

COLONY OF MAURITIUS

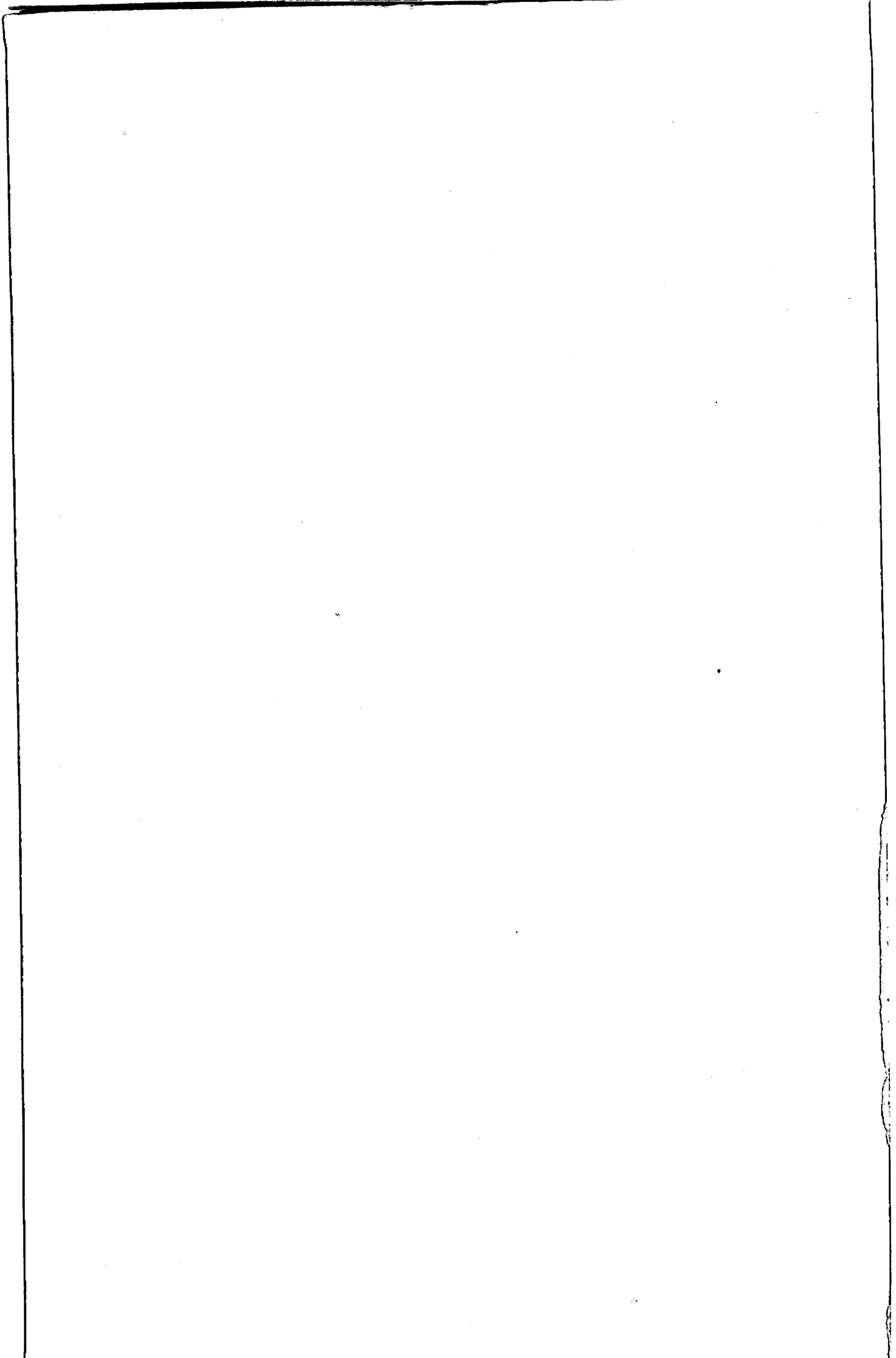
ANNUAL REPORT

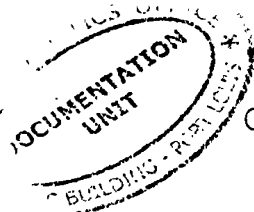
OF THE

Central Statistical Office

for the year 1959







ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
CENTRAL STATISTICAL OFFICE
FOR THE YEAR 1959



FUNCTIONS

In July, 1945, a Statistical Bureau was created in consequence of a recommendation made by the Commission of Enquiry into the disturbances which occurred in the North of Mauritius in 1943.

