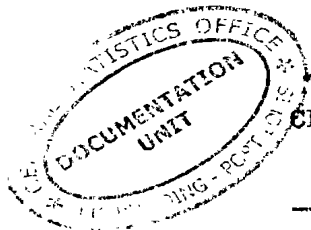
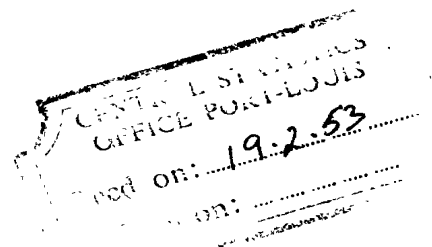


COLONY OF MAURITIUS

ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE CENTRAL STATISTICAL OFFICE
FOR THE YEAR 1952



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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 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. The scope of its activities now is no longer so limited, however, for it also keeps under review the demographic, the 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 whole mass of valuable information collected and analysed by the Central Statistical Office is presented in an annual handbook, in a form in which it can be conveniently utilised by the Government, the general public and outside institutions. The preparation of such a handbook calls for general familiarity with statistical technique; it demands a discriminating appraisal of the data obtained in order to render them, in the way of presenting the information involved, of greater use. This Year Book of Statistics for Mauritius has been published annually since 1946.

In addition the Central Statistical Office has also to prepare a 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 large number of enquiries from abroad, in addition to those from local organisations, institutions and individuals. When time and opportunity offers, it also carries out research on the material collected by the Department.

The Central Statistical Office is now in constant contact with the Colonial Office Statistical Department, a new separate organisation created towards the end of 1948.

LOCATION

Throughout the year, the Central Statistical Office was housed in a stone and concrete building at 8, Reverend Lebrun Street, Rose Hill.

An extension to the existing building was erected in June to serve as Census Office and at the same time shelter the Hollerith equipment.

STAFF

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

The Director of Statistics
The Assistant Director
The Senior Statistician
Two Assistant Statisticians
A Senior Compiler and Ten Compilers
One Typist.

STAFF MOVEMENTS/

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During the year the Senior Statistician, Mr. M. ETIENNE, followed courses in Statistics at the London School of Economics and at the Regent Street Polytechnic. He also went through a course of practical training in the Treasury, in the Board of Trade, in the Ministry of Agriculture and in the Social Survey Section of the Ministry of Information.

Mr. F. EMPEIGNE, one of the Assistant Statisticians, acted as Senior Statistician.

Miss E. GUILLEMIN, Typist, was as from the 1st of June appointed Acting Compiler. She was given preliminary training in punching technique by the Hollerith investigator who visited Mauritius and later, when the equipment arrived in October, became punching supervisor and a machine operator. She was replaced in the post of typist by Miss Y. LESAGE of the Posts and Telegraphs Department.

Mr. F. L'AIGUILLE, Second Grade Clerk, Income Tax Department, Mr. H. ITHIER, Miss L. SMITH and Miss G. LAMALETIE, Clerk Supplies Control Department, joined the Department as Compilers; the first three on the 17th of October and the last one on the 3rd of December.

QUALIFICATION AS REGISTERED STATISTICAL ASSISTANT

By arrangements with the Council of the Association of Incorporated Statisticians and its Secretary, the examination for the Certificate of Registered Statistical Assistant of this Association, incorporated in England, was for the first time held in Mauritius during the first days of December, 1952. Four members of the Central Statistical Office took part.

YEAR BOOK OF STATISTICS

The Year Book of Statistics for 1951 was prepared as usual and was almost complete in MSS by the end of the year.

The issue of the Year Book of Statistics for 1951 has unfortunately suffered belatedness. Apart from the fact that there was considerable pressure of more urgent work on the staff, the production of the volume had moreover to wait for the acquisition of a special new typewriter, the use of which was expected to improve very materially the typographic appearance.

