



MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
Government Centre, Port Louis, Republic of Mauritius

Circular Letter No. 10 of 2017

MY REF. : CF/50/50/50 V10

Date: 14 September 2017

YOUR REF. :

From : Financial Secretary

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

Official Mission Abroad and Overseas Capacity-Building Programmes:
Policies and Procedures

The purpose of this Circular Letter is to consolidate and update the operational procedures and the financial policies on expenditure relating to participation in official missions abroad and in overseas capacity-building programmes. It supersedes previous Circulars issued by this Ministry on those subject matter. However, this Ministry's under mentioned Circulars still remain valid –

- (i) Circular Letter (Ref CF/50/50/50 VF) dated 31 July 2015 relating to Overseas Travel within the Republic of Mauritius;
- (ii) Circular Letter (Ref CF/50/50/50 V8) dated 16 October 2015 relating to Mission to Rodrigues – Payment of *Per Diem*;
- (iii) Circular Letter (Ref TA/1/1 V.2) dated 29 October 2015 relating to Nominations for Overseas Training/Seminar/Workshop/Study Tour/visits; and
- (iv) Circular Letter (Ref CF/50/50/50 V10) dated 23 June 2017 relating to Mission Abroad and Overseas Capacity-Building Programmes: New Procedure for 'Per Diem' and Issue of Departmental Warrant.

A. Operational Procedures

2. As you are aware, as from 01 July 2016, financial clearance for the above purposes has been centralized, and all expenses relating thereto are being met and accounted for ***under Item 22180 Mission Expenses (Ministers, Delegates and Officials) of Vote 26-1 "Centrally Managed Expenses of Government"***.

3. The expenditure ceiling for the current Financial Year in respect of your respective Ministries/Departments has already been communicated to you. You have also been requested to draw up a Mission Plan as per template at **Annex I** for submission to this Ministry for each financial year. While preparing the Mission Plan, Supervising Officers should ensure that missions overseas for their respective Ministry/Department is prioritized and expenditure thereof be kept within approved ceiling. As from Financial Year 2018/19, the Mission Plan should be submitted to this Ministry by mid-July at latest.

4. Any request for financial clearance, as may be appropriate, in respect of the foregoing should be addressed to:

**Financial Secretary
Ministry of Finance and Economic Development
(Mission Cell)
5th Floor, New Government Centre
PORT LOUIS**

5. The Mission Cell may be contacted on telephone: 201-2659/201-2540/201-3607/201-3205/201-1821/201-2492 or by fax on 201-3948 or by email on missionmof@govmu.org.

6. To enable this Ministry to process and grant the necessary clearance on time, Ministries are strongly advised to submit their requests for financial clearance along with **all relevant documents/programmes/agenda and full justifications at least ten working days** prior to departure on mission. Such

requests should be submitted **both in hard and soft copies** in accordance with the format at **Annex II** and should be signed by an officer not below the rank of a Deputy Permanent Secretary. Supervising Officers will appreciate that non-submission of relevant information in accordance with the indicated format may lead to unnecessary delay in the processing of requests for financial clearance.

7. Furthermore, the Ministry concerned should also inform the Mission Cell of **all** facilities/allowances being offered to the participant by organizers or the host country. This Ministry reserves the right to either not process or turn down requests for financial clearance in respect of an overseas mission/training in the absence of relevant information or for late submission.

8. Your attention is being drawn to the following policy guidelines:

- (i) Missions have to be prioritized on the basis of their importance;
- (ii) arrangements need to be made with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade for missions abroad not warranting the formal presence of a Minister or official, for our Embassies/Missions to be represented on same;
- (iii) for any mission the **number of delegates** should be kept to the **minimum**, except for missions where specific technical expertise may be required;
- (iv) the route chosen should be the most **economical and direct one**;
- (v) the most appropriate officials should be designated for any mission, taking into account the expected objectives and outcome of the mission, and the level of representation required as well as the technical skills demanded; and
- (vi) maximum use should be made of **teleconferencing and other modern telecommunication facilities**.

