

Editorial

The Steering Committee set up to oversee the different stages in the establishment of an autonomous National Statistical Agency has agreed on the model that would satisfy the main desired objectives, namely,

- (i) ensure independence, both actual and perceived, from political interference in the collection, analysis and reporting of statistics; and
- (ii) provide operational flexibility particularly in merit-based selection of multi-disciplinary staff from both within and outside the statistical cadre.

An autonomous statistical agency outside Government with a Board and a Chief Executive would be perceived by the international community as a guarantee of independence from political interference. However, the committee was of the view that, in the local context, the perception is that such an agency will be more open to internal conflicts and political interference, and may in fact undermine rather than reinforce public trust in official statistics.

The committee reached consensus around a government funded non-ministerial government agency having professional and operational independence and answerable to a board which is not subject to political interference or direction or control by any person or authority. However, this ideal model, operational in some countries, will necessitate changes in the legislations and powers of many

local institutions. The committee has therefore agreed that the best option would be a model similar to the National Audit Office which is answerable to Parliament and whose Chief Executive holds a constitutional post.

Such a model is expected to guarantee the perception of independence of the statistical agency. Operational flexibility will be achieved by implementing the 2008 recommendations of the Pay Research Bureau (PRB) to transform public sector organisations into modern, professional and citizen-friendly entities with competent performance oriented personnel. The recommendations relating to recruitment and selection from outside the relevant cadre or the service, and those relating to implementation of Performance Management Systems across the public sector, are expected to provide the flexibility needed for merit-based selection of multi-disciplinary staff.

The office is currently finalising the legislation for an autonomous statistical agency on the National Audit Office model.

Schemes of service are also being reviewed to reflect the PRB recommendations, taking into consideration the staffing requirements of the new organisation.

In this Issue

Editorial	1
Institutional Development at the CSO	2
Performance Management System	3
Implementation of Programme-Based Budget (PBB)	4
Technical Assistance in Real Sector Statistics	6
International Initiatives – IMF Technical Mission	7
Software for Computing National Accounts Statistics	8
2007 Census of Economic Activities	9
Economic and Financial Statistics	9
Visits on the CSO Website	10
Important Indicators	11
Documentation Centre of the CSO	12
Training/Meetings attended by Staff	13
Award of Certificate	14
Word 2007: An Overview	15
Occupational Safety and Health	19
Staffing Development	20
CSO Staff Association – Special General Meetings	20
CSO Staff Welfare Association	22

Introduction

Statistics are an essential instrument of a country's monitoring and evaluation systems. Conscious of this reality and in line with international recommendations that national statistics should be a public good, and no longer the concern of only Government and the statistical agency, the Statistics Advisory Council initiated, at the beginning of 2006, the process of designing a National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) for Mauritius.

The National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS)

International best practice recommends the extension of the scope of national statistics to cover all data suppliers, data producers and data users including researchers, both within and outside government. The NSDS was developed with the technical assistance of African Development Bank (AfDB) using a participatory approach, with key stakeholders consulted right from the start. Moreover, advice and feedback from the Government, Parliamentarians, the private sector, civil society and other development partners as well as the staff of the CSO were sought through seminars and workshops.

Implementation of NSDS

The office is currently implementing the recommendations of the NSDS and one of them is the creation of an Autonomous National Statistical Agency so that the governance and publication of official statistics would be the responsibility of a wholly separate body at arms' length from government and fully independent of it. The agency will also be the hub and coordinator of the National Statistical System (NSS) and also absorb the current activities of the CSO.

Autonomous National Statistical Agency

On 18 December 2007, it was decided that a Steering Committee be set up under the Chairmanship of the Financial Secretary to oversee the different stages to an Autonomous National Statistical Agency. The first meeting of the Steering Committee was held on 25 June 2008 under the Chairmanship of the Financial Secretary and thereafter the latter delegated same to Mrs. Asha Burrenchobay, Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MOFED). The Steering Committee comprised representatives of MOFED, CSO, Mauritius Audit Bureau, Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms and concerned Unions, namely, Central Statistics Office Staff Association (CSOSA), Federation of Civil Service and Other Unions (FCSOU) and State Employees Federation (SEF).

Models Examined

Three models, namely the one proposed in the NSDS, the one being implemented in UK and a hybrid of the two models, were examined. All three models satisfy the international recommendation of a statistical agency at arms' length from Government and provide flexibility of selection of multi-disciplinary staff within and outside the statistical cadre. Moreover, the weaknesses identified in the current system are also addressed. The three models provided for a Board which would be responsible for the overall functioning of the National Statistical System (NSS).

However, the Committee after further deliberations at Committee/ Subcommittee level was of the view that in the local context, the establishment of an autonomous agency with a Board will not guarantee the perception of transparency and independence from political interference and may in fact undermine public trust in official statistics.

Proposal of Steering Committee

1. There was consensus among committee members around a government-funded non-ministerial government agency having professional and operational independence and answerable to a Board which is not subject to political interference or direction or control of any person or authority. However, this ideal model would be impossible to implement as it would imply changes in the powers and legislations of many organisations. After thorough deliberations and examination of the advantages and disadvantages of the various institutional models which exist in Mauritius (parastatal, corporate body, a department within the Ministry), the Committee has come to the conclusion that for the National Statistical Office to operate autonomously and to be perceived as doing so in the eyes of the public, it should function along the line of the National Audit Office. The Civil Service reforms under way, the implementation of the PRB recommendations aimed at transforming public sector organisations into modern, professional and citizen-friendly entities with competent performance oriented

personnel and the shift to Performance Based Budgeting mainstreamed with Performance Management Systems across the public sector, are expected to cut out bureaucracy and facilitate merit-based selection of multidisciplinary staff.

2. Making the post of the National Statistician a constitutional one, as is the case for the Director of Audit, will enable the latter to express more freely his views on statistics relating to the economic and social situation and on the erroneous use and interpretation of statistics. The argument put forward in favour of this proposal is that the appointment of the Director of Audit under the Constitution provides for the incumbent to exercise his function with due independence. It is clearly stipulated that in the exercise of his functions, the Director of Audit shall not be under the direction or control of any person or authority. In addition, independence is achieved through security in the tenure of office with respect to his appointment and dismissal.

The steering committee has presented its recommendations to MOFED in the first week of August.

Performance Management System

Financial Rewards and Career Progression

Since the introduction of the Performance Management System (PMS) at the Central Statistics Office (CSO) in 2006, views have been expressed in favour of financial incentives and career progression to reward performance. It has been pointed out that, if the PMS is used for training and development purposes only, officers would lose faith and interest in the system and it would be difficult to sustain the system over time.

This expectation for a performance-based reward system will now be met since in the PRB Report 2008 a number of measures have been proposed for rewarding officers according to their efforts and contribution towards the achievement of organizational objectives.

