

CHAPTER 1

Government Business

The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria provides that “the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of Government” and that, within the context of the ideals and objectives for which provisions are made in the Constitution, the State shall, inter alia:

- (i) “harness the resources of the nation and promote national prosperity and an efficient, a dynamic and self-reliant economy,” and
- (ii) control the national economy in such manner as to secure the maximum welfare, freedom and happiness of every citizen on the basis of social justice and equality of status and opportunity”.

Structure of Government

2. Government is made up of three arms, viz; the Legislature, the Executive and the Judiciary. The Legislature is saddled with the following responsibilities: law making, representation, oversight, and confirming the appointments of Ministers, Ambassadors, Judges, Chairmen and members of Commissions etc. The Executive is responsible for the day-to-day management of Government. In this context, it conceives, formulates, executes and monitors the policies, programmes and projects of the Government. The Judiciary, on its part, simply adjudicates.

3. Nigeria practices the Presidential system of Government under which the Federal Government is headed by the President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces and each of the 36 State Governments is headed by a Governor. At the Federal level, the President of the Senate heads the Legislature, complemented by the Speaker who heads the House of Representatives. The Senate consists of three Senators from each State and one from the FCT, making a total of 109. The House of Representatives consists of 360 members. The Judiciary is headed by the Chief Justice of Nigeria. The Legislature and the Judiciary are headed, at the State level, by the Speaker and the Chief Judge respectively.

4. The law making power of Government is vested in the National Assembly, at the Federal level, and in the House of Assembly at the State level. Either way, the members are elected by Nigerians and, just like the Executive, the main concerns of the Legislative Arm of Government centre on the security as well as

economic, political and social welfare of the people. Though the Legislature approves the Budget and makes the laws, it does not implement such laws. That duty belongs to the Executive.

5. Under the Constitution, the Federal Government has exclusive responsibility for specified matters such as Foreign Affairs, Defence, Aviation, Police, Telecommunications, Banking and Currency etc. On some other matters, both the Federal and State Governments share responsibilities. These areas which appear in the Concurrent List in the Constitution, include Health, Education, Roads etc. As a counter-weight to the Exclusive List, residual powers relate to matters upon which only the State Governments are empowered to legislate, e.g. social welfare, cooperative societies etc.

6. There exists, in the country, a third tier of Government called the Local Government of which there are 774 in all, across the nation. Local Government Chairmen and Councilors are also elected and are widely regarded as being closest to the people. The structure of the Local government is less elaborate in comparison with the Federal and State Governments. The topmost career Civil Servant in the set-up is designated as Secretary.

7. The Executive Council of the Federation, otherwise known as the Federal Executive Council or the Cabinet, has the duty and responsibility of determining Government policies on various matters. The Council comprises the Ministers of the Federal Republic. The Secretary to the Council is the Secretary to the Government of the Federation. The Council meets regularly, usually weekly. These meetings are attended by a few top aides of the President, including the Head of the Civil Service of the Federation and the National Security Adviser.

8. In order to facilitate assignment of responsibilities for a group of specific activities, the Civil Service is divided into Ministries and Extra-Ministerial Departments. Each Ministry is headed by a Minister of Cabinet rank who is the Chief Executive. His Chief Adviser is the Permanent Secretary who is also the Ministry's Accounting Officer. In some large Ministries, there are one or more Ministers of State who assist the Chief Executives. Extra-Ministerial Departments, on the other hand, usually have their Chief Executives designated as Chairmen e.g. Chairman, Federal Civil Service Commission. Every Chief Executive has the general responsibility for the achievement of the corporate objectives of the establishment.

9. Apart from the Civil Service, the Public Service also encompasses the Armed Forces, the Judiciary, the Legislature and the Police. There are, in addition, Parastatals, Statutory Agencies and Government-owned companies, all of which are attached to Ministries or the Presidency for purposes of supervision and coordination. Depending on their respective enabling legislations, the Chief

Executives of these latter bodies are known as Managing Directors, Directors-General or General Managers.

Good Governance

10. In recent times, it is being increasingly accepted that **good governance** is an important fundamental for efficient economic management and development and that it should, as such, be incorporated into our political system. Accordingly, the citizen expects the Government to use State resources to manage the affairs of the country judiciously. Good governance can be understood as comprising the following characteristics:

- (i) *Rule of Law*
 - fair legal frameworks that are enforced impartially;
 - Full protection of human rights, particularly those of minorities;
 - Independent judiciary and an impartial and incorruptible police.

- (ii) *Participation*
 - participation by both men and women;
 - participation also means freedom of association and expression on the one hand and an organized civil society on the other hand;
 - participation by direct or through legitimate intermediate institutions or representatives.

- (iii) *Transparency*
 - decisions taken and their enforcement are done in a manner that follows rules and regulations;
 - information is freely available and accessible to those who will be affected by such decisions and their enforcement;
 - people understand why government takes certain decisions;
 - there is zero tolerance for corruption.

- (iv) *Accountability*
 - governmental institutions as well as the private sector and civil society organizations must be accountable to the public and to their institutional stakeholders;

- organizations and institutions are accountable to those who will be affected by decisions or actions.
- (v) *Effectiveness and Efficiency*
- processes and institutions produce results that meet the needs of society while making the best use of resources at their disposal;
 - need for sustainable use of natural resources and the protection of the environment is recognized;
 - public officials carry out their duties efficiently and effectively as well as with sensitivity as to how services are best delivered to the public.
- (vi) *Equity and Inclusiveness*
- ensuring that all members of society feel that they have a stake in it and do not feel excluded from the mainstream;
 - all groups, especially the most vulnerable, have opportunities to maintain or improve their well being;
 - citizens of whichever religion, ethnic group, age or sex to be free from discrimination.
- (vii) *Consensus Orientation*
- need for mediation of the different interests in the society to reach a broad consensus on what is in the best interest of the whole community and how this can be achieved;
 - a long-term perspective for sustainable human development and how to achieve the goals of such a development.
- (viii) *Responsiveness*
- institutions and processes try to serve all stakeholders within a reasonable timeframe.
- (ix) *Security and Order*
- ensure peace and security and orderliness for citizens to get on with their lives to achieve their optimum.
- (x) *Conflicts*
- capacity to prevent/manage conflicts in society.

- (xi) *Purposeful Leadership*
 - ensuring credible, honest, disciplined, committed and purposeful leadership

- (xii) *Welfare of People*
 - ensuring welfare of the people through capacity building and socio-economic empowerment.

The civil service has a crucial role to play in ensuring that Nigeria is administered in a manner consistent with the aforementioned attributes and characteristics of good governance.

CHAPTER 2

Government Revenue and Expenditure

The term "Public Finance" is also referred to as "Government Finance" or "Public Moneys". It is defined by Section 2 of the Finance (Control and Management) Act of 1958 to include:

- (a) The Public Revenue of the Federation
 - (b) Any moneys held in his official capacity, whether subject to any trust or specific location or not, by any Officer in the Public Service of the Federation or by any agent of the government either alone or jointly with any other person.
2. The interest of modern day government in the economy is manifested via intervention through fiscal and monetary policies, using discretionary changes in the levels of government taxes, expenditures and borrowings to achieve desired socio-political and macro-economic objectives.
3. However, government revenue derives from various sources of income and can broadly be classified into two sections, namely:
- (a) Oil Revenue.
 - (b) Non-Oil Revenue.
 - (i) *OIL REVENUE* includes Petroleum Profit Tax, Rent Royalties and Government Crude Oil Sales, and proceeds from domestic consumption etc.
 - (ii) *Non-OIL REVENUE* refers to Indirect and Direct Taxes, Company Tax, Income Tax, Personal Income tax, etc. The tax revenue includes or consists of both direct and indirect taxes while the non-tax revenue refers to income accruable to the government outside its taxes such as operating surplus from its parastatals. Indirect taxes include excise duties, import duties, purchase tax etc.

Revenue Allocation

4. The Revenue Mobilization Allocation and Fiscal Commission is one of the Federal Executive Bodies provided for in the 1999 Constitution. Among other functions, the Commission has the power to:

- (i) monitor the accruals to and disbursement of revenue from the Federation Account; and
- (ii) review, from time to time, the revenue allocation formulae and principles in operation to ensure conformity with changing realities.

5. As of now, the Revenue Allocation formula in operation among the three tiers of government is as hereunder:

(i)	Federal Government	-	52.68%
(ii)	State Governments	-	26,72%
(iii)	Local Governments	-	<u>20.60%</u>
	Total	=	<u>100.00%</u>

The 52.68% share of the Federal Government goes into the Consolidated Revenue Fund and is sub-allocated by the Federal Government on the following basis:

(i)	Federal government	-	48.50%
(ii)	FGN Share of Derivation Ecology	-	1.00%
(iii)	Federal Capital Territory	-	1.00%
(iv)	Stabilization Fund	-	0.50%
(v)	Development of Natural Resources	-	<u>1.68%</u>
	Total	=	<u>52.68%</u>

Types of Accounts

6. The following are the major types of accounts in the Federal Public Service:

(i) *Federation Account*
 The incomes accruing to this account are direct taxes, indirect taxes and mining. It is a distributable (special) pooling account in which all revenues collected by the Federal Government are paid except the proceeds of tax under pay-as-you-earn system from the Armed Forces personnel, police personnel, foreign service officers and FCT-Abuja residents and other prescribed independent revenues. It is distributable among the Federal, State and Local governments in accordance with the extant revenue formula.

(ii) *Consolidated Revenue Fund*
 This is an account established by the 1999 Constitution which is not distributable, but solely for the Federal Government. All revenues

received by the Federal Government are paid into the account; the sources include:

- (i) Share from the Federation Account
- (ii) Indirect taxes
- (iii) License fees and other internal revenues
- (iv) Earnings and sales

All Recurrent Expenditures including the salaries of the Auditor-General, Chief Justice, President etc are charged to it.

(iii) Development Fund

This Fund is meant for capital projects. It is established by the 1999 Constitution. The sources of remittances to the Fund are transfers from the Consolidated Revenue Fund, external grants, internal grants etc. The Fund is utilised for sundry capital expenditures such as on roads, airports, seaports as well as on general administration e.g. provision and maintenance of prisons, police stations, barracks etc.

(iv) Contingency Fund

The Contingency Fund was established to take care of un-foreseen circumstances such as national disasters, fire-outbreaks, serious flooding etc.

The Budgeting Process at the Federal Level

Shared Responsibility for the Budget

7. The responsibility for the Federal Budget is shared between the Executive and the Legislature, which are two of the three arms of the Federal Government. The Constitution requires the President to submit a budget for the next financial year to the National Assembly for approval. Therefore, the Executive is responsible for preparing the Federal Budget while the Legislature approves it.

The Executive's Plans

8. The President gives directives to the Minister of Finance and the Budget Office of the Federation to prepare the Budget in line with the Government's vision and direction for Nigeria. The plans indicate what the Government intends to do to reduce poverty, generate wealth and create jobs. As the preparation of the Federal Budget is done against the background of these development plans, the Budget serves as a policy tool for attaining the immediate, medium and long-term development goals of Government.

The Medium-Term Revenue Framework

9. The Budget Office of the Federation, in consultation with the revenue generating agencies of the Federal Government, projects estimates of oil and non-oil revenues. Once the underlying assumptions are agreed, they are then used to estimate the amount of total revenue that will accrue to the Federation Account. The share of the Federal Government is then determined. These revenues are estimated for the next three years and are documented in the Medium-Term Revenue Framework.

The Medium-Term Expenditure Framework

10. The next step is to determine (a) the maximum amount that the Federal Government will spend in the financial year (b) how this amount is to be sub-allocated among the major expenditure heads and (c) the difference between available revenues and the total amount to be spent. In determining these estimates, the aim is to balance the need to spend money to attain the nation's developmental goals and the need to live within our means. The fiscal rule being observed under the *Fiscal Responsibility Act 2007* is that total spending should not exceed total revenues by more than 3% of GDP (Gross Domestic Product). GDP is the measure of the total value of goods and services produced within the economy in any single year. Once the maximum amount of money to be spent is ascertained, the amount of the Budget Deficit/Surplus is determined by subtracting total spending from total revenues. If expenditure is more than revenues, there will be a deficit and the Government must determine how this is to be financed. This is done usually by borrowing, asset sales or other sources. The maximum amount of spending, called the Aggregate Expenditure Ceiling, is then sub-allocated among the three major heads of expenditure, that is, Statutory Transfers, Debt Service and MDA Expenditure. All of the above are documented in what is referred to as the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) which covers a three-year period.

Stakeholders' Consultation

11. The Medium-Term Revenue and Medium-Term Expenditure Frameworks are then presented to different Stakeholders (including the National Assembly, the Organised Private Sector, Civil Society and the Public Sector) for their input and buy-in. The Stakeholders' consultations typically take the form of a one-day open and interactive session. However, for the National Assembly, the consultations are more rigorous and continuous, and their input is particularly taken into account in preparing the Budget.

MDA Expenditure Ceilings

12. The next stage is to sub-allocate MDA Expenditure among the various MDAs of the Federal Government. This is done by the Budget Office of the Federation, under the supervision of the Minister of Finance and is subsequently approved by the President. In allocating the spending ceilings, account is taken of the size of each MDA's payroll and the priority level accorded to the services to be delivered by each MDA. An Expenditure Ceiling is allotted to each MDA from which it must meet all its needs and deliver public goods and services. The allotment of the Expenditure Ceiling is to ensure that the sum of spending by MDAs does not exceed the Aggregate Expenditure Ceiling determined in the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework. Indicative Ceilings are initially allotted and later finalized.

Medium-Term Sector Strategies (MTSS)

13. MDAs are now required to develop and articulate Medium-Term Sector Strategies (or MTSS) consistent with the Plans of the Government. The MDAs identify and document the key initiatives (that is, projects and programmes) that will be embarked upon to achieve their goals and objectives, bearing in mind their Expenditure Ceiling. These initiatives are costed, phased over three years and linked to expected outcomes. The outcomes of the MTSS are then used as policy documents against which budget proposals of the MDAs are evaluated. This has been a feature of the budget preparation process since 2005 and covers at least 80% of MDA Expenditure.

Approval of the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework and the Fiscal Strategy Paper by the Executive Council of the Federation and the National Assembly

14. The Medium-Term Revenue Framework, the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework and the statements of how the Federal Government proposes to conduct its fiscal affairs for the next three years are summarized in a Fiscal Strategy Paper. The Fiscal Strategy Paper is then presented to the Executive Council of the Federation, along with the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework, for consideration and approval, so that required spending tradeoffs can be properly debated and agreed. Once approved by the Executive Council, the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework and the Fiscal Strategy Paper are shared with the National Assembly.

The Budget Call Circular & Evaluation of Submissions by MDAs

15. The next stage is the issuance of the Budget Call Circular by the Minister of Finance. The Budget Call Circular gives detailed instructions to the MDAs on

how to prepare and submit their expenditure estimates in accordance with Government's priorities and within the limits of their Expenditure Ceilings. MDAs then prepare their budget proposals in accordance with the Budget Call Circular and within their Expenditure Ceilings, and submit same to the Budget Office of the Federation. The principal role of the Budget Office at this stage is to ensure that MDAs stay within their allotted Expenditure Ceilings and that the budget proposals are consistent with the priorities of Government and the MTSS. The Budget Office evaluates and consolidates the submissions of the various MDAs and prepares the draft Budget.

The President's Approval and Transmission of the Budget to the Legislature

16. The draft Budget is then presented to the President for approval. Once approved by the President, the Budget and other supporting documents are formally presented by the President to the National Assembly for consideration and appropriation.

Approval by the National Assembly and Assent by the President

17. Following the presentation of the Budget to the National Assembly, the Budget is debated and then passed by each House of the National Assembly. The two Houses then meet to harmonise their respective positions. The recommendations of the various Committees that have oversight over the MDAs are considered and collated by the Appropriation Committee of each House of the National Assembly. These Appropriation Committees make final recommendations to each House. Once harmonized, the Appropriation Bill is then transmitted to the President for his assent. The President gives his assent and signs the Budget Appropriation Bill into law. Clearly, the preparation of the Federal Budget is a long and collaborative exercise, first within the Executive and then between the Executive and the Legislature, along with consultation with various stakeholders.

Collection of Government Revenue

18. In varying degrees, several MDAs in the Federal Service are responsible for collecting Government revenue. As many of the social and other services that the Government may provide for the people depend on the size of Government revenue, it is extremely important that Accounting Officers (Permanent Secretaries and Departmental Heads) and their staff in MDAs should do all they can to collect all the moneys due to Government. Time and again in his career, an Officer may be called upon to help in collecting Government Revenue. In this regard, the Accounting Officer of the MDA will ensure that the provisions of the Financial Regulations are complied with.

Government Expenditure

19. Government expenditure in MDAs are mainly as follows:

- (i) Recurrent Expenditure; and
- (ii) Capital Expenditure.

The Recurrent Expenditures for MDAs are expenditures which recur year after year. They mainly relate to the votes for the salaries, wages and allowances of public servants as well as Overheads which cover running costs, maintenance etc. The Capital Expenditures of Government are the costs of capital works and projects, e.g. Kainji Dam, Office buildings, hospitals, bridges, etc. undertaken by Government.

Control of Expenditure

20. The control of Government Finance is exercised both by the National Assembly and the Executive.

21. The main feature of such control is that no money should be spent except as approved by the National Assembly. The body responsible for querying mal-practices in the expenditure of the budget approved by the National Assembly is called the Public Accounts Committee. It is a committee of the National Assembly and is responsible to it. While most of its members are from the majority party, the Committee is usually chaired by a member of an opposition party. The Auditor-General for the Federation is always in attendance at examining sessions of the Committee, and it is on the basis of his advice that enquiries are conducted.

22. It is, however, essential that all MDAs adhere strictly to the following principles guiding expenditure control:

- (i) All payments must be covered by approval from the appropriate Authorities;
- (ii) The documents accompanying payments should support the validity of the claims, and payments should be for the purpose for which they are intended;
- (iii) All payments must be vouchered and duly pre-audited; and
- (iv) The payment voucher must contain the signatures of the officers, the sub-accounting officer and all necessary certificates.

e-Payment System

23. Government has adopted a policy of e-payment with effect from 1st January, 2009. The main purpose is to eliminate unacceptable delay in payment for government contracts and salaries. It is also to minimize interaction between contractors and those government officials who have a role to play in the payment process. The essential features of e-payment are as follows:

- (i) all forms of payment should only be through the banks;
- (ii) all MDAs should stop the use of cheques for payments;
- (iii) mandates containing details of payments are issued to banks for onward payments to the designated bank accounts of the contractors/ payees. This covers all forms of payments including overhead, capitals and personnel funds;
- (iv) returns on all mandates issued should be forwarded to Office of the Accountant-General of the Federation on a monthly basis;
- (v) all employees of the Federal Government must open accounts with commercial banks into which all payments due will be made; and
- (vi) on no account should the Central Pay Office collect cash from the bank for any payments.

24. The financial responsibilities of Government Officers are laid down by law and regulations from time to time by the Minister of Finance. The Officer responsible for safeguarding of public funds and the regularity and propriety of the expenditure under his control in a Ministry or Extra-Ministerial Department is called the Accounting Officer. In a Ministry, the Accounting Officer is the Permanent Secretary. The Accounting Officer of an Extra-Ministerial Department is the Head of the Department. Essentially, the duties of the Accounting Officer include:

- (i) ensuring that proper budgetary and accounting systems are established in his Ministry/Extra-Ministerial Department to enhance internal control, accountability and transparency;
- (ii) ensuring that the management control tools are put in place to minimise waste and fraud;
- (iii) ensuring that all Government revenues are collected and paid into the Consolidated Revenue Fund promptly;

- (iv) rendering monthly and other periodical accounting returns and transcripts to the Accountant-General of the Federation as required by the Financial Regulations;
- (v) ensuring the safety and proper maintenance of all Government assets under his care;
- (vi) assuming responsibility for answering all audit queries pertaining to his Ministry/Extra-Ministerial Department or Agency, including appearance before the Public Accounts Committees;
- (vii) ensuring accurate collection and accounting for all public moneys received and expended; and
- (viii) ensuring prudence in the expenditure of public funds.

It is to be noted that the Accounting Officer shall be held personally and pecuniarily responsible for all wrong-doings in his Ministry/Extra-Ministerial Department. Delegation of his duties shall not absolve him from these responsibilities and liabilities.

25. The Chief Accounting Officer of Government is the Accountant-General of the Federation. He is responsible for all the receipts and payments of non-self accounting departments. In accordance with the Financial Regulations, "he is also responsible for the general supervision of the accounts of all Ministries and Extra-Ministerial Departments within the Federation and for the compilation of the Annual financial statements of accounts and such other statements of accounts as may be required by the National Assembly or by the Minister of Finance".

26. Constitutionally, the Auditor-General for the Federation is responsible for "the audit of accounts of all Accounting Officers and all persons entrusted with the collections, reports, custody and issue of payments of Federal Public moneys or with the receipts, custody, sales, transfer or delivery of any stamps, securities, stores or other property of the Government of the Federation and for the certification of the Annual Accounts of the Federal Government."

Cost-consciousness in Spending of Public Funds

27. All Civil Servants should be cost-conscious in spending public funds on behalf of Government. Extravagance can be checked in many ways, including the following:

- (i) Every Officer or employee should justify his employment by giving efficient service in return for his earning;
- (ii) Every official expenditure should be duly authorized by an appropriate authority, as required by regulations;
- (iii) Expenditures should be in accordance with the Financial Regulations;
- (iv) Staff requirement should be dictated by real needs so that under-employment and over-establishment are avoided;
- (v) Economy should be exercised in all purchases, especially for office furniture, equipment and stationery;
- (vi) Made-in-Nigeria goods should be preferred to imported goods; and
- (vii) No Officer should condone wasteful spending of public funds and corruption by other Civil Servants.

CHAPTER 3

Due Process and Bureau of Public Procurement

Introduction

The Due Process policy is a novel anti-corruption mechanism of the Federal Government. It is aimed at providing transparency and accountability in procurement in the Public Service as well as in government budgetary and financial operations. It is to ensure fiscal transparency, strict compliance with procedures, effectiveness and efficiency in the costing of projects and services, privatization and execution of budget expenditure items, and to certify for public funding, only those projects and contracts that pass proper project implementation and execution scrutiny. It implies that any project or contract/service to be funded by the government must adhere strictly to internationally acceptable bidding system of openness, competition, cost accuracy and proper procedure.

2. Within the context of the Public Sector, Due Process manifests primarily through ensuring that Government business is carried out on the basis of relevant and prescribed laws, rules, regulations and practices. A common error in our nation is our strong tendency to instinctively associate the concept of due process with only procurement and contract awards when, in truth, it applies to all other aspects of Government business, including negotiation, recruitment, promotion etc. In other words, in whatever aspect of Government business we are involved, we must follow the rules as laid down by the constituted authorities.

3. The main objectives of the Due Process are as follows:

- i. to harmonize and update all Federal Government policies and practices on Public procurement;
- ii. to ensure that project conceptualization and packaging match the defined priorities and targets as contained in the annual financial appropriations;
- iii. to strictly enforce due process principles of transparency, competition and efficiency and value for money in the procurement of public goods, works and services;

- iv. to ensure efficient and integrity-based monitoring of the implementation of Federal Government projects in line with due process principles;
- v. to prevent extra-budgetary spending in Ministries, Departments and Agencies by ensuring that only projects with due appropriation by the National Assembly are certified and thus funded for execution;
- vi. to prevent contract inflation by ensuring cost reasonableness, accuracy, comparability of all Public contracts with national, regional and global costs; and
- vii. to guarantee elimination of waste.

Bureau of Public Procurement and the Public Procurement Act 2007

4. A Country Procurement Assessment Report conducted in 1999-2000 revealed that out of every ₦1 spent by Government, 60k was lost to underhand practices. In order to address the identified short-comings, therefore, the Bureau for Monitoring and Price Intelligence Unit (BMPIU) was set up in 2001. Its operations were based on Treasury Circulars. Subsequently, steps were initiated to institutionalize its operations. These steps eventually culminated into the signing into law of the Public Procurement Act 2007 on 4th June, 2007 by the President.

5. The essential objective of the Public Procurement Act 2007 is the "Establishment of National Council on Public Procurement and the Bureau of Public Procurement as the regulatory authorities responsible for the monitoring and oversight of public procurement, harmonizing the existing Government policies and practices by regulating, setting standards and developing the legal framework and professional capacity for public procurement in Nigeria; and for other related Matters." The Act applies to the Federal Government of Nigeria and all its procurement entities as well all entities outside the foregoing which derive at least 35% of funds appropriated for any type of procurement described in this Act from the Federation Share of Consolidated Revenue Fund.

6. Functions of the Bureau

The main functions of the Bureau are to:

- i. formulate the general polices and guidelines relating to public sector procurement for the approval of the Council;
- ii. publicize and explain the provisions of the Act;

- iii. subject to thresholds as may be set by the Council, certify Federal procurement prior to the award of contract;
- iv. supervise the implementation of established procurement policies;
- v. monitor the prices of tendered items and keep a national database of standard process;
- vi. publish the details of major contracts in the procurement journal;
- vii. publish paper and electronic editions of the procurement journal and maintain an archival system for the procurement journal;
- viii. maintain a national database of the particulars and classification and categorization of federal contractors and service providers;
- ix. collate and maintain in an archival system all federal procurement plans and information;
- x. undertake procurement research and surveys;
- xi. organize training and development programmes for procurement professionals;
- xii. periodically review the socio-economic effect of the policies on procurement and advise the Council accordingly;
- xiii. prepare and update standard bidding and contract documents;
- xiv. prevent fraudulent and unfair procurement and where necessary apply the provisions of the Act;
- xv. review the procurement and award of contract procedures of every entity to which the Act applies;
- xvi. perform procurement audits and submit such report to the National Assembly bi-annually;
- xvii. introduce, develop, update and maintain related database and technology;
- xviii. establish a single internet portal that shall subject to Section 16(21) to this Act serve as a primary and definitive source of all information on government procurement, containing and displaying all public sector procurement information at all times; and

- xix. co-ordinate relevant training programmes to build institutional capacity.

How the Due Process Policy Works

7. The Bureau reviews and certifies Federal Government contracts according to established and approved thresholds to ensure that compliance with the principles of right procedure (merit, transparency, competition etc) and right costs guide all Federal Government contracts for goods, works and services from the award stage through to their successful execution and completion.

Fundamental Principles for Procurements

8. Subject to any exemption allowed by the Act on Public Procurement, all public procurement should be conducted:

- i. based on thresholds as may from time to time be set by the Bureau;
- ii. based only on procurement plans supported by prior budgetary appropriations. Furthermore, no procurement proceedings shall be formalized until the procuring entity has ensured that funds are available to meet the obligations and, subject to the threshold in the regulations made by the Bureau, has obtained a certificate of 'No Objection' to Contract Award from the Bureau;
- iii. by open competitive bidding;
- iv. in a manner which is transparent, timely, and equitable for ensuring accountability and conformity with the Act and regulations deriving therefrom;
- v. with the aim of achieving value for money and fitness for purpose;
- vi. in a manner which promotes competition, economy and efficiency; and
- vii. in accordance with the procedures and timeline laid down in the Act and as may be specified by the Bureau from time to time.

9. All Bidders, in addition to Requirements contained in any solicitation document, shall:

- i. possess the necessary:

- a. professional and technical qualifications to carry out particular procurements;
 - b. financial capability;
 - c. equipment and other relevant infrastructure;
 - d. personnel to perform the obligations of the procurement contract.
- ii possess the legal capacity to enter into the procurement contract;
 - iii not be in receivership, the subject of any form of insolvency or bankruptcy proceedings of the subject of any form of winding up petition or proceedings;
 - iv. have fulfilled all its obligations to pay taxes, pensions and social security contributions;
 - v. accompany every bid with an affidavit disclosing whether or not any officer of the relevant committees of the procurement entity or the Bureau is a former or present director, shareholder or has any pecuniary interest in the bidder and confirm that all information presented in its bid are true and correct in all particulars.

10. The Accounting Officer of a procuring entity shall be the person charged with line supervision of the conduct of all procurement processes. In the case of Ministries, this shall be the Permanent Secretary and, in case of Extra-Ministerial Departments and Corporations, the Directors-General or Officers of co-ordinate responsibility. The Accounting Officer of every procuring entity has overall responsibility for the planning and organization of tenders, evaluation of tenders and execution of all procurements and in particular shall be responsible for:

- i. ensuring compliance with the provisions of the Act by his entity. In this context, he shall be liable in person for the breach or contravention of the Act or any regulation made hereunder, whether or not the act or omission was carried out by him personally or any of his subordinates, and it shall not be material that he has delegated any function, duty, or power to any person or group of persons;
- ii. constituting the Procurement Committee and its decisions;
- iii. ensuring that adequate appropriation is provided specifically for the procurement under consideration in the Federal budget;

- iv. integrating his entity's procurement expenditure into its yearly budget;
- vi. ensuring that no reduction of values or splitting of contract is carried out such as to evade the use of the appropriate procurement methods;
- vi. constituting the Evaluation Committee;
- vii. liaising with the Bureau to ensure the implementation of its regulations.