9. After obtaining financial clearance in respect of Official Mission Abroad, the concerned Ministry should seek Prime Minister's approval. In this respect, Supervising Officers shall rest guided by the Circular letter of the Secretary to Cabinet and Head of Civil Service (Ref: C/PS/16/1) dated 22 March 2002. A copy of the Circular letter is at **Annex III** for ease of reference. Once Prime Minister's approval is obtained with regard to any mission, the line Ministry will then request the Accountant General to issue a **Departmental Warrant** to meet expenses in relation to the mission costs. -----

10. Upon return of the official/s, the concerned Ministry shall communicate to the Mission Cell the amount of expenditure actually incurred, in accordance with the format at **Annex IV**. It is understood that any outstanding balance in the Departmental Warrant will lapse automatically. In this connection, Supervising Officers are advised to rest guided by the relevant provisions of the Financial Management Kit. -----

B. Financial Policies

11. Funds under Vote 26-1 Item 22180 Mission Expenses (Ministers, Delegates and Officials) would be used to **pay only** for the following –

- (i) **international travel** (airfare, train ticket, etc.);
- (ii) **Per Diem** (to meet costs of accommodation, meals, internal transportations and all other related expenses);
- (iii) **Entertainment Allowance** for mission abroad only, where applicable;
- (iv) **hiring of cars** for mission abroad only, where applicable; and
- (v) **registration/training fees**.

12. Expenses relating to **hosting of dinner/reception by Ministers and above** and **VIP facilities** to eligible officials in the country of mission should be met from an appropriate vote of the concerned Ministries/Departments.

International Travel

13. The policy regarding class of travel is reproduced hereunder:

<u>Category Of Officials</u>	<u>Class of Travel</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Level of Secretary to Cabinet and Head of the Civil Service and above.	First class
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Level of Permanent Secretary and above, but below the level of Secretary to Cabinet and Head of the Civil Service.Senior-most officer accompanying Minister.Chairperson of Statutory Boards where the CEO/Officer-in-Charge is drawing salary equivalent to that of a Permanent Secretary.	Business class
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Other Officials	Economy class

14. Supervising Officers shall ensure that the **most economical and direct air route** is chosen to minimize cost. Where a host country/organizer has issued a prepaid ticket for a Travel Class lower than to what an official is eligible to when proceeding **abroad on Mission/Training**, Government will meet the cost of **upgrading of the air ticket**.

15. A distinction should be made between an **official mission abroad** and **other categories of travel abroad, including:**

- (i) overseas capacity-building programmes (training course, seminars, workshops, symposiums, study tours/visits and similar events meant basically to enhance the skills/knowledge of individual officers); and
- (ii) personal invitation to an official by a foreign government/institution to act as a resource person/to form part of a panel/team.

16. As indicated in the Circular Letter (Ref: C/PS/16/1) dated 22 March 2002 of the Secretary to Cabinet and Head of Civil Service, an Overseas travel is considered as a Mission where an official, by virtue of his position, is called upon to represent or defend the interest of the Republic of Mauritius. Supervising Officers should clearly indicate whether an overseas travel is an official mission or otherwise.

17. Where it is deemed essential for an official of the Attorney General's Office or any other Ministry to form part of a delegation, the responsibility to seek financial clearance rests on the Ministry dealing with the subject matter and expenses in respect of such missions will be borne from the budget allocated to the Ministry/Department concerned.

Payment of *Per Diem*/Allowances for Officials proceeding on Official Mission Abroad

18. Officials proceeding on **Official Mission Abroad** will be eligible for *Per Diem* at the rates indicated in this Ministry's Circular Letter dated 1 July 2016, copy of which is reproduced at **Annex V**. Any other benefits payable to officials, i.e. other than those mentioned in this circular, will be subject to approval of the Prime Minister.