CONSUMERS' PRICES AND COST OF LIVING

Monthly surveys of the current retail prices of a large number of articles of common consumption were continued as heretofore. Indexes of these prices relative to prewar were worked out for 71 articles of food and beverages, 40 articles of clothing and textiles, 43 articles of household necessity, including fuel items.

CONSUMERS' PRICE INDICES (otherwise called the cost of living index) were computed each month for six different groups of consumers. These monthly indexes were regularly published in the Government Gazette. Early in the year, about one thousand forms suitable for an analysis of family budgetary expenditure were circulated to members of different occupational and social groups in the island. These groups comprised labourers, artisans, clerical workers and higher administrative officials and professionals. Through pressure of work, however, it has not yet been possible to examine how the results of this new sampling affect the weighting diagrams in use.

STATISTICAL RETURNS FOR THE COLONIAL OFFICE

Some 15 Monthly and Quarterly returns of demographic, vital and trade Statistics were regularly furnished to the Statistical Department of the Colonial Office.

STATISTICS FOR THE UNITED NATIONS ORGANISATION, FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL ORGANISATIONS AND OTHER AGENCIES

Extensive questionnaires from the United Nations Organisation and its agencies, dealing with demographic and vital statistics, cultivation, production, livestock, foodstuffs, external trade, etc., for Mauritius and its dependencies were replied to. Other extensive questionnaires from the Economic Reporting Service of the State Department, Washington, dealing with sea port facilities and connected matters in Mauritius were also dealt with. Statistical information on various subjects was supplied to the British Consul in Madagascar.

Since January 1951, monthly Statistical tables (covering varied subjects) were in addition 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. The tabulated information on the crop results was circulated to the Director of Agriculture, the Chamber of Agriculture and the Agricultural Bank. In addition, with the kind assistance of the Registrar of the Co-operative Societies, a satisfactorily large sample of small plantation results 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

On the 1st of January, the Standard International Trade Classification (S.I.T.C.) was adopted by the Customs Department for the Colony's Trade Statistics.

A revision of the existing Customs Tariff classification based on the Standard International Trade Classification started last year. The adoption of this new classification has been under consideration and it is expected that it will be adopted in 1953.

SALARIES COMMISSION

The Director and Staff of the Central Statistical Office continued during the year to furnish information and to be consulted on matters connected with the revision of Salaries of Government Servants.