Procurement Planning Committee

11. For each financial year, each procuring entity shall establish a Procurement Planning Committee. The Procurement Planning Committee shall consist of:

- i. the Accounting Officer of the procuring entity or his representative who shall chair the Committee;
 - ii. a representative each of:
 - a. the procurement unit of the procuring entity who shall be the Secretary;
 - b. the unit directly in requirement of the procurement;
 - c. the financial unit of the procurement entity;
 - d. the planning, research and statistics unit of the procuring entity;
 - e. technical personnel of the procuring entity with expertise in the subject matter for each particular procurement; and
 - f. the legal unit of the procuring entity.
12. The functions of the Committee shall be:
- (i) preparing the needs assessment and evaluation;
 - (ii) identifying the goods, works or services required;
 - (iii) carrying out appropriate market and statistical surveys and, on that basis, preparing any analysis of the cost implications of the proposed procurement;

- (iv) aggregating its requirement, whenever possible, both within the procuring entity and between procuring entities, to obtain economy of scale and reduce procurement cost;
- (v) integrating its procurement expenditure into its yearly budget; and
- (vi) prescribing any method for effecting the procurement, subject to the necessary approval under the Public Procurement Act.

Tenders Board

13. There is established in each procuring entity a Tenders Board whose membership guidelines the Bureau shall, from time to time, prescribe.

14. The Tenders Board shall be responsible for the award of contract for procurement of goods, works and services within the threshold set in the regulations.

15. In all cases where there is a need for pre-qualification, the Chairman of the Tenders Board shall constitute a technical evaluation sub-committee of the Tenders Board charged with the responsibility for the evaluation of bids. Such a Sub-Committee shall be made up of professional staff of the procuring entity and the Secretary of the Tenders Board who shall be its chairman.

16. The decisions of the Tenders Board shall be communicated to the Minister for information and approval before implementation.

17. It will be most useful for every Civil Servant to familiarize himself/herself with the provisions of the Public Procurement Act 2007 which are many and of interest. Suffice it, through this medium, to highlight some of these important provisions as hereunder:

- (i) Payment of Mobilization Fee is not compulsory but where an MDA decides to pay, the maximum allowed is 15% of the contract sum, subject to the provision by the Contractor of an unconditional Bank Guarantee or Insurance Bond;
- (ii) Delay in payment after 60 days of valuation of certification attracts payment of interest;
- (iii) There are severe sanctions for violation of the provisions of the Act through such acts as bid rigging, collusion, splitting of contracts, use of fake documents etc. Prominent among such sanctions are:
 - (a) Jail term of between 5 to 10 years, without option of fine;

- (b) Summary dismissal from Government service;
- (c) Nullifying of the whole or any part of the procurement process;
- (d) Temporary transfer of the procurement functions of the establishment to a Third Party;
- (e) Suspension of the officers concerned; and
- (f) Discipline of the Accounting Officer.

CHAPTER 4

Relations with the National Assembly and Its Public Accounts Committees

The 1999 Constitution makes provision for the existence of a National Assembly for the Federation which shall consist of a Senate and a House of Representatives. The former is presided over by the President of the Senate, while the latter is presided over by the Speaker, House of Representatives. The two chambers constitute the Legislative Arm of Government. All the members of both houses are directly elected by the voters in their respective constituencies.

Duties and Functions of the Legislators

2. The duties and functions of the Legislators of the National Assembly can be broadly categorized as follows:

- (i) Representation of their constituencies;
- (ii) Law making;
- (iii) Oversight of the Ministries, Department and Agencies (MDAs) of the Government; and
- (iv) Confirmation of appointments of certain posts, including Ministers, Ambassadors, Justices, Chairmen and Members of Commissions.

Both chambers carry out their functions mainly through their respective Committees to which requisite authority is usually delegated.

3. Undoubtedly, the interface between the elected officials and the civil servants is vital to good governance and the realization of government objectives. Essentially the areas in which the civil servant expects to interact with the Legislature will relate to law making and oversight functions. In these contexts, sections 88 and 89 of the 1999 Constitution fully vest the National Assembly with the powers to summon persons and/or call for documents in the discharge of their duties.

4. When summoned, therefore, it is incumbent on a Civil Servant so summoned to comply. It is also normal that when the Legislature is considering a bill, it will hold a Public Hearing as a forum for all stakeholders and interested parties to air their views before the bill is passed into law. The Ministry that has the assigned responsibility for the subject-matter of the bill should be expected to submit a memorandum and possibly make a presentation during such a Public Hearing.

5. In practice, Distinguished Senators and Honourable Members pay oversight visits to the MDAs to monitor projects and budget implementation and generally assess how the funds that have been appropriated are being utilised. These visits should be adequately planned for in all material respects. Otherwise, they can become a huge source of embarrassment and discomfiture to the MDAs. When well-handled, the visits can be educative and beneficial to all parties and can serve as a vehicle for getting more support for the affected projects in the succeeding years. It should also be emphasized that in order to achieve the goals and objectives of government, there is need for cordial relationship between the Civil Service and the National Assembly.

Appearance before Public Accounts Committees of the National Assembly

6. The 1999 Constitution provides that “the public accounts of the Federation and of all offices and courts of the Federation shall be audited and reported on by the Auditor-General who shall submit his reports to the National Assembly” and that he shall also submit his reports on the Accountant-General’s financial statement “to each House of the National Assembly and each House shall cause the reports to be considered by the committee of the House of the National Assembly responsible for accounts.”

7. Each of the two chambers has a Committee on Public Accounts. It so happens that in the process of carrying out their duties, the Committees on Public Accounts will observe areas of corruption, waste, non-compliance with the Financial Regulations or inefficiency highlighted by the Auditor-General and invite the affected MDAs to appear before them to answer such “audit queries.” The Committees always demand that the team from the establishment for this exercise must be led by the Accounting Officer, i.e. the Permanent Secretary in case of a Ministry.

8. The decisions of the Committee are generally final and are to be complied with. Ministries, as such, do not have the option of whether to comply or not with such decisions. Accordingly, it is most advisable that Ministries take audit queries very seriously and devote adequate time to their preparation for appearance before the Public Accounts Committees so as to avoid public embarrassment and indignity. This is necessary because the proceedings of the Committees are always recorded and atimes attract media coverage.

Annual Defence of the Budget before the National Assembly

9. As mentioned earlier in the discussion of the annual budgeting process in the Federal Service, it is a condition precedent that before the President gives his assent to the annual Appropriation Bill, it must first be approved by the National

Assembly. The procedure for discharging this responsibility in the Legislature, **among other steps**, involves each MDA appearing before the appropriate Committees of both the Senate and the House of Representatives separately to defend their budget submissions for the succeeding year.

10. Fund is the life blood of an MDA, and achievement of set objectives will be practically impossible without requisite and adequate funding. Ensuring the success of this exercise, is one of the most important responsibilities of the Accounting Officer of the establishment. As such, it is most vital that the Permanent Secretary, in full and effective liaison with all the parastatals and agencies under the supervision of the Ministry, ensures a most adequate preparation in all material respects for this exercise. It does not hurt as part of this preparation if regular consultation is held with key members of the Committee along the way, i.e. before the actual appearance. The team of the MDA for the appearance has to be led by the Minister. It is, therefore, critical that he is fully briefed about all the areas and provided with all necessary details in advance. One important duty of the Minister in this context is ensuring a buy-in by all the components of the MDA, especially the parastatals, into the proposals to be defended. In carrying out this exercise, it will be disastrous for the MDA to go to the National Assembly with a team of doubtful and divided loyalty.

CHAPTER 5

Management of Relations with Parastatals

According to the Public Service Rules, "a Parastatal is a government-owned organization established by statute to render specified service(s) to the public. It is structured and operates according to the instrument establishing it and also comes under the policy directives of Government."

Classification of Parastatals

2. Government has classified Parastatals into the following four categories:
 - (i) Regulatory Agencies e.g. Nigerian Communications Commission; Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority;
 - (ii) General Services e.g. Nigeria Meteorological Agency; National Health Insurance Scheme;
 - (iii) Infrastructure/Utility Agencies e.g. Power Holding Company of Nigeria; Federal Road Management Agency; and
 - (iv) Security Agencies e.g. States Security Services and National Intelligence Agency.

Essentials of Parastatals

3. Parastatals are set up by Government as implementing organs for specific objectives which usually cannot easily be achieved in a ministerial set-up. Each is, however, under the supervision of the Presidency or a Ministry. Each parastatal has a Governing Board, headed by the Chairman, to provide policy guidelines and liaise with the Minister. Both the Chairman and the Members are appointed by the President. The Permanent Secretary or his representative is a member of the Board for effective monitoring and policy guidance. He is also responsible for ensuring that effect is given to government decisions relating to the mandate of the Parastatal. The Parastatal also has a Chief Executive who is appointed by the President, usually on the recommendation of the Minister. He is responsible for the day-to-day administration of the establishment and is its Accounting Officer.

4. Parastatals, just like their supervising Ministries, articulate their respective plans and programmes annually and defend them before the Ministries and other government organs with oversight responsibilities, especially the National

Assembly. Parastatals are self-accounting and, where appropriate, enjoy direct allocation from the Budget Office.

5. The Administrative Guidelines Regulating the Relationship between Parastatals/Government-owned Companies and the Government indicates, by way of functions, that the Board of a Parastatal *"is responsible for setting out the parastatal's economic, financial, operational and administrative programmes and targets in line with the overall objectives of setting it up, and taking due cognizance of Government's policy directives as provided by the Minister. The Board also has the responsibility for measuring performance against targets, for introducing broad policy measures, for containing any adverse deviations, and for supervising management to ensure that the targets are achieved."* However, the Guidelines list out certain areas over which the President, through the Minister, shall retain final responsibility. These are:

- (i) "approval of regulations and bye-laws;
- (ii) approval of long-range plans and all significant deviations from such plans;
- (iii) the power to direct the parastatals to prepare accounts and set standards;
- (iv) approval of capital and operating budgets for parastatals; (this includes major issues relating to the adjustment, revision and increase in salaries, wages and fringe benefits of staff of parastatals);
- (v) approval of rates and scales of charges for services rendered to the public by the parastatals';
- (vi) approval of appointment and removal of external auditors subject to the provisions of the relevant portion of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria;
- (vii) regular communication with government appointees on the Board to keep them abreast of government policies affecting their parastatals; and
- (viii) the rendition of annual audited accounts which should be submitted within six (6) months of the end of their fiscal year."

6. For their operations, Parastatals are free to fashion out and adopt conditions of service for their staff. However, all such conditions of service "shall

be approved by their respective Boards and ratified by the Head of the Civil Service of the Federation.” (PSR 160103). Moreover, the provisions of the PSR 020701 on eligibility for promotion shall apply to all Parastatals and, with respect to disciplinary matters, they shall be guided by the provisions of Sections 2 to 6 in Chapter 3 of Public Service Rules (PSR). In the absence of internal rules and regulations on any matter, the relevant provisions of PSR shall apply.

Code of Practice for Representatives of the Ministry on the Boards of Parastatals

7. Officers who are delegated to represent their Ministries on the Boards of their Parastatals shall observe and adhere strictly to the following Code of Practice:

- (i) The Officer must secure from Parastatal’s management minutes of the last meeting and agenda for the up-coming meeting **before** leaving for the meeting.
- (ii) An Officer who cannot secure in advance the agenda of an up-coming meeting of the Board or prepare the requisite brief should not attend the meeting.
- (iii) Once he secures both items, he should immediately put up a brief and secure approval for the position of the Ministry on each item on the agenda. This way, at the meeting, he will be in a position to properly articulate the stand of the Ministry on the respective issues as opposed to stating his own stand. Furthermore, such an approval will enhance his confidence to properly guide the Board on policy matters.
- (iv) On return, the Officer must immediately brief the Permanent Secretary about any controversial or vital issue that came up during the meeting. Thereafter, he should submit a comprehensive report on the meeting within 48 hours.
- (v) It will be the responsibility of the Officer to convey earliest to the Board/Management any important decision that results from the Ministry’s consideration of the report.

In carrying out this important responsibility, Officers should bear in mind that they are not representing themselves but their Ministries whose interests they must always strive to protect.

Harmonious Relationship between the Ministry and Its Parastatals

8. It is vital for the achievement of the goals for which Government has set up Parastatals that a Ministry and its Parastatals must have harmonious relationships. Towards this goal, the following parties have been identified:

- (i) The Minister and his aides, such as Special Advisers, Special Assistants, Personal Assistants etc.
- (ii) The Permanent Secretary, his Representatives on the Boards and other Officers.

In the Parastatals, there are:

- (iii) The Chairmen and Members of the Board
- (iv) The Chief Executives, the Board Secretariats and other Officials.

9. An ideal situation conducive to the attainment of corporate goals will be achieved and sustained where the following conditions prevail:

- (i) All the parties are conversant with the requisite Guidelines, understand them and apply them strictly in the management of the organization and their relationships.
- (iii) Each party understands and accepts the roles and responsibilities of the other parties, and all work to support one another in an atmosphere of cordiality, openness and mutual respect.
- (iii) The objectives and philosophies of the Parastatals are clearly understood and shared by all so as to avoid conflicts and loss of focus.
- (iv) Members of the Boards make deliberate efforts to acquire cognate knowledge about the mandates of their respective Parastatals so that they can make significant contributions to their affairs.
- (v) The Directors and Officials in the Ministry who treat matters concerning the Parastatals have the requisite level of technical knowledge in the area of the Parastatals' respective specialization.
- (vi) The Management of each Parastatal handles contract matters in an accountable, open, fair and transparent manner and according to due process.

- (vii) Board Members leave their Management free to get on with day-to-day management of the establishment and do not mount undue pressure about financial entitlements and contract awards.
- (viii) No parastatal is made to rent or furnish accommodation for a Minister, or provide estacode allowances, purchase vehicles, air conditioners or grant loans to Ministries.
- (ix) The Chief Executives as well as the Boards enjoy a measure of security of tenure as long as they perform and meet set targets so that they would not have to live in constant fear of sudden removal.
- (x) The Minister is readily accessible to the Board Chairmen and the Chief Executives to discuss official matters, and the Permanent Secretary is invited to be present during their discussions as prescribed in the Guidelines.
- (xi) Once appropriated, subventions from Government are released promptly and in full and reasonable manner.
- (xii) Service Parastatals are allowed to withhold services from Government debtors and defaulting agencies.

CHAPTER 6

The Civil Service

A critical success factor in the realization of the lofty objectives of Government is a professional, competent and result-oriented Civil Service with the impetus to effectively discharge its catalytic role of facilitating successful conception, planning, execution and monitoring of the policies, projects and programmes of Government. Indeed, it is only such a Civil Service that can be useful and indispensable to the political leadership.

What is the Civil Service?

2. The 1999 Constitution says the Civil Service of the Federation “means service of the Federation in a civil capacity as staff of the Office of the President, the Vice-President, a Ministry or department of the Government of the Federation assigned with the responsibility for any business of the Government of the Federation”.

3. By way of contrast, the 1999 Constitution states that the public service of the Federation “means the service of the Federation in any capacity in respect of the Government of the Federation.” Practically, therefore, the entire organizations which constitute government’s mechanism for executing policies and programmes, and delivering services which adequately meet the needs of the citizenry, are called the Public Service, whose fundamental roles are to serve the public, the nation and the community, and also, to effectively promote the common good. The principles in the discharge of these laudable functions are accountability, responsiveness, courtesy, objectivity, impartiality and upholding the public trust at all levels. It is necessary to state that Political Appointees and elected Officials are Public Servants. In most countries across the world, the Head of Government is also the Head of the Public Service. In the same spirit, it can be said of Nigeria, that the Head of the Public Service is the President of the Federal Republic.

4. The Civil Service is a body or organ which enjoys continuity of existence. Its members unlike members of the National Assembly or a House of Assembly are not limited to a short term of office at the end of which they may or may not be returned to office. Elected members come and go but the Civil Service remains. When a Civil Servant relinquishes his office for whatever reason, his place is taken by another person who similarly enjoys security of employment.

5. Collectively, Civil Servants command a pool of experience and know-how for implementing Government Policies. The Civil Service is the instrument of the

Government of the day, but neither the Service nor its members are the partisan of any particular political party.

7. A Civil Servant is required to assist in formulating and implementing the policies approved by Government whatever his personal or private opinions or attitudes may be. This does not mean that a Civil Servant should undertake illegal action; if so directed, he should invite attention immediately to the legal position or requirement and advise on the proper action to take. He has the duty also to advise on the implications of a policy or action.

Vision

8. The vision of the Civil Service is:
"a world class service, implementing government policies and programmes for rapid and sustainable development"

Mission

9. The Mission of the Civil Service is "to attain an integrity and merit-based civil service that is performance driven, accountable and committed to continuous improvement in the conduct of Government business".

Core Principles

10. The core principles of the Civil Service are:

(i) *Stewardship*

As civil servants, we are accountable to the Nigerian people and the Government of the day. Accordingly, we will fulfill our stewardship role in the *judicious use of our time and in the efficient management of the material, financial and human resources entrusted to us by the nation for the promotion of the common good.* We shall provide *timely, accessible, cost-effective, and quality service* to the citizenry, to meet their varying needs and expectations and *implement Government's policies and programmes with diligence and commitment.*

(ii) *Trust*

Good governance is anchored on maintaining trust between the Government and the citizenry. Accordingly, we shall, by our exemplary conduct, *uphold the public trust.* In this connection, we shall be guided by the following considerations in discharging our duties: *sincerity of purpose, respect for diversity and dignity of all persons, sensitivity to the*

needs of the citizenry, equity, fair play, social justice, observance of the rule of law/due process and recognition of the right of the citizens to access information without infringing on the law.

(iii) *Engagement*

While the Civil Service is the engine of governance, we recognize that other non-state actors, particularly **the private sector, the civil society, the media, labour, faith-based organizations, etc** are co-partners in the development process. We shall collaborate and partner with these and other critical segments of the society towards addressing the daunting challenges of national development. In this regard, we shall create and nurture platforms to promote public/private partnership (**PPPs**) as well as foster partnerships across the three tiers of government and with other stakeholders.

(iv) *Professionalism*

In our commitment to excellence, we shall continue to display the highest level of professional standards in undertaking our tasks. Accordingly, we shall endeavour, individually and collectively, to promote the flow of ideas, knowledge and enterprise in the Civil Service by constantly updating our skills and competencies through individual self development and by harnessing the training opportunities provided by the Service. We shall refrain from all forms of unprofessional and unethical conduct. As **non-partisan** officers of the State, with professional loyalty to the government of the day, we shall always endeavour to maintain candour to political office holders and other officials of the Government through objectivity and impartiality in advice.

Structure of the Civil Service (Vertical Structure)

11. Structurally, the Federal Civil Service is divided into Ministries and Extra-Ministerial Offices. Currently, the following are the Ministries and the major Extra-Ministerial Offices:

The Presidency

- (i) State House
- (ii) Office of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation
- (iii) Office of the Head of the Civil Service of the Federation
- (iv) Federal Capital Territory Administration
- (v) National Planning Commission
- (vi) National Sports Commission

Ministries

- (i) Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources
- (ii) Ministry of Aviation
- (iii) Ministry of Commerce and Industry
- (iv) Ministry of Defence
- (v) Ministry of Education
- (vi) Ministry of Environment
- (vii) Ministry of Finance
- (viii) Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- (ix) Ministry of Health
- (x) Ministry of Information and Communications
- (xi) Ministry of the Interior
- (xii) Ministry of Justice
- (xiii) Ministry of Employment, Labour and Productivity
- (xiv) Ministry of Mines and Steel Development
- (xv) Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs
- (xvi) Ministry of Petroleum
- (xvii) Ministry of Police Affairs
- (xviii) Ministry of Power
- (xix) Ministry of Science and Technology
- (xx) Ministry of Tourism, Culture and National Orientation
- (xxi) Ministry of Transport
- (xxii) Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development
- (xxiii) Ministry of Works, Housing and Urban Development
- (xxiv) Ministry of Youth Development.

Some Extra-Ministerial Offices

- (i) Code of Conduct Bureau
- (ii) Federal Character Commission
- (iii) Federal Civil Service Commission
- (iv) National Population Commission
- (v) Office of the Accountant-General of the Federation
- (vi) Office of the Auditor-General for the Federation
- (vii) Police Service Commission

Horizontal Structure

12. In all Ministries, there are certain functions that are common across the board. These are allocated to the Common Services or Core Departments. Depending on the particular Ministry, these are variously broken down as hereunder:

- (i) Department of Administration and Supplies or Human Resources Management
- (ii) Department of Finance and Accounts or Finance and Supplies
- (iii) Department of Planning, Research and Statistics.

13. Apart from these core departments, each Ministry has professional departments that are suitably structured for carrying out its principal mandate. The numbers of such professional departments vary, depending on the size of the Ministry, but are usually around five. The designation of these departments will usually indicate the grouping of the assigned responsibilities of the Ministry e.g. Pharmacy Department and Hospital Services Department in the Federal Ministry of Health, Inspectorate Department and Tertiary Education Department in the Federal Ministry of Education, External Publicity Department and Domestic Publicity Department in the Federal Ministry of Information and Communications.

14. Complementing all these departments are Units. These are usually too small to be designated as departments but have unique responsibilities that are important and relevant in the scheme of things. In addition, these Units are to be found in each and every Ministry. Prominent among them are the following:

- (i) Legal Unit
- (ii) Public Relations (Press) Unit
- (iii) Protocol Unit
- (iv) Federal Audit Unit
- (v) Internal Audit Unit
- (vi) Stock Verification Unit
- (vii) Anti-Corruption and Transparency Unit
- (viii) SERVICOM Unit

Staffing

15. At the head of a typical Ministry is the Minister who is the Chief Executive of the establishment. As the chief representative of the President in the Ministry, he is the political leader with the over-all responsibility for policies, programmes and projects. In a large Ministry, he may be assisted by a Minister of State or two. Directly under his office are the following units:

- (i) Legal Unit
- (ii) Public Relations (Press) Unit

- (iii) Protocol Unit
16. The Minister's other duties include the following:
- (i) Formulation of policy
 - (ii) Attendance at the Meetings of the Executive Council of the Federation
 - (iii) Taking Memoranda from the Ministry and its Parastatals to the Executive Council of the Federation
 - (iv) Projecting the public image of the Ministry
 - (v) Implementation of approved Government policies relating to his assigned responsibilities
 - (vi) Ensuring that the Ministry achieves set objectives, particularly budget implementation
 - (vii) Conveying Government policies to affected Parastatals
 - (viii) Approving Minutes of the Meetings of the Ministerial Tenders Board (MTB)
 - (ix) Supervision of Parastatals under his Ministry
17. The officer in charge of day-to-day administration in the Ministry is the Permanent Secretary who is also the Accounting Officer of the establishment as well as the Chief Policy Adviser to the Minister. Under the Permanent Secretary's office are the following:
- (i) Internal Audit Unit
 - (ii) Stock Verification Unit
 - (iii) Anti-Corruption and Transparency Unit
 - (iv) SERVICOM Unit
18. Some of the main duties of the Permanent Secretary are:
- (i) Serving as Chief Adviser to the Minister on policy matters
 - (ii) Management of allocated resources to achieve set targets and agreed objectives

- (iii) Serving as the Administrative Head of the Ministry and its Accounting Officer
- (iv) Preparing Draft Council Memoranda for the consideration of the Minister before submitting to Council Secretariat
- (v) Ensuring implementation of the decisions of the Executive Council of the Federation
- (vi) Custody and handling of the papers of the Executive Council of the Federation
- (vii) Appearance before the Public Accounts Committees of the National Assembly
- (viii) Representation of the Ministry on the Boards of its Parastatals
- (ix) Preventing fraud and corruption in the Ministry
- (x) Maintenance of discipline within the Ministry
- (xi) Serving as Chairman of the Ministry's Senior Staff Committee, Ministerial Tenders Board and Procurement Planning Committee
- (xii) Approving decisions and recommendations of the Ministry's Junior Staff Committee
- (xiii) Ensuring that official matters are dealt with expeditiously in the spirit of SERVICOM
- (xiv) Ensuring effective preparation, defence, implementation and monitoring of the performance of the Annual Budget of the Ministry.

19. Below the Permanent Secretary are the other cadres of Civil Servants. Notable among these are Directors who head the Departments and are directly responsible to the Permanent Secretary; Deputy Directors who head the Divisions; Assistant Directors who head the Branches and Chiefs who head the Sections. Their subordinates range from Salary Grade Level 03 to Salary Grade Level 13. All officers below the Permanent Secretary belong to one cadre or the other.

20. The integrated structure which exists in the Federal Civil Service as of today is like a pyramid. From top to bottom, this pyramid has the following classes of Officers and employees:

- (i) Administrative and Professional Officers;

- (ii) Executive and Technical Classes;
- (iii) Secretarial Class;
- (iv) Clerical/Junior Technical and Sub-Technical Classes; and
- (v) Miscellaneous and Unestablished/Grades.

The Administrative and Professional Officers

21. One of the most important groups in the Federal Civil Service consists of the Administrative and the Professional Officers whose *raison d'être* and duties derive from our system of Government. The Ministers have vested in them executive powers. They may not necessarily be specialists in the work of their departments but are invariably the embodiment of the yearning, aspirations, attitude and desires of the people. They take policy decisions on behalf of the society as a whole. In order to make it possible for Ministers to carry out their functions efficiently and effectively, they are supported by a body of staff, under the leadership of Permanent Secretaries, which should bring to bear on the work of the Departments the objectives of the Ministers. It is for this group to bring together the many and diverse views involved in matters requiring policy decisions, to advise on the appropriate decisions and subsequently to put them into effect, usually in liaison with the other arms of the Service.

22. For example, the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Health cannot deal with every aspect of the problem in his own Ministry without the support and co-operation of other Ministries and Extra-Ministerial Departments. The following actions may be necessary:

- (i) A memorandum to the Executive Council of the Federation setting out the case for necessary funds may have to be cleared first with the Ministry of Finance;
- (ii) New posts which should be created will be referred for approval to the Office of the Head of the Civil Service of the Federation;
- (iii) A capital Development Project may have to be vetted by the National Planning Commission; and
- (iv) When the project is finally approved by Government, the Federal Civil Service Commission may have to appoint qualified Officers for the new posts necessitated by the decision to build more hospitals and new Health Centres.

Executive, Technical and Clerical Cadres

23. The duties of the Executive Cadre Officers are generally routine and considerably supervisory. Those of the Technical Cadre Officers, on the other hand, are sub-professional. Clerical Cadre Officers, on their own part, generally offer routine support services. **It will be in the enlightened self-interest of those who belong to these cadres to take steps earliest to acquire University degrees so that they can continue to be relevant in the Service and guarantee their tenure into the future.**

Functions of the Civil Service

24. Essentially the functions of the Civil Service are to:

- (i) contribute to translating the dreams and visions of the political/ruling class into concrete reality through the formulation of far-sighted policies and programmes and executing same loyally, conscientiously and effectively;
- (ii) provide continuity between Administrations;
- (iii) serve as a unifying factor by bringing together people from all parts of the Federation and providing effective and adequate social services;
- (iv) advise government on the full implications of various policy options open to it;
- (v) execute government policy loyally;
- (vi) protect public interest, as custodian of public conscience;
- (vii) manage government data and information system effectively and efficiently so as to facilitate availability of data for government decision making;
- (viii) operate an open, humane and sensitive system which respects the rule of law;
- (ix) operate a personnel management system that ensures high professionalism, significant specialization, excellent motivation and high morale; and
- (x) ensure prompt, effective and satisfying service delivery.

Previous Reforms and Reviews in the Civil Service

25. In order to make the Nigerian Civil Service more effective and efficient, many Commissions have been set up over the years to review the Civil Service. The focus had generally been to review salaries/wages and other conditions of service, rather than structural and attitudinal changes. For example, the Tudor Davis and Harragin Commissions of 1945 and 1946 were primarily concerned with the review of wages and general conditions of service. However, the Harragin Salary Review Commission made some structural changes by introducing the "Senior Service" and the "Junior Service", thus dividing the Service into two rigid compartments. The Gorsuch Commission, set up in 1951, to enquire into the structure and remuneration of the Public Service, concluded that the rigid division of the Service into "Senior" and "Junior" Services was defective in view of the absence of a viable middle category. It, therefore, recommended that the Service be re-organised into five main grades from the lowest established posts upwards. This was to remain the basic structure of the Civil Service until the Udoji Public Service Review Commission introduced the Unified Grading and Salary Structure (UGSS) in 1975.

26. The Hewn Committee was set up in 1959. It made proposals for the integration of Ministries and Departments, defined the roles and functions of Permanent Secretaries and evolved administrative machinery for the operation of Ministries. The Mbanefo Salaries and Wages Commission had, as its major concern, the review of salaries and wages in the Public Service.

27. The Morgan Commission was set up in 1963 for the review of the wages, salaries and conditions of service of the junior employees of the Government of the Federation and of private establishments. It introduced for the first time a minimum wage in the country on geographical basis. Arising from the Morgan Report, the Government appointed the Elwood Grading Team to enquire into any anomalies in the gradings and other conditions relating to all posts in the Public Service of the Federation with a view to determining appropriate gradings and achieving uniformity in the salaries of officers performing identical duties. The combination of the Morgan and Elwood exercises gave the Civil Service some motivation through improved compensation for advancement to higher graded positions. Schemes of Service now exist, and they specify the duties of each post, method of entry, including qualification requirements, and the pre-requisites for advancement within and beyond cadres.

28. There was also the Adebo Salaries and Wages Review Commission of 1971 which recommended the setting up of a Public Service Review Commission to exhaustively examine several fundamental issues like the role of the Public Service Commission, the structure of the Civil Service, its conditions of service and training arrangements. Government accepted this recommendation and set

up the Udoji Public Service Review Commission in 1972. The Udoji Commission focused primarily on the larger issue of increasing efficiency and effectiveness in the Public Service within the context of meeting the challenges of a development-oriented society. The Commission made recommendations designed to improve the structure and the system. It introduced the Open Reporting System for performance evaluation, the Unified Grading and Salary Structure covering all posts in the Civil Service and the creation of the Unified Senior Management Group comprising both Administrative Officers and Professionals, whose careers should be centrally managed.