19. The conditions attached thereto are as follows -
- (i) the rate of *Per Diem* payable, which is already applicable with effect from 1 August 2016, will be based on the **number of nights spent** by the official in the country of mission.
 - (ii) For transits/early check-in or late check-out in hotels the rate of *Per Diem* payable as from September 2017 will be as follows -
 - (a) for transits lasting **six to eight hours**, taking into account last check-in time – **one-third** of mission rate;
 - (b) for transits **exceeding eight hours**, taking into account last check-in time – **full mission rate**;
 - (c) for early check-in or late check-out in hotels, i.e. where there is a gap of **at least six hours** between the arrival/departure time of the flight and the normal check-in/check-out time in hotels (noon as in most cases) – **one-third** of mission rate;
 - (iii) the amount of *Per Diem* will be denominated in US Dollar only;
 - (iv) where an official is provided accommodation and meals (i.e. breakfast, lunch and dinner) facilities by the organizers or host country, a reduced allowance equivalent to **25%** of the *Per Diem* will be paid to cover incidentals;
 - (v) where hospitality is limited to either accommodation or meals, the allowance payable will be equivalent to **half** of the *Per Diem*; and
 - (vi) in case of early return from overseas mission/training, Supervising Officers should ensure prompt refund of any excess amount of *Per Diem*/allowances paid to participants.

Overseas Capacity-Building Programmes and Other Cases

20. With regard to nomination for Overseas Capacity-Building programmes, Supervising Officers shall rest guided by **Circular Letter No. 41 of 2016 of the Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms**. Requests for financial clearance should be submitted to this Ministry in accordance with the format at **Annex VI**. Where no cost on the part of Government is involved, financial clearance should not be sought.

21. Where **costs of participation are to be met by Government**, the rate of *Per Diem* in US Dollars applicable for training/seminars/workshops/study-tours/visits and similar events will, as from September 2017, be as follows -

First 14 days	:	Full prevailing UN Rate
Next 28 days	:	2/3 of prevailing UN Rate
Remaining days up to a maximum of 60 days	:	1/3 of prevailing UN Rate

For training exceeding 60 days approval of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development should be sought.

The prevailing UN Rates are obtainable from the local office of the UNDP:

Address: 6th Floor, Anglo Mauritius House, Intendance Street, P.O. Box 253, Intendance St, Port Louis or may be accessed on the UNDP website:

<http://www.ph.undp.org/content/philippines/en/home/operations/undp-un-dsa-rates.html>

22. Where the costs of board and accommodation or part thereof are met by the organizers, no *Per Diem* is payable. However, to meet out-of-pocket expenses, **all officials** may be paid an allowance equivalent to **1/3 of the prevailing UN rate**.

23. The conditions with regard to payment of *Per Diem* stipulated at paragraph 19 above (i.e. transits and early check-in or late check-out) shall also be applicable for training/seminars/workshops/study-tours/visits and similar events.

24. All officers are required to submit to the Supervising Officer of his/her Ministry a report highlighting the benefits derived and the relevance of the training/seminars/workshops/ study-tours/visits attended.

25. Supervising Officers **should** indicate as to whether the **Registration/Training fees** being paid by Government in respect of participants also cover accommodation or meals expenses.

Entertainment Allowance

26. Entertainment Allowance is payable only to **eligible officials** proceeding on official **mission abroad** in accordance with the schedule at **Annex V**. The Allowance payable shall be for **the actual duration** of the official mission and not for the number of days spent in the country of mission.

27. Entertainment Allowance is **not** payable to officials in other cases, including those attending international boards/committees/conferences, in their capacity as member.

28. Your attention is drawn to the fact that participation in events like Congress, Forum, Road Shows, Enquiries, Trade Fairs/Expo, Promotional events are **not considered as Missions**. Therefore, **no** Entertainment Allowance is payable for such events.

Hiring of Car for Official Mission

29. Wherever transport facilities are not provided by the organizers/host countries to officials on mission abroad, our overseas Embassies and High Commissions normally make appropriate arrangements for officials of the level of Secretary to Cabinet and Head of the Civil Service and above.