Reward as proposed by the PRB will take the form of performance bonuses, special allowances, early and additional increments and career advancement.

To ensure fairness, equity and consistency in the process, the PRB has proposed the setting-up of various mechanisms to address the proposals from Ministries/Departments for performance-related rewards.

As far as financial incentives are concerned, proposals would be examined and approved by a Reward Committee at the level of the Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms and a High Level Performance Management Monitoring Committee.

There are conditions to be satisfied for the approval of proposals for reward, and these include the validity, reliability and sustainability of the PMS processes put in place in the organization, the resulting work culture, the effectiveness of the communication strategy and adherence to the principle of fairness and transparency.

As regards recommendations for career progression, the existing reporting system – the Annual Confidential Report System – will be reviewed to ensure that officers who are promoted are being legitimately rewarded for their performance, their skills and competencies and other personal attributes. The Annual Confidential Report will accordingly be replaced in due course by the Performance Appraisal System under the PMS. The Performance Appraisal System provides for performance planning, mutually agreed performance targets and standards, continuous monitoring and feedback, and a fair and objective evaluation of performance and competencies based on tangible results.

Given that the CSO is implementing the PMS since two years, all efforts are being made by the office to ensure that performing officers are rewarded as early as possible on the basis of their contribution to organizational results. In this respect, a Moderating Committee has been set up along relevant guidelines from the Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms to examine and validate the appraisal process, and to ensure that it is fair and equitable. Work has already started.

Implementation of Programme-Based Budget (PBB)

1. Background

This fiscal year 2008/09 marks the start of implementation and execution of the national budget on a Programme Based Budget. Under the Sub-programme ‘Provision of Statistics’ of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MOFED), 10 performance indicators have been identified for which CSO has to show results (details are given in table below). On and above these indicators, the office has also been called upon to provide assistance to all Ministries and Departments in the development of indicators specified in their budgets. These include the undertaking of 39 surveys.

This exercise is an extension of the performance indicator “Inputs for PBB performance indicators submitted to 6 Ministries / Departments by April 2009:

(i) Tourism

- (ii) Agro-industry
- (iii) Judiciary, Police and Prison
- (iv) Women and Children
- (v) Education and
- (vi) Environment

2. Organisation of Work at Office Level

- (i) *Indicators from PBB-Surveys:* Mr. D. Bahadoor, Deputy Director is working on the design of the surveys with the support of Mr. Haulcooree, Statistician at CSO and Ms. Upadhyaya, Senior Analyst at MOFED. Preliminary work has already started with the Ministries specified as priorities, given at Para 1.
- (ii) *Other PBB Indicators:* Tasks in connection with the other indicators are being performed by units responsible for the subject matter.

3. Institutional Set-Up for monitoring the PBB

With the introduction of PBB, reports on financial information need to be complemented by a monitoring and evaluation system of outputs and results. The Public Expenditure Management System Review Directorate (PEMSRD) at MOFED, headed by Ms. Boolell, has the responsibility of coordinating and monitoring the work in all Ministries and Departments. An Internal Monitoring Committee has to be set up in each Ministry/Department where an Internal Early Warning System need to be established. The objective of this system is to ensure that the

PBB indicators are developed and compiled in time. For each Ministry/Department, each programme of the PBB will be under the responsibility of a Programme Manager who will have to provide a monthly feedback report to his Supervising Officer for onward transmission to the PEMSRD. A first half-yearly report will have to be prepared by 31 January 2009 at latest and a draft annual performance report by 15 May 2009. The reports need to focus on progress achieved and identify constraints to achieve targets set. The final annual performance report will be submitted to MOFED by 15 August 2009.

Sub Programme 36107: Provision of Statistics

Priority Objectives	Outputs	Performance Indicators
PO1: Providing coherent, timely, relevant and reliable statistics on the dynamics of the economy and society through the application of latest internationally recommended statistical tools and methodologies.	O1: World-class statistical infrastructure.	P1: Draft Bill for autonomous statistical agency finalised by December 2008.
		P2: 75% of recommendations of the IMF Report on Observance of Standards and Codes (ROSC) on National Accounts and Prices implemented by June 2009.
	O2: Data required by the public available in a timely manner.	P1: All statistical reports released according to advance release calendar (67 economic and social indicators and 21 statistical reports).
		P2: Census of Economic Activities completed by June 2009.
		P3: Income Threshold Survey conducted in August 2008.
	O3: New statistical tools to assist in policy making.	P1: Inputs for a national poverty line by December 2008.
		P2: Social Accounting Matrix in line with the System of National Accounts (SNA) compiled by June 2009.
		P3: Tourism Satellite Account in line with the SNA compiled by June 2009.
		P4: A system of environment-economic accounts in line with the SNA developed by December 2008.
		P5: Inputs for PBB performance indicators submitted to 6 Ministries / Departments by April 2009: (i) Tourism (ii) Agro-industry (iii) Judiciary, Police and Prison (iv) Women and Children (v) Education and (vi) Environment.

Technical Assistance in Real Sector Statistics



Working Session with IMF Regional Advisor, Mr. J.Prinsloo

As part of its program of technical assistance, the International Monetary Fund appointed in October 2007, a Regional Advisor (RA) in real sector statistics, Mr. Johann Prinsloo, to assist Botswana, Mauritius and Namibia to broaden the scope of their National Accounts and to bring their statistics in line with the requirements of the Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS).

A first mission of the RA to Mauritius was fielded from 18 to 29 February 2008. The main issues addressed were: seasonal adjustment of quarterly National Accounts estimates, use of annual overlap in the calculation of quarterly national accounts at constant prices, improvement of deflators, and allocation of Financial Intermediation Services Indirectly Measured (FISIM) to institutional sectors and industrial activity groups. Mr. J. Prinsloo effected a second visit from 25 August to 5 September 2008 to follow up on issues addressed

during the first mission; he also advised on the compilation of independent estimates for inventories, improvement of deflators for the expenditure components of Gross Domestic Product; and compilation of financial accounts.

Progress has been made on the various items covered. Thus, since June 2008, seasonally adjusted estimates of quarterly National Accounts are being published in the series of Economic and Social Indicators. The other improvements will be taken on board while rebasing National Accounts estimates on the results of the 2007 Census of Economic Activities around the end of 2009.