29. Despite all these well-meaning efforts, by the late 1980s, the Nigerian Civil Service was far from being ideal. It was tradition-bound, somewhat ponderous and showing signs of deterioration and several undesirable characteristics of which the following were the most prominent: over-centralisation; incessant conflicts among cadres; little emphasis on results and concrete performance; counterproductive separation of authority from responsibility at the topmost hierarchy; dangerously low staff morale and productivity; inappropriate staff development practices. Indeed at that point in time, the Civil Service was displaying a patent inability to cope effectively with the challenges of a modern, complex and development-hungry society.

30. Small wonder then that the Government, in 1988, through the Civil Service Re-Organisation Decree No. 43, instituted Civil Service Reforms. The Reforms were designed to ensure the following: enhanced professionalism; alignment with the Presidential system of Government; decentralization and delegation; combination of authority with responsibility; enhanced accountability; enhanced checks and balances; general modernization; enhanced effectiveness; efficiency and speed of operation.

31. Following are the highlights of some the most important provisions of the Reforms. The Office of the Head of the Civil Service was abolished; the Minister, in addition to being the Chief Executive, also became the Accounting Officer in place of the Permanent Secretary; the post of Permanent Secretary was also abolished. In its place, a new political post of Director-General was created. The Director-General then held office at the pleasure of the President and would vacate office with the Government which appointed him unless reappointed by an incoming administration. The Civil Service was professionalized in order to stimulate specialization and expertise. In this context, an Officer was expected to make a career in a particular Ministry or Department. Each Ministry was restructured along Departmental lines to reflect the basic functions and areas of concern to the Ministry. Each Department was subdivided into Divisions; each Division was sub-divided into Branches; and Branches were subdivided into Sections. Each Ministry or Extra-Ministerial Department was allowed to have three Common Services Departments, viz: Department of Personnel

Management, Department of Finance and Supplies and Department of Planning, Research and Statistics and not more than five operations departments. Each Ministry was empowered to undertake the appointment, promotion and discipline of its staff under the general and uniform guidelines provided by the Federal Civil Service Commission.

32. However, it later became clear that the Civil Service Reforms had some limitations. There was inadequate knowledge about the provisions of the Reforms on the part of many Civil Servants and top Government functionaries. There was absence of strong commitment on the part of top Government functionaries to the implementation of the Reforms partly as a result of misconception that full implementation would erode their powers. There was also the problem of human resistance to change and fear of the unknown on the part of many civil servants.

33. Besides, there was inadequate funding for the introduction and entrenchment of provisions of the Reforms. There was wrong deployment of officers to duties not relevant to their academic/professional backgrounds, training and cognate experience. There was lack of a formal programme of implementation incorporating deadlines, and lack of sanctions for infringing the provisions of the Reforms.

34. It was, therefore, not surprising that Government decided to set up a Civil Service Review Panel, popularly known as the Ayida Review Panel, which recommended the abrogation of the Civil Service Re-Organisation Decree No. 43 of 1988. It also recommended a return to what the Civil Service was before the introduction of the Reforms. It should, however, be noted that some parts of the Reforms have survived.

On-Going Public Service Reforms

35. Presently, the Civil Service has a lot of deficiencies which have hindered it from responding effectively to the developmental challenges of the nation. This has called for the on-going reforms in the Civil Service aimed at enabling it to continue to support duly constituted governments for the realization of a united, peaceful, just and prosperous nation, anchored on good governance and sustainable democracy.

36. In effect, the reforms are targeted at addressing the dwindling civil service values, ageing workforce, inadequate succession planning, inappropriate organizational structure, poor culture of innovation, inconsistent planning methodology, non-productive work operations and systems, absence of professional management of human resources, unconducive working conditions,

incompetent and discouraging leadership, poor service delivery, corruption and general inefficiency.

37. The reforms so far have shown that there are many positive gains attendant to them. There have been new initiatives formulated on ethics and integrity to ensure a value-driven Service. This has further improved the psyche of Civil Servants and propelled them towards sound service delivery.

38. Almost all MDAs (Ministries, Departments and Agencies) are undergoing restructuring aimed at enhancing their performances. Similarly, parastatals are undergoing the reform process to reduce waste, remove clashing of roles and improve their service delivery capabilities.

39. The Federal Capital Territory is now better administered under the Federal Capital Territory Administration. This reform replaced the former Ministry of the FCT with a structure designed to facilitate improved policy making and service delivery.

40. Besides, substantial savings amounting to about N400m monthly are now being realised as a result of the gains from the Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System (IPPIS) Programme which has almost eliminated the syndrome of ghost workers in the participating arms of the Federal Civil Service.

41. In August 2009, a tenure was placed on the posts of Permanent Secretaries and Directors. By the new policy, Permanent Secretaries in the Federal Civil Service are to hold office for a tenure of four years, renewable for a further tenure of four years only, subject to satisfactory performance, and no more. Directors, on their own part, are to retire compulsorily upon serving for eight years on the post. Thus Permanent Secretaries and Directors who had served for eight years on post as at 1st January, 2010 were directed to retire.

42. The successes recorded are most apparent in the monetization of fringe benefits, establishment of contributory pension scheme, intensified war on corruption and the introduction of the National Health Insurance Scheme, among others.

43. The current reforms are different from previous ones. They are more comprehensive and are not designed to focus solely on the civil service nor a limited set of interventions, as was the case in previous reforms carried out by the Federal Government. They are entirely home grown, and the funding of the processes is almost entirely from the national budget.

44. The reforms address contemporary issues like capacity building, performance improvement, human resources management, information systems,

ethics and integrity, improvement of management systems, structures as well as service delivery.

45. The elements of the reforms are budgetary, financial management, accountability, transparency and anti-corruption, human resource management, operations and systems management as well as value re-orientation, ethics and integrity.

46. The institutional arrangement for implementing the process is the National Council on Reforms chaired by the President, and the Steering Committee on Reforms comprising Ministers, Heads of Strategic Agencies and Presidential Advisers whose roles include providing guidance and technical leadership in reform design and initiating action on reforms.

47. The reform cells are located in various places. For instance, Tax Reform is located in the Federal Inland Revenue Service, Ports and Customs Reforms at the Nigerian Customs Service, Anti-Corruption at the ICPC and the Code of Conduct Bureau, and Service Delivery at the SERVICOM Office.

48. The reform of the Public Service also seeks to ensure cultural change through behavioural and attitudinal change by encouraging officers to desist from acts contrary to the ethics and morality of the Public Service and developing the capacities of public officials to resolve ethical dilemmas in their actual work situations.

49. In the course of the reforms, establishments have been right-sized. This is a process where, because of structural review and the establishment of manning levels and skills requirements of an organisation, the organization ensures staff deployment based on the right mix of skills in numbers to engender professional efficiency.

50. There was also downsizing, in which the number of employees in an organization was reduced to a desired point based on cost-saving, space utilization and manpower efficiency. The third aspect was severance, which entailed removing staff from an organization based on predetermined considerations, guidelines and paying them off before the normal due date of retirement. Some of those in the severance category were improperly appointed, had cases of serious misconduct, were redundant, were medically unfit or held jobs already outsourced or abolished. Others were inefficient or had unsatisfactory character.

51. To reduce the effects of disengagement on the affected officers, a social assistance/pre-retirement training, code-named "strategic training and re-

orientation for individual development and empowerment scheme” was provided. This was done to prepare the affected staff for new vocations after retirement.

CHAPTER 7

Management of Human Resources in the Civil Service

What is Management?

There is no generally accepted definition of “management” as an activity. However, many writers today define management as the process of getting things done effectively and efficiently with and through other people to achieve the objectives of an organization.

Functions of Management

The basic functions of management are as follows:

- (i) *Planning*: this function involves:
 - establishing organizational objectives (short, medium and long range);
 - determining the plans to accomplish desired organizational goals or objectives;
 - working out the strategies, programmes, procedures and methods to guide workers;
 - developing schedules to keep the work moving towards the objectives; and
 - recognizing that plans may require readjustment periodically in the light of new information and changes in operating conditions.
- (ii) *Organizing*: This implies assigning various tasks to different people and co-ordinating their efforts. It is the process of developing a structure or framework among personnel, functions and physical factors. It involves:
 - determining departments/divisions/units, each of which has its peculiar mission;
 - determining the organizational structure (organogram); and

- allocating inputs (human and economic resources) to the various organizational units.
- (iii) *Directing:* This is the process of stimulating organizational personnel to undertake desired action according to predetermined goals and plans. Directing, therefore, involves:
- disseminating instructions/directives within organizational units and sub-units;
 - acceptance and execution of these instructions by organizational members;
 - providing leadership; and
 - ensuring staff motivation so that performance can be consistently high.
- (iv) *Staffing:* This is the personnel function concerned with putting in place an efficient system of recruitment by hiring the right individuals for the appropriate jobs, job analyzing, training as well as providing favourable conditions of work.
- (v) *Budgeting:* This function is very important because without funds the organization cannot achieve its goals and objectives. The budget must be carefully worked out to ensure the viability of the organization.
- (vi) *Co-ordinating:* This is to ensure that the various branches of the organization are working smoothly and that the interrelated tasks being performed in the various subdivisions and sections are harmoniously co-ordinated. There may be need to check progress against plans which may call for modification based on feedback.
- (vii) *Reporting:* This involves keeping appropriate authorities as well as subordinates informed of what is going on through reporting, records, research and inspection and, very importantly, facilitating effective communication flow.

Human Resources Management

2. Human Resources Management is that part of the field of Management which provides for effective utilization of human resources to achieve both the objectives of the organization and the satisfaction and development of employees. It covers such diverse areas as human resource planning; job

analysis; staffing; training and development; compensation and benefits; performance appraisal and management; industrial relations; staff welfare; disengagement etc. It is, as such, necessary to enhance the capabilities of employees and ensure that they possess the requisite level of competence, knowledge, skill and attitude which must be continually improved upon to increase productivity. This is the only viable way in which the civil service can discharge its various responsibilities to the nation.

3. Within the context of our Civil Service, numerous HRM challenges have become evident over the years. These include the following:

- * under-utilization and non-utilization of available human resources;
- * uncoordinated and fragmented approaches to human resources development;
- * unavailability of reliable data on training needs;
- * uncoordinated training programmes;
- * inadequate linkages between training output and the duty post;
- * officers negotiating their own training without regard to organizational goals;
- * lack of monitoring mechanisms for determining the capacity of trained personnel to contribute meaningfully to organizational goals;
- * inability to recruit and retain the needed well-trained and skilled manpower;
- * poor remuneration, which is a disincentive to attracting and retaining skilled manpower;
- * low morale, especially among officers in the managerial and professional cadres arising from poor job satisfaction and low pay;
- * over-centralization of decision-making systems, resulting in monopolization of power and decision-making authority by a few at the top hierarchy of the Service;
- * duplication of functions and overlapping of jurisdiction;
- * outdated procedures, resulting in delays in handling Government business with attendant higher costs;

- * loopholes in administrative procedures as a result of limited capacity for policy analysis and strategic long-term thinking;
- * stagnation at higher levels, reflective of poor succession and career planning;
- * need for refinement in the deployment system to ensure better fit between job and skills;
- * need for more and better managed distribution of training opportunities;
- * poor job descriptions and schedules for many posts, leading to inability to specify targets and hold officers accountable for results, all of which culminate in a seriously flawed performance management system;
- * an ageing population and a preponderance of unskilled staff;
- * disconnect in the recruitment process preventing user agencies (Ministries, Departments and Agencies) from playing dominant roles in the recruitment of middle and senior management officers;
- * perception that both the recruitment process and the advancement procedure need to be reviewed to ensure equity and transparency;
- * perception that the Federal Character principle is being abused and misapplied in recruitment and transfers;
- * existence of ghost workers, symptomatic of poor personnel records and flawed payroll control system, particularly in those MDAs that are not yet part of the IPPIS programme;
- * prevalence of serious capacity gap at all levels;
- * non-articulation of talent management strategy and succession planning to develop future leaders;
- * bloatedness, reflected in phenomenal growth in number rather than in needed skills set;
- * erosion of the concept of merit;
- * excessive political patronage in recruitment and promotion; and

- * inability of central human resource management agencies to innovate and provide leadership in managing human resources as a strategic asset.

4. Equally, over the years, Government has been making assiduous efforts to over-come these challenges. Indeed, these efforts have been the major *raison d'être* for all the reform efforts in the Civil Service over the years, including the on-going ones. Details about these Reforms are provided in Chapter 6 of this publication, titled the Civil Service.

Institutional Machinery for Human Resources Management in the Civil Service

5. Government, like other organizations, has workers of different categories and specializations in its employ for the purpose of realizing its objectives and discharging its responsibilities. It constantly makes efforts to ensure that the staff complement is neither too large nor too small and that all are usefully engaged. Towards this end, various institutional arrangements have been put in place for the development and utilization of human resources in the Federal Civil Service. The key institutions with oversight responsibilities for policy articulation and implementation, as well as quality assurance on HR issues, through monitoring and enforcement of standards, are the Office of the Head of the Civil Service of the Federation (OHCSF) and the Federal Civil Service Commission (FCSC).

6. For experience sharing, alignment and harmonization of human resource issues between the Federal and the State Governments, the National Council on Establishments (NCE) has been in existence since 1957. The body, which is chaired by the Head of the Civil Service of the Federation, is an organ for inter-governmental collaboration, partnership and decision harmonization on issues of salaries and allowances, grading, conditions of service, schemes of service as well as for pooling information on establishments and Service matters.

7. The Office of the Head of the Civil Service of the Federation (OHCSF) provides general direction, guidance and leadership to the Civil Service through its various activities. Through its Management Services Office (MSO), it deals with issues of systems, structures, work processes and other related matters for ensuring the efficiency and effectiveness of the Service by proffering innovative solutions to bring about continual re-engineering of the systems, processes and procedures in the Civil Service. The Establishments and Pensions Office (EPO) is the custodian of Service records and approved establishments in addition to being responsible for industrial relations and pension administration. The Manpower Development Office (MDO) has responsibility for ensuring that, on a sustainable basis, the Service has its fair share of quality manpower. In this

context, the Office coordinates Service-wide administration of training and development. It also supervises all training institutions under the OHCSF, including the Administrative Staff College of Nigeria (ASCON), the Public Service Institute of Nigeria (PSIN) and the Federal Training Centres. The Career Management Office (CSO), on its own part, manages the pool system which involves managing the careers of officers at the senior management level (GLs.14-17), and of some pool cadres including administrative officers, librarians, confidential secretaries, store and procurement officers as well as officers in the executive cadre. The Office is complemented in this regard by other Ministries and Offices controlling professional pool cadres. Among these are the Federal Ministry of Justice for the career management of Legal Officers; Office of the Accountant-General of the Federation and Office of the Auditor-General for the Federation for Accountants and Auditors respectively; the Federal Ministry of Information and Communications for Information Officers and the Federal Ministry of Works, Housing and Urban Development in the case of Engineers. The professional and line Ministries are responsible for the career development of their professional and technical staff below the senior management level as well as junior officers (GL.03-06). There are still some other significant functions that the Office of the Head of the Civil Service of the Federation (OHCSF) performs to the benefit of the whole system. These include:

- (i) Advising the President, in consultation with the Federal Civil Service Commission, on appointment of Permanent Secretaries, and alone, with respect to deployment of Permanent Secretaries;
- (ii) Promoting good relations between Ministers and other political appointees, on the one hand, and Permanent Secretaries and other Civil Servants on the other hand;
- (iii) Providing staff for newly-established and ad-hoc bodies;
- (iv) Allocation of offices to Civil Servants;
- (v) Issuing Guidelines for Training in the Federal Civil Service; and
- (vi) Issuing and revising the Schemes of Service which indicate in respect of each cadre the following:
 - (a) the correct nomenclature;
 - (b) the lowest to the highest Salary Grade Levels;
 - (c) qualifications for entry and progression within the cadre; and
 - (d) Schedule of Duties at each Grade Level.

All in all, OHCSF does its best to promote high morale, *esprit-de-corps* and good image in the Service and foster professionalism among Civil Servants.

8. The Federal Civil Service Commission (FCSC) is the constitutional body with the power:

- “(a) to appoint persons to offices in the Federal Civil Service; and
- (b) to submit and exercise disciplinary control over persons holding such offices”.

Accordingly, recruitment of Federal Civil Servants is vested in the Commission which is headed by a Chairman. From time to time, it delegates its authority in respect of appointments, promotions and discipline of specified categories of staff to Ministries/Extra-Ministerial Departments. The Commission also regularly issues Guidelines for Appointment, Promotion and Discipline in the Federal Civil Service. Its other important activities include the following:

- (i) monitoring the activities of the MDAs on appointment, promotion and discipline to ensure that its Guidelines are being strictly and uniformly adhered to;
- (ii) maintaining up-to-date personnel records of Civil Servants;
- (iii) serving as an appellate body in respect of petitions from Officers in the MDAs who feel aggrieved concerning appointment, promotion and discipline matters;
- (iv) processing and determining applications for transfer and secondment;
- (v) posting of those officers it recruits to the relevant MDAs;
- (vi) attending the meetings of the Senior Staff Committees of the MDAs;
- (vii) approving Acting Appointments. In this context, officers should note that if they are asked, for whatever reasons, to cover the schedule of a superior officer, that does not mean they are acting in that post. **For an officer to be able to claim to be acting on a particular post, such an arrangement must be expressly approved in writing by the constituted authority, i. e. FCSC in the case of officers and the President in the case of the post of Permanent Secretary. In other words, it is improper for a Director temporarily covering the schedule of the**

Permanent Secretary to start addressing himself as the Acting Permanent Secretary. The proper thing to do is to simply claim his substantive post and write under it " for Permanent Secretary". The same principle applies with respect to all other posts.

- (viii) liaising with OHCSF and the other Ministries/Extra-Ministerial Departments controlling pool officers on appointment, promotion and discipline of such officers; and
- (ix) providing general guidance and direction to the 36 States Civil Service Commissions on all matters within its purview so as to improve institutional effectiveness of the Civil Service at all levels of Government.

9. Another organ of the Federal Government that is important in the context of management of human resources in the Federal Civil Service is the Office of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation (OSGF). The main functions of this Office are:

- (i) Serving as Secretary to the National Council of State, the Executive Council of the Federation and other constitutional Councils which are chaired by the President or the Vice-President;
- (ii) Co-ordinating the activities of Ministries and Government Agencies, especially on the implementation of Government policies and decisions;
- (iii) Dealing with constitutional, political and economic matters as may be referred to the Presidency;
- (iv) Administrative Tribunals and Commissions of Enquiry;
- (v) Co-ordinating national security and public safety matters;
- (vi) Protocol matters;
- (vii) Co-ordinating appointments to statutory bodies and agencies;
- (viii) Dealing with matters relating to conditions of service of political office holders in the Executive, the Legislature and the Judiciary;
- (ix) Processing matters on prerogative of mercy;

- (x) National honours and awards;
- (xi) Petitions and appeals to the President from non-public officers;
- (xii) Liaison with Secretaries to State Government;
- (xiii) Residential and Office accommodation for Political Office holders;
- (xiv) Management of Offices as may be determined by the President from time to time. Currently, these are:
 - (a) Cabinet Secretariat
 - (b) General Services Office
 - (c) Political Affairs Office
 - (d) Economic Affairs Office
 - (e) Special Services Office
 - (f) Ecological Funds Office
 - (g) Special Duties Office

10. Apart from the above centralized agencies that coordinate activities in the Federal Civil Service, there are the MDAs which are much more in number and, therefore, bear most of the responsibilities. This mandate they discharge in accordance with the provisions of the Guidelines for Appointments, Promotion and Discipline issued by the Federal Civil Service Commission.

11. The Guidelines demand that each MDA has the Senior Staff Committee, the Junior Staff Committee (Local) and the Junior Staff Committee (Headquarters). In addition, the Guidelines have provisions covering the following areas:

- (i) Advertisements
- (ii) Interview
- (iii) Confirmation of Appointment
- (iv) Various forms of appointment, including Temporary, Acting, Special and Contract Appointments
- (v) Secondment and Transfer
- (vi) Notional and Substantive Promotions
- (vii) Discipline
- (viii) Appeals and Petitions.

CHAPTER 8

Code of Ethics and Conduct in the Civil Service

Traditionally, our Civil Service used to attract the very best of talents and enjoy high recognition and respect, indeed envy, from the other groups in society. All these, however, started plummeting a couple of decades ago. All the same, the leadership of the Service has taken steps to reverse the trend, burnish its image and make it more relevant to national aspirations. It is, however, clear that a lot still needs to be done to get the civil service to the promised land.

Code of Ethics

2. In order to continue to move the Civil Service in the right direction, the requisite Code of Ethics should be embraced by all civil servants. Ethics shall mean a sound culture, based on ethical values and principles. A civil servant should ensure compliance with the principles of law and the implementation of judicial decisions. He should perform his duties properly and efficiently and display professional discipline, dignity, integrity, equity, impartiality, fairness, public-spiritedness and courtesy in the discharge of his functions, notably in his relations with his superiors, colleagues and subordinates, as well as with the public. He should ensure at all times that public property under his responsibility is managed in the most appropriate and efficient manner. His conduct shall be deemed to be appropriate only when he behaves in a manner that enhances public confidence and boosts the image of the Service. In addition, the following code of ethics demand his attention and adherence:

(i) Political Neutrality and Duty of Confidentiality

A civil servant should not use his post, functions or responsibilities for political or partisan purposes, which may be detrimental to the interests of the civil service. He should respect the confidentiality of official information to which he is privy by virtue of his professional activities, even after leaving office, except where the law, the legitimate authority or the interest of justice requires otherwise. He should not, on the basis of his political affiliation or ideological beliefs, seek to influence or change the policies, decisions or actions that the administration has decided to define, adopt or implement.

(ii) *Integrity and Moral Rectitude*

A civil servant should refrain from any activity that is inconsistent with ethics, morality, such as misappropriation of public funds, favouritism, nepotism, discrimination, influence-peddling or administrative indiscretion. He should not solicit, accept, demand or receive, directly or indirectly, any payment, gift or other advantages in kind, in return for performing or refraining from performing functions or obligations. It shall be reprehensible for a civil servant to offer gifts or other advantages that might influence in his favour or in favour of his family members and friends, the judgment or decisions of another person. A civil servant shall, under no circumstance, mis-use public property or prevail upon subordinates to perform activities other than those falling within the scope of their functions or mandate.

(iii) *Conflict of Interest*

A civil servant should not take up functions or positions, engage in transactions or have any financial, commercial or material interests that might be incompatible with his functions, responsibilities or duties. Without prejudice to the incompatible activities already laid down in the laws or regulations, he should, to the extent required by his official position, declare any financial and commercial interests he might have or any profit-making activities he may be engaged in, either directly or through family members, if such interests or activities are likely to give rise to conflicts of interests. In the event of any potential or actual conflict of interest between his professional status and private interest, a civil servant shall terminate activities likely to give rise to such a conflict.

(iv) *Professionalism*

Professionalism resides in how skillfully and how well a civil servant performs his functions and duties. Professionalism manifests itself in his behaviour at work and in his constant effort to improve, reinforce and update his knowledge, refine the skills that are necessary for carrying out his tasks and enhancing his output and productivity.

(v) *Discipline*

The civil servant must be well disciplined. Rules and regulations should be adhered to and the interests of the Service must be paramount. Senior officers should prescribe code of conduct which they themselves can and should comply with. Those who wish to lead other people should always remember that effective leadership involves exemplary character, hard

work and integrity. Good conduct is one of the criteria for promotion. Junior officers should be familiar with Government Regulations and Rules regarding good conduct. They must learn to obey lawful orders and constituted authorities.

(vi) Loyalty

Civil Servants should be loyal to the Government which has given them the opportunity to serve it. No Officer or employee should assume that he has the right to a salary or wage without giving adequate service in return. Government has no obligation to retain inefficient or disloyal elements in the Service.

(vii) Honesty

Civil servants should be honest in doing their duties and in their dealings with the public. They should realize that they are paid salaries for the duties which they perform. This means that they should be conscientious on duty, and demand or receive nothing in money or in kind from anyone in the performance of their duties.

(viii) Courage

Courage is one of the greatest assets of the best Civil Servants. The exhibition of this quality takes many forms. It may be shown in working hard in a very busy post, for there is really no reason to fear hard work. Civil Servants should acquire the courage of working hard. They should not hesitate to take over an extensive schedule of duties. Another type of courage involves doing what is morally right even though one does not stand to gain personally from such action. In your schedule of duties, you should do the right thing, especially if it will enhance the reputation of the Service and the country. You should, at all times, resist temptations from any quarter. Where the prior consent of a superior authority is necessary, be courteous in getting it.

(ix) Courtesy

It costs nothing to be polite to your colleagues and the general public served by you. Polite instructions are usually more easily obeyed. Members of public always cherish courtesy and consideration from Civil Servants. Courtesy in the office and to the general public makes it easier to get on with other people. A heavy schedule of duties or any other circumstance can not justify bad temper by civil servants.

(x) Co-operation

The eleven members of a good football team co-operate whenever they are on the field for a match. One or two members who believe that they are as good as the rest of the team put together may cause the defeat of the whole team. Similarly, all the staff in the section of a Ministry should co-operate as a team in order to realize the overall purpose of the section. The Officers and staff of a Ministry should work together to attain the goals of the Ministry.

(xi) Tact

“Tact” means skillfulness in handling a difficult situation without giving offence to the people involved. That is very necessary in the Service. Skill in dealing with people by creating an impression of willingness to be of assistance enhances the efficiency of the office and gives the public satisfaction.

(xii) Industry

In this sense, industry means, useful hard work. This definition is necessary because some workers work furiously to get little or nothing done. They only waste their energy and often give false impression to their supervisors. You have been engaged to serve your Ministry or Department in some way. In turn, your Ministry or Department serves the Government and members of the public. Try to ensure that you work to earn your pay and promotions. To work hard with good results, the following principles are useful:

- a. Know the scope of your work;
- b. Know the various parts of your schedule of duties;
- c. Decide the appropriate order or sequence the various stages of your work;
- d. Before you start an assignment, have a rough idea of when you should finish it; and
- e. If your work involves writing, ensure that your style is clear and direct.

(xiii) Avoidance of Delay

If you are hard-working, you are unlikely to delay action on files or projects. However, some schedules of duties are extremely busy. There are either so many people to interview and/or so many files to deal with. Your time should be devoted to official work. If you are ill, you may be unable to concentrate on your work. In such a case, you should consult a Doctor and then return to work later, unless you are given sick leave. If you are going to be away for a day or two, you should let your boss know as soon as possible. Any urgent work in your schedule may then be taken over by some other officers. You could avoid delay in the following ways:

- a Know precisely when you have to submit any piece of work to your supervisor or higher authority;
- b Do not hoard files in the hope that you can dispose of them at the eleventh hour;
- c Avoid being bogged down by a difficult matter at the expense of many simpler ones. In this connection, there is a psychological advantage in disposing of several simple cases before taking on tougher ones;
- d Come early to your work place and devote your time to work until the closing time;
- e Do not malingering in your work-place; and
- f It pays to do some overtime occasionally in order to bring your work up-to-date.

(xiv) Tidiness

Civil Servants should keep their offices tidy not only because visiting members of the public served by them are thereby more favourably impressed but also because an orderly office often gives an idea of the state of mind of the staff. It usually enhances efficiency if files and equipment are placed so that they are easily located when necessary. In this connection, you may perhaps recall your own impression when you went to an officer who could not help you in getting some reference because his office was untidy and disorderly. Workers should also ensure that they are properly dressed to do their duty in the office or work place. It is a good idea to dress in a business-like manner, not as if one were going to a formal party or a beauty-queen parade. It does not cost much

to dress simply with carefully chosen material. It is useful to remember that how people dress tells keen observers a great deal of the general character and taste of such people.

(xv) Helpfulness

You may have heard many people allege that it is now difficult for people to get help from those they do not know. That there is something in this allegation is borne out by the fact that many young people now seem to believe that they can only get jobs from public offices if they channel their applications through their personal friends, relatives or townsmen. This unfortunate tendency should be discouraged by all Civil Servants. There are many opportunities of helping your colleagues and your juniors in the office at no personal cost at all. You could advise a young officer to further his studies instead of allowing him to waste his official time and his money on gambling. Similarly, Supervisors should find time to listen to their subordinates who have personal or domestic problems. Those who complain that some of their requests have been turned down should be told why it is impossible to meet their wishes. Should papers or documents come to you by mistake from members of staff or the general public, find out the correct destination and take necessary directive as to re-routing it from your superior officers.

(xvi) Kindness

Being kind does not imply that you should give to people what they are not entitled to. Kindness involves respecting the privileges and rights of officers, employees and members of the public, irrespective of the fact that those concerned are unknown to you. A Civil Servant is a public servant. He should, therefore, serve impartially. Kindness also involves having a humane approach in dealing with people in difficulty. This applies to staff as well as members of the public. A staff in difficulty needs help and, if you are in a position to do so, you should assist him to the best of your ability without, of course, breach of the regulations or perverting the course of justice. The same consideration should be shown to the public.

(xvii) Attitude to Public Funds

The following points are strongly emphasized in terms of cost-consciousness:

- a Do not waste public funds. If you are frugal in spending your own money, you should be equally frugal in spending public funds.
- b Collectors of Government Revenue should be conscientious in doing their duty. They should not grant any rebates as a favour to anyone. In this regard, it is not kindness to reduce the Revenue due to Government on your own account or at your own level.
- c Justify every expenditure and ensure that economy is always maintained, e.g. discourage wasting public funds on ill-advised purchases near the end of the financial year.
- d As a good citizen and a good civil servant, discourage financial abuses by making suitable reports through the correct channel.
- e Made-in-Nigeria goods should be preferred to their imported counterparts. Patronage of local goods encourages the growth of local industries and employment.