30. Wherever service car is not available, chauffeur-driven car may be provided for official use to the eligible officials, in the country of mission. However, the concerned Ministry should seek financial clearance from this Ministry and submit an indication of the approximate cost to be incurred.

31. When an official is on private visit, no transport facilities shall be provided by the Embassies/High Commissions or by the Ministry concerned. Such visits should be at no costs to Government.

Other Travel

32. Where an official is invited by a foreign government/institution to act as a resource person/to form part of a panel/team, participation shall be at **no cost to Government** and payment of *Per Diem/allowances*, air tickets or upgrading of air tickets shall not be entertained.

33. Where all costs of participation are to be borne by Government, **Officers proceeding abroad in their normal course of duties/for specific assignments/enquiry/court cases**, may be paid a Per Diem at prevailing UN Rates subject to the conditions at paragraph 19 above. All such expenses should be met under an appropriate Vote Item by the concerned Ministry/Department.

Insurance Cover while on Mission Abroad

34. This Ministry has, on behalf of the Government, contracted an insurance cover for delegates proceeding on official **mission abroad**. The insurance cover is in respect of personal accident, medical, repatriation, loss/damage of baggage and personal effects. Any claim from an official for reimbursement shall be forwarded to the Mission Cell of this Ministry for consideration. The settlement of claims would, however, be subject to applicable excesses, applicable limits and terms and conditions of the Insurance Policy.

Public/Statutory Bodies

35. In line with existing practice, this policy would have to be complied with by all **public/statutory bodies** under the control of your Ministry, governed by the Pay Research Bureau or dependent on public funds. Approval should, however, be effected at the level of the respective Board.

36. Accordingly, the rate of *Per Diem/allowances* payable to a Chairperson of the Board of a Public Body in connection with mission abroad shall be at the rate normally payable to the Chief Executive Officer or the Officer-in-Charge of the organization concerned.

37. The *Per Diem/allowances* payable to board members other than Government officials, shall be at the rate applicable to officials below the level of Permanent Secretary.

38. Supervising Officers shall ensure that funds from State Owned Enterprises and Statutory Bodies falling under the control of their respective Ministry are **not** used to finance mission abroad or overseas capacity-building programme of any public official, except where the official is a Board Member or Director in that State Owned Enterprise or Public/Statutory Body and is proceeding abroad on official mission for the benefit of that institution.

39. You are requested to bring the contents of this circular letter to the attention of all officers concerned and the relevant public/statutory bodies falling under the aegis of your Ministry so as to ensure that the new procedures are strictly adhered to.



Financial Secretary

Copy to: *Secretary to Cabinet and Head of the Civil Service*
Accountant General
Director of Audit

Official Mission Abroad

Format for application for Financial Clearance

1. **Purpose of Mission:**
2. **Details on venue and duration of mission:**
3. **Details on delegates including their designation, basic salary:**
4. **Justification for participation in respect of each nominee:**
5. **Confirmation that:**
 - i) participation in the mission is crucial and in the interest of Mauritius; and
 - ii) no other alternative arrangement (e.g. representation at the level of our mission abroad) is possible/advisable.
6. **Travel Plan:**

A tentative travel plan of each delegate to be given. Confirmation that the route chosen is the most economical and will entail a minimum stay abroad.
7. **Detailed breakdown of costs implication in terms of:**
 - Air Travel
 - Check-in and check-out times both at airport and hotel
 - Per Diem
 - Entertainment Allowance (if eligible)
 - Hiring of cars (if eligible)
 - Any other cost(s) involved

Details of any sponsorship/assistance obtainable.

- Note:**
- i. **Copy of invitation letter should also be annexed with application.**
 - ii. **Contact details of schedule officer to be provided.**
 - iii. **If private visit is included, same should be indicated in the application and the duration thereof.**



PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE
REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS

D/PS/16/1

22 March 2002

From : Secretary to the Cabinet and Head of the Civil Service
To : Supervising Officers in charge of Ministries/Departments

Nominations for Overseas Training/Missions

As you are aware, all nominations of public officers for overseas training are being processed and approved by the Ministry of Economic Development, Financial Services and Corporate Affairs in accordance with its circular (ref. MEDFSCA/TA/1/1) dated 26 April 2001.