International Initiatives – IMF Technical Mission

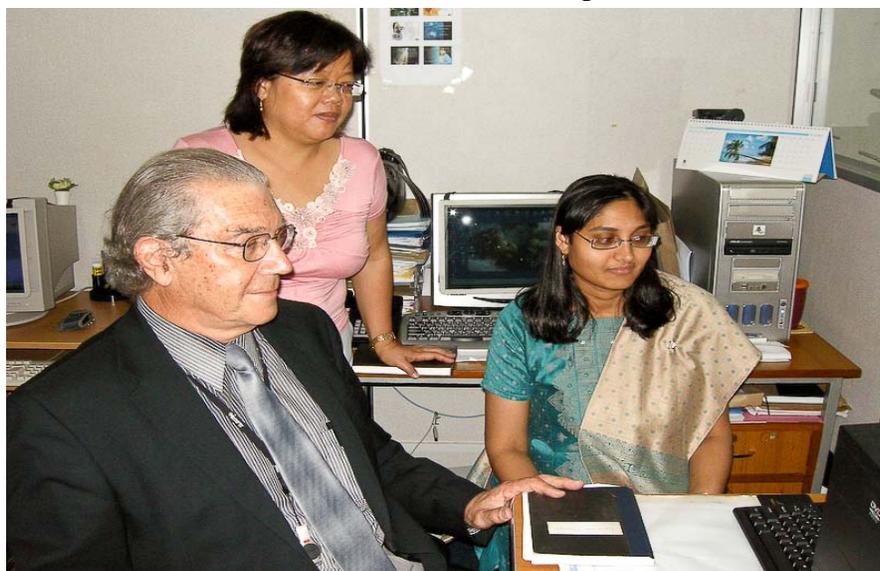
Introduction

In response to a request from the authorities, an IMF technical assistance mission fielded a visit during September 1–5, 2008. Mauritius has been working towards adherence to the SDDS module and in line with the work plan prepared during a workshop held to help Anglophone African countries, the purpose of the mission was to review, with the staff of the concerned agencies, the steps needed to finalise National Summary Data Page (NSDP) for Mauritius. The consultant, Mr. Dessart met the representatives of the three data suppliers, namely Bank of Mauritius (BOM), the Central Statistics Office (CSO) and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MOFED).

Recommendations

During his visit, Mr. Dessart took stock of the currently unmet requirements of the NSDP development and assessed the quality of the data through a macroeconomic framework to detect possible inconsistencies between sectoral data. At the end of his mission, he made the following recommendations:

- (i) the selection of the CSO website for hosting and disseminating the NSDP and its accompanying Advance Release Calendar (ARC), and
- (ii) the creation of a National Page Group, which would be responsible for monitoring the final preparation of the NSDP and the regular update of it.



Working Session at IT Unit with IMF Consultant, Mr. Dessart.

The National Summary Data Page and Advance Release Calendar

The Webmaster of the CSO was consulted and she gave the mission the assurance that uploading NSDP and ARC on the CSO website would be easily worked out. Creation of hyperlinks BOM, MOFED and evidently the IMF's Dissemination Standards Bulletin Board (DSBB) would also be fully taken care of.

The mission also recommended that the CSO start uploading a "provisional" NSDP and ARC

on its website without waiting for those documents to be SDDS compliant and restrict their access to those who can contribute to the NSDP finalisation. However, in the summing up meeting, following the query of CSO to have on its website a NSDP which does not satisfy all SDDS requirements, Mr. Dessart pointed out that such a NSDP would be considered as data published by CSO. However, as the NSDP would not be approved by IMF, it would not be linked to IMF website and Mauritius would not yet be considered as a SDDS member.

Creation of a National Page Group

Given the need to press down on the data-supplying agencies to get their timely delivery of new or updated data and also to promote harmonisation of concepts and removal of inconsistencies between sectoral data, it was recommended to charge a group of persons, called the National Page Group (NP Group), with the responsibility of monitoring the many aspects of the full development and dissemination of NSDP for Mauritius.

The NP Group would consist of representatives of BOM, MOFED and CSO. To make sure that the NP Group gets the authority it needs to carry out its tasks effectively, the Director of MOFED Budget Strategy and Management would be its official Chairperson while the technical tasks would be performed by the CSO.

The main tasks of the NP group are:

- (i) to obtain from the three supplying-data agencies that they fully comply with the NSDP requirements,
- (ii) to certify the final NSDP presentation before it is sent to the IMF for approval,
- (iii) to warrant the regular update of NSDP and ARC for Mauritius,
- (iv) to improve the presentation of the NSDP, and
- (v) to improve the quality of the NSDP data, while assisting the data-supplying agencies in detecting and eliminating inter-sectoral inconsistencies.

Cost-effective Software for computing National Accounts Statistics

The Office has been since some time investigating on the use of cost-effective software for compiling National Accounts estimates and ensuring consistency and coherence of the data. In this context, a study tour to the Institut National de la Statistique et des Etudes Economiques (INSEE) – Réunion was organized from 5 to 8 August 2008. The main objective of the study tour was to get the necessary information that would enable our officers to assess the suitability of the software in the local context, as well as investigate on the possibilities of technical assistance from the agency.

During the study tour, the Senior Statistician and one Statistician working on the Analysis and Integration Programme were received by Mr. Claude Parain and Ms. Nadine Jourdan from the ‘Service études diffusion de la direction régionale de la Réunion’. They had the opportunity to learn about the various possibilities and functions of the software.

ERETES which is jointly owned by the European Commission and the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was developed in the 1980's. It is a microcomputer based tool specifically designed to facilitate the compilation of national accounts. It allows for the storage of the basic economic data, provides for a structured workspace for national accountants, and helps on the follow-up of tasks. It facilitates data reconciliation, and the production of integrated economic accounts, including computation of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) estimates according to the three approaches, namely production, expenditure, income, institutional sector accounts, and supply and use tables.

Based on information gathered and after careful assessment, the Office has found the software appropriate to its needs. It will now investigate on possibilities of funding with respect to the acquisition of the required software as well as technical assistance for capacity building and setting up of the system.

2007 Census of Economic Activities – Phase I

The Central Statistics Office (CSO) is currently conducting its fifth Census of Economic Activities (CEA) in Mauritius and Rodrigues, with 2007 as reference year. This current round like the previous ones is conducted in two phases - Phase I covers a sample of small production units (i.e. those engaging less than ten persons) and Phase II covers all large units (i.e. those with ten or more persons). Phase I is completed while Phase II is on-going.

During Phase I, 3,426 units were surveyed, of which 3,113 in the Island of Mauritius and 313 in Rodrigues. To capture seasonality in the production activities, the 3,113 units that were selected in the Island of Mauritius were spread evenly over the 12 months of the year and the 313 units selected in Rodrigues were spread over the four quarters. Every month, four Supervisors and 20 Interviewers were involved in the data collection in the Island of Mauritius. In Rodrigues, the data collection was carried out during the second month of each quarter by six Interviewers working under the supervision of two Supervisors. The whole exercise was

coordinated by one Chief Supervisor with the support of one Senior Supervisor.

Given that small units do not usually keep proper records of their transactions, data collection was carried out by direct interviews. The respondents were requested to keep daily/weekly records of their transactions in diaries provided to them. The completed diaries were collected at the end of the survey month, and the data transcribed from the diaries to the relevant census questionnaires by the interviewer.

