

Editorial Note

Welcome to the second issue of the Newsletter which highlights the main activities and undertakings of the CSO.

One of the main events which have polarized attention of the general public during the 2nd quarter 2007 is the setting up of a National Pay Council to make appropriate recommendations to Government with regard to salary compensation. The CSO which is part of the Technical Support Team has been requested to develop a new set of indicators in order to meet the statistical requirements of the Council.

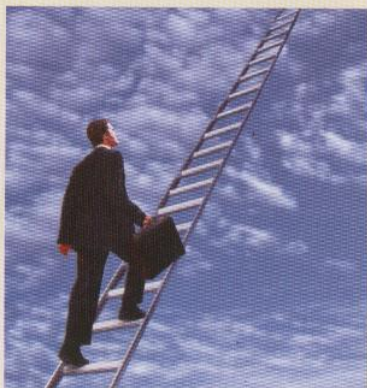
The implementation of the Performance Management System is well on its track and, by end of June 2007, the mid-term review would have already been completed.

The country adhered to the General Data Dissemination System (GDDS) of the IMF in 2001 and is looking forward to graduate to the Special Data Dissemination System (SDDS) by end of 2007. The present Newsletter gives more details about this graduation.

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Our Vision, Mission and Principles



Our Vision

To be a key provider of world class statistical information

Our Mission

To provide timely, relevant and reliable statistics, consistent with international principles and standards, for effective decision-making and monitoring

Our Principles

- Access for all
- Relevance
- Integrity & trust
- Timeliness
- Confidentiality
- Trust in our people

The National Pay Council (NPC) from the standpoint of the Central Statistics Office (CSO)

The NPC has been set up to make appropriate recommendations to Government with regard to a yearly minimum wage increase taking into consideration, among other things the

- (i) rise in the consumer price index,
- (ii) national ability to pay,
- (iii) national productivity and competitiveness, and
- (iv) employment and unemployment rate.

The Council is chaired by Mr. Sen Ramsamy and comprises five representatives each of Government, workers and employers. A Technical Support Team has been set up consisting of CSO staff and specialists in economics, accountancy, productivity and labour management to provide NPC with technical inputs for its work.

For its first assignment, namely salary compensation for 2007-08, the NPC had to

manage with whatever data were available. However, it has been decided that the CSO should develop a set of indicators of productivity, competitiveness and capacity to pay at enterprise and sector levels. These will be used to differentiate between high performers and those which are weak or have moderate capacity to pay. The differentiation will be critical for collective bargaining whereby strong enterprises are expected to give better compensation than the minimum recommended by the NPC.

Furthermore, the CSO will need to refine the analysis of employment and unemployment data in view of the mismatch between vacancies and unemployment.

The CSO will review its activities to integrate the new priorities whilst staying within the 2007-08 budget ceiling as far as possible.

Mr. S. Ramsamy - Chairperson

Board Members / Representatives

Government	Employers	Unions
Mr. S.C. Seebaluck Head of Civil Service	Mr. M. Gopal President - MEF	Mr. Y. Sooklall
Mr. A. Mansoor Financial Secretary	Mr. A. Jeetun Director -MEF	Mr. F. Thomas
Mr. R.P. Nowbuth Permanent Secretary	Mr. P. Legris Chief Executive -AHRIM	Mr. R. Maudhoo
Mrs.V.L. Ramsamy Permanent Secretary	Mrs. D. Wong Director - Mauritius Export Association	Mr. D. Quedou
Mr. P. Jhugroo Supervising Officer	Mr. P. Rivalland Senior Manager - Phoenix Beverages	Mr. R. Somanah

Performance Management System (PMS)

Sustaining the PMS by providing continuous feed-back

The Central Statistics Office (CSO) is already six months through the implementation of the Performance Management System (PMS). By now officers would have already completed their Mid-Term Performance Review. It is pertinent to note that the Mid-Term Performance Review and the End-of-Year Performance Review are formal exercises during which the appraiser and the appraisee exchange feed-back on performance issues, and agree on individual shortcomings and achievements. This formal performance evaluation happens only twice a year. In between these formal reviews, however, major occurrences can and do happen; hence the need to monitor performance and to provide adequate feed-back on a continuous basis.

Regular feed-back is therefore essential if good work performance and staff motivation are to be sustained throughout the year.

It is also important that feed-back be given in a constructive manner. Regular and constructive feed-back builds confidence and trust in the staff and help to maintain the effective work relationships necessary to keep officers motivated and efficient. Providing constructive feed-back implies that performance problems are discussed openly and that solutions are identified jointly by the appraiser and the appraisee.

