/Department should seek the approval of the BPC.

Step 3: Approval of BPC

Process at the level of BPC

14. Following financial clearance from MOF, the client Ministry/Department should submit the following documents to the BPC for approval:
 - (a) the full set of preliminary drawings;
 - (b) a detailed scope of works, including a brief description of the materials to be used and the type of construction;
 - (c) an indicative Implementation Plan;
 - (d) financial clearance from MOF;
 - (e) a copy of all relevant clearances obtained including, the report of the Design Review Committee³, where applicable; and
 - (f) a letter from the client Ministry/Department confirming the preliminary drawings meet their requirements.

³ Design Review Committee as required in the Architect Guidelines

15. The BPC should examine the documents submitted by the client Ministry/Department in line with paragraph 5 above. A representative of the client Ministry/Department should be invited to attend the BPC and submit its acceptance of the project plans in writing.
16. Thereafter, the BPC should approve the preliminary drawings. The approved preliminary drawings should bear the official seal of the BPC.
17. Upon approval of the preliminary drawings by the BPC, the client Ministry/Department should request MNI or the Consultant to proceed with the completion of the detailed design.

***Construction of new Government Buildings and/or extension/upgrading works
(Cost Estimate < Rs 5 million)***

18. Accounting Officers of Ministries/Departments should ensure that Projects having a cost estimate of less than Rupees Five Million (Rs 5M), exclusive of VAT, have received necessary clearances from relevant Authorities. These projects do not require the approval of the BPC.
19. Where the actual bids received or awarded sum for the construction of new Government buildings and/or extension/upgrading works exceeds Rupees Five Million (Rs 5M), the Client Ministry/Department should follow the process for seeking approval of the BPC.

Change in Scope or Cost Estimate

20. MNI or the client Ministry/Department should not accept or make any major technical modifications to the requirements after it has been approved by the BPC.
21. If in exceptional cases during the development of tender drawings, there are substantial variations in the scope of works or the project cost estimate exceed 15% of the initial estimate, the client Ministry/Department should seek further clearance from MOF, prior to resubmission to the BPC for approval. In such cases, the client Ministry/Department should follow the procedures specified at paragraph 9 (A) of the Capital Project Process Manual.
22. No further alterations or departure from the approved plans should be made once they have been finally approved by the BPC except for minor modification of the project during construction phase.