(xviii) National Consciousness

The ideals held by people influence their actions. Therefore, Civil Servants should aim at inspiring, broad-minded ideals without being unrealistic. One Nigeria is by far better and always superior to any town or clan or ethnic group in the Federation. Therefore, the interest of any group should not be pursued at the expense of what is best for Nigeria. Attempts by some people or ethnic groups to appropriate public offices and resources to themselves or members of their group always tend to weaken and change the bonds of national unity. Sometimes, civil unrest may arise from indifference to or disguised encouragement of nepotism, favouritism and their associated vices.

(xix) A Good Image of the Service

The Governments of the Federation are the largest employers of labour. Their Civil Services, therefore, have a leading role to play in the social and economic affairs of the country. Nigerian Civil Servants have proved their mettle in successfully grappling with the problems arising from the rapid, social and economic development of the country. A deterioration of standards should not be tolerated. In achieving this goal on which a good

image of the Civil Service depends, Nigerians, particularly those at the top, should continue to provide honest and courageous leadership.

(xx) Efficiency

Our level of efficiency can be improved upon. Training-consciousness will help in this regard. No grade or group of officers should consider itself so good as to dispense with further training. As a matter of policy, advantage should be taken of induction, refresher and training courses. In the national interest, training institutions in the Federal Service should be open to Civil Servants in the States. As a matter of policy, staff may attend training courses in the States. It would be extremely rewarding if the training of some Federal and State personnel could be held jointly to promote a community of experience for such trainees. The younger elements in the Services are very important. Their most promising members will later be among the top Civil Servants. It is, therefore, suggested that the minds of the future leaders in our Services should be exposed to good education and discipline. The Services should not only be disciplined; they should also be efficient.

(xxi) Social Problems and Social Justice

Civil Servants have responsibility for helping to formulate and for implementing Government Policies. These policies concern the maintenance of law and order, promoting a healthy and well-educated nationhood, efficient systems of transport, reliable means of communication, opportunities for trade and industry, efficient development of national resources, etc.

The amenities provided by Governments should be equitably distributed among the people without reference to political parties, ethnic and religious groups. As Civil Servants are paid from the various taxes collected from the people, Government servants should help to ensure that:

- (a) Equal opportunity for employment is provided for all job seekers.
- (b) Under no circumstances should bribes and gifts be taken from applicants for jobs. Interviews for employment should always be conducted by a duly constituted panel. It should never be left in the hands of a single person. Proper record should be kept of the interview for future reference.

- (c) Nepotism or any other form of preferential treatment should be avoided.
- (d) In the Services themselves, privileges should be granted only to those who are qualified for them.
- (e) Civil Servants should never dispense private or personal favours with public funds and property.
- (f) Justice and fair play should be extended to all concerned.
- (g) Ensure that public business is always discharged in accordance with existing laws, rules and regulations of Government and with expedition.
- (h) Discourage discriminatory practices to individuals and groups.
- (i) All irregularities reported should be investigated and corrective action promptly taken.

(xxii) Exercising Authority

Authority may be defined as the power given to a body or person or office holder by a superior to ensure that some definite objective is achieved. As the extent of the power given is usually stated, "Authority" as a rule, is never unlimited. It is important for those who wield authority to remember always that the power enjoyed by them is to enable them achieve the goals of their organizations. In several matters in the Civil Service, authority has to be exercised for the general welfare of the public and not for the private or personal gains of departmental or divisional heads. Authority should not be exercised in a manner to advance the interest of a family, clique or ethnic group. Officers in authority should ensure that all those under them are given the same opportunities. Preferential treatment for any officer or class amounts to favouritism. A head or supervisor who is guilty of favouritism often makes it impossible for all his subordinates to do their best. Every head should make it clear to his staff that merit and loyalty, not family, religion or place of origin are decisive factors for achievement.

(xxiii) Flexibility and Decision Making

Much of the work of the schedule officers involves taking decisions or supplying information to aid decision making. In doing this, Civil Servants should ensure that, as much as possible, they follow the under-listed steps as a means of enhancing objectivity and good judgment:-

- (a) Thorough mastery of the problems;
- (b) Knowing the facts about the problems under consideration;
- (c) Analysis of the facts collected;
- (d) Examining whether available precedents fit into the problems under consideration;
- (e) Determining the conclusions in the light of the facts and other consideration; and
- (f) Giving an idea of probable effects of the conclusions if implemented.

Mandatory Declaration of Assets

5. Against the backdrop of the unfortunate prevalence of bribery and corruption in the Public Service over the years, it became necessary to monitor excessive and/or irregular accumulation of wealth by Public Servants. Accordingly, the 1999 Constitution provides for the establishment of the Code of Conduct Bureau with the power to:

- “(a) receive declarations by public officers made under paragraph 12 of Part 1 of the Fifth Schedule to this Constitution;
- (b) examine the declarations in accordance with the requirements of the Code of Conduct or any law;
- (c) retain custody of such declarations and make them available for inspection by any citizen of Nigeria on such terms and conditions as the National Assembly may prescribe;
- (d) ensure compliance with and, where appropriate, enforce the provisions of the Code of Conduct or any law thereto;
- (e) receive complaints about non-compliance with or breach of the provisions of the Code of Conduct or any law in relation thereto, investigate the complaint and, where appropriate, refer such matters to the Code of Conduct Tribunal;
- (f) appoint, promote, dismiss and exercise disciplinary control over the staff of the Code of Conduct Bureau in accordance with the provisions of an Act of the National Assembly enacted in that behalf; and

- (g) carry out such other functions as may be conferred upon it by the National Assembly.”

6. With respect to the completion of the Asset Declaration Form, the Bureau has prescribed the following conditions:

- “1. This form is a schedule of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999) and it is mandatory for all Public Officers whether elected, appointed, recruited, contracted etc, by whatever name called to collect and sign for the form from the Code of Conduct Bureau nearest to their work station in any of the 36 States of the Federation and F.C.T. Or the Code of Conduct Bureau Headquarters at the Federal Secretariat Complex, Shehu Shagari Way, Maitama District, Abuja.
2. The responsibility to collect, fill and return the form rests solely with the declarant; therefore, submission of completed forms by the declarant through his/her respective Head of Department does not in any way exonerate declarant from responsibility or liability.
3. Every declarant is required by Law to declare his/her assets/liability including that of his spouse(s) who is not a Public Officer and children under 18 years age, honestly, sincerely and submit same to the Bureau within 30 days of the receipt of the forms.
4. You are to declare **ONLY** those Assets/Liabilities you **ACTUALLY** owned at the material time of filling the form. **DO NOT** declare any Assets/Liabilities you are anticipating to have before actual acquisition.
5. All properties/assets acquired outside Nigeria **MUST** be stated clearly with the value of the said Assets in the Currency of the Country where the property is situated.
6. After the completion of the form, the declarant must personally go and swear to the declaration before a High Court Judge nearest to his work station before submitting it to the Bureau.
7. Every Public Officer is to **NOTE** that it is the requirement of the Law to declare his/her assets/liabilities on: (a) *Assumption of office;* (b) *At the end of his term of Office,* (c) *At interval of four years for Public Officers on continuous employment of Government either of Federal, State or Local Government;* (d) *And at such other intervals as the Bureau may determine from time to time.*

8. When filling the form, you are required to provide detailed information including but not limited to the number, type, address, value of properties so declared and the date of acquisition as well as income derivable from the properties where appropriate.
9. **NOTE** that where a question in any column is not applicable, you are required to state reason(s).
10. Also **NOTE** that all declarations made by declarant are subject to **VERIFICATION** by the Officers of the Bureau authorized on that behalf.
11. Failure to declare your assets as required under the provisions of paragraph 11 of the 5th schedule of the Federal Constitution shall attract on conviction any or all of the following; (a) *Removal from office.* (b) *Disqualification from holding any Public Office.* (c) *forfeiture to the state any property acquired in abuse of office or dishonesty."*

The law further states that these sanctions shall be without prejudice to the penalties that may be imposed by any law where the conduct is also a criminal offence. The Constitution also states that the prerogative of mercy shall not apply to any punishment imposed by the Code of Conduct Tribunal for breaching this Code

7. Furthermore, as a means of establishing and maintaining a high standard of morality in the conduct of Government business and ensuring that the actions and behaviour of public officers conform to the highest standard of public morality and accountability, the Bureau mandates the following conducts on the part of Public Officers:

- "1. A public officer shall not put himself in a position where his interest conflicts with his duties and responsibilities.
2. Without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing paragraph, a public officer shall not;
 - (a) Receive or be paid the emoluments of any public office at the same time as he receives or is paid the emoluments of any other public office; or
 - (b) Except when he is not employed on full time basis, engage or participate in the management or running of any private business, profession or trade; but nothing in this paragraph shall prevent a public officer from engaging in farming or participating in the management or running of any farm.

3. The President, Vice-President, Governor, Deputy Governor, Minister of the Government of the Federation and Commissioners of the Government of States, members of the National Assembly and the Houses of Assembly of the States and such other public officers or persons as the National Assembly may by law prescribe shall not maintain or operate a bank account in any country outside Nigeria.
4. A Public Officer shall not, after his retirement from public service and while receiving pension from public funds, accept more than one remunerative position as Chairman, Director or public authority or receive any other remuneration from public funds in addition to his pension and the emolument of such one remunerative position.
5.
 - (1) Retired Public Officers who have held offices to which the paragraph applies are prohibited from services or employment in foreign companies or foreign enterprises.
 - (2) The paragraph applies to the office of President, Vice President, Chief Justice of Nigeria, Governor and Deputy Governor of a State.
6.
 - (1) A public officer shall not ask for or accept any property or benefit of any kind for himself or for any other person on account of anything done or omitted to be done by him in the discharge of his duties.
 - (2) For the purposes of sub-paragraph (1) of this paragraph, the receipt by a public officer of any gifts or benefits from commercial firms, business enterprises or persons who have contracts with the government shall be presumed to have been received in contravention of the said sub-paragraph unless the contrary is proved.
 - (3) A public officer shall only accept personal gifts or benefits, from relatives or personal friends to such extent and on such occasions as are recognized by custom:

Provided that any gift or donation to a public officer on any public or ceremonial occasion shall be treated as gifts to the appropriate institution represented by the public officer and, accordingly, the mere acceptance or receipt of any such gifts may not be treated as a contravention of this provision.

7. The President or Vice-President, Governor or Deputy Governor, Minister of the Government of the Federation or Commissioner of the Government of State, or any other public officer who holds office of a Director-General or head of any public corporation, University, or parastatal organization shall not accept:

(a) A loan, except from government or its agencies, a bank, building society or other financial institution recognized by law; and

(b) Any benefit of whatever nature from any company, contractor, or businessman, or the nominee or agent of such person:

Provided that the head of a public corporation or of a University or other parastatal organization may, subject to the body, accept a loan from such body.

8. No person shall offer a public officer any property, gift or benefit of any kind as an inducement or bribe for the granting of any favour or the discharge in his favour of the public officer's duties.

9. A Public Officer shall not do or direct to be done in abuse of his office an arbitrary act prejudicial to the rights of any other persons knowing that such act is unlawful or contrary to any government policy.

10. A Public Officer shall not be a member of, belong to, or take part in any society the membership of which is incompatible with functions and dignity of his office.

11. (1) Every public officer shall within 3 months after the coming into force of this Code of Conduct or immediately after taking office and thereafter

(a) at the end of every four years; and

(b) at the end of his term of office, submit to the Code of Conduct Bureau a written declaration of all his properties, assets and liabilities and those of his spouse, or unmarried children under the age of 18 years.

(2) Any statement in such declaration that is found to be false by any authority or person authorized in that behalf to verify it shall be deemed to be a breach of this Code.

- (3) Any property or assets acquired by a public officer, any declaration required by sub-paragraph (1) (a) of this gift, or loan approved by the Code shall be deemed to have been acquired in breach of this Code unless the contrary is proved.
12. Any allegation that a public officer has committed a breach of or has not complied with the provisions of this Code shall be made to the Code of Conduct Bureau.
13. A public officer who does any act prohibited by this Code through a nominee, trustee, or other agent shall be deemed ipso facto to have committed a breach of this Code."

CHAPTER 9

Service Delivery

Service delivery is a primary element in good governance. Indeed, efficient and effective delivery of good service is the *raison d'être* of Government. When political parties want to go to voters to canvass support, they prepare their respective manifestos, a key component of which are the services they are promising to deliver to the citizenry in the various sectors of national life and the economy.

2. The Charter for the Public Service in Africa was adopted by the Third Biennial Pan-African Conference of Ministers of Civil Service in Windhoek, Namibia on 5th February, 2001 with Nigeria as a major participant in the entire process. This Charter expresses the will and commitment of African States to streamline the services provided to citizens and the desire to ensure the efficient use of the resources allocated for such services.

Fundamental and Universal Principles for Provision of Public Services

3. The Charter prescribes fundamental and universal principles for the provision of public services, including the following:

(i) **Principle of equality of treatment**

All public services shall recognize the equality of citizens before the law. Persons in a comparable situation vis-à-vis the administration shall be treated equally without any distinctions whatsoever. Any discrimination based on the place of origin, race, gender, religion, ethnic group, philosophical or political convictions or other personal considerations shall be prohibited. Moreover, measures taken by the public service shall be proportional to what is required to achieve the goal of safeguarding the interests of the public at large, so as not to unduly affect the interests of other parties.

(ii) **Principle of neutrality**

The public service that serves the interest of the public shall not discriminate against its employees because of their personal traits. The public service as a whole remains neutral in respect to the government of the day, and this fundamental principle will be respected by all administrations.

(iii) **Principle of legality**

Public service shall be provided in strict compliance with the law. Administrative decisions shall be taken in conformity with existing regulations.

(iv) **Principle of continuity**

Public service shall be provided on an ongoing basis and in all its component parts, in accordance with the rules governing its operation.

(v) **Proximity and accessibility of services**

The public service shall be organized along functional and decentralized lines designed to bring public management closer to the people and provide them with appropriate and accessible basic services. Physical proximity and accessibility can be achieved by the application of appropriate information and communication technologies (E-Governance).

(vi) **Participation, consultation and mediation**

It shall be the responsibility of the administration to ensure that the mechanisms of participation and consultation involving civil society and other stakeholders are effectively put in place through consultative forums or advisory bodies. It shall be the responsibility of the public service to put in place a system of mediation through an institution that has sufficient moral and social authority that enables users as well as public service employees themselves to have means of redress other than administrative and/or legal remedies. The mandate of this institution would thus be to ensure that the rights of users and public service employees are upheld for the benefit of all parties concerned.

(vii) **Quality, effectiveness and efficiency**

The public service shall ensure that the highest quality and the most effective and efficient services are provided by making optimal use of the resources at its disposal. It shall also take into account the resources and means that users have available to them to benefit from public services. The public service shall make the necessary adjustments to the way in which its services are organized and operated, in order to respond, on a sustainable basis, to changing needs and the demands of the public at large. These adjustments must lead to better service delivery and must be informed by best practices in the application of the information and communication technologies.

(viii) **Evaluation of services**

The evaluation of the effectiveness and productivity of services shall be based on objectives and programmes of activities defined beforehand, accompanied by performance indicators and criteria. To this end, evaluation mechanisms shall be established in the public service to carry out periodic evaluations of the services offered to the public. The results of these evaluations shall be disseminated, together with the publication of the annual reports.

(ix) **Transparency and information**

Administrative decisions shall always be taken in accordance with transparent, simple and understandable procedures, while ensuring accountability. All administrative units shall make available all the necessary information on acts and procedures in their respective domains, as well as the information required to assess their management, with a view to enabling those interested to have full access. The administration shall inform the person concerned of any decision taken concerning him/her, indicating the reasons for such decisions and stating, where necessary, the legal remedies open to him/her, should he/she decide to challenge the decision. The administration shall establish or strengthen reception and information units for users in order to assist them in gaining access to services and in recording their views, suggestions or complaints.

(x) **Speed and responsiveness**

The public service shall determine and respect deadlines in the delivery of its services. These deadlines must be established by law and regulations, and evidence of unusually long delays may make the administration liable to legal action. Failure by the public service to take action upon the expiration of a deadline as stipulated in the law shall be construed as tacit acceptance, unless otherwise expressly provided by the law or regulations.

(xi) **Reliability and confidentiality of information concerning citizens**

Personal information or information that helps to identify, in any manner whatsoever, directly or indirectly, the individuals concerned, may not be subject to processing, including computerized processing, in a manner that would violate personal privacy, individual freedoms or human rights. Any person who can prove his/her identity shall have the right to be informed about any personal information concerning him/her, and to

challenge and have such information corrected, if need be. He/she shall also be informed of the use to which such information is put, including in computerized information. With the exception of administrative departments such as the police and the judiciary, which may be authorized by law to maintain automated personal data files, no files shall contain information on the private life, views, health or individuals, or on any other type of information that may violate the privacy of individuals, without the express authorization of the individuals concerned. Departments must, however, take cognizance of the complexity of privacy and disclosure in the event of an individual, where a balance has to be found between privacy and public interest. (e.g. HIV/AIDS).

SERVICOM

4. In December 2003, the Federal Government received the report of a diagnostic audit of service delivery in Nigeria. The report, inter alia, recommended "a far reaching transformation of Nigerian society through a service delivery programme as a step in the process of moving to a government that is more in touch with the people." So was born a Service Delivery Initiative which the Federal Government considered a critical component of its reform agenda.

5. On 21st March, 2004, the Federal Government consequently launched SERVICOM which is an acronym for Service Compact with all Nigerians. The Initiative is an essential tool not only for minimizing service delivery failures but also for enabling us to discover new and more efficient processes and procedures for delivering services to the teeming population of Nigerians whose right to quality service Government regards as inalienable and non-negotiable. Its core provision says "we dedicate ourselves to providing the basic services to which citizens are entitled, timely, fairly, honestly, effectively and transparently". The concept revolves around the following five core principles:

- (i) Conviction that Nigeria can only realize its full potential if citizens receive prompt and efficient services from the State;
- (ii) Renewal of commitment to the service of the Nigerian nation;
- (iii) Consideration for the needs and rights of all Nigerians to enjoy social and economic advancement;
- (iv) Avowal to deliver quality services based upon the needs of citizens; and

- (v) Dedication to providing the basic services to which each citizen is entitled in a timely, fair, honest, effective and transparent manner.

6. In order to operationalize Government's commitment to service delivery, it subsequently established the SERVICOM Office with the following objectives, functions and responsibilities:

- (i) Spearheading the strategy for implementing Government's Service Delivery Initiative;
- (ii) Co-ordinating the implementation of the Initiative across the entire Public Service;
- (iii) Disseminating approved service delivery policies/ programmes;
- (iv) Monitoring the implementation of such policies and programmes;
- (v) Conducting surveys of services and research on customer satisfaction;
- (vi) Propagating best standards and practices and publishing results and principles;
- (vii) Coordinating the formulation and operation of SERVICOM charters in Ministries, Parastatals and Extra-Ministerial Departments;
- (viii) Monitoring and reporting progress and performance of Ministries and other public agencies under SERVICOM obligations;
- (ix) Publicizing charters and also sensitizing the citizenry to demand quality service as a right at all times;
- (x) Introduction of SERVICOM Charters to regulate public service performance and public expectation of service;
- (xi) Appointment of Ministerial Nodal Officers (contact persons) to oversee in-house service delivery as well as act as liaison with the SERVICOM Office; and
- (xii) Introduction of SERVICOM Index to measure service delivery performance.

7. Every Ministry is expected to have a Ministerial SERVICOM Unit (MSU) as well as a SERVICOM Charter. The overall responsibility of the MSU is to

spearhead the Ministry's Service Delivery Initiative through SERVICOM compliance. The MSU is also to:

- (i) produce, review and monitor performance of Charters from the Ministry and its Parastatals;
- (ii) manage the Ministry's Customer Relations Policy, including providing opportunities for customer feedback on services;
- (iii) put in place a Complaints Procedure, including Grievance Redress Mechanism, for the Ministry and its Parastatals;
- (iv) identify and adopt appropriate Market Research techniques for identifying customer needs and expectations;
- (v) ensure the promotion of quality assurance and best practices in the Ministry's performance of its functions;
- (vi) provide a comprehensive and effective training policy for frontline Staff on Customer Relations and related matters;
- (vii) disseminate best practices and other tips on service delivery improvement;
- (viii) serve as a link between the Ministry and the SERVICOM Office;
- (ix) serve as the Secretariat of the Ministry's Service Delivery Committee;
- (x) manage links with strategic partners and other stakeholders on Service Delivery, Market Research, Customer Care/Relations, etc; and
- (xi) facilitate a safe and conducive working environment for Staff at all levels of service delivery.

8. The SERVICOM Charter, on its own part, is an operational tool designed to guide both service providers, as well as service takers, on service provider responsibilities and customers' expectations and obligations. The Charter makes promises based upon which customers can expect and demand quality service as a matter of right and to which they can have recourse when service delivery fails. It guides both the service provider and the service taker on service providers' responsibility and customers' expectation. The Charter should be displayed conspicuously by every Ministry, Parastatal, Extra-Ministerial

Department and other Government agencies. It should afford the customer an active role in the service delivery programme and should deliver on promises made and strive to break the twin evils of corruption and inefficiency.

9. In December 2005, Government established the Service Delivery Institute whose main focus is to provide relevant training for all cadres of public servants as a means of institutionalizing the concept of SERVICOM by inculcating the basic values of service delivery in the Nigerian Public Service. There are, at present, four broad categories of courses delivered by the Institute, viz ,

- * High level Accuracy and Training in leading Customer Focused Reform. Basically, this is aimed not only at securing top-level buy-in but also to intensify the vision of the Initiative and sustain commitment to the Compact;
- * Technical training for staff of Ministerial SERVICOM Committee and Service Delivery Units (SDU's) of parastatals on SERVICOM principles, workings of Ministerial SERVICOM Committees (MSC) and roles of specific desk officers;
- * Service Improvement Planning Workshops for evaluated Ministries, Departments or Agencies (MDAs), Customized training for SERVICOM Pilots, Open courses on Service Delivery; and
- * Training for SERVICOM Pilots.

Some Points for Enhancing Service Delivery

10. Those charged with the responsibility to deliver service are expected to:
- (i) Be friendly to those who come to seek for service
 - (ii) Be strongly committed to providing service
 - (iii) Encourage close dialogue with customers
 - (iv) Know the needs and expectations of their customers
 - (v) Be flexible in meeting customers' demands
 - (vi) Treat customers as partners, not adversaries, and adopt a positive attitude towards them
 - (vii) Make it easy to provide service
 - (viii) Encourage customer feedback
 - (ix) Seek to exceed the expectations of the customer

- (x) Know that first impression counts – so make sure it is good at all times
- (xi) Empower staff to do what it takes to ensure total customer satisfaction
- (xii) Be genuine, serve whole-heartedly with utmost dedication, promptness, efficiency and loyalty.

11. Civil Servants, in whatever post they serve and irrespective of cadre or grade level, must strive to offer quality service without let or hindrance at all times to the Nigerian tax payers who are, after all, the ones who pay their salaries and, as such, empower them to meet their obligations to their families and dependants. Any other attitude apart from this is unacceptable, unpatriotic and should not be tolerated in the reforming Civil Service.

CHAPTER 10

Records Management in the Civil Service

The political leadership in a nation changes periodically, irrespective of whatever form of government is practised but even more so in a democratic dispensation as we have in Nigeria. The duty of the Civil Service to provide continuity, mainly through reference to the decisions of past governments, can as such be better appreciated when we visualize what would have been the case were we not to have the Service to perform this most critical role of preservation of official records. In essence, therefore, the records and materials it generates within the system on a daily basis constitute the life blood of the Civil Service and, by extension, of Government. Indeed, it can be safely asserted that the continued relevance of the Civil Service in the scheme of things, is very much a function of how well it manages these records and materials. These are generated daily in each and every arm of the Service and range from mundane things like nominal rolls and leave applications to highly sensitive materials like Council Conclusions and defence plans. They all have their uses.

Classified Documents

2. Since it is an offence for a Civil Servant to fail to take reasonable care of any documents entrusted to his care, these materials are duly classified so as to sensitize him about the degree of care required for each. The higher the classification of a document, the higher the standard of protection required. The classification of each individual document depends solely on its content, and the sole criterion for deciding, is the degree of harm its unauthorized disclosure would cause. Accuracy in classification is very important since over-grading of documents can lead to delays and inconveniences while under-grading can cause a danger to the system
3. Currently, in the Federal Civil Service, classified documents and materials are graded into the following categories:

(i) Restricted Documents

RESTRICTED documents contain information and data which should be discussed only in Government Offices even though such documents may be enclosed in 'Open' files. It should be noted that what constitutes "restricted" information varies from one office to another. Loyal, responsible Civil Servants should never discuss at home, in buses, hotels and gatherings outside the office what they find in "restricted" documents.

(ii) Staff Confidential Documents

STAFF CONFIDENTIAL documents usually contain information relating to staff in an office or department or Ministry. The contents of such documents are accessible only to a limited number of personnel in the organizations concerned. Examples of 'Staff Confidential' documents are confidential reports on members of staff, files on disciplinary actions, recommendations for promotions and other information which, if revealed to everyone, may embarrass the management of an establishment. Under no circumstances should 'staff confidential' information be discussed at home, in buses, hotels, other Government offices and private or public gatherings.

(iii) Confidential Documents

CONFIDENTIAL documents usually contain information which, if disclosed to unauthorized people, groups and organizations, would be prejudicial to the interest and reputation of an office or department or Ministry and the Government. 'Confidential' documents may be concerned with the following:

- (a) Confidential Reports on members of Staff;
- (b) Negotiations regarding purchase of Government supplies;
- (c) Negotiations with Trade Unions and Staff Association.

(iv) Secret Documents

SECRET documents usually contain information which involves vital interests and the security of a Government, State or the entire Country. As the unauthorized disclosure of secret information is detrimental to the welfare, security and reputation of a Government and its international relations, every civil servant should do his utmost to protect 'secret' documents. Furthermore, you should not hesitate to report any breach of security concerning secret and other documents, notwithstanding the status of the defaulter. At the same time, you should not invent any breach of security merely to damage the fortunes and reputation of any colleague. Examples of 'secret' documents are the following:

- (a) Arrangements for a search by the Police, investigations by security officers, anti-smuggling campaigns, examination papers for candidates for schools and colleges and advancement tests for members of staff;

- (b) Proposals on rationing schemes and price control measures as their prior knowledge by unauthorized people would be prejudicial to their operations;
- (c) Important directives to Nigerian representatives negotiating with foreign powers; and
- (d) Vital Military information, e.g. photographs, aerial surveys, maps, charts, plans and models, details relating to national defence, military, aviation and naval establishments and installations as well as armament research.

(v) *Top Secret Document*

Top secret documents contain information which, if disclosed, will cause exceptionally great damage to an Organization, the Government or the whole nation. Examples of such documents are the following:

- (a) Recommendations on promotions to top posts in the Home and Foreign Services of the Federal Government;
- (b) Proposals on vital inter-state relations in the Federation;
- (c) Very important political documents dealing with international negotiations and alliances; and
- (d) Major Government plans, e.g. new tariff measures, new taxation proposals, measures which may reduce or abolish the liberty of citizens and aliens and crucial matters being put to the Cabinet or the Executive Council of the Federation for consideration and direction.

4. It is customary for different coloured file covers to be used for the various gradings mentioned above and although there are many differences among the various Ministries, it is almost universal for yellow file covers to be used for Top SECRET papers. Files may never be downgraded unless written authority has been granted by a Senior Schedule Officer. Graded letters must always be appropriately stamped at the top and bottom by the Despatch Clerk. In prescribing all these steps, the ultimate aim is the need to respect the fundamental principle of "need to know" in the handling of official documents by Civil Servants.

Security of Classified Documents

5. The most serious dangers to official secrets are from members of subversive organizations and hostile intelligence services which are continually working to break through official security defences with the aim of collecting classified official information which may be used to harm the interests of Nigeria and subvert or cause embarrassment to the Government. In order to forestall this, Officers dealing with 'secret' files must each be provided with a filing cabinet fitted with a bar and special lock (six-lever padlock) so that all secret papers may be kept securely when the officers are not in their offices. When secret files are sent out by Schedule Officers, they must be enclosed in sealed big bag envelopes, and the movements of the files should be recorded in dispatch books which shall be initialed by the recipients of the files. Top Secret files must always be delivered personally by the officers dealing with them. When not in use, they should be kept in safes. In many Ministries and Departments, the procedure for the transmission of secret files is also adopted for confidential files; it is desirable that this be done. In addition, the following measures should be put in place:

(i) *Personnel Security*

Ensure that everyone who is allowed access to classified official information is trustworthy, loyal and made aware of their personal responsibility for safe-guarding such information from possible threats and compromise.

(ii) *Physical Security*

Official secrets, materials and key points need to be well-guarded against those who have no authority to see or gain access to them.

(iii) *Document Security*

Ensure that classified papers are seen only by authorized persons who also have a real need to have access to them for the proper performance of their duties. One way of achieving this is by restricting and controlling the production and circulation of classified papers and by shredding or burning classified waste. Ensure that no officer has access to his own Confidential file.

(iv) Ensure that all personnel that have access to classified information should be aware that such information is protected by the Official Secrets Acts, 1962 and should, as such, be required to sign a declaration of secrecy. Moreover, all personnel allowed access to

classified information should, as soon as possible, swear to the Oath of Secrecy.