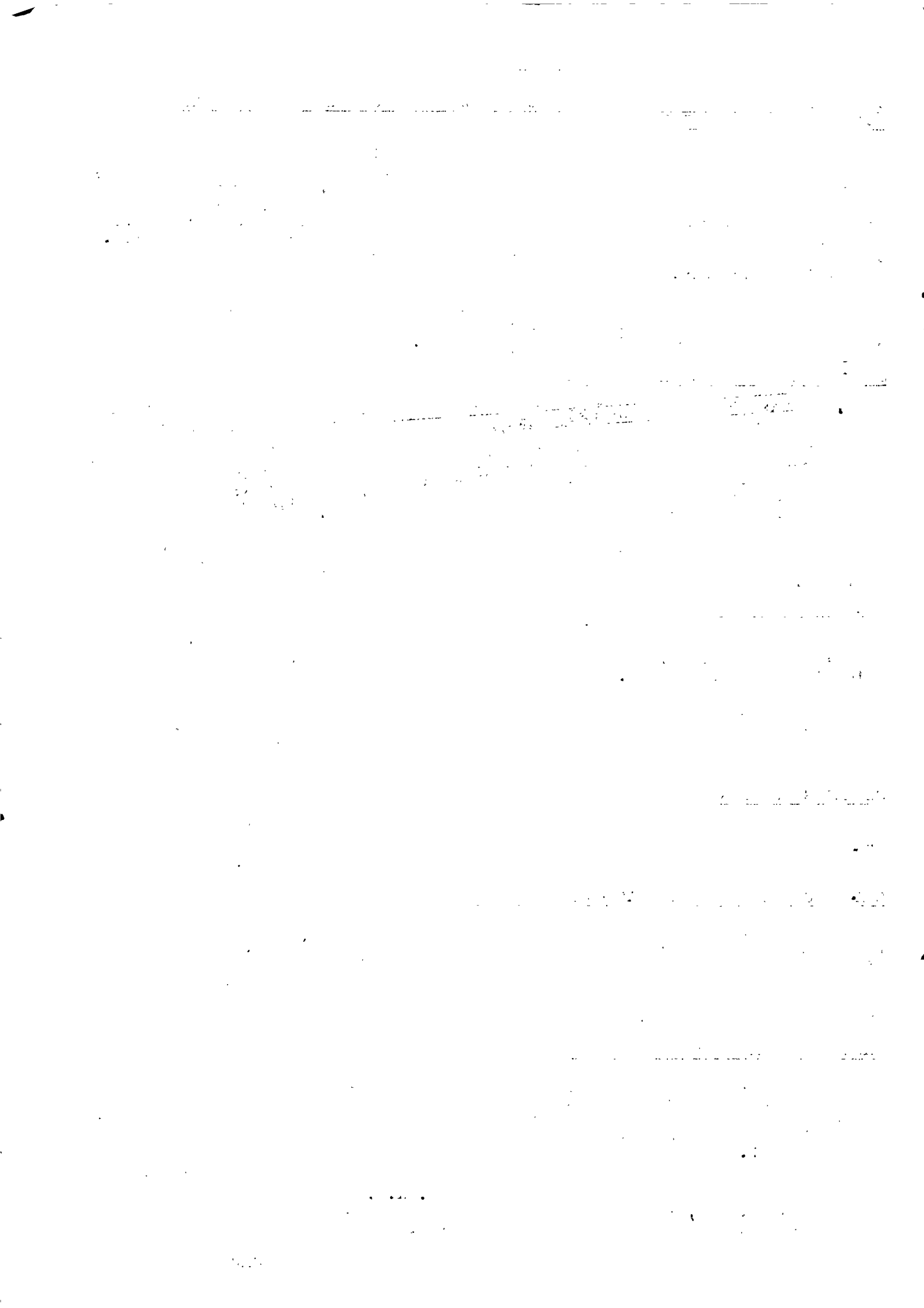
STANDING COST OF LIVING ALLOWANCE COMMITTEE

The Director continued to form part of the Standing Cost of Living Allowance Committee which was set up in June last year. Three sittings of the Committee took place and were mostly concerned with the working out of the trend in Cost of Living indexes and the examination of a scheme of consolidation for Cost of Living Allowance which had been submitted by Government.

BALANCE OF PAYMENTS OF THE COLONY

The Balance of Payments for the years 1950 and 1951 were computed and this work for which extensive investigations had to be carried out in the records of the Treasury, of private firms and of trading banks, was completed in August in respect of the year 1950 and in November in respect of the year 1951.

The Director wishes to record his appreciation of the interest taken and of the kind assistance given by Mr. A.T. FRANCIS, the Manager of Barclays Bank, who, in consultation with the other Bank Managers, collected the banking data relevant to this calculation.



CAPITAL FORMATION ESTIMATES

Calculations of the Capital Formation in the Colony during the years 1950 and 1951 were as previously undertaken at the request of the Secretary of State.

The final tables for 1950 were completed in March and the provisional figures for 1951 were forwarded to the Secretary of State by the end of April.

THE NATIONAL INCOME

The patient collection of data which had become possible under the powers afforded by the legislation enacted the previous year bore its fruits in enabling the gross and net national product of the Colony to be calculated for the first time in Mauritius. This calculation was made in respect of the year 1950, but it will henceforward, it is expected, be calculated annually as a matter of routine.

The complete plan regarding the National Income assessment allows for an entirely independent computation to be made from statistical material which will be provided by the Census of population and which should also be available from the Income Tax Office records.