Data entry was carried out by the Central Information Systems Division (CISD) of the Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunications while data cleaning and tabulation were performed by CSO staff.

The main results of Phase I of the CEA are published in the series of Economic and social Indicators in September 2008. A detailed analytical report will be published by end of this year, and another one integrating the results of Phase I and Phase II will be released by the end of 2009.

Streamlining the Work of the “Economic and Financial Statistics”

The office has been working on the setting up of a harmonised, integrated and cost-effective data collection system which avoids overlap and duplication, reduces/eliminates data gaps, and minimises response burden. The system favours extensive use of administrative sources of data supported by a complementary set of data collection instruments and Memoranda of Understanding with important data custodians.

Since the beginning of this year, the “Economic and Financial Statistics” programme has been re-organised accordingly. The programme is divided into two sub-programmes as follows:

- (i) Sub-programme I: Economic and Financial Statistics
 - (ii) Sub-programme II: Analysis and Integration
- Sub-programme I focuses on the planning, organisation and conduct of business censuses and surveys, as well as the exploitation of economic data from administrative sources, with a view to satisfying the data needs of users and supporting the Analysis and Integration sub-programme. It also involves analysis of subject area statistics.

Sub-programme II focuses on the analysis and integration of economic, financial and social statistics including the production of National Accounts, input and output tables, supply and use tables, satellite accounts, social accounting matrices, and productivity and competitiveness indicators amongst others. It will also look into time series analysis, modelling and forecasting.

With the new system in place, business surveys are being streamlined. Questionnaires relating to National Accounts are now harmonized and the number reduced from five to three. Surveys with low response rate have been discontinued and particular attention given to surveying of main drivers with a view to reducing cost and

improving quality. The use of administrative data sources such as Income Tax database has been made possible through the amendment of Income Tax Act allowing for data sharing.

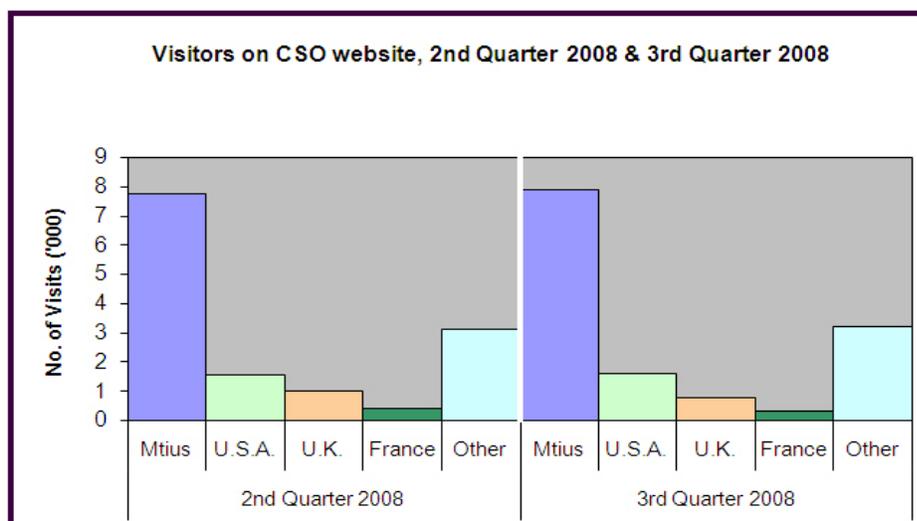
Furthermore, the number of officers has been reduced, with four statisticians and two Senior Statistical Officers released for other assignments. Currently, four Statisticians and six Senior Statistical Officers (SSOs) are involved in the data collection and analytical work with respect to subject areas, and five Statisticians and seven SSOs in analysis and integration of economic, financial and social statistics.

Visits on the CSO Website

The number of visits on the CSO website was 13,724 during the third quarter of 2008, representing a very slight decline of 0.6% from 13,805 in the second quarter of 2008.

Visitors	2 nd Quarter 2008		3 rd Quarter 2008	
	No. of visits	%	No. of visits	%
Local	7,774	56	7,895	58
Foreign	6,031	44	5,829	42
Total	13,805	100	13,724	100

During the third quarter of 2008, visits from Mauritians accounted for around 58% of all visits. Foreign visitors who made up the remaining 42% came mostly from the United States of America, the United Kingdom and France.



For the 3rd Quarter 2008, the Economic and Social Indicator (ESI) on *Population & Vital Statistics* (Year 2007 issue) which went online on 04 March 2008, was the most accessed ESI with 1,666 visits. Next came the ESI on *International Travel and Tourism* (1st Quarter 2008 issue) which was uploaded on 20 May 2008, with 996 visits.

Important Indicators released during the Third Quarter of 2008

GDP Growth Rate

The GDP growth rate for 2007 is maintained at 5.4% as estimated in June 2008. On the basis of latest information gathered on various sectors of the economy and recent past trends, the economy is expected to grow by around 5.6% in 2008, slightly lower than the forecast of 5.7% made in June 2008.

Consumer Price Index and Inflation

The rate of inflation for the twelve months ending September 2008 works out to 9.8% compared to 9.7% for the twelve months ending September 2007. On the basis of trends in previous years and recent price changes, the inflation rate for 2008 is forecasted at 10.0%. It is to be recalled that the rate of inflation was 8.8% for both the financial year 2007/2008 and the calendar year 2008.

External Trade

Total export proceeds for the first semester of 2008 were valued at Rs 30,228 million and imports reached Rs 62,848 million.

Based on past trends, total exports for the year

2008 are expected to be of the order of Rs 70,000 million, lower than the Rs 73,000 million forecasted in June. As for imports, the forecast for the year is maintained at Rs 130,000 million. The trade deficit would therefore be around Rs 60,000 million.

Tourist arrivals

Tourist arrivals grew by 4.6% from 644,821 in the first nine months of 2007 to 674,164 in the corresponding period of 2008. Gross tourism receipts for the first nine months of 2008 were estimated by the Bank of Mauritius at Rs 30,801 million.

Tourist arrivals for 2008 are expected to be around 960,000 and tourist receipts is forecasted at Rs 44,338 million.

Unemployment

The unemployment rate for the second quarter of 2008 is estimated at 7.4% compared to 8.2% at the first quarter 2008 and 8.8% at the second quarter 2007. Based on the trend for the first semester, a lower unemployment rate of 7.8% is projected for 2008 compared to the forecast of 8.0% made in March. It is to be noted that the rate was 8.5% in 2007.