The Registry

6. In general, there are two types of Registry in the Civil Service. These are the Open Registry where non-classified documents and correspondences are kept and processed and the Secret/Confidential Registry where classified documents are handled. Entry into Secret Registries is often highly restricted, and those who work there are required to swear to Oath of Secrecy. In some Ministries/Extra-Ministerial Departments, this Registry is usually split into two – Secret Registry and Confidential Registry – depending on the size of the volume and number of personal and subject files that are involved. Where the Registry is split into two, only highly classified subject files are kept in the Secret Registry whilst the Confidential Registry keeps the confidential personal files of the staff of the Ministry/Extra-Ministerial Department. To avoid the creation of a Confidential Registry, in some Ministries/Departments, personal confidential files of senior officers are kept in a cabinet under lock and key in the office of the Permanent Secretary while those of the junior staff are locked up in the cabinets in the office of the Director of Administration/Human Resources.

7. The functions of Registries are the opening, allocating, recording, classifying, indexing, custody of files and the filing of all correspondences and other documents in order to facilitate their identification and location. Registries also supply files on demand and prepare mails for dispatch. To deal with these processes, Clerical Staff of various grades are employed in Registries. Registry Personnel are given designations appropriate to the duties they perform. These are normally as follows:

Type of Work		Designation
Supervising	-	Superintendent or Supervisor
Receipt of in-coming Correspondence	-	Receiving Clerk
Indexing	-	Indexing Clerk
Opening of New files	-	New Files Clerk
Transit Recording	-	Transit Clerk
Tracing of Files	-	Tracer or Searcher
Enclosing Papers in Files	-	Enclosure Clerk or Registrar
Despatch of Outward Correspondence	-	Despatch Clerk
Recording and Bringing Out/B.U.	-	B.U. Clerk
Reviewing of Files	-	Review Clerk
Putting Away of Files and Marking of Charge Slips	-	File or Paper Keeper.

In small offices, one Clerk may be responsible for all, or a combination, of any of these processes while in large offices, two or more Clerks may group various

jobs. Indeed, in very large offices it may be necessary for more than one Clerk to be employed on only one of the above processes.

8. The handling of mails and documents in the Registry involve a number of steps. These are detailed below:

(i) **Processing**

The routine procedure for treatment of mail in a Registry is as follows:

- (a) Delivery to Receiving Clerk;
- (b) Opening of letters and checking of enclosures;
- (c) Affixing date stamp;
- (d) Submission to Schedule officers in Daily Mail Folders or on suitable files;
- (e) Submission of all unopened letters addressed personally to members of staff, either Secret or Confidential, should be made to the Secret Registry;
- (f) Registration in Correspondence Register (where applicable) and recording of receipt and disposal of items of value, deeds, etc. in the Valuables book;
- (g) Examination of correspondence for urgent papers, and affixing of appropriate priority labels where necessary;
- (h) Quoting of file numbers by reference to index and, if none is in existence, the next serial number in the book of numbers will be allotted and entered on the letter after the subject, name of officer with post and department, have been entered against the serial number in the book of numbers;
- (i) Enclosing of letters in files, paging of letters and other documents, if any, and complete cross-referencing;
- (j) Marking out of files on Action Sheet and recording them on Charge Slip for entering on Absent File Cards in the cabinet;
- (k) Passing files to Supervisor to check (where applicable); and
- (l) Submission of files to Schedule Officers.

With reference to the procedure for opening letters and checking enclosures, any discrepancies in the enclosures to a letter should be reported immediately to the Supervisor who, if he is unable to trace the missing enclosure, will inform the originator and request for the original or a copy thereof. A report to the Schedule Officer concerned should be made early. In some Government Offices, no record is made of in-coming mail but, in offices where such records are made, the letters are entered only after:

- (a) they have been circulated in the daily Mail Folders;
and
- (b) they have been marked with the appropriate file numbers.

In-coming mails must, however, always be recorded when valuable documents are attached to the correspondence. It is the duty of the dispatch arm of the Registry to prepare and record everything that is being sent out of the Office but, in some offices, letters going by post are not recorded in mail registers. Official letters received directly by Schedule Officers should be passed at once to the Registry where they should be stamped, placed on file, and referred back to the officer for action unless he has already marked them "F&P/A" in which case they are merely stamped with date receipt and put away in the proper file.

(ii) **Priority Classifications**

In order to facilitate efficient work, papers are classified according to the degree of urgency attached to them. The system of classification in a Government Office can be grouped into three, namely: Printed Slips, Coloured Slips and Red Xs.

(a) *Printed Slips:*

Federal Ministries and Extra-Ministerial Departments can obtain these from the Federal Government Printer, Printing Division, Federal Ministry of Information and Communications with the following words printed on them:

IMMEDIATE, AT ONCE,
TODAY OR URGENT

When an "IMMEDIATE" or "AT ONCE" slip is attached to a piece of work, it should be handed personally to the officer required to take the necessary action. He should, after completing his action, return it by hand to the officer who has ordered the work. This classification takes precedence over all others. The next in importance is the slip "TODAY". This takes precedence over a slip marked "URGENT" and all unclassified work. The emphasis of this slip is that the job should be completed and submitted to the officer classifying the work before the office closes for that day.

URGENT Slip is superior to all unclassified work. It also denotes that such work should be completed and submitted as early as possible, say, within 24 hours.

(b) *Coloured Slips:*

Another form of priority classification is by attaching red and green/blue slips to papers requiring urgent attention. A red slip denotes IMMEDIATE attention while a green/blue slip suggests URGENT action.

(c) *Red Xs*

Some departments denote priority classifications by the markings of Xs with a red pencil on the papers requiring urgent action. Three red 'Xs' mean IMMEDIATE, two red 'Xs' mean TODAY, and one red 'X' means URGENT.

(d) *Abuse of Priority Classifications*

The abuse of priority classifications is frequent; so no urgency label should ever be attached to a letter or file unless there is such a degree of urgency as is sufficient to warrant priority over other files.

Steps for Effective Registry Operations

9. Ministries may consider taking the following steps in their desire to have effective and efficient Registry operations:

- (i) Suitable, adequate modern filing and other equipment should be provided.

- (ii) Operating instructions to staff should be provided, and these should be in clear and simple-to-understand language.
- (iii) Staff should be trained in registry procedure. This should form part of the induction and continuous training programme for them.
- (iv) The supervisor should enforce discipline with justice and fairness at all times.
- (v) Staff should be allotted specific duties so that someone will be specifically responsible for any piece of work or duty.
- (vi) Correct use should be made of Absent File cards and card slips.
- (vii) There should be a record book for file movements in the office of each schedule officer, which must be kept up to date at all times.
- (viii) All Official letters received must be date stamped and recorded in the in-coming register with an indication of the files into which the letters are filed before being sent for action.
- (ix) Duties of the registry should not be performed by non-registry officials.
- (x) Schedule of duties of senior staff should be made known to the registry staff so that documents or information can be sent to the appropriate schedule officer.
- (xi) An efficient B.U. System should be maintained so that documents returned to the registry for action on a future date could be produced on the due dates.
- (xii) Schedule Officers should NEVER lock up files in their drawers or cabinets. Files should be promptly returned to the registry. When action is pending in files, such files should be kept on the table or elsewhere in the room where searchers can see and record them against such officer.
- (xiii) Every outgoing letter should be issued from a file and should bear the file number and the appropriate page number.
- (xiv) All unfiled letters/documents should be passed to or brought to the attention of the registry supervisor at the end of each day's work.

- (xv) All files for 'put away' should be reviewed to avoid oversight of any uncompleted action.
- (xvi) Attention of the registry should be sought whenever there is need to change the scope of any file or transfer documents from such files.
- (xvii) All documents marked 'secret' or 'confidential' should be accorded that status.
- (xviii) Movements of non-registry staff should be closely monitored in the registry, and unnecessary visits should be highly discouraged.

Filing

10. Filing means the enclosing of letters and/or documents in a file to preserve them for future reference and for action to be taken on them. A file is a 4-page folder containing pages made up of letters (or other documents) received or copies of those despatched, minutes between officers, rulings, reports, etc. The object of the file is to bring together in one folder all letters, minutes, documents. etc. referring to a given subject so that they may be produced instantly when necessary. There are many types of filing systems in existence but ideally every good filing system should have the following features:

- i. The filing methods should be simple and easily understood by all the members of staff that need to operate them.
- ii. The system should be economical and cost effective in terms of overall outlay on space and equipment.
- iii. The arrangement should be compact i.e. it should not take up too much space.
- iv. The organisation of filing should be suitable to the entity and its operations.
- v. The system adopted must be elastic in its capacity for expansion and contraction.
- vi. The system should ensure adequate security for all the documents.
- vii. There should be a clear and comprehensive cross-reference system.

11. The main system of filing in Government offices is the Book File system which is the method of filing whereby letters and minutes are all enclosed on the left-hand side-face to cover in chronological order and are numbered in the same fashion as a book. The file cover is usually a thick sheet of manila paper folded to form a jacket for enclosures. Various colours are used to identify different gradings, and entries are made on the Action Sheet at front cover to indicate the required circulation. There is also a section on (or inside) the front cover for recording the names and references of files connected with the same subject. Generally, there are good principles of filing. These include the following:

- (i) All papers relating to a particular individual or subject should be filed together.
- (ii) Only knowledgeable and authorized persons should carry out filing, the handling of files and their contents.
- (iii) Filing should be done daily as the need arises.
- (iv) Filing should be done neatly and methodically, ensuring that all enclosures and attachments to a correspondence are filed along with it.
- (v) Care must be taken to ensure that each correspondence is placed in the correct file.
- (vi) Files should not be allowed to become too bulky. Any volume of a file that contains between 100 and 110 pages should be closed and a new volume opened.
- (vii) Papers, once filed, should never be removed without a clear, conspicuous and due notation of such a removal.

Classification of Files

12. The purpose and main essentials of file classifications are:

- (i) the grouping of files under well-defined subject headings, or their identification by means of sectional symbols;
- (ii) a catalogue of subjects contained in the group headings or sections;
- (iii) a numerical index of all files which quotes their titles and subjects; and

- (iv) an alphabetical index of all file titles or subjects which also quotes their file numbers.

The main causes of breakdowns in classification system are faulty interpretation of the subject matter of the document being classified and insufficient knowledge of, or reference to, the alphabetical subject index.

Classification Systems

13. It is impossible to recommend a system of file classification for general use as the system adopted in an office must be designed to meeting the peculiar needs of that office. One of the following three systems may be adopted:

- (i) *Subject Classification System*

The first three letters of the Section, Branch, Division, Department or group heading is used as a prefix to the file number.

- (ii) *Alphabetical Classification System*

Every Section, Branch, Division, Department or group is allocated a letter of the alphabet which it uses as a prefix to the number.

- (iii) *Numerical Classification System*

Blocks of numbers are allocated to each Section, Branch or group. If the block of numbers allocated to a group, branch or section is used up, then another unallocated block of numbers is allocated to such a group. No section, branch, division, department or group should use numbers belonging to another department, division, branch or section.

The following table shows the various systems of file classification:

<i>Section, Branch, Division or Department</i>	<i>Subject Classification</i>	<i>Alphabetical Classification</i>	<i>Numerical Classification</i>
Management	MAN 1, MAN 2, etc	A1, A2, etc	1-250
Organization and Establishments	OE&MS 1 OE&MS 2	B1, B2	251-500
Officer Cadres Posting	OCP 1, OCP 2	C1, C2	501-750

Pensions and Gratuity	PEN 1, PEN 2	D1, D2	751-1000
Training	TRG 1, TRG 2	E1, E2	1000-1250
Personnel	PER 1, PER 2	F1, F2	1250-1500

NOTE – Each Section, Branch or group starts its file numbering from No. I prefixed by the group of letters representing the Sectional name or by a letter of alphabet allocated to the section. In the numerical classification system, each section, branch, division, department or group uses only the numbers allocated to it. However, all Ministries already have their own systems of classification of files, and all staff who are new to Ministries would, therefore, acquaint themselves as quickly as possible with the system of classification of files which is in use in their Ministry.

Titles

14. Titles of files must never be changed unless such action is authorized by a Schedule Officer. When titles are changed all relevant "Absent File", transit, record and index cards must be clearly marked to reflect the alteration. When no existing file is suitable for the subject of a newly received letter, it is necessary to open a new file. The principle of filing is that there should not be more than one file on the same subject but there can be several volumes of it. When opening a new file, careful consideration must be given to the title of the file, and it should be brief but clearly descriptive of the subject matter of the file, endeavouring to make the first words of the title indicative of the subject, as this facilitates the alphabetical indexing. The papers put into files should be related as closely as possible so that no file deals with a range of subjects that is too wide. If this is not done a file will constantly be in action on several aspects of the subjects and will not be available when required. The clerk opening the new file records all the necessary information on the front cover and, when necessary, on the inside of it. He must also make 'absent file' or transit cards and send them to the Transit Clerk. New files may never be opened unless authorized by the Supervisor of the Registry, who will first consult Schedule Officers when he considers it necessary. Whenever a file cover becomes torn or defaced, a new one should be opened immediately by the appropriate Registry.

Enclosures

15. The enclosures in a file are secured by means of a tag, and the papers to be enclosed must be punch-holed so that the metal end of the tag can be passed through. The hole punched in papers should be made $\frac{3}{4}$ " inwards and 1"

downwards from the top left-hand corner if possible. Care must be taken, however, not to obliterate a reference or part of the text of a letter so that spacing may have to be slightly varied. The tag must never be pushed through the paper without first punching a hole and if papers are very thin, they should be reinforced (by sticking extra paper on the corner) before the holes are punched.

Pages

16. Every page in a file with something written or typed on it must be numbered consecutively at the top corner nearest the outside edge. All papers, with the exception of attachments, must be numbered in red and attachments to letters must be numbered in blue. When two or more minutes or documents are on the same page, they can be differentiated by marking the second 'A', the third 'B' and so on if desired. Where lengthy reports or pamphlets are enclosed in a file as a permanent record, the front cover of the document should show the number of pages covered by it, e.g. if a 20-page report on irrigation is to be inserted after page 20 in the file, the front cover of the report would be marked "21-40". Thick pamphlets and booklets may be placed in an envelope gummed inside the back cover of file if their inclusion as pages in the file would not be practicable, and they should usually remain there permanently.

17. Papers such as copies of correspondence, papers for perusal and return, etc. which are in the file purely for reference but which do not form part of the permanent records, should never be left loose in the file. For such documents, an envelope should also be gummed to the back cover of file and all loose documents kept therein. Such loose documents should be removed from the files immediately they have served their purpose and returned to the appropriate custodian.

18. As a general rule, no file should contain more than 100 pages. In some cases, however, a file becomes too bulky even with less than 100 pages. A new volume should, therefore, always be opened immediately the folder becomes strained or when it contains more than 100 pages. The best method of opening a new volume is to let the existing volume grow to 110 pages and then to extract the last ten pages into a new file cover. When this method is adopted, the action to be taken is to:

- (i) make up a new file cover identical with the existing file but writing, after its number, the letters "Vol. II";
- (ii) extract from the file to be closed the pages after page 100, and enclose them in the new cover;

- (iii) on the last page of the closed volume, write boldly "Volume Closed – see Volume II"; and
- (iv) write on the last page in the closed file the letters "Volume I".

The 100-page limit should be treated with discretion however, and a particular document or course of action on a file should not be split up merely because the hundredth page has been reached. In such cases, the split may occur sooner or later than 100, whichever seems most appropriate. The procedure for splitting up of all subsequent volumes is similar except that new volumes are suitably numbered. Further volumes should continue with the page numbering from previous volumes. Whenever possible, new volumes should only be opened when the original or last file is not in action.

Cross References

19. When reference is made in a letter to another document, which is either in the same file or in another, the number of the page, or the file and page where the document referred to can be found, should be indicated in red in the left-hand margin alongside the reference in the context of the letter. This is known as "backward reference" and should be made for all references quoted in a letter. When the documents are in other files, those files should be attached. If the new letter enclosed is in reply to one which has been issued from the file, the letter being answered should be endorsed "see page in red". This is known as a "forward reference". Forward and backward referencing together are known as "cross referencing".

Temporary Files

20. A temporary file is opened when the main file is missing or it cannot be released because it is in action. When a file cannot be found or released within 24 hours of the receipt of a letter for which it is needed, the officer who will be required to deal with the letter should be consulted, and he will decide whether:

- (i) action can be taken in a temporary file;
- (ii) action may await the return of the file; or
- (ii) the file must be recovered from the Officer holding it.

On no account should a temporary file be opened without the knowledge and consent of the Schedule Officer concerned **nor should one ever be used for processing payment.**

21. When the Schedule Officer directs that a temporary file be opened, the Registry Clerk will make up a file cover identical in title and number to the main file but the reference "/T. 1" is put after the number on the temporary file. Should a second temporary file be required for the same number at any time, it will be numbered lightly in delible lead-pencil and cross-referencing should be done in lead pencil so that these marks may be erased when it becomes necessary to merge it with the main file. A record must be made on the card for the main file of all temporary files opened by the Registry, and a periodical check must be carried out to ensure that they are merged as quickly as possible and that record cards are suitably amended.

22. Correspondence from a temporary file should be merged with the main file in chronological order, and all cross-referencing should be made at the time of merging. The merged papers may be given page numbers A, B, C, etc., if necessary, so that they can be accommodated in their proper places. If more than one temporary file is in existence, all should be merged in the /T. 1 file as soon as possible to facilitate eventual merging with the main file. In the absence of the main file, the temporary file, when not in action, should be kept in the normal place of the main file so that when the main file is returned, the temporary file is ready for merging. Once a file is deemed irrevocably lost, the temporary file should be marked on the top of the front cover "Duplicate-original missing", the "T" marking should be deleted, and the enclosures marked up and cross-referenced in red.

Sub-Files

23. Sub-files of the main file are opened when the subject matter of a letter, although closely related, is divergent from the subject dealt with in the main file. For example, if there is a main file entitled "Board of Inquiry into Salary Scales" and this file is concerned with the Inquiry itself, it would be an unsuitable file in which to put correspondence dealing with the accommodation for Members of the Board. So a sub-file of the main file should be created.

24. A Sub-file should bear a title related to that of the main file but with the addition of the particular aspect dealt with in the sub-file. The main number must be the same as that of the file but with the addition of "...../S. 1". Or "...../S.2", etc according to the number of sub-files opened. Sub-files, unlike temporary files, are permanent files and must be suitably indexed, with permanent record cards and "Absent file" or transit cards made for them.

Case Files

25. Case files are opened for matters relating to the subject of a main file (such as scholarship awards or advertised vacancies), but they are purely

ephemeral in nature as they are opened solely to accommodate applications from individuals and when the main exercise is completed, there is little purpose in retaining the case files permanently. For example:

<i>File No.</i>	-	-	-	<i>Subject</i>
200	-	-	-	Scholarship Award for A.M.I.L.T.
200/C.1	-	-	-	Application from A.B. Amadi
200/C.2	-	-	-	Application from Dauda Yakubu

Meanwhile, however, they must be treated as permanent and record cards must be made for them, as is done for sub-files. When action is completed on case files, they should be marked to be B/U in two years' time for destruction. When that time comes, they should be scrutinized by the relevant Schedule Officer and any important matter, principles or rulings, can be extracted to the main file. After this has been done, he should instruct that the files and all record cards related to them be destroyed, provided approval for such action has been obtained from the Director of National Archives.

Redisposition

26. Periodically a suitable Executive Officer should be instructed to review all main files with a view to retiring appropriate ones from the filing cabinets. The files which are never likely to be required again but which may be of historic or other interests should be sent to the National Archives. Those rarely used but which might be required occasionally should be moved to a separate repository and those containing matters of very trivial and ephemeral nature – which, once action has been completed, will never be required again - can be destroyed two years after action was last taken therein, provided approval has been obtained from the Director of National Archives. All records and transit cards should clearly record any action taken along these lines.

Transfer of Papers

27. When it is necessary to transfer correspondence from one file to another, a note should be made in the file accordingly, e.g. "Page 50 transferred to File No. 1234, page 20". Similarly, the document itself should be endorsed to show where it was originally located. The in-coming correspondence register, if kept, should also be amended. Sometimes, a letter is received which is relevant to more than one file. Whenever duplicate copies are not available, they must be made and marked at the top of the page "Original in File No....., page.....". The original should also be marked to show where duplicate copies have been filed. Each copy should be marked to show where action on each section has been taken, i.e. "Action on paragraph 2 taken in File No" Equally, it sometimes occurs that some part of a letter is relevant to another file. When

this happens, the extract should be made on a fresh sheet of paper headed "Extract from page in File No." The original should be endorsed against the section so extracted, i.e. "Extracted to page in File No." and action taken, using photocopying machines as this is more accurate and economical than reproductions made by secretaries.

Further Action

28. A "Further Action" Slip must be affixed when:
- (i) an enclosure on which action is still required is covered by a later enclosure; and
 - (iii) a file is removed from an Officer before his action on any document has been completed.

The Slip should be attached to the relevant papers to draw attention to the fact that action is still outstanding on them.

Bring-Up Procedure

29. The term "B.U." on (date) is used in all Government Offices to indicate that the files so marked be re-submitted to the Schedule Officer concerned on the date indicated. Files are marked B.U. in the following instances:

- (i) a reply to an out-going letter is expected;
- (ii) a file should be submitted to an officer on his return from leave or tour;
- (iii) some information in a file should be produced on a specified date; or
- (iv) action will be necessary at a future date, e.g. the submission of a Report.

30. A directive regarding "B.U." should always be written and signed by the Officer dealing with the file on the last page of the file. His directive should always indicate why he needs the file e.g. 'B.U. 14/06/09 for reply to page 96,' or 'B.U. 16/06/09 for annual report' or 'B.U. for Mr. John Dauda to see page 51'. Where a vague 'B.U.' date is given, such as 'B.U. to Mr. John Dauda on his return from leave,' it is necessary for the Clerk responsible for "B.U." to know the approximate date of Mr. Dauda's resumption of duty and record the B.U. for the date. Once the probable date of Mr Dauda's return is known, bring up the file in anticipation of this date. Under no circumstances should a vague 'B.U.' (that which is not indicative of the action necessary) marking be made on files. Such marking merely confuses reliefs when the substantive officer (the marker) has

been posted away from the department or is on a long leave, or perhaps has even left the Service. If the 'B.U.' marking is covered by subsequent papers before the 'B.U.' date matures, it should be transferred to the last page when the action on the papers has been completed and before the file is returned to the 'B.U.' racks.

Bring-Up Systems

31. The following are the most common B.U. systems:

- (i) the Dip System;
- (ii) the Diary System;
- (iii) the Dip and Diary Systems; and
- (iv) the Tickler Card System.

32. The Dip System consists of a set of pigeon-holes labeled in sequence from 1-31. The holes represent the days of the month and files marked B.U., instead of being returned to the 'P.A.' racks after necessary action has been completed, are put away in the 'B.U. dip in accordance with the days on which they are required, irrespective of the month.

Bring-Up Dip

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31			SPARE	

Files marked 'B.U.' 28-06-09, 28-07-09 and 28-10-09 will be placed in pigeon-hole N. 28. Some large departments may even have dip for each day of the year while others may group so many days in one dip. Each morning the Clerk responsible for 'B.U.' goes to the pigeon-hole for that day. He sorts out the files for that day and submits them after marking out the transit cards for the respective files. Should a file be removed from the 'B.U.' racks for any action before the B.U. date matures, a thick paper card bearing the number of the file and its whereabouts must be inserted in the pigeon-hole in its stead.

The Diary System

33. This system uses a diary for the recording of B.U. files. Each file marked B.U. is entered in the diary under the date on which it is required to be submitted. The details to be recorded are the following:

- (i) the number of the file;
- (ii) the page number on which the B.U. entry appears in the file;
and
- (iv) the name or designation or the person or section to which the file is to be submitted.

No special rack is kept for 'B.U.' file under the Diary System. All files are returned to their numerical position in the 'P.A.' racks. Each morning, the Clerk in charge of the diary removes from racks all the files appearing in his diary for that day. He then marks them out in the transit record and crosses the entry through in the diary. Some departments require the B.U. Clerk to present his diary to his Supervisor for endorsement when all the 'B.U.' files have been produced and submitted for onward transmission to Schedule Officers. Those files which are not available in the racks must be looked for and produced, if possible. All outstanding entries must be brought forward weekly to ensure that they are not overlooked. No entries should ever be made for Sundays. The space for Sunday in the diary should be used for carry-forward entries. A carry-forward entry should be identical to the original entry, but it should also show the date of the original B.U. A constant check should be kept on outstanding entries. They should be cleared as quickly as possible. Schedule Officers must be informed of the entries carried forward.

The Dip and Diary System

34. This is a combination of the first two systems described above. It ensures greater precaution against omissions. The diary is used to record the 'B.U.' and a B.U. dip to store the files; one is used in conjunction with the other. Another advantage of the Dip and Diary System, over the Dip System alone, is that it saves the trouble of bringing all files to the table of the B.U. Clerk and checking through every file to determine which of them are due for the month. With the Diary System combined with the Dip System, the number of the files for a particular day is known, and only those files are brought out from the dip, thereby saving time and energy.

The Tickler Card System

35. The 'Tickler' is a box or drawer in which are placed twelve guide cards, one of each bears on the 'tab' the name of a month. Behind each guide card are put 31 cards numbered in sequence representing the days of the month. Thus the first card in the box is the guide for January followed by a card number 1 which represents 1st January. The sequence is maintained until the last card which represents the 31st of December is reached. The numbers of files for 'B.U.' are endorsed on the card which represents the dates on which they are to be submitted. The files are then stored in the 'P.A.' racks. Each morning the 'Tickler' is examined by the Clerk responsible, and the files appearing on the card for that day are obtained from the racks, and the entries on the card for them are deleted. Each card should be placed in the last position in the box as dealt with. In this way the card for attention each morning will always be the first in the box. A well-operated tickler card system has the following two major advantages:

- (i) Buying yearly diaries is avoided; thus, money is saved.
- (ii) It serves as a good calendar.

Submission of Files

36. *Transit Records* – Under the four systems of 'B.U.', the transit card/absent file card for the file should be endorsed to the effect that the file is for B.U. before the file is stored away.

Submission of 'B.U.' Files – Each file submitted for 'B.U.' should be flagged with the 'B.U.' slip. Where it is not in use, the file should be minuted to the person or branch concerned as follows: "B.U. as directed on page" The writer of the minute should sign his name in full and date his minute.

Bundles of Files – Where a file 'B.U.' has other files attached, the bundle should, under the 'DIP' or 'Combined Dip and Diary' Systems, be kept together in the B.U. rack and the transit cards of the other files noted accordingly. However, under the Diary and Tickler Card Systems, the bundle should be broken up and each file returned to its correct place in the 'P.A.' racks; the Diary and Tickler Card should, in that instance, show the files which were with the file for 'B.U.', so that all the files can be brought together again before the file for 'B.U.' is submitted.

Disposal of Files

37. The term 'P.A.' or Put Away, is used in the Civil Service to indicate any files which should be stored away in the file racks (or file cabinets) as there is no

further action necessary in them. Storage racks are, therefore, referred to as 'P.A.' racks. The greatest care should always be taken in putting away files so that they are placed in their correct numerical or alphabetical order. Files put away carelessly in the racks may be temporarily lost. Even if a file has been marked 'P.A.', it should not be returned to the racks immediately. Instead, a Review Clerk or other appropriate registry staff should examine the various enclosures to see if there is any outstanding action. Where some action is still pending, the files should be sent to the appropriate Schedule Officer for necessary action instead of putting them away, as directed, by another Schedule Officer. One method of ensuring that no action is outstanding in a file marked 'P.A.' is to return to the previous 'P.A.' marking; go carefully over all subsequent minutes and correspondence to discover whether further action is necessary. In the absence of any further action, the file should be returned to the rack.

38. Whenever a file, previously in circulation for action, is returned to the registry with other files attached, the bundle of files should be broken up and each one scrutinized for outstanding action before it is returned to its appropriate numerical/alphabetical place in the rack. On no account should a bundle of files be put away in the 'P.A.' racks. Files should not normally be marked 'P.A.' by any Officer below the rank of an Assistant Executive Officer. It is essential that when a Schedule Officer is disposing of a file, his disposal instructions do not overlook the need for further action to be taken on the contents of earlier pages in the same file. Files marked P.A. should not be allowed to accumulate to such an extent that returning them to the racks becomes a whole morning's work. It is better to put away 12 files at a time five times in one day than to have 60 files together.

Storage of File

39. There has been reference to the Book File System. This System or any other used should ensure the following advantages:

- (i) that documents are stored in suitable equipment;
- (ii) that documents are so located that they are easily accessible for action;
- (iii) that extraction and insertion of documents are possible; and
- (iv) that the filing system is adaptable to changing needs.

40. The storage of files is extremely important. There are many commercial products in the market for this purpose. Many offices avoid buying expensive file holders like the Roneo Lateral Filing cabinet with pockets by using wooden or metal file racks which contain several shelves or pigeon-holes for storing files. Every pigeon-hole in a rack is numbered to show the files which are (or may be)

placed therein. Pigeon-holes should be so allocated that sufficient space is reserved for more files in due course. The type of equipment for storing files may be determined by the following factors:

- (i) the nature of the documents to be filed, e.g. their bulk and size;
- (ii) the storage space available;
- (iii) the volume of documents which will be filed;
- (iv) how frequently stored files may be referred to again;
- (v) the need for special protection against fire and theft; and
- (vi) allowance for further expansion.