2. The above-mentioned circular has also been made to apply to participation of public officers in overseas conferences/seminars/workshops/meetings and so on.

3. It is considered that a distinction should be made between a training course on the one hand, which is meant basically to enhance the skills of individual officers, and a conference/meeting on the other hand, where the officer, by virtue of his official position, is called upon to represent or to defend the interests of Mauritius and is thus considered to be a mission. However, as regards seminars/workshops/symposiums, the line of demarcation between training and mission is at times blurred.

4. Consequently, it has been decided that :

- (i) all recommendations for participation in any conference/meeting, i.e. a mission where an officer is called upon to represent and/or defend the interests of Mauritius, should be submitted to the Prime Minister, through the Head of the Civil Service, for consideration and approval;
- (ii) nominations of officers for overseas training courses should continue to be approved by the Director, Ministry of Economic Development, Financial Services and Corporate Affairs on behalf of the Prime Minister. As regards officers of the Administrative Cadre, their nominations for training courses should continue to be processed by the Ministry of Economic Development, Financial Services and Corporate Affairs, but should thereafter be submitted to the Head of the Civil Service for approval on behalf of the Prime Minister.

(iii) as regards workshops/seminars/symposiums, it would be up to the Supervising Officer to determine whether they constitute a training or a mission and take action as at (i) or (ii) above.

5. Advisers serving under contract in the public service or parastatal organisations, should not normally be nominated to follow training courses whether locally or abroad. However, they may attend conferences/workshops/seminars/meetings, etc, abroad. The decision to nominate an adviser on either a mission or a training course overseas will rest with the Prime Minister. Supervising Officers should therefore submit all such nominations to the Prime Minister, through the Secretary to the Cabinet and Head of the Civil Service, for approval.

6. The other procedures for the submission of nominations, as laid down in the Ministry of Economic Development, Financial Services and Corporate Affairs circular letter dated 26 April 2001 shall continue to apply.

7. It would be appreciated if you could inform parastatals/departments falling under the responsibility of your Ministry of the above.



(Harry Gahoo)
Secretary to the Cabinet

**Per Diem and Entertainment Allowance (Duration of Overseas Mission Only)
As from 1st July 2016**

Officials	Category 2	Category 3	Category 4	Category 5	Category 6	Category 7
Group Countries	Vice President, DPM & VPM's, Chief Justice & Speaker	Ministers and Secretary to Cabinet and Head of Civil Service	Chief Whip, PPS, Financial Secretary, Deputy Speaker, Opposition Whip, Chairperson of PAC and Chief Commissioner of Rodrigues	MPs & Other Officers drawing ≥ Rs 140,000 p.m., and above e.g. Ombudsman	Permanent Secretary, Ambassadors drawing ≥ Rs 122,000 p.m., and above	Other Officials
	US\$	US\$	US\$	US\$	US\$	US\$
A	961	815	690	590	497	497
B	796	683	577	484	411	411
C	670	564	477	411	351	351
D	544	464	398	338	285	285
E	451	385	332	285	239	239
F	371	318	272	239	225	225
Entertainment Allowance		200		125		-