Feed-back should not be limited to poor performance. Appraisers may be tempted to overlook or neglect those officers who are performing well. This is understandable in as

much as appraisers are often under pressure and prefer to focus their attention to problem areas. However, if good performance keeps going unnoticed or unmentioned it is very likely that those officers who legitimately deserve praise and recognition for their work would soon be discouraged and prefer to put in the minimum efforts when discharging their duties and responsibilities.

Another important point to note is that documentation and record-keeping facilitate the feed-back process. Records help the appraiser and the appraisee to keep track of occurrences having a critical impact on performance. They can also prevent unnecessary arguments during performance reviews since good or bad performance can be easily substantiated. The performance evaluation therefore becomes more transparent and credible.

Most of, if not all, the points mentioned above have already been covered in the PMS training sessions delivered at this office. Reiterating them aims at creating additional awareness about the importance of adequate and timely feed-back, and, at the same time, making the staff more comfortable with the implementation of the PMS.



Graduation from the General Data Dissemination System (GDDS) to the Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS)

Following the 1994-95 international financial crisis, in which information deficiencies were seen to have played a major role, the International Monetary Fund launched the data standards initiative to enhance member countries' data transparency and to promote their development of sound statistical systems. Under the data standards initiative, the IMF established

(i) the Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS) in 1996 to provide guidance to countries having or seeking access to capital markets, to disseminate key data so that users in general, and financial market participants in particular, have adequate information to assess the economic situations of individual countries

(ii) the General Data Dissemination System (GDDS) in 1997 to provide a framework for countries that aim to develop their statistical systems, within which they can work toward disseminating comprehensive and reliable data.

Whilst participation in the GDDS is open to all members of the IMF, the SDDS is intended for member countries having or seeking access to international capital markets.

Presently 88 countries have adhered to the GDDS and 64 have subscribed to the SDDS. Mauritius adhered to the GDDS in 2001 by posting its metadata on the IMF Website and updating it annually. The country is now looking forward to subscribe to the more stringent SDDS by the end of 2007. It is worth noting that among African countries only the Republic of South Africa is a subscriber to the SDDS.

By subscribing to the SDDS, Mauritius will facilitate the country's access - for both public and private sectors - to international capital markets, potentially implying higher

levels of foreign investment. To achieve this, the country will have to meet the standard prescribed concerning coverage, periodicity and timeliness of 18 data categories covering the real, fiscal, financial and external sectors, while pursuing good practice to ensure accessibility, integrity and quality of the data. In particular the country will

(i) disseminate an Advance Release Calendar for the 18 data categories prescribed by the SDDS and release the data to all interested parties simultaneously, through a National Summary Data Page and

(ii) build confidence of users in the statistics by disseminating the relevant metadata, i.e. documentation with respect to the legal environment, integrity, methodology, accuracy and reliability, serviceability and accessibility aspects of data, which can be used to assess the quality and reliability of the data published.

In Mauritius, four institutions are responsible for the dissemination of the 18 data categories required by the SDDS. These are: The Central Statistics Office (CSO) (6 data categories), the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MOFED) (4), the Bank of Mauritius (BOM) (7) and the Financial Services Commission (FSC) (1).

As at end of June 2007, out of the 18 data categories, 11 meet the requirements of the SDDS, if we use flexibility option for two data categories compiled by CSO.

CSO is responsible for 6 data categories, namely Quarterly National Accounts, Production Index, Price Indices, Labour Market Indicators, Merchandise Trade and Population. Five of the above data categories

already meet the standard. The remaining one, namely Labour Market indicators, comprises three components: Employment, Unemployment and Wage Index. Presently employment and unemployment meet the SDDS requirements and for the last component the office has started conducting as from 2007 a quarterly establishment survey to collect data on wages in view of compiling a quarterly wage index to be disseminated by the end of the year.

For each of the data component to be published, a relevant metadata need to be written. At the CSO, concerned officers are currently finalizing the ones falling under their responsibilities.

The other institutions are taking the necessary actions concerning their respective data categories in order to meet the SDDS requirements by end 2007.

The CSO Website

The screenshot shows the home page of the Central Statistics Office (CSO) website. At the top left is the coat of arms of Mauritius and the text 'Republic of Mauritius'. Below this is the CSO logo and the text 'Central Statistics Office under the aegis of the Ministry of Finance & Economic Development'. A navigation menu on the left lists various sections like 'Home', 'Vision - Mission', 'Services', etc. The main content area includes a paragraph describing the CSO's role, a list of publications released regularly, and two sections for 'New Releases' and 'Communique' with links to recent reports.