Documentation Centre of the CSO – Current Awareness Service

The following publications have been acquired during the third quarter of 2008:

Local Publications

Periodicals

- 1. European Commission in Mauritius**
Newsletter – July 2008
- 2. Evaluation Unit/Ministry of Health & Quality of Life**
Reproductive Health Service Statistics – Feb 2008

Reports

- 1. Nigel Richards**
Poverty Observatory Qualitative Methodology – Executive Summary – June 2008
- 2. Government Information Service**
SADC International Conference on Poverty and Development, Mauritius –April 2008

Foreign Publications

Periodicals

- 1. INSEE, France**
Economie ET Statistique, No. 410, 2007
- 2. The Guttmacher Institute, New York**
International Family Planning Perspectives, June 2008

Reports

- 1. Commonwealth Secretariat, United Kingdom**
Small States Economic Review and Basic Statistics
- 2. United Nations**
 - (i) World Population Prospects. The 2006 Revision, Vol. II
 - (ii) 2005 Energy Balances and Electricity Profiles
 - (iii) Classification type pour le commerce international
Quatrieme version revisee
 - (iv) National Accounts Statistics: Analysis of Main Aggregated 2006
- 3. The World Bank**
Global Purchasing Power Parities and Real Expenditures
2005 International Comparison Program

Training/Meetings attended by Staff during the Third Quarter of 2008

(i) Overseas

Name	Programme	Country	Period
Mr. M. Dawoonauth & Ms. G. Appadu	Compilation of National Accounts with ERETES Software	Reunion	5 to 8 August
Mr. H. Bundhoo	15 th SADC Statistics Committee Meeting	Gaborone, Botswana	22 to 24 September

(ii) Local

Local Training

1. Training programmes organized by the Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms:-

3-Day course on "Training of Trainers for PMS Facilitators" - Mr. L.C.Lacloche

1-Day course on "Basic Techniques of Risk Assessment":

Mr. L. C. Lacloche Mr. K. Bheecarry Mr. D. Pillay

2. Infotech 2008

Ms. R. Juman attended on 7 August a seminar on 'Infotech 2008' organised by the National Computer Board

In-House Presentation

The following officers attended a 1-hour presentation on "Performance Management System" conducted by Mr. L. C. Lacloche and Ms. S. F. Cheung Tung Shing

Mr. H. Bundhoo	Mr. M. Dawoonauth	Mr. S. Chaumoo	Ms. K. Pothegadoo
Ms. L.F. Cheung Kai Suet	Mr. L. Persand	Ms. L.C. Tse Ve Koon	Ms. T. Beerachee
Mr. D. Juleemun	Mr. S. Bhonoo	Ms. N. Meenowa	Ms. S. Maudarbocus
Ms. G. Appadu	Ms. C. Bandinah	Mr. P. Seenauth	Mr. K. Bheecarry
Ms. M. Ganoo	Ms. R. Soborun	Mr. M. Lan Pin Wing	Mr. M. R.Rujub
Mr. C. Ramnath	Ms. C. Rughoobur	Mr. S. Mungur	Ms. N. Ramjan
Ms. R. Moraby	Mr. A. Bundhoo	Mr. K. Nassurally	Mr. G. Chandydial
Mr. C. Arianaick	Mr. A.S. Mungralee	Mr. R. Mungur	Ms. V. Kissoon
Mr. M.S. Boodoo	Ms. N. Gujadhur	Ms. S. Geemul	Mr. A. Bahadoor
Mr. D. Pothegadoo	Mr. S. Haulcooree	Mr. A. Poreema	Ms. W. Abdouramane
Mr. Y. Thorabally	Mr. A. Ramasamy	Mr. Y. Buxsoo	Mr. D. Pillay

Award of Certificate

SADC Training Pack

A training pack was prepared by the Statistical Services Centre of the University of Reading, U.K. for the SADC Secretariat with support from the European Union. This training programme, based on the SADC harmonized syllabus, aims at improving statistical capacity among staff of National Statistical System (NSS) and students of statistics in the SADC region. The CSO received a copy of the training pack in January 2008 and it was posted on the Intranet.

The course, if successfully completed, is comparable to the Higher Level Certificate Examination of the UK Royal Statistical Society (RSS).

The structure of this training programme is modular and the modules are arranged in three levels, namely:

- (1) Basic level includes 2 modules,
- (2) Intermediate level contains 5 modules, and
- (3) Higher level being made up of 8 modules.

The CSO, in the process of implementing the training programme, decided to go for 3 modules which are:

Module H4: Economic Concepts and Principles for Statisticians – Higher Level

Module H6: Sampling Concepts in Survey Work – Higher Level and

Module I4 : Presenting Statistical Results – Intermediate Level.

As a start, the office in collaboration with the University of Mauritius, organized a short course on module H4 from 5 May to 4 June 2008. The course was divided into 10 sessions, each lasting for three hours. 25 officers from the grade of Senior Statistical Officer and Statistician attended the course.

The 10 sessions of module H4 which provided participants with a basic understanding of economic concepts and principles included:

1. Basic definitions and concepts
2. The national income accounts
3. Growth and development
4. Endogenous growth and human development
5. Economic cycles
6. Prices and inflation
7. Labour markets
8. Role of government
9. Government financing and debt
10. Trade, capital flows and the international financial institutions.

The lecturers were Associate Professor S.K. Bundoo and Associate Professor S.K. Sobhee. On completion of the training, an assignment was given to test the extent to which trainees have acquired the knowledge imparted. All participants obtained more than the pass mark (40 %) and on 22 August 2008 were awarded an Attendance Certificate for successful completion of the course.



*Ceremony of Award of Certificate at University of Mauritius
Group Photo of Lecturers and Participants*

The participants were:

Ms. R. Moraby

Mr. M.S. Boodoo

Mr. D. Pothegadoo

Mr. Y. Thorabally

Mr. L. Persand

Ms. C. Bandinah

Ms. R. Soborun

Ms. S.B. Nunhuck

Mr. A. Bundhoo

Mr. A. Ramasamy

Ms. F. Koussa

Ms. N. Guillaume

Mr. S. Mungur

Mr. K. Nassurally

Mr. R. Mungur

Ms. F. Victor

Mr. K. Bheecarry

Ms. S. Venkatasami

Ms. N. Joomun

Mr. K. Nardeosingh

Ms. R. Fanor

Mr. E. Lukshmudu

Ms. F. Moserdee

Mr. G. Chandydial

Ms. K. Pothegadoo

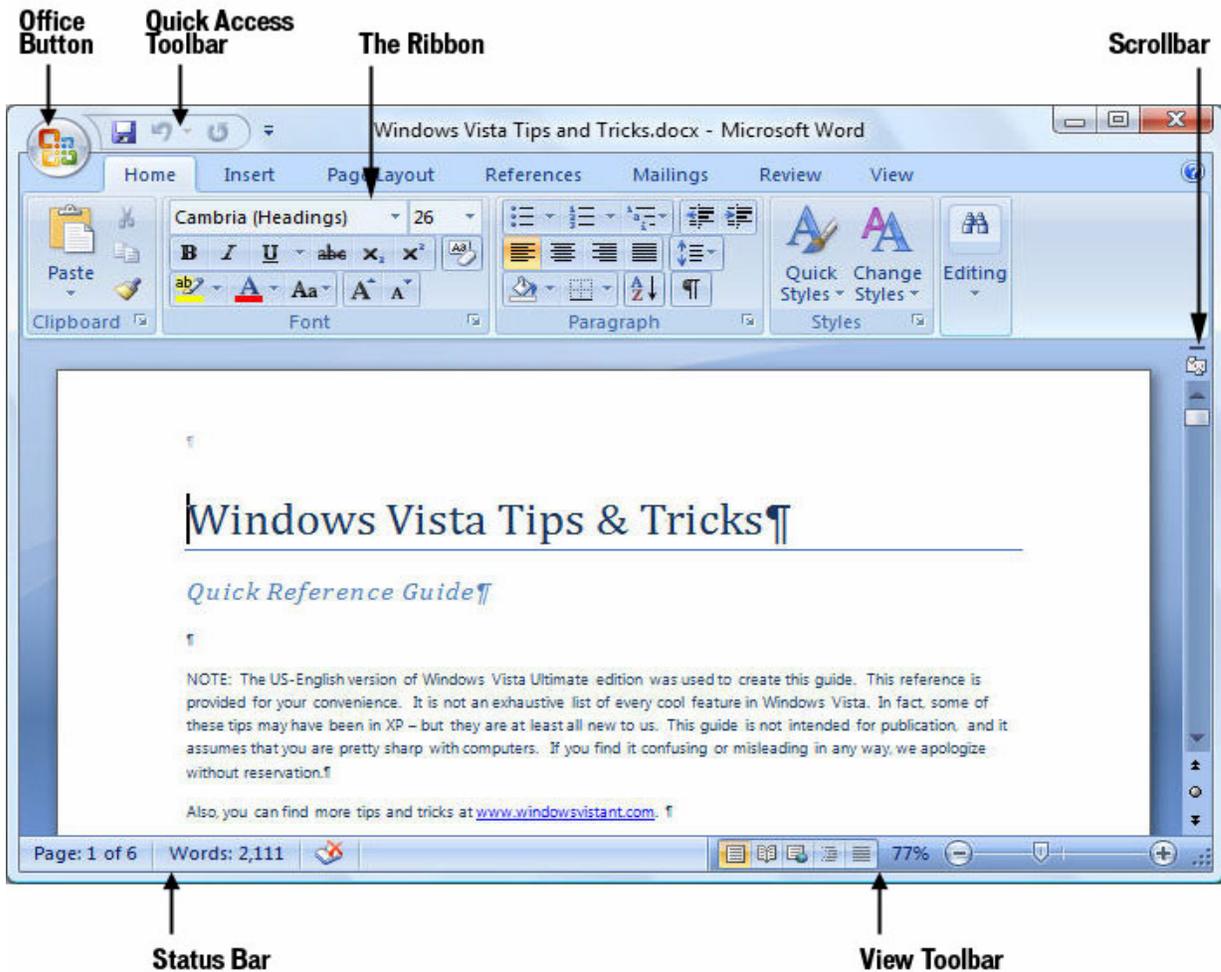
Word 2007: An Overview

(by Ali Hoolash)

In the previous issue of our newsletter, we had taken a bird's eye view of the changes brought to the Office suite by Microsoft. We will now take a deeper look at the changes in Word 2007 and how these changes will affect the way we used to interact with this application. A complete description of all the changes brought to Word 2007 is beyond the scope of this article. We will instead focus on the main changes.

Many users have been baffled with the "new" Word and have found it to be exceedingly disorienting. An article I read somewhere amusingly describes the new Word interface as "like driving back home and not only finding that your furniture has been re-arranged but that the house itself has moved to another location." I think this clearly sums up the mind of pre-Word 2007 users when they find themselves face to face with Microsoft's new word processor. Anyway, nothing's lost. The learning curve can be straightened with some effort and practice. So, here are a few tips to help you safely navigate the troubled waters of Word 2007.

1. The Word 2007 Interface



The *Office Button* replaces the old File menu. Familiar features like opening files, saving files, printing files and so on are located there.

The *Quick Access Toolbar* contains Word's most common features, including Save, Undo, Redo, Print Preview. You can add and remove buttons to customize it the way you work.

The *Ribbon* is a love or hate affair! It is the main way that you will work with Word. It replaces menus and submenus (found in the previous versions) with buttons grouped on a graphical interface.

The *Scrollbar* is basically unchanged from previous versions of Word; use it to scroll up and down. There are a couple of minor changes: at the top, there's a small button that looks like a minus sign that lets you split your screen in two, and just below that, there's a small icon that

displays or hides a ruler when you click it.

The *View toolbar*, which used to be on the lower left-hand side of the screen in earlier versions of Word, moves over to the right in Word 2007. It lets you choose between print layout, full screen, Web layout, outline and draft views, just as it did in earlier Word versions. There's also a nice addition: a slider that lets you zoom in or out on your document.

The *Status Bar* is in the same place as in earlier Word versions and has the same function, i.e., to display information such as the number of pages in your document. It has one nice little extra: It displays the word count of your document as well. If you highlight an area of text, it will display the number of words in the highlighted area.

2. Add Commands to the Quick Access Toolbar

The simplest way to do this is by clicking the small “Down” arrow to the right of the Quick Access toolbar (figure 1) and selecting a new button to add. But this is quite limited, because there are only a small number of commands you can add in this way.

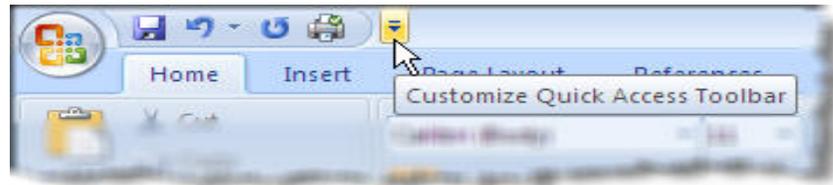


Figure 1: The “Down” arrow next to the Quick Access Toolbar

Another method is to click on the Office Button and then Click on the “Word options” button (figure 2). This brings up the “Word options” dialog box. Click on “Customize” and then select the feature you would like to add on the Quick Access Toolbar by clicking the “Add” button (figure 3). You can change the order of the buttons by highlighting a button on the right side of the screen and using the Up and Down arrows to move it.