Indexing and Records

Functions and Types of Index

41. An index may be defined as an alphabetical list of subjects discussed in a book or file, showing the page or pages where each subject is dealt with or mentioned. In a Government office, an index is a list of file titles or subjects, showing the numbers of files dealing with various subjects. The purpose of an index is to make the identification of files easy. In a small office, some kind of index of files is necessary; in a large office dealing with vast correspondence, it is vital. The ease with which the correct file can be identified and located depends on the efficiency of the office. There are many different types of indexes in commercial use but the type mainly used in Government offices is a card index which consists of a single drawer of a cabinet of drawers in which cards, set on edge, are arranged in alphabetical or numerical order. There are various sizes of cards but those measuring 8" x 5" and 6" x 4" are chiefly used. Guide cards showing either an alphabet or number of group classification, help Clerks to find the section of the index they need.

42. The five types of card index which are generally used in Government offices are the following:

- (i) the personal file index; }
- (ii) the subject index; }
- (iii) the nominal index; }Alphabetical Indexes
- (iv) the numerical index; and }
- (v) the transit index (or Absent File Card).}

The first three types of card index are always maintained in a simple alphabetical order. They are sometimes known as alphabetical indexes. The fourth and fifth card indexes above are maintained in numerical order.

Personnel File Index

43. The personal file index is an index of the files of all officers employed in an office or entire Service. Under this system, one card for one person, kept in strict alphabetical order, is the rule. Each card shows the employee's name, his grade, department and file number. Additional information may be added if necessary. Hyphenated names in the index should be shown under the second part of the surname, e.g. "T. S. Smith-Jones", should be indexed under "Jones, T.S. Smith", and not "Smith-Jones, T.S". Where a name includes a title, such as Alhaji, the title should be regarded as part of the officer's name for the purpose of indexing, e.g. Alhaji Audu Kano should be indexed as "Kano, Alhaji Audu".

Subject File Index

44. The above index is for all matters and subjects not relating to personal files. It is based on the principle of selecting from the title or subject, the key word and indexing the subjects under that key word, in alphabetical order. In addition, subsidiary cards, placed in their appropriate alphabetical order as cross references, are inserted in the index for each secondary key word, e.g. a file entitled "Mental Condition of Persons charged with Serious Crimes" may be indexed under 'Mental' which is the key word in the subject; subsidiary cards could be placed under 'Persons' and 'Crimes'. In some offices, cards used for cross references do not bear the number of the file; they merely refer the searcher back to the main card, e.g. Crimes: Mental Condition of Persons Charged with Serious Crimes see "Mental". Although this is a very good system, it naturally takes a little longer to quote a reference number if the searcher is referred from a cross reference to a main card. Therefore, it is better for all cards to bear the reference number.

Nominal Index

45. A nominal index, which is subsidiary to personal and subject indexes, is a further aid to facilitate efficiency in locating files. A nominal index consists of cards, again in alphabetical order, for the names of persons, departments, organizations, etc. that have connection with matters dealt with in the files indexed in either the personal or subject matter. For example, Messrs Ayo and Okeke write to protest against the harsh treatment which their client, Mr. S. O. Smith, is receiving in prison while awaiting trial for attempted murder. They maintain that their client is of unsound mind and should, therefore, be detained in hospital or be allowed to receive treatment for his condition while in prison. This subject is dealt with in the file, "Mental Condition of Persons Charged with Serious Crimes". At a later date, they return to the charge and forward a medical report on their client's past history of lunacy. But, unfortunately, they are vague in their reference to previous correspondence, and it is not clear that

their client is involved in a police case. In this case, it would be highly unlikely that the registry would be able to trace the papers. However, by inserting in the nominal index (when the first correspondence was received), cards under "Ayo", "Okeke" and "Smith, S. O.", each bearing a reference to the file number, it would be possible for the registry to trace the file more quickly.

Numerical Index

46. The numerical index is a record in numerical order of all files opened in a file series. Each card bears the number and the subject of the file. When opening a new file, the numerical index must be consulted to find the next unallocated number in the series. Its primary object is to determine the subject or title of a file referred to in correspondence by number only. Numerical indexes may be maintained in loose-leaf ledgers or bound-ledgers.

Precedent Index

47. It is essential for important decisions to be noted for use as precedents in similar cases which may arise in future. For this purpose, a precedents index is made. The consulting of precedents is of great assistance in any Government office, and it is the duty of Schedule Officers to draw the attention of Registry staff to any papers likely to be of value as precedents or containing rulings or decisions of general interest. Schedule Officers should also make their own records of precedents. For this purpose, alphabetically divided address books are very suitable. Precedents records should be maintained by every Registry on index cards which should be filed in alphabetical order of the subject matter of the 'precedent to be recorded'. The card should show the page number of a file containing a precedent.

General

48. Successful indexing, whatever the form of index adopted, should be carefully thought out and intelligently applied. Searching for a reference in an index mainly calls for a good knowledge of its method. It must not become a matter of memorizing on the part of the indexer as this leads to too little cross referencing and makes the index unintelligible to a new-comer. When making entries in an index, the indexer must put himself in the place of someone who may be required to consult the index. He should use the most appropriate key word and as many secondary words as occur to him. The use of the words 'General', 'Miscellaneous' and 'Routine' should be avoided when giving a new file a title and when indexing.

Transit Recording

49. The term "transit recording" embraces all devices in the office which record the movements of files thereby helping to ascertain the whereabouts of files in an office. These devices are:

- (i) Transit Index or Absent File Card;
- (ii) Charge Slips or Transit Books;
- (iii) Search or Morning Lists.

Absent File Card (or Transit Index)

Below is a specimen of an Absent File Card:

Gen. 6

Subject	File No	
<i>To Whom</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Initials</i>

The Absent File Card occupies the same pocket or dip with the file and carries the same number and subject.

50. In order to keep an accurate record of the movements of files, cards bearing the numbers of files, their titles, columns for addresses, dates of dispatch and initials (of recorders) are maintained. These cards, known as Transit Cards, form the transit index.

Transit Card Systems

51. Cards for all files are kept in cabinet drawers, and all files leaving the registry are passed through the Transit Clerk who withdraws the cards from his index and records thereon the file's destination before sending the file on. On return of file to the registry, it passes through the hands of the Transit Clerk once more to cancel the last movement recorded and to insert the new one. Each file has, tagged behind the last enclosure in it, a transit card whenever the file is not in circulation. When the file is withdrawn from the "P.A." rack to be sent out to the registry, the card is detached from the file, the file movement is then recorded thereon, and the card placed in the index drawer. On return of the file for putting away, the card is removed from the index drawer and put again behind the last enclosure.

Charge Slips

52. Below is Form Gen. 7^A which is called a Charge Slip. It is almost 7" long and 4" wide.

GEN. 7^A

To:..... Registry

CHARGE SLIP

Name of Officer:

Branch/Section:

File sent forward on:(Date)

<i>File Number</i>	<i>To Whom Sent</i>	<i>Time</i>

A Charge Slip helps Registry staff to follow the movements of a file among Schedule Officers. Suppose a file XYZ is sent out of the Registry to Schedule Officer "A", this file will be entered against Mr. "A" in the Absent File Card in the Registry. If Mr. "A" minutes the file to Mr. "B", who in turn sends the file to Mr. "C", Registry staff will not be aware of the movement of file XYZ to Messrs "B" and "C" unless duly completed Charge Slips are sent to the Registry where the Absent File Card is brought up-to-date. In this example, a Charge Slip from Mr. "A" advises the Registry that file XYZ has moved from Mr. "A" to Mr. "B". A second Charge Slip is sent by Mr. "B" to the Registry as soon as the same file is routed by him to Mr. "C".

53. Where a file moves between the Registry and a Schedule Officer, who returns it to the Registry in due course, no charge slip is necessary. In practice, Charge Slips may be determined by Secretaries, but it is the responsibility of the officer concerned to see that they are so maintained. Immediately a file moves from an officer's desk, the Charge Slip should be completed (not necessarily by filling all the writing spaces on each slip) and sent to the appropriate Registry. It is emphasized that Charge Slips should never be retained overnight before they are forwarded to the Registry. In the event of an officer dealing with files from more than one Registry, separate Charge Slips should be used for files from each Registry. Upon receipt of Charge Slips, the Registry Transit Clerk must ensure that the details thereon, showing the latest movements of files, are recorded on the relevant Absent File Cards. Thus when a file is called for and it is not in the Registry, the Absent File or Transit Card should show the most recent movement of that file.

The Duplicate Note-Book System

54. Some officers still use the duplicate note-book system for recording transmission of files whereby whenever an officer sends out a file, his Clerk records its number, date and destination in a duplicate note-book. On completion of each page and always at the end of each day, the Clerk must give the top copy of his list to the officer in charge of the most appropriate Registry, which records the movements on the Absent File Cards. If files from more than one Registry are included in the list, that Registry should pass the list on to the other Registry as soon as it has completed its own recordings. Under the above system, whenever a file is required, the Searcher ascertains its latest movement by reference to the transit card index or Absent File Card and if the file is not with the officer to whom it was marked, he scrutinizes the duplicate copy of that officer's list of out-going files to ascertain where the file is located. To save time, therefore, it is essential for the original list to be handed over to the Transit Clerk promptly and regularly and for him to mark down the cards in his index as quickly as possible. It will be evident that many files come into the Registry for action to be taken (e.g. dispatch of letters) and go out again without having been placed in their cabinets. Provision must, therefore, be made for the Absent File Cards to record such outward movements. All Registries should also raise Charge Slips or use duplicate note-books for recording outward movements of files which were not handed over to the Transit Clerk so that this record can be kept up-to-date. The Transit Clerk should, therefore, be charged with the special responsibility for securing the lists from his own Registry at regular intervals. Changes notified by letters should be recorded on index cards or strips, book numbers and the file covers before the letters are sent out for action.

Computer Application to Records Management

55. Just like all other large contemporary organizations, the Civil Service is now applying modern tools in all aspects of its operations. This is more evident where it is using the computer in the five major areas of records management, viz:

- (i) **Creation of Record** occurs when a document is written, e.g. a letter, a report etc
- (ii) **Distribution of Record** occurs when the letter is dispatched to the various recipients for whom it is meant.
- (iii) **Preservation of Record** occurs when a letter or another document is saved in a file.

- (iv) **Retrieval of Record** occurs when the file containing the document is taken out of the cabinet for the purpose of examining the letter again.
- (v) **Disposal of Record** occurs when extra copies of classified documents, or documents that have outlived their usefulness, are destroyed.

Creation of Record

56. Under the old paper-based system, records are created by typing on typewriters with drafts being typed, corrected and typed again and again with the ultimate aim of producing a perfect document. In the typing process, several drafts may be produced, each being produced through the same laborious process of typing during which errors not existing in one draft can occur in the new draft through the secretary's mistyping. To create such complex records as charts, plans etc, graphic artists or draughtsmen need to sit down and painstakingly create such records physically and laboriously.

57. Computer has eliminated almost all labours connected with the creation of records. In a computer, there are various software programmes devoted to the creation of various types of records. The Microsoft Word is used to create letters and reports. The Pagemaker is used to do typesetting of pages of books and pamphlets. Excel is meant for the production of tabulated statements such as accounts etc. Corel Draw is the software used to produce graphic materials such as drawings, designs, charts, maps etc. With the use of scanning machine to transfer photographic and other images onto a computer, there is virtually no record that cannot be created, from a simple letter to complex full colour posters, cartoons etc because all the software can be installed on the same computer, and you only need to press the proper combination of keys to give you the benefit of a particular programme.

Distribution of Record

58. In order to distribute record using old systems, you need to physically deliver the record from one person to the other. And where the recipients are not nearby, it would involve either posting, courier delivery etc which can take anything from minutes to weeks, depending on the distance between the two parties.

59. Computer has made record distribution much easier and faster. The phenomenon of computer networking has ensured that when a record is created on a computer, it can be dispatched to all the other computers linked to that computer in the network within seconds after creation, through the server, which

is the central source which all the hooked-on computers can input into and draw from. The phenomenon of internet technology has also helped greatly in this direction. Through the use of the internet, e-mail record created in Lagos can be sent to another computer in Australia within a few seconds, and a reply can also be received within a few minutes. All these should mean minimal need for paper work in the future.

Preservation of Records

60. The old system demands that record preservation is done through the process of filing and microfilming with the attendant need for filing cabinet, extensive filing registries and an army of registry staff. With the application of computer, there is no need to open physical files, store them in cabinets kept in registries and operated by a whole complement of personnel. In every computer, we have one or two record storage facilities called hard disk. These disks exist in various capacities referred to as megabytes, each megabyte referring to a million words of a specified number of letters. Therefore, depending on the capacity of the hard disks in a computer, it can store more than the contents of 500, 100-page file folders. In this storage facility, you can open files with various titles, and you can input record into any file you want in your computer in order to save them for future reference. Apart from the hard disks inside the computer, you can also preserve records in compact disk, flash drives and external hard disks to secure additional storage capacity and facilities.

Retrieval of Records

61. Under the old systems, to retrieve a record, you must locate the file and open it to the page you want, with possible attendant problems and bottlenecks. To start with, if you are operating a centralized filing system, the file you need may not be available. It may be with another officer, may be temporarily missing, or lost. Even if you can locate the file, there is the possibility that through mis-handling, the particular document you want may have been torn out of the file. Therefore, there are the possibilities of delay and missing record.

62. With computer storage, these problems are either non-existent or greatly minimized. Once a record is stored in a file on your computer's hard disk, unless you or another person deliberately deletes the file or the particular record, it will always be available for you to recall on to the screen of your computer's monitor for examination.

Record Disposal

63. Pre-computer, unwanted records must be physically destroyed either in a paper shredding machine or burnt, and once a document is destroyed, it can never be recalled. It can only be recreated again.

64. Computer storage has eliminated this problem. Any document or file can be deleted from the memory of the computer or wiped off from any of the other subsidiary storage models. However, in the case of the hard disk, unless you deliberately delete the record or file totally and permanently, the computer has a facility for transferring deleted files and records into a file called "Recycle Bin". Once in this bin, the record cannot be recalled ordinarily onto your monitor screen unless you deliberately go into the recycle bin. However, the files and records in the recycle bin do not stay there permanently since the storage capacity there is limited. Once the storage capacity becomes filled up, it automatically eliminates the stored records on the basis of "first-in" "first-out" so that, always, only more recently deleted records will still be available there.

Tampering with Record

65. The introduction of computer into the system has, however, come with its own problems. With the older methods of record management, falsification of records through alteration and deletion can be more easily detected and prevented. With computer, it is easy for any person with access to the computer to alter or delete the records. This is why computer programmes come with a network of safeguard codes meant to prevent access into either the computer or into specific files without proper authorization. Another problem with computer is the ease with which codes are broken and access is gained by professional computer experts, which enables them to defraud persons and organizations of huge amounts of money through the computer. So, the battle to devise codes and other protections, which will be hard to beat, continues.

CHAPTER 11

Chairing and Servicing of Meetings and Forums

Chairing of Meetings

As an Officer advances in his career and moves up into senior management in the Service, i.e. Salary Grade Level 14 and above, he would not only have reasons to attend various types of meetings but also have opportunities to chair some of such meetings. It is, as such, useful to briefly discuss some of the expectations the system has of him when he functions as the Chairman.

2. The following are the most prominent demands on an Officer chairing a meeting:

(i) *Understanding the Purpose of the Meeting*

The most fundamental demand on the Chairman of a meeting is to understand the purpose of the gathering. Sometimes, it may be very straightforward, like the monthly departmental meetings where the primary purpose is to share ideas about the progress and challenges of the Department. At other times, however, the purpose of the forum may be so complex that it has to be spelt out in formal Terms of Reference. Whatever the case is, the Chairman must have a clear and full understanding of the *raison d'être* of the gathering and communicate this effectively to the other members of the forum. Where he and the other members cannot achieve such an understanding or agreement on what the purpose is, it behoves the Chairman to revert to the convening authority to seek and secure clarification to the satisfaction of all parties.

(ii) *Ensuring availability of Secretariat*

Just as every meeting needs a Chairman to achieve its purpose, it equally needs a good Secretariat for efficiency and effectiveness. It is, as such, in the interest of the Chairman to ensure that such a Secretariat exists, to liaise with it and to brief its head, in particular, fully of what he expects of it by way of services, skill and attitude. He should make himself available for consultation by the Secretariat on any and all relevant issues as the need arises.

(iii) Preparation

A Chairman will be doing himself a world of good if he takes the trouble to prepare adequately for the meeting. Indeed, it is only by doing so that he can assure himself of an effective control of the meeting and earn the full respect of the members, particularly when he might have to rule on controversial issues about which opinions are sharply divided. Essential steps in this regard include the following:

- (a) He should read the files as well as other relevant documents and materials so as to become fully conversant with the subject—matter. Of particular interest in this context are the minutes of the last meeting, if applicable, and any documents due to be discussed at the up-coming meeting.
- (b) He should get the Secretariat to prepare and submit for his vetting the **Draft Agenda** for the meeting. Once he clears this, he should direct its circulation, together with any other relevant documents, to all the members well in advance of the meeting.
- (c) If under **Matters Arising**, there are actions for him to take before the meeting, he must address such issues promptly. Otherwise, the effectiveness of the meeting may be undermined, and he will not have the moral authority to criticize those members who may fail to take follow-up actions required of them.
- (d) He should take interest in welfare issues and see to it that the Secretariat makes requisite arrangement for such matters as Tea, Lunch, Transport Allowance, Honorarium etc. as applicable.
- (e) He should make it a point of duty to arrive promptly at the venue, with the full intention of starting the meeting on time. This will encourage the members to take the forum and its objectives seriously.

(iv) Conducting the Meeting

He should conduct the meeting in a fair, orderly and effective manner, using as much as possible the adopted Agenda. He should consciously, in this context, give room for opposing views and protect the weak or junior members from being intimidated by their superiors. It's

also important that he prevents a few over-active and loquacious members from dominating and monopolising discussions. Most importantly, he must ensure judicious use of time and make sure that all contributions are relevant to the purpose at hand. It is his prerogative to decide who takes the floor to speak. He is also the one to give clearance as to when lunch should be served, if appropriate.

(v) Closing the Meeting

In bringing the meeting to a close, it is the duty of the Chairman to carry out a number of responsibilities of which the following are the most notable:

- (a) He should summarise the conclusions of the forum to the agreement of the other members and for the benefit of the Secretariat which should reflect these in the minutes.
- (b) He should highlight the follow-up actions required, the party responsible for each action and the time frame for action.
- (c) He should direct the Secretariat as to the time for the production and circulation of the minutes of the meeting.
- (d) He should secure agreement of the house on the date, time and venue of the next meeting, as applicable.

Servicing of Meetings and Forums

3. The servicing of a typical meeting or forum in the Civil Service environment will incorporate all requisite activities from the time an officer is designated as the Secretary to the time the forum rises and essential follow-up actions are completed.

Among the main types of forums typically serviced by Officers are the following:

- (i) In-house meetings;
- (ii) Inter-Ministerial Meetings;
- (iii) Committee Meetings;
- (iv) Panels of Enquiry;
- (v) Task Forces; and
- (vi) Tribunals of Enquiry.

Preparation for the Meeting/Forum

4. The following are some of the major activities the Secretariat is expected to perform in preparing to service a meeting/forum:

(i) Venue and Public Address System

Book Venue and Public Address System and ensure that they will be available for the period of the meeting. Ascertain that there will be enough seats for the expected number of participants and that the Public Address (PA) System is in order. You may need battery for the Microphones.

(ii) Notice of Meeting

Issue a circular to invite those to attend the meeting. The circular must indicate time and venue of the meeting as well as the subject-matter to be discussed. Also let them know if there are any documents they should bring along to the meeting. If it is an inaugural meeting, indicate the source of authority for convening the meeting.

(iii) Distribute Notice of Meeting well in advance of the date of the meeting. Where appropriate, the notice should be addressed u.f.s. Head of Department/Division/Unit. In doing this, ensure that each copy is signed for. This way, the person who receives it will be encouraged to deliver it, and if it is not delivered and there is a dispute about its receipt, you will have proof that the fault is not from your end.

(iv) Previous Minutes

Where appropriate, attach a copy of the minutes of the last meeting as well as of other essential documents to your Notice of Meeting so as to facilitate adequate preparation by the participants.

(v) Liaison with Chairman

Liaise with the Chairman of the meeting to draw up the Draft Agenda which will incorporate the list of items under Matters Arising. Preferably, the Draft Agenda should be forwarded along with the Notice of Meeting, whenever possible.

- (vi) If the Matters Arising require follow-up actions on the part of any official before the meeting, draw the attention of such an official to the point.
- (vii) Find out from the Chairman if there are any documents that will be needed for the meeting. Make these ready in time.
- (viii) Confirm from the Chairman if refreshment or meals will be served during the meeting and how this will be provided. If it is going to be provided by the Tea-Girls, make your application in time and follow up to ensure that appropriate actions are taken. If, on the other hand, it is your responsibility to arrange for the refreshment, apply promptly for an appropriate advance with the knowledge of the Chairman who should clear the menu to be served.
- (ix) Whenever there is approval for you to take an advance to service a meeting, process this in time so that money can be available for the intended purpose. In implementing the budget, do remember to secure approval of your boss or the Chairman.
- (x) Find out if the Chairman wants the file on the subject-matter before the meeting. If yes, let him have it.
- (xi) Prepare in advance an attendance sheet which should require members to provide the following items of information:-
 - (a) Name
 - (b) Post/Designation
 - (c) Organisation
 - (d) Address (Where Appropriate)
 - (e) Telephone Numbers (Where Appropriate)
 - (f) e-mail Address
 - (g) Room Number (Where Appropriate)
- (xii) It may atimes be necessary for you to prepare and submit for consideration before the meeting an Aide Memoire or Position Paper or Brief on some of the items on the Agenda. If this is so, make such a submission in time.
- (xiii) If Media Coverage is called for, liaise and arrange with the Press Secretary of the establishment.
- (xiv) If it is necessary to arrange security, liaise and effect with the Chief Security Officer of the Ministry.

Meeting Day

5. On the day of the meeting, you should focus attention on the following activities, among others:-

- (i) Dress properly for the meeting. If meeting is lasting more than one day, the first day is very important.
- (ii) Report at the venue before the first member arrives.
- (iii) Arrange venue and install Public Address System which you should ensure is working. Determine in advance where the Chairman, the Secretariat as well as the members will be sitting.
- (iv) Go to the meeting with all appropriate items, including the following:-
 - (a) blank sheets of papers and some biros which should be placed in front of the seats for members' use.
 - (b) Extra copies of the minutes of the previous meeting just in case members request for such.
 - (c) Enough copies of any documents which the Chairman may have directed should be made available to members.
 - (d) Extra copies of the Draft Agenda.
 - (e) Attendance Sheet.
 - (f) An Ancillary staff, e.g. clerk, that you can send on errands as occasions demand, provided the Chairman agrees.
- (v) Brief the Tea Girls about when refreshment/meal will be served.
- (vi) For certain types of forums, it may be necessary to accredit those attending to ensure that there are no infiltrators.
- (vii) Once the members are on seat or at the agreed time, invite the Chairman for the commencement of the meeting.
- (viii) Once the Chairman arrives, let him have the file on the subject-matter in front of his seat. If the file has been with him, ensure that it is available for the meeting.

- (ix) Before you invite or permit the Tea Girls to serve refreshment or tea, clear with the Chairman.
- (x) If during the meeting, you are not clear about any decisions reached, secure clarification.
- (xi) **You may not contribute to deliberations unless first permitted or called upon to do so by the Chairman. If you have any relevant information to offer, alert your boss or Chairman.**
- (xii) At the end of the meeting, ascertain the latest time by which you must submit your draft of the minutes. Ideally this should not be later than 48 hours after the meeting.
- (xiii) You should stay at the venue of the meeting until the Chairman and the members leave at which point you should then make arrangement to remove the public address system and other materials, vacate the room and see to it that it is securely locked and handed over to the custodian.

Servicing of Panels of Enquiry

6. When an Officer is appointed to serve as the Secretary of a Panel of Enquiry, he will have to undertake some special activities quite apart from the general ones listed in the above paragraphs. The very first step in this context is to understand the differences between the two main types of panels, viz, Administrative Panel of Enquiry and Judicial Panel of Enquiry thus:

Administrative Panel of Enquiry

This is a group of officers appointed to investigate some allegations. These officers are not members of the Judiciary. Therefore, they would not operate like judges. Usually, the officers being investigated would not be represented by lawyers. The allegations would be examined purely within the provisions of the rules and regulations of the civil service or the parastatal. An administrative panel would be expected to refer any aspect of its findings or recommendations which have legal implications for further examination by those competent to handle such matters. Persons outside the organization may or may not be involved in the investigation.

Judicial Panel of Enquiry

A Judicial Panel of Enquiry has some basic differences from an Administrative Panel. A judicial panel of enquiry is usually appointed by Government. The appointment is published in the Gazette to give it legal status. It is usually headed by a judge, and its other members could be drawn from the public service or could be private citizens appointed on their own merit. A judicial panel usually has a counsel or legal adviser who is also appointed by government. The legal adviser is usually a State Counsel, i.e. a lawyer who is in Government employment. Judicial panels are sworn-in by either the President or his representative. The persons who are invited to give evidence before the panel are allowed to use the services of Counsels or Lawyers.

7. Having understood the characteristics of panels of enquiries, the Secretary to the panel should now be in better position to tread a path through his assignment. So how does the Secretary begin the task of assisting the members of the panel, who may not necessarily be public officers, to carry out their assignment with minimum obstacles and delay? The following paragraphs itemize the functions of the Secretary. The list is not exhaustive as various factors will necessitate variations in the approach of the Secretary. It can be stated, at this juncture, that there would be as many variations and options as there are Secretaries and Chairmen. Nevertheless, the following paragraphs will examine the basic actions common to all Secretaries of Enquiries.

8. It is important to point out that although the members of the panel as well as the Secretary are appointed in writing, the Secretary is not a member of the panel. He does not contribute to the discussions unless he is invited to. However, he holds a very important position because he is expected to be the custodian of the rules and regulations. He should, therefore, be able to advise the panel on the implications of its recommendations.

9. The following are the key steps the Secretary should take to discharge his responsibilities:

(i) *Meet your Supervisor for Briefing*

The first step you should take is to meet your supervisor for briefing on the subject, since the letter appointing you to the position may have been routed through him.

(ii) *Familiarize Yourself with the Subject*

If the appointment comes to you in a file, your task is lightened. If not, then you will have to locate the file in which the matter was treated in order to familiarize yourself with the background to the assignment.

(iii) *Contact the Chairman*

You may find that this stage and the familiarization with the subject would go *pari passu*. This is usually so if the appointment is done through the Press. You will have to contact the Chairman very quickly. You may need to employ different avenues e.g. telephone, letter, personal call, etc to reach the Chairman. Remember that this comes after you have been properly briefed by your supervising officer. The office which appointed the panel will normally provide the contact address of the Chairman and of the other members of the panel.

(iii) *Venue*

You will have to start considering the most appropriate venue for the panel's sittings. One very important factor which should be considered in choosing a venue is the sensitivity of the subject of investigation. This would necessitate your requesting the police for adequate security for the venue and the members of the panel. This is usually so with judicial panels.

(iv) *Contact Other Members of the Panel*

Having secured the addresses of the members, your next step is to contact them, sometimes through the authority which appointed them. You will find that you may have to travel to their places of abode.

(v) *Secretariat*

You will need to compose a secretariat. The type and size of the panel will determine the size of your secretariat. It is advisable to have in your secretariat verbatim reporters. In the absence of reporters, a competent Secretary who is very efficient in shorthand writing will serve the purpose. You will also require clerks. Because these officers may be picked from other areas of your organization, appropriate letters of release would have to be written to their respective bosses.

(vii) *Swearing-in-Ceremony*

If you are the Secretary to a Judicial Panel of Enquiry, you will have to make arrangements for the swearing-in ceremony of the panel. The Ministry of Justice will give you all the necessary advice. If it is an Administrative Panel of Enquiry, a simple inauguration by the appointing authority may suffice.

(viii) *Provision/Supply/Retrieval of Documents/Security of Exhibits and Documents*

The availability and security of documents and exhibits submitted by witnesses is vital to the work of the panel, judicial or administrative. It is advisable to ensure their security by keeping them in fire proof cabinets. Remember to return documents at the end of the panel's work.

(ix) *Study the Terms of Reference*

The terms of reference, no doubt, are very important in the successful implementation of the panel's work. Experience has shown that badly formulated terms of reference could affect the quality of the report of the panel. The terms of reference should be examined critically to detect repetition, ambiguity, etc. The Secretary should bring his observation in this regard to the attention of the Chairman. He should suggest amendments and, if they are approved, he would arrange to publish such in the Gazette, in the case of judicial panels.

(x) *Budget*

Depending on the size, type and importance of the enquiry, you will need to spend money on a number of things such as stationery, transportation, flights, postage, accommodation, printing, refreshment, lunch during sittings, etc. The list is determined by the exigencies arising during the course of the panel's work. So you have to prepare an appropriate budget in consultation with your Chairman. Thereafter, submit it to the appointing authority with a view to securing funds.

(xi) *Vehicles*

You have to make arrangements for vehicles to be allocated to the panel to convey the members of the panel during their sittings and

to convey the members of the secretariat on errands. Do not forget to ask for drivers for the vehicles.

(xii) Public Announcement of the Enquiry

Usually, setting up of Judicial Panels of Enquiries is announced publicly through the various media – print and electronic. This has to be done in accordance with the relevant rules and regulations. This announcement will inform the public of the enquiry, its subject, its terms of reference, the period allocated to it, invitation for memoranda, venue of its sittings, etc.

(xiii) Recording the Panel's Proceedings

The activity entails doing the following:

- (a) Daily Recording
- (b) Panel's Report – Interim and Final
- (c) Printing
- (d) Submission of the Report

(xiii) Mopping Up

- (a) Submission of the account
- (b) The Officers return to their various organizations.