Home Page of CSO Website

The website of the office (<http://statsmauritius.gov.mu>) was first created in July 2001 with the following web pages:

- i. Economic and Social Indicators
- ii. Mauritius in Figures
- iii. Monthly CPI

The interface and content of the website is being continuously updated to improve its user-friendliness so that it becomes the privileged interface with data users. The volume of statistics posted on the website has increased from around 100 Megabytes in 2002 to 500MB in 2006. The website has become a medium for the timely release of all CSO publications, viz., Digests of Statistics, Economic and Social Indicators, Ad-hoc Reports and Mauritius in Figures. To facilitate

user navigation, statistics are also grouped by subject and, wherever available, historical series are provided. As from April 2007, a “Tableau de Bord” or Dashboard which is updated at the end of each month is posted to give snapshots of key performance indicators.

The website also includes the following information:

- i. the Vision and Mission of the office
- ii. the different services provided together with the current legislation, i.e. the Statistics Act, and a Customer Charter
- iii. the latest Strategic Plan including an organization chart
- iv. pricing policy for its publications
- v. the functions and composition of the Statistics Advisory Council

Website Hits

The number of monthly visits to the website has increased continuously from 1200 in 2002 to 2800 in 2006. Around 60% of visitors are local and 40% foreign.

Since the start of this year, the number of visitors has increased significantly. In fact, during the second quarter, 10,967 visits were recorded compared to 9,157 for the first quarter. Further details are given in the table below:

Visitors	1st Quarter 2007		2nd Quarter 2007	
	No of visits	%	No of visits	%
Local	4989	54.5	5827	53.1
Foreign	4168	45.5	5140	46.9
Total	9157	100	10967	100

Future Improvement Plan

The office is working on the improvement of its website in order to make it more dynamic and interactive. The improvement relates to:

- I. ability for online subscription to our publications by users.
- II. restricted access to some contents of the website.
- III. automatic e-mail notification and delivery of new publications (electronic versions) to subscribers.
- IV. inclusion of a drill-down feature where an element in one file can be linked to another file containing more detailed information on that element.
- V. efficient search engine to index and search all contents of our website.
- VI. inclusion of a section on “Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)”.
- VII. ability to conduct online surveys.

Documentation Centre

The aim of the centre is to collect, preserve and make available for consultation various documents and reference materials relating mostly to statistics and related fields.

The collection at the centre consists of CSO publications in the form of economic and social indicators, regular digests and other adhoc reports. Some documents date back to pre-independence era.

There are also text books, statistical and economic publications from other national and international organizations, periodicals, magazines, newspapers as well as the government gazettes.



CSO Documentation Centre

A Library Management System designed by CISD has recently been installed to manage activities of the Documentation Centre.

Some new acquisitions during the quarter were:

Title	Author
Introduction to Econometrics	Maddala G.S
Applied Econometrics Time Series	Enders Walter
Performance Management in a Week	Bagueley Phil
Management and Organisational Behaviour	Mullins Laurie
Management Strategy for IT	Curie Wendy

Important Indicators

GDP Growth Rate

Based on latest available information, GDP in 2007 is now expected to grow by around 5.3%, higher than the 5.0% growth forecasted in March 2007. This is mainly explained by higher growths expected in "EPZ manufacturing industries", "Construction" and "Hotels and restaurants".

Unemployment Rate

From the data collected between January and March 2007, the unemployment rate for

the first quarter of 2007 is estimated at 9.6% compared to 8.2% for the previous quarter and 9.2% at the first quarter of 2006. Unemployment rate for the year 2007 is estimated at 9.3% against 9.1% in 2006.

External Trade

Exports for the first quarter of 2007 amounted to Rs. 15,460 million and imports Rs. 24,373 million. Total exports for the year 2007 are expected to be of the order of

Training/ Meetings attended by staff during the second quarter of 2007

(i) Overseas

Name	Programme	Country	Period
Ms. R. Moraby	Second Workshop on Harmonisation of International Merchandise Trade Statistics in SADC	Zambia	2nd to 5th April
Mr. D. Bahadoor	Census Workshop for the 2010 Round of Censuses in Sub-Saharan Africa	Cape Verde	23rd to 27th April
Ms. Cheung Tung Shing	SDDS Module Workshop	South Africa	7th to 9th May
Mr. C. Arianaick	HIV and Aids Monitoring Evaluation Workshop	Tanzania	16th to 18th May
Mr. S. Haulcooree and Mr. A. Ramasamy	Survey Methodology Training Course	South Africa	25th to 1st June
Ms. M. Ganoo	2nd Planning Meeting of the SADC Millenium Census Project	South Africa	2nd to 4th June
Ms. D. Balgobin and Mrs. N. Guillaume	Statistical and Survey Methods	Lesotho	4th to 15th June
Mr. A. Sookun	Statistical Indicators for Environmental Policy in Africa	Germany	12th to 20th June

Rs.83,000 million, against imports of Rs. 126,000 million resulting in a trade deficit of around Rs. 43,000 million.