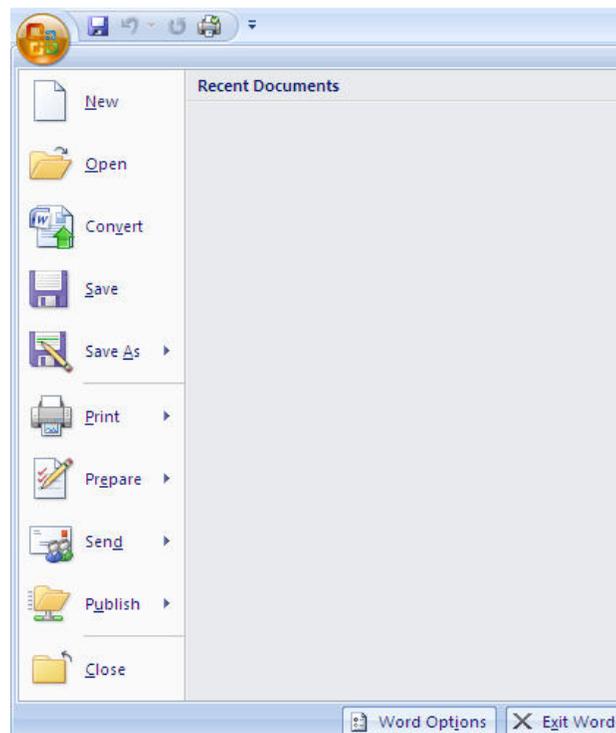


Figure 2: The “Word Options button”

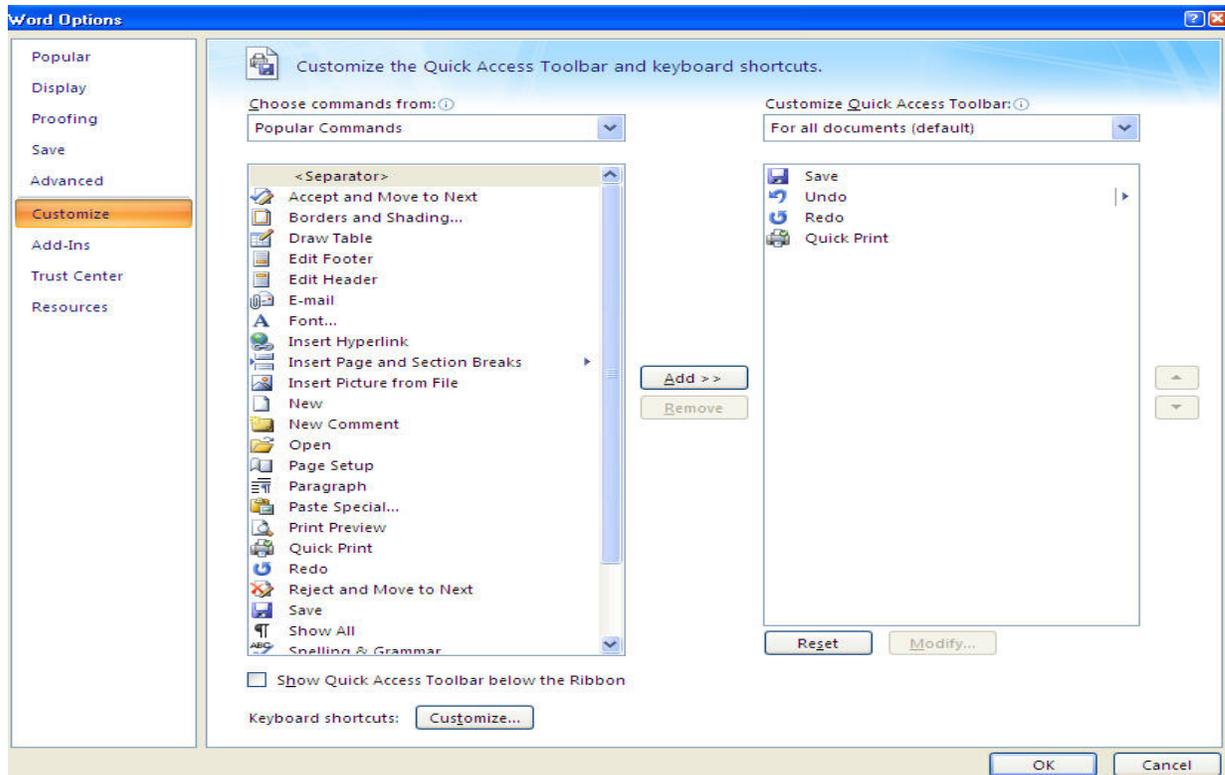


Figure 3: The “Word Options” dialog box

3. Some Keyboard Shortcuts

Open a Word 2007 document and simply press the “Alt” button. Word now displays the different “Alt +” combinations under the respective features. For example, “Alt + N” takes you to the “Insert” ribbon.

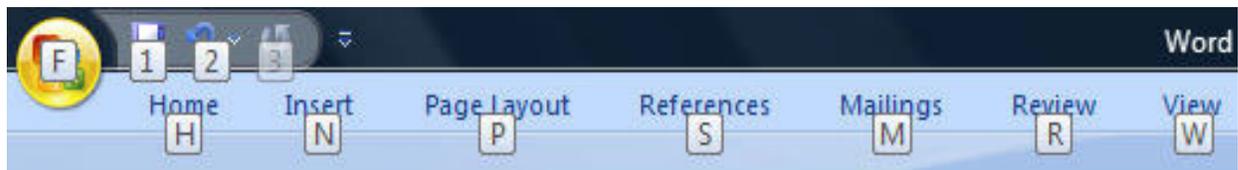


Figure 4: The “Alt” keyboard shortcuts display when you press the ALT key.

Word 2007 Alt key combinations	
Key combination	Function
Alt-F	Office Button
Alt-H	Home tab
Alt-N	Insert tab
Alt-P	Page Layout tab
Alt-S	References tab
Alt-M	Mailings tab
Alt-R	Review tab
Alt-V	View tab
Alt-L	Developer tab

4. Turn off the Ribbon

Why turn off the ribbon? Well, the main reason being that this will give you plenty of screen real estate, i.e., more working space and a more airy feel to the application.

There are several ways to turn off the Ribbon:

- (i) Click the Down arrow to the right of the Quick Access toolbar button and select Minimize the Ribbon.
- (ii) Press Ctrl-F1. (Press Ctrl-F1 to make it appear again).

We will delve into more Word 2007 tips in our next article. For now, I hope the few tips mentioned above will bring forward your adventurous side and will keep you busy until the next issue!

Occupational Safety and Health

A site visit at the CSO was effected by two officers of the Occupational Safety and Health Unit of the Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms on 4 July 2008.

The objective of the visit was to assess the safety and health standard of the working environment and to make appropriate recommendations in compliance with the Occupational Safety and Health Act 2005.

Hereunder are the shortcomings noted and the actions taken to remedy the situation.

Fire Safety Arrangements

Redundant materials were found along the emergency staircase on ground floor.

All the cleaning materials and equipment found there have been removed.

First Aid Box

A First Aid Box was available but was not in conformity with First Aid Regulations.