The original functions assigned to this Bureau were to collect and compile accurate information as to wages of labour, the number and type of employment in various industries, the level of prices and the computation of cost of living indices. The Bureau was also assigned the task of supervising and coordinating the statistical data collected in various Government Departments. These functions of the Bureau were gradually extended to involve the periodical statistical survey of every branch of economic activity in the island: agricultural, industrial, financial and commercial. It also keeps under review the demographic, vital, health, educational and other social statistics of the life of the Colony. In July, 1948, the original Statistical Bureau became the Central Statistical Office.

The information collected, tabulated and analysed by the Central Statistical Office is presented in an annual handbook, in such a form as can be conveniently utilised by the Government, the general public and outside institutions. This Year Book of Statistics for Mauritius has been published annually since 1946.

The office draws up complete annual tables of the Balance of Payments of the Colony, of Capital Formation aggregates, of National Income and National Accounts.

In addition, the Central Statistical Office has also to prepare a large number of statistical reports for submission to the Colonial Office and to the various agencies of the United Nations Organisation. It has to reply to a great number of enquiries from abroad, in addition to those from local organisations, institutions and individuals. When time and opportunity offer, it also carries out research on the statistical material collected by the Department.

LOCATION

With the gradual expansion of the Central Statistical Office, the building in which it is housed at No. 5, Abbe de La Caille Street, Beau Bassin, has proved to be no longer adequate for its requirements. The new and bulkier Hollerith equipment, expected to arrive at the beginning of 1960, cannot be installed in the present building, and no space is available for further enlargement. It was therefore considered advisable to erect a larger building on Crown land adjoining the Police Station at Rose Hill. The new building will form part of the plan for the reconstruction and centralisation of Government departments and offices on that site.

At the end of the year the building was nearly completed.

STAFF

The strength of the staff as at the end of the year consisted of: -

The Director of Statistics
The Assistant Director
The Statistician
Two Assistant Statisticians
An Office Superintendent
Ten Compilers
A Hollerith Operator
A Typist-Stenographer
4 Punch & Verifier Operators

STAFF MOVEMENT

Mr. Marc Herchenroder, who had been Director of Statistics since 1946, left the Colony on vacation leave prior to retirement on the 29th March.

Mr. L.Honore, the Assistant Director was appointed Acting Director.

Mr. M.Etienne, Statistician and Mr. F.Empeigne, Assistant Statistician acted as Assistant Director and Statistician respectively.

QUALIFYING EXAMINATIONS

Local examinations were again held this year by the Association of Incorporated Statisticians.

Mr. F.L'Aiguille completed Part B of the final examination of the Associateship and thus qualified for this certificate.

Mr. F.Cheong Tin was successful at the intermediate examination.

YEAR BOOK OF STATISTICS

The Year Book of Statistics for 1958 was issued in October.

CONSUMERS' PRICES AND COST OF LIVING

Monthly surveys of the current retail prices of a large number of articles of common consumption were continued. Indexes of these prices relative to pre-war were worked out for 72 articles of food and beverages, 40 articles of clothing and textiles and 43 articles of household necessity, including fuel.

CONSUMERS' PRICE INDEX

This index (otherwise called "the cost of living index") was computed each month for each six different categories of consumers. These monthly indexes were regularly published in the Government Gazette.

At the invitation of Government, Mr. K.J.Penniment, a member of the Statistical Division of International Labour

Organisation made a stay of just under a month in the Colony. During his visit he made a thorough study of the present arrangement for collecting information relating to household expenditure and of the method used in the computation of the various consumers' price indices.

STATISTICAL RETURNS FOR THE COLONIAL OFFICE

Several monthly and quarterly returns of demographic, vital, industrial production and trade statistics were regularly furnished to the Statistical Department of the Colonial Office.

The sections on Mauritius in the Digest of Colonial Statistics published by the Colonial Office are also periodically revised.

STATISTICS FOR THE UNITED NATIONS ORGANISATION

Extensive questionnaires from the United Nations Organisation and its agencies, dealing with demographic and vital data and statistics of cultivation, production, livestock, foodstuffs, external trade, etc., for Mauritius and its Dependencies were answered.

Since January 1951, monthly statistical tables (covering various subjects) have been furnished for the Monthly Bulletin of Statistics of the United Nations Organisation.