Productivity

In 2006, labour productivity for the whole economy grew at 3.5%, higher than the 1.1% growth registered in 2005. Labour productivity for "Manufacturing" increased by 3.1% after a decline of 4.0% in 2005.

Tourist Arrivals

Tourist arrivals for the first quarter of 2007 reached 243,931, an increase of 16.6%

compared to the corresponding quarter of 2006. The number of tourist arrivals for the year 2007 is expected to grow by around 11% to reach 875,000 from 788,276 in 2006

Wage Index

The overall wage rate index, which shows the evolution of the price of labour, increased by 3.8% in 2006 compared to 5.0% in 2005.

(ii) Local

In-House Training

The following officers attended half-day training on Institutional Accounts, Supply and Use and Input/Output tables:

Ms. G. Appadu	Mr. A. Sookun	Mr. E. Lukshmudu
Mr. D. Juleemun	Mr. D. Pothegadoo	Mr. K. Bheecarry
Mr. C. Ramnath	Mr. S. Haulcooree	Mr. S. Chaumoo
Mr. A. Ramasamy	Mr. E. Wong	Mr. P. Seenauth
Mr. R. Thorabally	Ms. D. Balgobin	Mr. S. Mungur
Mr. B. Unmar	Ms. F. Koussa	Ms. A. Owadally
Ms. D. Ramlukon	Ms. R. Soborun	Ms. F. Mohamud
Mr. K. Nardeosingh	Ms. S. Nunhuck	Ms. S.D. Venkatasami
Ms. Cheung Tung Shing	Ms. R. Moraby	Ms. S. Geemul
Mr. D. Jagai	Mr. A. Poreema	Ms. F. Victor
Mr. A. Bundhoo	Ms. R. Fanor	Mr. L. S Lee Chee Sang

Other Local Training

2-Day training on "Leadership and Supervision" :

Mr. B. Unmar Mr. C. Lacleche
Mr. M. Dawoonauth Ms. C. Bandinah

2- Day training on "Public Relations and Customer Care" :

Mr. S. Ramdhun Mr. S.K. Janna Naikeny
Mr. M. Bungsy

5- Day training on "Project Management":

Mr. S. Mungralee

Tips to Make Windows XP More Convenient

by A. Hoolash

When all the attention is turned these days towards Windows Vista, your Windows XP system might get an inferiority complex. However, Windows XP has a lot of life left in it and isn't going anywhere soon. So here is a collection of interface and usability tips that can help make using your trusty old WinXP system a little more convenient and efficient.

Bypass the Recycle Bin

Want to delete a large file that you're sure you'll never need again? To permanently delete the file so that it doesn't take up space in your Recycle Bin, hold down SHIFT key while you delete it.

Caps Lock Alert

Have you ever typed something on your keyboard and then looked up at the screen to find you messed things up by inadvertently pressing the CAPS LOCK key somewhere along the way? WinXP's ToggleKeys feature can play an audible warning whenever you press CAPS LOCK (it works for NUM LOCK and SCROLL LOCK, as well). To activate ToggleKeys, go to Start - Control Panel and open Accessibility Options and check the box labeled "Use ToggleKeys". (Another way to turn ToggleKeys on and off is to hold down NUM LOCK for five seconds).

Check System Up Time

Ever suspect that your system might have rebooted itself while you were away? To see how long your computer has been running, type systeminfo from a command prompt window (Start Button - All Programs - Accessories - Command Prompt). Scroll up

near the top and you'll be able to view the System Up Time, which is displayed right under the date that Windows was originally installed.

Clean Up or Customize the Desktop

Want to tidy up your Desktop? If you right click the Desktop, choose Arrange Icons By, and then remove the check mark next to Show Desktop Icons, you'll make all of its icons disappear. (To get them back, just repeat the process and add the check mark).

You can also customize which of the standard Windows icons will appear on the Desktop, as well as how they look: Right-click the Desktop and then click Properties, the Desktop tab, and the Customize Desktop button. Here you'll be able to select which icons you want to appear (My Computer, My Network Places, My Documents, and Internet Explorer). You can change the default icon for most of them, except Internet Explorer.