LEGISLATION

Another addition was made to the number of Regulations already enacted under Ordinance No.11 of 1951 concerning the taking of Censuses and collection of Statistical Information.

This was Government Notice No.20 of 1952 which provided for a declaration of the nature and purpose of all transfers or remittances of funds effected outside the Colony.

CENSUS 1952

The Census of population which had been ordered by the Governor in Council, under G.N. No.245 of 1951, was carried out according to plan. Three members of the Central Statistical Office's Staff acted as Supervisors and one other member superintended the enumeration for Port Louis, the Capital. The preliminary enumeration and numbering of dwellings and buildings was started on the 1st of February and was for the greater part completed by the 15th of May; preparations were then made for the final enumeration on individual household schedules to take place on the night of the 28th - 29th June, 1952. The distribution and collection of schedules were effected with but few hitches. A certain number of unsatisfactorily filled schedules had to be returned to the householders concerned for completion, but on the whole by the end of August, all schedules had been delivered to the Census Office by the District Superintendents. With one or two exceptions, the Superintendents and Enumerators did their work satisfactorily well. In particular, the Superintendent of Rodrigues Island, who could not receive direct help from the Senior Census Staff, carried out his duties remarkably well. To all Superintendents and Enumerators and to the Rodrigues Superintendent in particular, I tender here my appreciation of their devotion to duty sometimes in face of quite unpleasant odds. The compilation of the Census results has been undertaken with the help, for the first time in Mauritius, of the Hollerith Punched Card System, the equipment for which arrived almost in right time. Coding and Punching of the results of the preliminary enumeration were started in August. In September the coding and punching of the information recorded on the final schedules were started and by the end of the year this work was in good progress.

The first tabulations were not secured until the end of October but it must be remembered that an important period of training staff on these machines and of planning the tabulation work had to be effected

during/

during the months of August and September. Assuming that there will not occur any unforeseen impediment to the work of compilation, it is probable that the tabulations will be completed by mid-April 1953.

SECOND CONFERENCE OF COLONIAL GOVERNMENT STATISTICIANS

Intimation was received in January that a second Conference of Colonial Government Statisticians would take place in April and May 1953 in London.

The Director of the Central Statistical Office has been invited to represent the Colony at this Conference.

VISITS

A number of visitors to the island, whose interests were concerned with the commercial and economic or social activities of the Colony, called on the Director for information.

MISCELLANEOUS OTHER ACTIVITIES

The Office had to reply during the year to a large number of enquiries of a private nature from individuals and institutions both local and abroad, in addition to numerous enquiries of an official character.

OFFICE EQUIPMENT

Some valuable books and publications were added in the Library during the year.

A Facit electric calculator Model ESA - 0 was purchased locally in October to cope with the increasing volume of computations to be performed in the office. The Marchant calculator, which had been purchased in 1947, gave trouble and was for some time out of commission. The office made the acquisition during the year of a Gestetner Model 160 Electric Duplicator, the main function of which will be the production of the Year Book of Statistics, which had now expanded to a volume of some 200 foolscap pages.

A cabinet for Hollerith Cards was received towards the end of the year.

HOLLERITH PUNCHED CARD EQUIPMENT

This equipment which consists of five punches and four verifiers, one sorter and one tabulator had been received and was working to capacity by November. The punches and verifiers were first received in June and after the arrival of the Hollerith Supervisor at the beginning of July, the training of the Staff immediately started. The rest of the equipment was received and set up in the course of September and October.

Thanks to the unstinted efforts of Mr; F.A. HUDSON, the Supervisor of the British Tabulating Machine Company Ltd., the efficiency and speed of the Hollerith operating staff had by the end of the year reached a very satisfactory mark by European standards.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I have much pleasure in recording here my appreciation of the good work performed throughout the year, by every member of the staff.

M. HERCHENRODER

February, 1953.

Director of Statistics.