STATISTICS OF THE SUGAR INDUSTRY

As in previous years, the Central Statistical Office undertook the compilation of complete data relating to cultivation, production and manufacture in the sugar industry. Tabular statements on the crop results were circulated to the Director of Agriculture, the Chamber of Agriculture, the Central Board and the Agricultural Bank. In addition, with the kind assistance of the Registrar of the Co-Operative Societies, a satisfactorily large sample of data relating to small plantations was analysed and published.

Bi-annual statements of employment and wages for artisans and skilled personnel in the sugar industry were collected, compiled and analysed.

TRADE STATISTICS

Complete statistics of imports and exports on the basis of the Standard International Trade Classification continued to be compiled in the Office in collaboration with the Customs Authorities. Since 1953 a publication embodying complete trade accounts has been produced by the Customs Department. In addition the Year Book of Statistics gives a complementary analysis of the year's trade with relevant index numbers and other information.

NATIONAL INCOME AND NATIONAL ACCOUNTS

The National Income and National Accounts Tables for 1958 were prepared in continuation of the published result for previous years and issued for official information in December. Complete information and data on this subject are now available from 1948 onwards.

BALANCE OF PAYMENTS OF THE COLONY

Tables of the Balance of Payments for the year 1958 were computed as in previous years and this work, which necessitated analyses of the records of the Treasury and the Post Office, and the compilation of returns from private banks and commercial agencies, was completed in August.

CAPITAL FORMATION ESTIMATES

Tabular statements of Capital Formation and Consumption in the Colony during the year 1958 were compiled and issued as previously at the request of the Secretary of State. Provisional tables were forwarded to the Secretary of State by the middle of March and the final tables in June.

SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS

Dr. B. Abel Smith and Mr. W. Lynes, two members of the Titmuss Mission, arrived in Mauritius on the 5th of August to make a preliminary enquiry with a view to advising Government as to the provisions to be made for Social Security, bearing in mind the resources of Mauritius and the needs of the people.

Both called on the Ag. Director of Statistics and asked for his assistance and that of his staff in matters connected with their investigations.

This office is still engaged in preparing extensive statistical system analyses for the Mission.

Help was also given during the year to the experts of the World Health Organisation who were engaged on special health and nutrition investigations in the island.

COMMISSION ON PURCHASING POWER OF THE RUPEE

Early in May 1958 there was constituted a Commission of six Members of the Legislative Council, with the Director of the Central Statistical Office as an additional member, whose terms of reference were broadly to investigate matters affecting the purchasing power of the rupee, the structure of the credit system, interest levels, etc.

The Commission held its first sitting in June 1958 and submitted its report in June 1959. Numerous demands for investigations, computations and data of a statistical nature were made on the Central Statistical Office in connexion with the work of the Commission.

MISCELLANEOUS ACTIVITIES

During the year the office dealt with a large number of enquiries of a private nature from individuals and institutions both local and abroad.

HOLLERITH PUNCHED CARD EQUIPMENT

In addition to the work of the Central Statistical Office, the Hollerith equipment is at present used to compile and tabulate: -

- (i) trade statistics of which monthly, quarterly and annual accounts are produced;
- (ii) statistics of the Health Department;
- (iii) statistics of the Income Tax Department;
- (iv) statistics of crime;
- (v) complete monthly and annual statements of vital statistics for the Civil Status Office;
- (vi) certain statistics of the Postal Department;
- (vii) Crown Agents monthly statements of Revenue and Expenditure for the Accountant General's Department.

The equipment was also put to considerable use in making special compilations and tabulations for the Titmuss Mission and the Cyclone and Drought Insurance Board.

A new Hollerith tabulator and a new sorter were ordered, and by the end of the year notification had been received that the equipment was to be expected early in 1960.

PUBLICATIONS OF THE CENTRAL STATISTICAL OFFICE

The following list of all publications issued by the Central Statistical Office as from its foundation is inserted here for reference:

<u>Title of Publications</u>	<u>Date of Issue</u>
Year Book of Statistics	Annually
Mauritius Life Table (1944-1946)	September, 1947
Mauritius Life Table (1951-1953)	December, 1954
National Income & National Accounts of Mauritius 1948 - 1954 [†]	November, 1955
Gross & Net Capital Formation in Mauritius 1948 - 1954	March, 1956
Natality and Fertility in Mauritius 1825-1955	June, 1956
Highlights of Mauritian Economy 1946-1956	January-February 1957 (Revue Agricole et Sucriere de l'ile Maurice)
Gross & Net Capital Formation in Mauritius 1948-1956 (revised version)	December, 1957

[†]Computed annually since 1954.

L. Honore
Ag. Director of Statistics

15th February, 1960.