The actions described above are only a guide. The Secretary will find, as he proceeds in his assignment, that he has to introduce a number of techniques to suit his particular assignment. The Secretary must, therefore, be versatile and alert at all times. By the time he completes his assignment, he would have become a lot more skilled and matured.

Essentials of Minute-Taking

10. The following are the essentials for taking and producing good minutes of meetings and other similar fora:

- (i) Ability to understand the trends of discussion

Requirements

- (a) Solid understanding of the English Language;
- (b) Familiarity with subject-matter;
- (c) Good hearing;
- (d) Listening Skills;
- (e) Having a seat in an appropriate place;

- (f) Concentration; and
 - (g) Understanding of the Chairman.
- (ii) Deciding what should be recorded, and what should be left out

Requirements

- (a) Know objective of the meeting;
- (b) Maturity and good judgment;
- (c) Understand the environment;
- (d) Know when to seek clarification; and
- (e) Guidance from the Chairman.

- (iii) Recording the minutes

Requirements

- (a) Basic grammatical competence;
- (b) Comprehension and precis skill;
- (c) Sequencing and restructuring skill;
- (d) Technical proficiency in the use of English Language/
Familiarity with the Civil Service way of writing;
- (e) Ability to write fast and listen at the same time;
- (f) Adequacy of materials, especially papers; and
- (g) Time Management Skill.

- (iv) Producing the minutes

Requirements

- (a) Discipline to keep to target;
- (b) Adequacy of materials;
- (c) Support and cooperation of the superior officer who will vet;
- (d) A good and competent Secretary;
- (e) Legible writing; and
- (f) Proof – reading patience.

Competence in Minute – Taking

11. Below are some hints about the contents of your minute and how they should be structured for best effect:

- (i) *TITLE*

Contents should include the following:-

- (a) Name/Title of the Forum

Or

The purpose of the meeting.

- (b) Venue – state the particular room, whenever possible
- (c) Day, i.e. Monday, Tuesday etc
- (d) Date.

(ii) *ATTENDANCE*

(a) The categories should include the following:-

- (i) Present
- (ii) In Attendance
- (iii) Secretariat
- (iv) Absent

(b) State in respect of each person the following:-

- (i) Name, with Title i.e. Mr./Mrs etc
- (ii) Designation/Post
- (iii) Organisation – if the forum has participants from different organisations
- (iv) Sometimes, it may be helpful to include the e-mail address and the telephone numbers.
- (v) Start the list with the Chairman and then list the others in order of seniority.
- (vi) For Chairman and Secretary, state the name, title, designation and organization first before adding Chairman or Secretary.

(iii) *OPENING*

A common format for the minutes is:

Heading	Line No	Body	Action By

The opening paragraph should, among others, incorporate the following items of information:

- (a) Starting time
- (b) Who is presiding
- (c) Indication of saying of prayers, and by who, if applicable
- (d) Opening remarks by the Chairman, which may incorporate welcoming of the participants and purpose of the meeting.

(iii) *BODY*

Some general tips on writing the body of the minutes are:

- (a) Use the Agenda for the meeting as a guide for producing the minutes.
- (b) Group similar ideas on the same issue together as much as possible.
- (c) Each new item on the Agenda or each new subject-matter should have a heading.
- (d) Number the paragraphs.
- (e) The essence is not verbatim reporting. While it is useful to provide background information and antecedents, you must never lose sight of the Decisions/Agreements/Directives. Every paragraph indicating the decision reached should ideally follow the paragraph(s) in which the matter was considered. Such phrases as "It was resolved that" and "It was unanimously agreed that"
- (f) Where the meeting gives a duty or responsibility to an officer, indicate this under the "Action By" column.
- (g) Let there be variety in the action verbs you use.
- (h) Report in the past tense.
- (i) Use your Dictionary freely to confirm meanings and/or spellings.
- (j) In reporting, avoid personalization as much as possible. If you must personalize, such as when a duty is given to someone, use his/her designation, not names.

- (k) Give full meaning of an acronym first before subsequent use in the minutes.
 - (l) Do not use school or text terms such as "cos" for because or "b4" for before.
 - (m) Minutes are permanent records that will be referred to for many years. Therefore, be civil and polite in your choice of words.
 - (n) Do not add your own "facts". It is most unprofessional to manufacture "facts" for whatever purpose.
 - (o) Do not leave out what you do not like or views you don't agree with.
 - (p) Where many figures and/or categories need to be stated, it is better to do this in tabular form rather than in prose.
 - (q) If your hand-writing is bad, do not squeeze your words and allow adequate spacing.
- (iv) *CLOSING*

The closing paragraphs should, among other things, incorporate the following items of information:

- (a) Subject postponed (if any).
- (b) Place, date and time of next meeting, if appropriate.
- (c) Indication of closing prayers, if any, and by whom.
- (d) Closing remarks by the Chairman.
- (e) Closing time.
- (f) It may not always be necessary for you and the Chairman to sign. Such a practice is usually reserved for more formal records like Reports of Panel or Committee.

CHAPTER 12

Basic Techniques of Clear Writing in Government Business

As there is an infinite variety of subjects ranging from the administration of the Ministry's own staff to matters requiring specialized or technical knowledge, it is important to cover all aspects of the work done by Schedule officers. However, since the bulk of the work done by them is the production of minutes and correspondences for which the basic principles and procedures are standardized, this chapter is confined to setting out guidelines for the preparation and treatment of such papers. Since much of the time of most officers is devoted to drafting and minuting, it is of cardinal importance that they should be familiar with the basic techniques for clear writing. "Clear writing" in this context means not only legibility but also clarity of style.

What is Style?

2. Style may be defined as the distinctive manner of writing. A Schedule Officer should have a good style. Without it, he will be severely handicapped in projecting his views in a manner to be clearly understood.

Basic Techniques for Clear Writing

3. The following points are relevant for clear writing:
- (i) Think clearly: Normally, if your thinking is clear, clarity of language cannot be in doubt. No useful purpose can be served by looking for an "impressive opening" when the points at issue in a problem have not been grasped. It is a good idea to think first and then write afterwards.
 - (ii) Assemble facts: While thinking about a problem, jot down the main points and go over them later, putting down suitable references, if any.
 - (iii) Arrange points in logical sequence: After thinking about the subject and checking your sources, put the main points in logical sequence. Get your references handy.
 - (iv) Committing views to paper: If you have to write up your minute or draft for a Secretary, then write boldly and legibly. If you are in doubt about any passage, get it explained to the Secretary. It is essential to speak deliberately, clearly and coherently to a

Stenographer, while dictating. Before directing the final draft of your script, correct any grammatical mistakes or any words misspelt.

The principles covered above apply to drafting, minuting, letter-writing and other forms of official communication.

Drafting

4. A draft is a proposed reply, circular or any other document put up by an officer to a higher authority. If the proposed reply or suggested circular serves the prescribed purpose, it is considered good and approved. A draft may be amended by filling in the gaps in the efforts of the officer or by the incorporation of additional facts by the senior officer. A bad draft (e.g. one which does not show an appreciation of the point at issue or one hastily put up without taking pains) may be rejected and scrapped.

When to Draft

5. Where an item of correspondence is of a routine nature and calls for a routine reply, a letter ready for signature should be put up to the senior officer for signature. Sometimes, the writer of a minute has to submit a draft reply embodying a recommendation in his minute. Draft replies suggested for consideration may reduce substantially the length of a minute. When a draft has been approved, it is sent to the Secretary to be produced in the correct form for issue. The act of typing the letter in this form is known as 'fairing', and the finished document is known as a 'faired draft'.

6. Features of a good draft are as follows:

- (i) *Clarity of thought and expression*:- Say exactly what you wish to say in simple and direct language. Avoid repetitions.
- (ii) *Accuracy*:- Verify all facts and figures before writing.
- (iii) *Grammar*:- Weak or indifferent grammar mars the quality of a draft. Special care is necessary in the use of punctuation marks. Avoid over-worked expressions and stilted phraseology.
- (iv) *Courtesy*:- All communications from public servants to persons inside or outside the public service must be polite. Even the reply to a discourteous writer should be couched in courteous terms.

7. Typed drafts of minutes, briefs, letters, etc. should have headings which give an idea of the matter in the drafts. Reasonable spacing is used in typed drafts so that there is ample space for amendments. Discarded papers containing classified information should never be used for drafting. When drafts of any documents are given to the Secretary for fairing, the number of copies required should always be clearly recorded at the top of page 1 of every draft. Such information can, for example, take the form of either '6 copies' meaning 6 in all or '1+5 copies' meaning one original and five copies. It is desirable for Schedule Officers and their secretaries to agree on the wording to be used in describing the number of copies that should be made in addition to the original so as to save time and avoid waste of stationery.

Minuting

8. A minute may be defined as a communication in writing, usually in files, between two or more officials. This definition does not apply to a letter from one officer to another. Minutes are normally used to consider and settle matters or to direct what action may be taken in a given circumstance. Minuting is the act of writing a minute.

When not to Minute

9. It may not be necessary to minute on a matter when:
- (i) The matter can be cleared by discussion either at a meeting (usually informal) or by telephone. The latter medium should not be used for confidential or secret matters;
 - (ii) The action necessary is routine;
 - (iii) A more senior officer has specifically suggested that the matter at issue should be referred to him for further action, usually because he is familiar with the background of the subject and/or he wishes to put down some drafting instructions;
 - (iv) When the issue is highly confidential, in which case it should first be discussed with a superior officer before deciding whether it is necessary to minute and what form the minute should take;
 - (v) The matter is straight forward, and no further information or guidance can usefully be added; or
 - (vi) The subject matter has assumed technical, professional or special knowledge which the Schedule Officer is not familiar with. In such

a case, the matter should be referred as early as possible to a suitable professional or expert for necessary action.

Forms and Contents of a Minute

10. The top left-hand side of a minute refers to the person, by appointment, to whom it is written. The text of the minute follows. It is concluded by the signature or initials of the writer; immediately under his signature or initials is the typewritten or stamped name of the Officer writing it. Under his name, the post held is shown as well as the date of his minute.

11. A minute may be built up as follows:

- (i) state briefly the matter at issue.
- (ii) state the present position and facts affecting it, supporting the statement by references to previous papers, if applicable.
- (iii) verify whether or not the report, proposal or request accords with any Laws, Public Service Rules (PSR), Financial Regulations, Circulars, or Memoranda which have been circulated. Sometimes, it is helpful to quote the actual words of the Public Service Rules, etc. or to attach a copy of the relevant document.
- (iv) indicate any previous decisions which may be relevant to the point at issue.
- (v) point out any facts or argument which may influence the action to be taken (or decision to be given) as they occur to you when examining papers, precedents and previous decisions. Cite relevant authorities.
- (vi) finally, suggest what action you propose should be taken. The substance of a memorandum or letter in reply may be suggested in your minute which should be so drafted that the wording may be incorporated direct into the reply to issue.

Faults to Guard Against in Drafting and Minuting

12. The following are common faults to avoid:

- (h) Avoid slipshod thinking – if one's thinking is obscure, one's drafts and minutes may not be clear.

- (ii) Bad handwriting – Unless you can write legibly, it is advisable to type short drafts or minutes. Unless one's hand writing is easily readable, all minutes or drafts covering more than half of an A4 page should be typewritten.
- (iii) Irrelevance – Try to have a grasp of the subject at issue, and do not drift away from the question being considered.
- (iv) Haste – It is considered bad to defer action on problems requiring considerable effort in drafting and minuting. A large accumulation of work on files tends to encourage the production of hasty drafts or minutes based on haphazard research.
- (v) Inaccurate Information - Make sure you know intimately the provisions in Government circulars and regulations. Make a special note of alterations in Laws, Public Service Rules and other approved authorities. A conclusion based on obsolete precedent is likely to be misleading.
- (vi) Indecision – If a draft or a minute must solve or advance the solution to a problem, it should not show indecision. Your summing up or conclusion should, therefore, indicate your stand.
- (vii) Stylistic defects – Avoid repetitions (e.g. return back, can be able), unnecessary airs and graces.

13. The margins for minutes should be at least 1.5" wide and when references are made to other pages in the file (or in other files), the location of those pages should be indicated by means of marginal references. The other files (if any) referred to should be attached and their reference numbers stated. If a minute contains references to matters already dealt with or to papers within the file, the pages so referred to should be flagged with slips of paper clearly showing their numbers. When minutes are copied to other files, the copies should be clearly marked at the top with the reference and page numbers of the file containing the original minute. Short titles and abbreviation may be used when addressing minutes, e.g. Perm. Sec. or D.G. Minutes should be as brief as is consistent with clarity and, in general, should be confined to statements of fact and matters strictly relevant thereto.

14. When a minute is routed through more senior officers, they should not alter it (other than amending spelling or grammatical errors) but should write additional paragraphs in which they can each express their views on the statements made by their subordinates. Every such additional statement is signed by its contributor. If an intermediate officer entirely agrees with the

statements made by his subordinates, he can indicate this by merely initialing and dating against his designation in the address of the minute. He needs not append a paragraph merely for that purpose but if he particularly wishes to emphasize his support, he can do so even if that paragraph contains nothing more than the word "Supported". Minutes are usually routed back through the same channels as they were routed outwards. **When a minute is addressed to a superior officer and there is insufficient space for his reply, a blank unnumbered sheet should always be enclosed in the file before it is submitted.** It is customary to sign a minute to superiors and subordinates alike in full, especially if the signature of the officer writing the minute is not immediately above the typed or hand-printed initials and surname. Where these have been typed or stamped on the left-hand side of the page at the end of the minute, together with his designation and date (including year), initialing alone is permissible.

15. Minutes should not normally be sent to other Ministries as this entails sending a whole file. So, enquiries are usually made by letter, but when sighting of other papers in the file is likely to be required, it is sometimes easier to put a minute in the file and send it over to the appropriate Ministry. Such minutes must always be addressed to the Permanent Secretary, but when the matter is clearly going to be dealt with by a Schedule Officer there, the wording "for the Attention of (designation of officer)" should be included. When minuting files to other Ministries for normal action to be taken, it is quite in order for the Schedule Officer to sign the minute and send out the file regardless of the rank of the Schedule Officer whose attention is required, but when a minute is being sent for the personal attention of the Permanent Secretary of the other Ministry, the minute should not be signed and sent directly to him. It should either be sent through the Schedule Officer's own Permanent Secretary for onward transmission, or should be prepared for his signature and transmission. In cases where it is necessary to minute a file to another Ministry, it is the responsibility of the Schedule Officer to ensure that the file contains no papers which should not be seen by outsiders. Accordingly, should the file contain such papers, the following procedure should be carried out:

- (i) all papers relevant to the subject matter should be extracted from the file and placed in a "T" file bearing the same number;
- (ii) file notes should be inserted in the main file in place of the pages extracted, stating clearly the action that has been taken, the designation of the officer who took the action and the date;
- (iii) the minute is then placed in a "T" file which is sent to the other Ministry; and

- (iv) a note is made on the last page of the main file describing the action which has been taken and ending with a B.U. so that the matter can be followed up on a specified date.

Style of Letters

16. Letters should always have a heading briefly descriptive of the subject matter and must bear a reference number and date. The letter starts with the file number in full, and this is followed with a stroke and the file page number. The page number and the actual date are atimes left blank so that the officer signing the letter can fill them in by hand. Unless there is danger of a letter being seriously delayed before signature, it is preferable for the Secretary to complete these details not only on the original but also on the duplicate and other copies. Where the details are put on the original only, in ink by the signatory, they may be omitted from copies which are, therefore, not strictly exact copies of the original. As some photocopying machines do not reproduce hand-written matter, page numbers and dates should always be typed in originals and their copies before signature. Deviation from this procedure may be given by a Schedule Officer.

17. The wording in letters should always be brief, clear and consistent. It should avoid superfluous and flowery expressions. The style should be courteous, dignified but not too stiff, brusque or over-formal and slang. Witticisms and colloquialisms must not be used. The expression "I am directed....." should not be used unless it really applies. When dealing with routine matters, it is quite unnecessary to use these words.

18. Official letters should always be signed on behalf of the Head of the Ministry, but should also include in brackets the name of the officer who signed the letter. All paragraphs except the first should be numbered consecutively. Letters addressed to persons who are not in Government should always have a formal beginning and ending; the customary salutation is "Dear Sir" or ("Madam") with the ending "Yours faithfully". On the rare occasions when a letter is required to commence with the words "I have the honour to", the ending should be equally formal "I have the honour to be, Sir, Yours faithfully". Great care should be taken to ensure that names are correctly spelt, titles used, and that decorations (if any) are included in the address. Letters to Government Officers concerning official businesses do not require a salutation or closing phrase but the style of writing should also be as described above. Letters to Government Officers concerning personal matters of an official nature, however, should have a formal salutation and ending. For example, an officer applying for leave on ground of urgent private affairs would frame his letter with the formal salutation and closing phrases.

Attachments

19. When Appendices or Schedules, etc. are attached, they should always be marked with the reference of the letter to which they were attached so that if they become detached at anytime they can readily be connected to the relevant letter. The second and subsequent pages of the letter should be similarly marked. A dash should be typed in the margin in line with references in the letter to any enclosures or, the abbreviations. Enc. or Encs. should be included at the foot of the letter. If the letter has more than one enclosure, the number of enclosures should also be included. When letters are dispatched, the Despatch Clerk must always stamp and initial duplicate copies of the letters before placing them in their files, and must pass them back to the Schedule Officers for disposal instructions to be recorded.

20. When letters are to be registered, the Secretary should always include "BY REGISTERED POST" in the letter above the name of the addressee and do the same on the envelope. He should then draw blue penciled lines downwards and sideways across the middle of the front and the back of the envelope. A letter going by air should have the words "BY AIRMAIL" typed on the letters above the name of the addressee so that the duplicate copy of the letter records that the original was sent by air. The Secretary should also prepare an Airmail envelope.

Additional Copies

21. Unless additional copies of letters are required for transmission to others, it is customary to make only one duplicate copy of each letter. The duplicate copy is placed in the file from which the matter is dealt with. On important schedules, two flimsy copies of each letter may be necessary; the additional copy is for circulation within the office so that other members of the staff are acquainted with the contents of such letters. Each office has its own specific rules concerning the frequency and the circulation of the folders of flimsies but, in general, the practice is to circulate such folders as frequently as possible and to start with the most senior staff in the office so that they can direct that prompt action be taken whenever they notice that incorrect statements have been made. It is not customary for copies of the Head of Department's own letters to be circulated to his subordinates. When a Head of Department considers it necessary, he merely minutes the relevant file to the person concerned – who then sees the copy of the letter.

Overseas Correspondence

22. Communication addressed to Overseas Government should never be made directly. The required information should be conveyed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with a request that it should be transmitted to the Government concerned.

CHAPTER 13

Forms of Official Communication in Government Business

A key ingredient of good governance is communication to the various stakeholders as the occasion demands. Government is a very large organization with its own culture, methods and practices. Expectedly, therefore, it has its own ways of communicating, complete with its own unique way of writing. These various forms of communicating in our bureaucracy will be examined in the succeeding paragraphs.

Letters

2. Letters to other Ministries are always addressed to the Honourable Minister even though most of them will be dealt with by lower rank officials. It must be borne in mind that some of those officials may be of a higher rank than the signatory of the letter being sent out. In consequence, whenever information of a censorious nature, or which is likely to cause displeasure to the recipient, has to be sent out, the Schedule Officer should first consider whether the official dealing with the matter in the other Ministry is of a higher rank and, if so, whether the difference is such as to warrant that the letter be signed by an officer of higher status than himself. Accordingly, even when a Schedule Officer is directed to draft a letter, it does not necessarily mean that he should also sign and send out the letter. It is left to his discretion as to whether he should do so or whether he should merely prepare the letter on behalf of a more senior officer to whom it should be sent for signature. If he is in any doubt, he should first seek advice from his immediate superior officer.

3. It is frequently necessary to follow up letters which have not been answered, and a large percentage of files marked B.U. return for action on this account. When following up, a brief letter reminding an addressee of an earlier letter, stating its reference and date of issue, may be issued. Subsequent reminders may be progressively stronger but courteous as well. If the establishments concerned are near, the Schedule Officer may make personal contact. In cases where all such efforts have failed to produce an answer, the Schedule Officer should report the matter to his superior officer who should be requested to raise the issue at a higher level, as this frequently produces immediate results.

4. When a Schedule Officer has to write a long and complicated letter which entails considerable research into previous papers and the letter contains references to them, it is very helpful to have the references of those pages on

record. It is a very good practice for such references to be included marginally on the file copy of the letter. If this is done when the original letter is being written, unnecessary research work could be avoided later on.

5. Enquiries from the general public are frequently addressed to the wrong Ministry. It is not helpful merely to return them to enquirers. The correct action is to write short letters to them stating that their enquiries have been passed on to the Ministries concerned for necessary action. An extra copy of each letter should be endorsed to the Ministry concerned, the copy being attached to the original enquiry. The file copy of the letter can be marked to indicate that page.....(originally occupied by the enquiry) has been sent with the endorsement.

6. It is very helpful to all Government offices if the addressee of a letter knows to whom it has been copied because he can then send copies of his reply to the same people so that the records of all concerned are kept complete. Accordingly, whenever endorsements are being sent, it should be indicated in the original letter. This procedure applies only when addressees are other Government offices. It should never be followed on letters addressed to persons outside Government. In such cases, endorsements, etc, are typed only on all the duplicate copies of the original letter.

7. Copies of letters frequently have to be sent to other Government Offices purely for information purposes; in such cases, there is no need to use formal endorsements. The footnote should merely be "c.c. Honourable Minister of the relevant Ministry" at the bottom left-hand side of page. Under this procedure, there is no need for signature, formal titular subscription or reference. It is, however, very helpful to the Ministry to whom a copy is being sent if that Ministry's reference can be quoted. Accordingly, when such references are known, they should be quoted in brackets alongside the Ministry being addressed.

8. Demi-official letters may be written to officers in other Ministries when the writer is on familiar term with them and the style adopted is usually "Dear....." ending with "Yours" so that the writer can fill in the name and epistolary formula by hand.

9. Official letters to non-Government Bodies are slightly more formal. They open with "Dear Sir" and close with "Yours faithfully" or (when the addressee is personally known to the writer) Dear "Mr....." and with "Yours sincerely".

Endorsements

10. When letters are received and they contain information which should be conveyed to other Government Offices, it saves time and labour to have them copied and forwarded by merely endorsing the copies. It is essential that endorsements should bear the reference numbers of the files containing the original letters and that they include reasons why copies of the letters were endorsed, e.g. "For your action with reference to paragraph 3 of the above". Endorsements should include the name of the officer's own Ministry, the date, the Head of Department's subscription and the Officer's name in brackets because, in effect, all endorsements are letters and should, therefore, be referenced and signed. The original letter itself should then be marked to show to whom copies have been sent and, if the reasons are not obvious, these should also be recorded.

11. The full formalities of endorsements should be carried out when a Schedule Officer endorses a copy of his own letter to some other Government Offices since his endorsement is, in effect, a short letter. In such a case, it is not necessary to repeat his Ministry's address. The reference of the endorsement is the same as the page of the letter on which it has been written, but a suffix "A" is added to the reference number. When space permits, a further endorsement to another Government Office can be made on that same page, and the suffix "B" is then used for that. When endorsements (or additional endorsements) are required and have to appear on the next page, the reference number is changed to reflect the number of the next page in the file, e.g.:

- (a) Letter reference number is A1000/10, but there is no room for endorsement which must, therefore, be made on next page and is referenced A1000/11;
- Or**
- (b) Letter reference number is A1000/10, and the first endorsement on the same page is A1000/10A, the second endorsement on the same page is referenced A1000/10B.

12. Endorsements should only be used for conveying information to other Government Offices and should never be used for conveying information to private persons or non-government bodies, because even when there is no harm in such persons seeing the letter in its entirety, it is discourteous to pass information on to the public in this way. Accordingly, when a letter can be copied in its entirety to someone outside the Government, it is customary to have a copy made (photo-copied, if possible) and sent under cover of a short letter. It is, however, permissible to use a compliments slip in lieu of a letter when there is urgency or the addressee is very well-known to the Government Officer concerned. When it would not be proper to copy the letter in its entirety

to a person outside Government, the Schedule Officer should write a letter conveying the gist of the information to be passed on or he may quote verbatim specific extracts from the letter.

Briefs

13. A Brief is a summary of a subject prepared for a superior authority, e.g.:
 - (i) for one of the representatives of the Official Side at a Negotiating Council Meeting; or
 - (ii) for the use of a Departmental Head at a meeting;
 - (ii) for the Members of a Commission, e.g. the Civil Service Commission; or
 - (iv) for a Minister to introduce a memorandum in Council; or
 - (v) for a Minister when receiving an Ambassador or a Foreign dignitary who wishes to discuss a subject within the portfolio of the Minister.
14. In several ways, a brief is like a minute. Unlike the letter, it has no address, and it is not addressed to anyone either by name or rank.
15. Essential features of a good brief are as follows:
 - (i) A good heading which gives an idea of the content of the brief;
 - (ii) An introduction which summarises the background of the subject such as how the matter arose, previous action taken, if any, and why the issue is being raised again;
 - (iii) A clear analysis of the points at issue; where necessary, the points for and against a course of action should be stated;
 - (iv) A specific recommendation or suggestion; where two or more recommendations or suggestions are possible, they should be put in order of importance; and
 - (v) In the case of a brief for the Council of Ministers, the name and designation of the personage submitting the brief should be shown.
16. Every good brief should be self-contained. All relevant questions should be anticipated so that the user of the brief does not get the feeling that he cannot take a decision as some factors have been omitted. A brief should be

concise and constructive. It should try to recommend the solution to an outstanding problem.

File Notes

17. File Notes are a simple form of making a quick written record of something that has happened; they are often invaluable. They should, therefore, be made as frequently as possible when verbal discussions are held by telephone or otherwise. The gist of the discussion should be summed up in a few words and recorded on the last page of the file or can be written on a loose sheet and sent to the Registry for P.A. or B.U. on the relevant file. Such notes should always be initialed and dated.

Handing Over Notes

18. Handing Over Notes may include the following:

- (i) Details regarding content of the schedule of duties of the post;
- (ii) Useful references to aid the officer taking over;
- (iii) Unfinished matters, e.g. new policy issues;
- (iv) Replies to important letters, inquiries, etc. expected;
- (v) Files marked B.U.;
- (vi) Dates of impending meetings, if any;
- (vii) Matters being k.i.v.;
- (viii) Peculiar problems relating to the schedule which may be looked into by the Officer taking over as well as suggested rectifying measures; and
- (ix) Documents (usually references and reports), machinery and equipment being handed over.

The notes, in triplicate, should end as follows:

Handed over by:
.....
(Name to be typed in)
(Designation of post)

Date

Taken over by:
.....
(Name to be typed in)
(Designation of post)

Date

19. The original and the two copies of the Notes should be signed by both the Officer Handing Over and the Officer Taking Over. The original should be filed and a copy retained by each officer. The filed original should then be passed to the Supervisor and/or a superior officer who should know that the duties of that post have been properly taken over.

Means of Official Communication in the Civil Service

20. Letters, reports, circulars, e-mails as well as minutes of officers are important means of communication in the Civil Service. Within Ministries and sometimes between Ministries and Departments, minutes, enclosed in files which are then circulated so that action can be taken and recorded therein and a permanent record kept, are extensively used. Minutes are submissions of facts in concise form. They are different from minutes of meetings which are recorded in a special way.

21. Internal minutes are normally only used when addressing officers within the same Ministry or Department. Sometimes, external minutes may be addressed to civil servants in other Ministries or Departments. Minutes are never used in correspondence with the general public.

22. In writing minutes, separate sheets of plain papers are usually used. Whenever a minute is likely to exceed half a page, it should be typed unless the urgency of the matter is such that the resultant delay would not be justifiable. Minutes should be typed in double line-spacing.

23. Paragraphs, other than the first one, must be numbered consecutively. Like briefs with which they have much in common, minutes do not normally include any full inside address.

24. When recording dates at the end of minutes, the year should also be included, e.g. 01/04/2010 to avoid confusion in later years.

Speeches

25. Sometimes, the political leadership makes speeches to the public in order to convey government policies and to seek their support and co-operation for such policies. Since it is usually the responsibility of the Civil Servants to prepare these official speeches, it is incumbent on them to become familiar with the basic ingredients of good speech writing.

A. **Title**

The title of a speech should give all the basic information about the occasion, including:

- (a) names and title of the functionary reading the speech;
- (b) name of the event;
- (c) day and date; and
- (d) venue.

An example may read thus: "Address delivered by Dr. X. Y. Zonta, CON, Hon. Minister of Environment at the Opening Ceremony of the Public Forum on Desertification Organized by the Institute of Environmental Analyst on Monday, 22nd March , 2010 at the New Federal Secretariat, Abuja".

B. **Protocols**

Next, the Order of Protocol has to be observed. In doing this, it is proper to be guided by our National Order of Precedence which has the President of the Federal Republic as number 1, the Vice-President as number 2 and so on down the line. There is nothing wrong if you decide to do the listing by designation, post or functional title only, but should you decide to also add the names of those being recognised, then you must take the pains to use the correct titles plus any national honours the dignitaries may have. It is safer to end your listing with "Ladies and Gentlemen" to take care of any dignitaries you might have inadvertently omitted.

C. **Opening Paragraph**

The opening paragraph should indicate the purpose of the event e.g. "I am most delighted to be here with you this morning to deliver the keynote address at this opening ceremony of the Public Forum on Desertification that is being organized by the Institute of Environmental Analyst in this our beautiful Federal Capital City. I welcome you all". Furthermore, this paragraph should, in general, be used to connect with the audience by saying something of interest to them in order to attract their attention, .e.g. reference to a recent outing or accomplishment by the group constituting the audience.