Financial Implications			
Title of Mission, Venue, Country, Duration			
S/N	Particulars	Cost (USD)	Cost (Rs)
	"Name of Official", "Title/Status"		
(i)	Passage Costs ("Class of Air Ticket to be specified") Air ticket (Quoted amount in MUR) or sponsored or upgrading		xxx,xxx
(ii)	Per Diem Departure from Mauritius (or Country of Mission Abroad in case of Ambassadors/Representatives of Mission Abroad) on "Departure Date" at "Departure Time" Arrival in "Country of Mission" on "Date of arrival" at "Time of Arrival" Departure in "Country of Mission" on "Date of Departure" at "Time of Departure" <i>Eligible on a per night basis from "Date of Arrival in Country of Mission" to "Date of Departure from Country of Mission"</i> <i>Number of nights x Mission Rate in USD as per Circular</i>	xxx,xxx	
(iii)	Entertainment Allowance (Duration of mission only) (If Eligible) <i>Number days x Rate payable in USD</i>	xxx,xxx	
(iv)	Transit Allowance (If applicable)	xxx,xxx	
(v)	Early Check-in (If applicable)	xxx,xxx	
(vi)	Late Check-out (If applicable)	xxx,xxx	
(vii)	Other allowance (If applicable and to be specified) Ex: Accountable Advance to the Tune of USD or MRU	xxx,xxx	
(v)	Less Facilities provided by Organiser/Host Country	(xxx,xxx)	
Total Allowances (USD) (Prevailing Dollar rate in MUR)		xxx,xxx	xxx,xxx
TOTAL COST (Approximately) (Rs)			xxx,xxx

Prepared by:
Grade :
Date :
Signature:

Verified by:
Grade :
Date :
Signature:

Overseas Training/Workshop/Seminar

Format for application for Financial Clearance

1. **Purpose of Training/Workshop/Seminar:**
2. **Details on venue and duration of Training/Workshop/Seminar:**
3. **Details on nominee/s including their designation, basic salary:**
4. **Justification for participation:**
5. **Confirmation:**
 - a. that the training is in a priority field/forms part of an approved scheme; and
 - b. whether funds are available to finance the costs.
6. **Detailed breakdown of costs implication in terms of:**
 - Air Travel
 - Per Diem
 - Participation/Registration fee
 - Any other cost involved (visa fees, etc)

Details of any sponsorship/assistance obtainable should be indicated in the application.

Note:

Copy of letter of invitation containing details regarding the seminar/workshop/training and the participation costs/sponsorship should also be submitted.

Group A Algeria (Algiers), Angola (Luanda), Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Belgium, Bermuda, Canada, Denmark, France, French Polynesia, Ghana, Germany (Berlin & Hamburg), Gibraltar, Guadeloupe, Hong Kong, Israel, Italy, Korea (Seoul/South), Kuwait, Liechtenstein, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Qatar (Doha), Reunion, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Sweden, Switzerland, U.K (London), UAE, U.S.A (New York), Venezuela, Zambia.

Group B Aruba, Australia, Bahrain, China (Shanghai), Cote D'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Finland, Gabon, Ireland, Luxembourg, Mexico (City and Cancun), Monaco, New Zealand, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Trinidad & Tobago, Senegal, Seychelles, Ukraine, U.K (Other than London), U.S.A (Other than New York).

Group C Austria, Botswana, Cape Verde, Chile, China (Other than Shanghai), Comoros, Congo (Brazzaville), Congo Democratic (Kinshasa), Czech Republic, Estonia, Egypt, Fiji, Greece, Germany (Other than Berlin & Hamburg), Guyana, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Lebanon, Malta, Mozambique, Poland, Oman, Samoa, South Africa, St Lucia, Spain, Uruguay, Turkey (Istanbul).

|

Group D Angola (Other than Luanda), Brazil, Bulgaria, Brunei, Burundi, Cameroun, Chad, Columbia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Dominican Republic, Liberia, Macedonia, Malawi, Maldives, Mali, Malaysia, Morocco, Nigeria (Lagos and Others), Panama City, Peru, Philippines, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, Syria, Sudan, Vanuatu.

Group E Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Congo (Other than Brazzaville), Cuba, Cyprus, El Salvador, Gambia, Libya, Madagascar, Niger, Rwanda, Serbia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Tanzania, Togo, Zimbabwe.

Group F Algeria (Other than Algiers), Bangladesh, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Central Africa, Congo Democratic (Other than Kinshasa), Djibouti, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Haiti, Iran, Korea (North), Laos, Lesotho, Mauritania, Namibia, Nepal, Pakistan, Romania, Somalia, Swaziland, Timor Lest, Tunisia, Turkey (Other than Istanbul), Uganda, Vietnam.