The Ministry of Health and Quality of Life has been contacted for the supply of appropriate appliances and requisites for First Aid.

Electrical Safety

It was noted that:

- (i) Multiplugs and extension cards were widely used.
- (ii) Electric cables and wires connected to computers were trailing haphazardly on the floor.
- (iii) Some electric sockets were found detached from the wall.

The services of an electrician will be hired to look into the matter.

Room Temperature

Staff reported that the air conditioning system does not function properly. Sometimes it was too cold and in some cases not well ventilated.

The Lessor has been requested to install proper regulating devices on the air conditioning system and to ensure that the Contractor perform regular visits at the LIC Building to detect fluctuation in room temperature and to make adjustments accordingly.

Staffing Development

(i) *Appointment*

The following officers have been appointed Principal Statistician in a temporary capacity with effect from 16 September 2008.

Mrs. Meera Bye GANOO

Mr. Dhananjay JULEEMUN

Mrs. Set Fong CHEUNG TUNG SHING

Mrs. Gangamah APPADU

Mr. Chitranjan RAMNATH

(ii) *Recruitment*

Mr. R. LUTCHMADOO and Mrs. A.G. PYENEEANDEE PAKEEROO have assumed duty as Statistical Officer in a temporary capacity with effect from 18 August 2008.

(iii) *Retirement*

The officers below have proceeded on leave

prior to retirement:

(a) Mr. K. KOWLESSUR, Office Superintendent, with effect from 06 September 2008. He will retire from the service on 16 February 2009.

(b) Mr. M. BUNGSY, Office Care Attendant, with effect from 01 August 2008. He will retire from the service on 26 November 2008.

We seize this opportunity to convey our best wishes for a happy and peaceful retirement to our two colleagues, after providing a long and loyal service.

(iv) *Leave Without Pay*

Mrs. S.D. DOORGAKANT, Statistical Officer, has proceeded on one year leave without pay on 01 September 2008 to take up employment outside the Government Service.

Special General Meetings of the CSO Staff Association

The CSOSA held two special general meetings concerning the National Statistical Agency and PRB Report 2008.

National Statistical Agency

The president informed members of the first meeting of the Steering Committee set up by government to make recommendations on the model that could be implemented. There were enthusiastic and fruitful interventions from members and the main decisions are highlighted below:

1. The association whilst being for the independence of the Central Statistics Office was unanimously in favour of the CSO remaining within government as a non-ministerial department due to the specific nature of its functions. The Union proposed that the CSO could function on similar lines as the National Audit Office. The main advantages of remaining within government are:

- (i) Facility in the movement of professional staff within and across government. It is to be noted that presently CSO staff are posted in Statistical Units in different ministries and departments and this practice has been praised and regarded as the main strength of our Statistical System in the NSDS report. Autonomy outside Government might jeopardise this inter-departmental arrangement.
- (ii) Access to micro data from other government departments. Due to confidentiality, exchange of basic data outside government departments might not be possible.
- (iii) Maximum sharing of knowledge and best practices across government.
- (iv) Statistical staff staying close to data suppliers and customers.
- (v) Ensuring good working links with policy-makers.

2. The union was against the model proposing the setting up of a board governing the Statistics Office with power to recruit, promote and dismiss staff. Experience with various boards can so far be qualified as 'bad'. Instead of creating public confidence in statistics, the contra result will be achieved if such a board is instituted.

The members were asked to remain mobilised and will be kept informed of any development.

PRB Report 2008

The president informed members of the main recommendations of the PRB report for the whole civil service in general and in particular for the Central Statistics Office. Regarding the latter, he informed that submission will be made by the Union for the forthcoming report on errors and omissions scheduled for June 2009. The following views were expressed on the respective issue:

1. Grade of Statistician

The positive recommendation for the grade lies in the recognition by the PRB that the grade of Statistician is to be considered as a professional grade, by the grant of an additional increment upon appointment as Statistician by those possessing the Graduate Diploma in Statistics of the Royal Statistical Society. The president reminded that in the past the grade of Statistician was at par, salary wise, with other professional grades like Meteorologist, Veterinary Officer, etc. However, the grant of one increment upon appointment is but insignificant. Moreover, by recognising only those possessing the Graduate Diploma in Statistics, the PRB is creating two categories of Statisticians who would in effect be performing similar jobs. Members agreed that there should be only one grade of Statistician and the salary attached to the post should be similar to other professional grades.

2. Grade of Statistical Officer

Members unanimously considered the recommendation to the effect that Statistical Officers would be confirmed in their appointment only if they possess the Ordinary Certificate of the RSS (and not just the

exemption there from) is a vivid example of anomaly. The president informed that since this year the Royal Statistical Society (RSS) has changed its regulations regarding exemptions. These are granted normally to enable prospective candidates to enter examinations at the next higher level. Hence candidates possessing the appropriate H.S.C qualifications can now enter directly for the Higher Certificate in Statistics. RSS only issues a certificate equivalent to the Ordinary Certificate (against payment of 100 pounds!). Moreover, it does not make sense to ask a Statistical Officer possessing a Degree in Statistics (hence eligible for appointment in the higher grade of Statistician) to sit for the Ordinary Certificate of the RSS in order to be confirmed on his/her appointment as Statistical Officer. As an alternative, union suggests the implementation of an appropriate training programme which would enable Statistical Officers to be more efficient.

3. Grade of Principal Statistical Officer

The union has welcomed the creation of the grade of Principal Statistical Officer (PSO) which could turn out to be the career grade for many officers in the department. However the qualification requirement of two years service only in the grade of Senior Statistical Officer is against the justification of the post which is based on the fact that many Senior Statistical Officers have the experience, knowledge skills and abilities to operate at a higher level than they are currently doing. The union is thus proposing that appointment in the grade of Principal Statistical Officer to be made by promotion in the grade of Senior Statistical Officer. Moreover, the salary attached to the post is unreasonable. Presently more than 22 Senior Statistical Officers have reached their top Salary. Most probably those who will be appointed in the grade of PSO would have already reached their top salary and would also reach the top salary of the PSO only after one year after their appointment.

The President added that the union will prepare its submission to be made to the PRB and invited members for views.

The CSO Staff Welfare Association (CSOSWA)

The Central Statistical Office Staff Welfare Association is pleased to inform that it has renewed its bureau for the 2008/2010 Managing Committee.

The following members have been nominated to form the executive committee and to look at matters related to the welfare of this office.

President	Zameer KAUSMALLY
Vice President	Smet CHAUMOO
Secretary	Deosharma CHINNEE
Assistant Secretary	Jameel SAWDAGUR
Treasurer	Jaiprakash AUDIT
Assistant Treasurer	Saida HOSANY
PRO	Adiraj PENTIAH
Members	Hemlata PRYAM Harshini PURSUN

Two members will be nominated in the next committee.