Control the System Tray

If your Taskbar's System Tray is filled with so many icons that you can't see them all without expanding it. WinXP can manage them for you. WinXP automatically hides those that it deems inactive, or you can also force it to always hide or always show the icons of your choice. To do this, right-click the Start menu, select Properties, and then click the Taskbar tab. Then click the Customize button, and you'll see a list of all your current and past Taskbar icons. The majority of these will be set to the default "Hide When Inactive", but if you click the setting next to an item, you can change it to "Always Hide" or "Always Show". You can force Windows XP to show or hide certain icons in your System Tray.



Make Your Own Application Toolbar

For easy access to a group of frequently used programs, you can create a Taskbar-based Toolbar for them. First, create a new folder on the Desktop (or anywhere else) and fill it with shortcuts to the programs you want. Then, right-click the Taskbar, select Toolbars, and New Toolbar.

Specify the folder you just created and then all the shortcuts will be conveniently available right from the Taskbar.

Pin Items to the Start Menu

Want to put a favorite application on the top of the Start menu? Right-click the application's program or shortcut icon (it could be in Windows Explorer, on the Desktop, or deeper within the Start menu) and select Pin To Start Menu. This will put the program at the top of the Start menu, and the link will remain valid even if you relocate the original file or shortcut. (NOTE: This only works with applications, not documents). To remove an icon from the Start menu, right-click it and choose Unpin From Start Menu.

Set Up an Icon to Lock Your Computer

You probably know that you can lock your computer and return it to the login screen by holding down the Windows Key (the key on your keyboard with the flying windows icon) and pressing L. But you can do the same thing without the keyboard by creating a shortcut to the lock command that you can conveniently place on your Desktop or Start menu. Right-click the Desktop and select New and Shortcut. When prompted for the location of the item, type `rundll32.exe user32.dll, LockWorkStation` (make sure you include the capital letters). From now on, you'll be able to lock your system by double-clicking the shortcut.

Quick Access to Windows Explorer

A speedy way to access Windows Explorer without clicking through multiple menus is to hold down the Windows key and press E. Explorer will appear. You can use similar keyboard shortcuts to launch the Run dialog box (Windows-R), access System Properties (Windows-PAUSE/BREAK) or to immediately minimize all open windows (Windows-M).

Staffing Developments

Major staffing developments at the Central Statistics Office during the quarter March to June 2007 have been as follows:

Appointments

The 11 officers listed below have been appointed Statisticians in a substantive capacity.

Ms. S. B. Nunhuck	Mr. S. Haulcooree
Mr. A. Sookun	Mr. A. Bundhoo
Mr. A. Ramsamy	Mr. D. Jagai
Mr. A. S. Mungralee	Mrs. D. Balgobin
Mrs. N. Guillaume	Mrs. N.D. Gujadhur
Mrs. B. F. Koussa	

Retirement

1) Mr. G. Vydelingum, Deputy Director of Statistics, retired from the Service in May 2007 on grounds of age limit.

Mr. Vydelingum served this office during 38 years. He joined as Compiler in January 1969 and was subsequently appointed to various positions (Senior Statistical Assistant in 1974, Assistant Statistician in 1981, Statistician

in 1982, Senior Statistician in 2000, Principal Statistician in May 2006, and Deputy Director in November 2006).

2) Mr. R. Auckbur, Statistician, proceeded on leave prior to retirement in May 2007.

Mr. Auckbur joined this office in April 1973. He was appointed Senior Statistical Assistant in July 1974, Assistant Statistician in May 1978, and Statistician in July 1980.

Mr. Auckbur will retire from the Service on grounds of age limit in October 2007, after having served this office for 34 years.

3) Mrs. Q.C. Lee Choon, Senior Statistical Officer, will be proceeding on early retirement from the service in October 2007.

Mrs. Lee Choon reckons 34 years' service at this office. She joined as Compiler in November 1972. She was appointed Senior Statistical Assistant in September 1975.

Mrs. Lee Choon is on leave prior to retirement since May 2007.

Welfare Activities

The Ministry of Health and Quality of Life conducted a medical screening for non-communicable diseases on 8, 9 and 10 May 2007.

The following tests were effected:

- Blood sugar
- Blood pressure
- Obesity (computation of body/mass index)
- Vision

Some 140 officers took advantage of the exercise which shows that Officers are more and more concerned about their health and lifestyle. Further investigations will be carried out at hospitals/health centres for those referred to.

The Ministry of Health and Quality of Life was satisfied of the number of participants.

This office seizes this opportunity to convey our gratitude to the medical practitioners as well as their supporting team for their collaboration.