D. **Content**

The body of the speech is its soul that contains the messages to be passed across to the audience. It is, as such, the most important part of the exercise which should engage the utmost attention of the Officer drafting it. More than anything else, what will determine the quality of the draft is the amount of research the Officer carries out on the subject-matter at hand before beginning the drafting. Prominent among the sources he will find useful, as applicable, in this regard are:

- (i) the files on the subject-matter;
- (ii) minutes of previous meetings the Ministry may have held or attended on the issue;
- (iii) relevant previous Council Conclusions;
- (iv) newspaper write-ups and analysis that are relevant;
- (v) consultations with and guidance from superior officers, particularly if possible the functionary who will deliver the speech;
- (vi) usual reference sources, such as the Constitution, Circulars, Public Service Rules, Government White Papers etc; and
- (vii) the Internet which, as we all know, has information on practically all subjects.

In putting down whatever the Officer decides should be part of the content, there are some basic points to bear in mind such as:

- (i) Whatever is represented as fact must indeed be factual. The Officer must check and re- check from appropriate sources, and where there is any doubt, the information should be dropped. Better to do so than to, for instance, embarrass the Minister by getting him to pass on to the public what the media may gleefully refer to as a lie;
- (ii) Do not get your Minister, or principal, to make a policy pronouncement on an issue that is clearly the responsibility of another Ministry or official;
- (iii) Even on an issue that is clearly within the purview of your Ministry, but is important enough to seek the prior consent of the Executive Council of the Federation, do not get your

Minister to make a policy pronouncement unless, and until, such a Council approval has been secured. Otherwise, you may cause your principals massive discomfort or even their jobs;

- (iv) Your style and choice of words should be simple, smooth and free-flowing. It serves little purpose if you use words that are big but communicate little. Use accurate and interesting statistics as well as antidotes and humour, where appropriate. Use a variety of short and long sentences to avoid boredom and make sure your materials are properly organized so that your points and messages will be easy to follow. **Most important of all is good grammar;**
- (iv) Your draft should be user specific, .i.e. you should always bear in mind who will be reading the speech; and
- (vi) Your draft should be audience specific. This is to say that, in putting up a draft, the Officer should always bear in mind the nature of the prospective audience, especially in terms of sophistication, educational level, orientation, interest, friendliness etc.

E. **Closing**

It is always appropriate to close a speech with an appreciation of the opportunity given and some kind of exhortation to the audience to go in a certain direction or carry out some specific activities .e.g. "It is my sincere hope that, by the time this gathering winds up tomorrow, you would all have realized the great danger desertification constitutes to our national development and each and everyone of you would have resolved to plant at least 50 trees annually in your respective localities and thereby become veritable agents of change. I thank you all for your attention. God bless you all."

Circulars

26. Circulars are used in conveying important information or directive from one Ministry or Department of the Service to other Ministries and Departments. Those issued by other Ministries should be filed in series contained in one file for each Ministry so that they can be circulated to appropriate officers for information and will thereafter be readily accessible to any officer who might wish to refer to them. Each circular therein should be marked with the number of the file in which the action copy has been placed. A second copy (the action

copy) of each such circular should be placed in the file relevant to the subject matter and should be passed to the appropriate officer for action to be taken. If he requires to initiate any action, he will proceed accordingly in that file, but if he does not require actually to initiate any action he will either merely minute the file to others for information and disposal or will himself dispose of it at once with a P.A. marking.

27. When a Ministry issues a circular to other Ministries, one copy should be placed in its own circular series file, and a copy should also be placed in the relevant subject matter file. Circulars may never be issued from a Ministry unless authorized by the Permanent Secretary/Head of Department or such officer to whom he has delegated authority in this respect.

28. Instructions issued by a Ministry to its own staff only, i.e. purely internal instructions, are not described as circulars but are usually called Office Notice or Office Instructions. The procedure for initiating and distributing these is usually laid down by every Ministry.

Electronic Mail (e-mail)

29. Advancement in technology has introduced a world-wide system of electronic communication, the e-mail. It is a process of sending a message from one computer to another electronically. This process can take only a few seconds or minutes depending on internet traffic. It has become a very quick way of transmitting official information. Invitations to official meetings, interviews and minutes of meetings are now sent by e-mail. In some developed countries, official instructions are transmitted to subordinates by their superior officers through the e-mail.

Official Channels

30. The correct routing of a paper-work is a matter of great importance. The general principle is that officers should always make their submissions to their next superior officer. Unless given special instructions to route their work in a different manner, their minutes should usually be addressed only to the next Senior Officer. However, it frequently happens that an instruction comes direct from a higher authority, in which case, the officer's submission may be addressed to such higher authority, but routed to him through the officers of intermediate status, i.e through official channels. The three main purposes of this are, firstly, to ensure that an unauthorized direct approach is not made; secondly, to afford the higher authority the benefit of the useful comments which could be made by the intermediate officers through whom the papers were routed; and thirdly, that officers should be aware of matters being raised by their subordinates.

31. The style of address in general use for the submission of minutes through official channels is by placing the most senior officer's title first followed by other officers in descending order of status prefixed by the word "through", e.g. Permanent Secretary (thro' Director, Deputy Director).

32. Papers routed upwards through official channels are routed back in the same way, and all intermediate officers are, therefore, acquainted with decisions reached by the higher authority. Intermediate officers should not delay unnecessarily papers which are routed through them for information only, e.g. when a decision has been taken by the higher authority and routed down for a subordinate officer to execute or when an intermediate officer accepts as comprehensive and complete the submission from a subordinate schedule officer.

Secrecy

33. All Civil Servants are required to take an Oath of Secrecy. Unauthorized disclosure of any information acquired in the course of their duties is a very serious offence. Security instructions must be read by all persons who deal with graded papers. It is rewarding to read the Oath of Secrecy and the Security Handbook from time to time.

Ink

34. Ink pens or biros must always be used when:

- (i) letters or minutes are signed;
- (ii) drafts are made for typing;
- (iii) written instructions are made; or
- (iv) destinations are recorded on files, etc.

Pencils should only be used for making notes or when there is a likelihood that what has been written may be erased or amended later on, such as in paging of temporary files. All officers should use blue, black biros or ink on all official papers. Except for numbering the main pages (not attachments) and cross referencing in files; officers should never use green, as this colour is reserved for the Highest Authorities. Ministers use red, and the Audit staff use brown pencil. Blue pencil is usually used for numbering attachment to letters, minutes and other documents which are destined for filing.

Executive Council Papers

35. A key purpose of the Civil Service is to provide the political leadership with the instruments with which to administer Government at the highest level, i.e. the Executive Council of the Federation, more popularly known as the Federal Executive Council (FEC), with the ultimate aim of fulfilling its manifesto and achieving its agenda. So, what are these instruments which Permanent Secretaries and their staff are responsible for preparing as part of the policy making process?

Council Memorandum

36. A Council Memorandum is a document which details facts and figures on given situations, phenomena, or proposals and is submitted for the consideration of Council in order to obtain its approval for implementation or modification of government programmes or policies or for the enunciation of new policies. A Council memorandum should be as brief and clear as possible and should end with a precise statement of the decisions which the author of the memorandum seeks to obtain from the Council. Submission of Council memos is usually informed by such documents as Rolling Plans, Reports of Enquiries or Previous Decisions. They may also relate to events such as natural phenomena, a public scandal, sudden economic, social or political developments etc.

Council Note

37. A Council Note is like a Council memorandum. It is referred to as a Note because of the purpose it is meant to serve. Thus, while a Council memorandum is meant for consideration of Council, necessitating a debate in order to arrive at a decision on the requests made by the author of the memorandum, a Council Note is not intended for a debate. It is presented to Council only for information of members about a state of affairs on which Council had given approval previously. It is not normally included in the agenda of the Council; unless, after circulation, a member informs the Secretary to the Council, that is, the Secretary to the Government of the Federation, that he wishes to raise any issue contained therein.

Council Conclusions

38. Council Conclusions are the records of the debate and decisions taken during the consideration of a memorandum in Council. These records enable affected Ministries to know the decisions of Council which have to be executed by them. It is expected that Council Conclusions should be circulated as far as possible within twenty-four hours of the meeting and will be taken as final unless a member of the Council, present at the meeting, proposes an amendment

within twenty-four hours of their circulation. Council Conclusions are the most important of all Council documents. They are, therefore, guarded jealously and kept away from unauthorized persons. Conclusions of exceptional importance are set out in a Top Secret Annex to the Conclusions and given a very limited circulation. In some circumstances, there may be no circulation at all. For example, discussion of fiscal proposals for the annual budget whose leakage would be dangerous to the economy of the country, is usually set out in a Top Secret Annex and only one copy is made and kept for reference in the Office of the Secretary to the Council until the Budget proposals are made public or implemented.

Council Extracts

39. Council Extracts emanate from Council Conclusions. However, while Council Conclusions show the trend of the discussions and decision(s) of Council on each subject, Council Extracts reflect only the answers to the 'prayers' presented to the Council in the memorandum. In other words, Council extracts are a summary of the decisions of Council.

Preparation of Council Memoranda

40. Council memoranda are prepared in two places: namely, the Council Secretariat, Office of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation in the Presidency and in the various Ministries. The memoranda prepared at the Council Secretariat are those normally presented to the National Council of States and similar bodies. They are normally presented by the President; at times he also submits memoranda to the Executive Council of the Federation. All such memoranda are prepared for him by the Council Secretariat. The memoranda prepared by Ministers are usually for the consideration of the Executive Council of the Federation and are initialled and presented in Council by the Minister of Cabinet rank and not by the Minister of State, where one exists.

Memoranda for Executive Council of the Federation

41. Each Ministry has a clearly defined jurisdiction as set out in the allocation of ministerial responsibilities by the President and as usually published in Federal Official Gazette from time to time. Each Ministry is expected to initiate policies on issues that fall within its jurisdiction and also ask for consideration and approval for any programme of action for the achievement of the stated objectives of government. At times, the implementation of a project or policy may involve more than one Ministry. In such a case, a joint memorandum may be presented by the Ministries concerned to Council.

42. The necessity for memoranda to be presented by Ministries to seek Council approval arises from the doctrine of collective responsibility that guides the executive action of government. When issues are presented in Council, that exercise enables all Ministries to know what each Ministry is doing and why it is doing it. The quality of the decision on the subject could also be improved or enriched through the contribution of members of Council during discussion. Any Minister will then be in position to defend any government action whenever the need arises.

43. This practice also helps to avoid a situation where the functions of one Ministry will be usurped by another. This is because, if a proposed action by a Ministry appears to conflict with the functions of another one, it would be detected by the Council Secretariat which will draw the attention of that Ministry to the flaw in the memorandum before the proposal comes to the floor of Council. That would stop the 'defaulting' Ministry from going ahead with such an action.

Classification of Memoranda

44. Memoranda may be classified into four broad categories as follows: Policy Making, Legislative and Judicial, Financial and Information.

(i) Policy-Making Memos

These are memoranda that seek the approval of Council on policy matters and governmental activities initiated by government agencies for a given financial year or even on a longer-term basis. Virtually all government agencies submit such memoranda.

(ii) Legislative and Judicial Memos

Ministers intending to submit new legislation or propose amendments to existing one first forward memoranda on the issue involved to the Council in order to obtain approval for the necessary drafting instructions to the Ministry of Justice for the preparation of the appropriate draft legislation. During the debate on such memoranda, the sponsoring Ministries have to convince Council on the need and relevance of the proposed legislation to the overall objectives of Government. The resultant drafts are then submitted as Bills to the National Assembly for consideration.

(iii) Memoranda Dealing with Financial Matters

Generally speaking, there can be no public expenditure on Capital Projects, unless prior approval of Council has been obtained for that

purpose. Such projects, in normal circumstances, must have been reflected in the Development (Rolling) Plan for the period and budgeted for in the relevant financial year. Fiscal and monetary measures announced by the Annual Budget are always preceded by memoranda submitted to the Council by the Ministers of Finance and National Planning who must have coordinated government expenditures proposals for the coming year. When the Council has considered these, the President packages the outcome thereof in form of a Bill to the National Assembly, which may be presented as Budget Address. It is what the National Assembly ultimately approves that becomes the National Budget for each given year. It becomes an Act when the President has signed it into Law.

(iv) Information Memos

The import of some memoranda is informative. Such memoranda may describe the roles played by Nigeria in international organizations such as UN, AU, ECOWAS, Lome Conventions or allied bodies of which she is a member-state. Memoranda might also inform Council on treaties to which Nigeria is a signatory. Council is generally briefed by way of Memos or Notes on the international meetings attended by Nigerian official delegations. Council has to be informed of sudden events e.g. the bomb explosions in Lagos, riots etc.

Format of a Council Memorandum

45. Like all important documents, Council memoranda have their own distinctive features and special format that must be used. A memorandum has four important sections: namely, the heading, the opening paragraph, the body and the concluding part.

46. The heading of a memorandum shows clearly the Council to which a memorandum belongs. For example, a memorandum for the Executive Council of the Federation will have a heading like this: THIS DOCUMENT IS THE PROPERTY OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF THE FEDERATION. At the heading of the memorandum also will be some formal inscriptions, like the number of the memorandum, the date, the copy number and the inscription 'Secret' to show that Council memoranda are always 'classified document'. After the heading, we have the title and the author of the memorandum; for example, 'Award of Contract for the Construction of Gwagwalada-Abaji Road: Memorandum by the Minister of Works.' Moreover, references to all previous Council decisions on the subject-matter should be stated on top of the memorandum.

47. The second area of focus is the opening paragraph. The opening paragraph should indicate the purpose of the memorandum. At times, the purpose may not necessarily be indicated at the opening paragraph of the memorandum. When it is indicated, however, it looks like this: "The purpose of this memorandum is to seek Council's approval for the award of contract for the construction of Gwagwalada – Abaji Road". Alternatively, the opening paragraph could deal with the antecedents of the subject matter, especially if the matter or a related issue had previously been presented to Council.

48. The third segment of the memorandum is the body. This is made up of all the relevant information supported by accurate facts and figures which would be presented in logical sequence. All these will be set out in continuous paragraphs clearly numbered in Arabic figures, 1, 2, 3, 4, etc. Supporting data and information are given in annexes to the memorandum.

49. The fourth segment is the ending which will contain precise statements of the requests that are being made. These requests are called 'prayers'. An example may look as presented in the next paragraph.

50. Council is, accordingly, invited to:-

- (i) note the importance of the Gwagwalada – Abaji road as the major link between the southern states and the Federal Capital Territory;
- (ii) note the five major road building contractors that have been invited to bid for the dualization of the road;
- (iii) approve the award of contract for the dualization of Gwagwalada – Abaji road to Messrs Denge Capital Construction Company Limited at the cost of ₦750 million (Seven hundred and fifty million Naira) and a completion period of 36 weeks.

**(Initialled) A. A.
Minister of Works
Abuja**

2nd December, 2009

51. Generally, when reporting in a memo, it should be done in the past tense and in writing the prayers, you should use functional verbs like "note", "agree", "approve," "direct", "ratify", "confirm", etc. depending on the nature, type and sense of the request.

Qualities of a Good Memorandum

52. The quality of a memorandum can best be assessed by the number of corrections the Council Secretariat of the Presidency makes in it. All memoranda emanating from the Ministries are sent to the Council Secretariat for processing under the signatures of the Permanent Secretaries, after they have been approved and initialed by the Ministers. It should be emphasized that the processing role of the Council Secretariat is not that of a post office. In 'vetting' memoranda, the Council Secretariat has to ensure that they meet the standard already set by Council; that the information presented in each memorandum is factual and that the necessary consultations and clearance had been made. The Council Secretariat pays special attention to the following features:

(i) *Compliance with the Usual Format*

It is the duty of the Council Secretariat to ensure that the memorandum that will be presented to Council has the necessary distinctive features mentioned above. The Secretariat will also check for clarity of expression to ensure that members of Council understand the message that is being conveyed in the memorandum.

(ii) *Implications involving other Agencies of Government*

As a general rule, any memorandum with financial implications originating from Ministries other than the Ministry of Finance must be cleared with the Ministry of Finance before it is submitted to the Council Secretariat for processing. This is to ensure that the Ministry has budgetary provision for the subject-matter and that sources of funding are known. Any memorandum with legal implications has to be cleared with the Ministry of Justice. If the memorandum is seeking a re-organisation of a Ministry with a view to changing its structure and staff complement, it will have to be cleared with the Office of the Head of the Civil Service of the Federation. A memorandum proposing new legislation or amendment to any existing bilateral agreements with a foreign country, accession to treaties etc. should be cleared with Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It is also the duty of the Council Secretariat to ensure that a Ministry does not usurp the functions of another Ministry by seeking Council's approval for a proposal that falls within the jurisdiction of that other Ministry. All contending views and alternative options on the subject of a Council memorandum should be reflected in the body of the memorandum in order to give Council the full picture before it takes a decision on the recommendations/prayers.

How to write Council Conclusions

53. Writing of Council Conclusions, just like writing of the other Council papers, is learnt by diligent practice and by study of memoranda on various subjects over the years. Unlike in the case of Council Memorandum, there is no defined formula for writing a Council Conclusion. Staff of the Council Secretariat who, alone, have the duty to produce Council Conclusions are advised to ensure full concentration during meetings to be able to get the substance of the points being made by members during discussion. With time, one will be able to sift the wheat from the chaff out of the welter of issues that would be raised. In order to fully drive home the doctrine of collective responsibility, a strict policy of anonymity is maintained by avoiding, as far as possible, linking views expressed during discussion with any individual member. It is only the substance of the discussion which leads to the final decision (conclusion) that is usually recorded. Verbatim reports of the meetings are not kept.

54. The conclusion should state precisely the introductory remarks, the substance and trend of the discussion and indicate the varying views and the consensus of opinion leading to the decisions on the prayers sought by the author of the memorandum. Clarity of diction, relevance and a faithful rendition of the decisions are cardinal principles in the writing of Council Conclusions.

General

55. Listed below are some general but relevant points on this very important subject-matter:

- (i) Once a memorandum is submitted to the Council Secretariat, it ceases to belong to the originating Ministry and becomes the property of the Council. Reproduction or photocopying is absolutely prohibited, except by the Office of the Secretary to the Council, i.e. OSGF, upon formal request.
- (ii) In circulating Council papers, each copy is given an identity number. Thus, the President has No.1, the Vice-President has No.2 and so on down the line for every member and recipient. The main reason for this is that if there is any loss, leakage or photocopying, the source can be easily ascertained.

CHAPTER 14

Notes on the Nigerian Foreign Service

The Nigerian Foreign Service deals with all diplomatic relations and consular matters in respect of the Government and people of Nigeria. Appointments to the Foreign Service is made by the Federal Civil Service Commission. However, appointments of Principal Representatives of Nigeria e.g. Ambassadors, High Commissioners and Heads of Mission are made by The President. It is expected that priority consideration should be given to career diplomats rather than non-career diplomats in the appointment of Principal Representatives of Nigeria. Non-career Ambassadors hold their appointments at the pleasure of the President and cease to function when the President ceases to hold office.

2. All newly appointed Foreign Service Officers are expected to attend a one-year training course in diplomatic practice at the Foreign Service Academy. Officers who fail to pass after two attempts are relieved of their appointments. In view of the uniqueness of the Foreign Service, no transfer or lateral conversion above GL 10 is allowed.

3. Officers from Home Ministries posted to Nigerian Diplomatic Missions abroad are designated Attaches in charge of the responsibilities of their Ministries.

4. All married officers are expected to give full particulars of their spouses for registration. Any officer seeking to marry a foreigner must seek the prior permission of Government. If the marriage will not be in the interest of the Service, the officer will be required to leave the Foreign Service or return to the Home Service.

5. No Foreign Service Officer is allowed to accept gifts or presentations, whether in form of money or otherwise, from any person for services rendered or to be rendered.

6. A spouse of a Foreign Service officer is not allowed to work while at post with the Officer. Spouses of Foreign Service Officers on leave of absence on grounds of Public Policy and who fall within the field of selection for Interview/Promotion Examination will be allowed to sit for the promotion examination while at post and, if successful, will be promoted accordingly.

7. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is primarily and statutorily charged with the responsibility for foreign policy formulation, articulation and implementation. Nigeria's Foreign Policy comprises the totality of her perceptions, attitude and

behaviour towards the international system at any given time. It is also a reflection of her political, economic, social and cultural circumstances and, to some extent, the immediate and remote circumstances domestically in Nigeria. The major consideration in the pursuit of Nigeria's foreign policy choice of strategies is her national interest.

8. Some MDAs do not seem to recognize this statutory role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. On Consular and other issues, most MDAs violate the proper channel of communication with Foreign Missions in Nigeria, apparently in order to obtain quicker results. This is against extant Government policy on the matter. Usually, it is only after these MDAs run into trouble that they choose to consult the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

9. Besides, MDAs and other bodies are not expected to embark on foreign trips without informing the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. There should be proper and effective co-ordination between the Ministry's Consular Section, Foreign Missions in Nigeria and MDAs on visa matters. MDAs and other Bodies should create units within their organizations to act as focal points of contact between them and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

CHAPTER 15

Conditions of Service

(a) The National Council on Establishments

The National Council on Establishments was established by the Governments of the Federation in 1957 to facilitate inter-governmental consultations on establishment matters and to avoid unnecessary disparities in general conditions of service in all the Civil Services of the Federation.

2. It comprises the Heads of Service of States with the Head of the Civil Service of the Federation as the Chairman. The Council meets at least once a year to deliberate on establishment matters.

3. It acts as a consultative body for the Governments of the Federation on matters pertaining to staff establishments, salary structures, gradings and conditions of service with a view to achieving some degree of uniformity in the Nigerian Civil Services.

4. The Council also serves as a pool of information on all establishment and service matters for the Governments of the Federation. Each government is thus expected to forward relevant documents, circulars and statistical information to it for sharing experience.

5. In the recent past, the Council has reviewed and updated the Schemes of Service to accommodate emerging cadres and has also approved the inclusion of emerging certificates. It has approved the elongation of existing cadres, created new ones and made changes in nomenclatures in line with on-going reforms and current realities.

(b) The Joint National Public Service Negotiating Council

The Joint National Public Service Negotiating Councils I, II and III comprise eight Unions in the Public Service. These unions are usually consulted by Government before important decisions affecting the lives of public officers are taken by Government. This has shown that Government believes in the principle of collective bargaining. The views of the Unions are usually taken seriously by Government. This enables the representatives of workers to participate in the decision – making process. However, there is room for improvement in strengthening the collective bargaining process in the public sector.

(c) National Salaries, Incomes and Wages Commission

The National Salaries, Incomes and Wages Commission was set up to deal with issues relating to salaries and wages in the Public Service in Nigeria. It was expected to examine, streamline and recommend salary scales applicable to each post in the Public Service and to examine areas in which rationalization and harmonization of salaries, wages and other conditions of employment are desirable and feasible between the public and private sectors of the economy. It is also expected to examine the current rate of retirement benefits and recommend appropriate mechanism for periodic review of retirement benefits.

2. In order to achieve its objectives, the Commission regularly participates in negotiations between Government and Staff Unions in the Public Service where it offers technical advice during discussion about the fixing or review of compensation packages. It also carries out regular salary inspections of Ministries, Departments and Agencies to ensure that the salaries and allowances being paid by them are approved by the appropriate authorities. In this way, it ensures that the wage bill is kept under continuous surveillance. It has been made clear through circulars issued by the Federal Government that all MDAs considering review of their salaries, allowances and other aspects of remuneration are obliged to submit their proposals to the Commission for evaluation and eventual recommendation to Government for approval, where necessary.

(d) Revenue Mobilisation, Allocation and Fiscal Commission

This Commission is empowered to monitor the accruals to and the disbursement of revenue from the Federation Account. It is also to review, from time to time, the revenue allocation formulae and principles in operation to ensure conformity with changing realities. It is also expected to advise the Federal, State and Local Governments on fiscal efficiency and methods by which their revenue is to be increased. It also determines the remuneration appropriate for political, public and judicial office holders. In specific terms, the Commission determines the remuneration of the President, the Vice- President, the SGF, Ministers, Special Advisers, Chairmen of Commissions, Governors, Deputy Governors, SSGs, Commissioners, Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Local Governments, the Chief Justice of Nigeria, Justices of the Supreme Court and members of the National and State Assemblies.

CHAPTER 16

Pension Administration

Contributory Pension Scheme

The Pension Reform Act of 25th June, 2004 set up a Contributory Pension Scheme in Nigeria for payment of retirement benefits to all employees in the Public Service of the Federation and the Private Sector. In the case of the Private Sector, it covers all employees in any organization employing 5 workers or more. However, existing pensioners and employees who had 3 years or less to retire were exempted from the scheme.

2. The objectives of the scheme are to:
 - (i) ensure that every person who worked in either the Public Service of the Federation or the Private Sector receives his retirement benefits as and when due;
 - (ii) assist careless workers to save in order to cater for their livelihood during old age; and
 - (iii) establish a uniform set of rules, regulations and standards for the administration and payment of retirement benefits for the Public Service of the Federation and the Private Sector.

3. Each employee is expected to contribute a minimum of 7.5% of his/her monthly emolument, (basic salary, housing and transport allowances) while the employer also contributes a matching 7.5% of the employee's monthly emoluments. In the case of the Military, the contribution rates are a minimum of 2.5% by the employee and 12.5% by the employer. However, an employer may agree or elect to bear the full burden of the scheme, provided that the total contribution shall not be less than 15% of the monthly emoluments of the employee.

4. The total contribution will be paid out by the employer directly to a Pension Assets Custodian (PAC) and will be managed and invested by the Pension Fund Administrator (PFA) of the employee's choice. The Pension Fund Administrator is expected to open Retirement Savings Account (RSA) for all employees and allocate to them Personal Identity Numbers (PIN). The PFA will maintain books of account on all transactions relating to pension funds managed by it. It will be required to issue a statement of account, at least, once every

quarter. The employee has the freedom to move once a year from one PFA to another.

5. The contributions are not taxable, but voluntary contributions are taxable. However, no pensioner will be entitled to make any withdrawals from his/her Retirement Savings Account unless he/she has retired or attained the age of 50 years, whichever falls later. Once the condition has been met, withdrawals can be made, provided what is left in the savings account is sufficient to guarantee that at least 50% of his/her last salary will be paid to him/her monthly through an annuity or a programmed withdrawal. A programmed monthly or quarterly withdrawal is the method by which the employee collects his accumulated benefits for the length of an estimated life span. An annuity for life is an income purchased from a licensed life insurance company with monthly or quarterly payments during the life of the retiree.

6. The retiree should also be entitled to a lump sum from the balance in his/her savings account provided the balance will be sufficient to procure an annuity or fund programme withdrawals that will produce an amount not less than 50% of his/her annual remuneration at the date of his/her retirement. Where the employee retires before attaining the age of 50 years, and if he/she requests for withdrawal of lump sum, he/she should be able to withdraw not more than 25% of the balance in his/her savings account, provided the withdrawal is made six months after his/her retirement and he/she has not secured another employment.

7. In the event of death of the retiree, his/her entitlements under the life insurance policy will be transferred to his/her savings account and the balance therein will be paid to his/her recorded next-of-kins or beneficiaries under his/her will.

8. The scheme allows for the transfer of employees' accrued pension rights for past service to it. Thus, in the case of public servants who were covered by an unfunded scheme, the issuance of a bond known as Federal Government Retirement Bond in favour of the employees should be redeemed upon the retirement of the employee, and the amount so redeemed will be added to the retirement savings account of the employee.

9. However, in the case of funded schemes and the private sector, employers shall credit the Retirement Savings Accounts of their employees with any funds to which each employee is entitled and in the event of deficiency, the shortfall shall become a debt and be treated with same priority as salaries owed. The employer shall also issue a written acknowledgement of the debt and take steps to meet the shortfall.

10. Where an employee transfers his/her service or employment from one employer or organization to another, the same retirement savings account will continue to be maintained because the account is portable and will remain with the employee for life. All that he/she needs to do is to notify the new employer of the PFA that manages his/her account, and thereafter his/her contributions will be sent to its custodian.
11. Existing pensioners and employees who had 3 years or less to retire at the commencement of the scheme, and who were exempted from the scheme will be provided for by a Pension Transitional Arrangement Department which will pay gratuity and pension to the existing pensioners in the Public Service. The Department will cease to exist after the death of the last pensioner or category of employees entitled to retire with pension before the commencement of the scheme.
12. All incomes earned from investment of pension funds will be placed at the credit of individual retirement savings account holder except for clearly defined and reasonable fees, charges, costs and expenses of transactions made by the Pension Fund Administrators.
13. All retirement savings account holders who have contributed for a number of years to a licensed Pension Fund Administrator will be entitled to a guaranteed minimum pension as may be determined by the Commission from time to time.
14. The contributions are to be invested by Pension Fund Administrators with the objective of safety and maintenance of fair returns in bonds, debentures, ordinary shares of public limited liability companies, bank deposits and bank securities, and real estate investments.
15. The Pension Commission will, at least once a year, authorize an inspection or examination or investigation of Pension Fund Administrators or Custodians or the Pension Department to determine whether or not the provisions of the Act are being complied with. Any Pension Fund Administrator or Custodian who misappropriates pension funds is liable on conviction to a fine of an amount equal to three times the amount mis-appropriated or imprisonment for a term not less than ten years or to both fine and imprisonment.
16. Any employee or beneficiary of a retirement savings account who is dissatisfied with a decision of the Pension Fund Administrator or Custodian may request in writing that such decision be reviewed by the Pension Commission. But where either party is dissatisfied with the decision of the Commission, the matter will be referred to arbitration.

CHAPTER 17

General Sources of Information

An important asset to most schedule officers is accurate information based on facts and figures. Obsolete and incorrect information do not help officers to make sound decisions. Besides, such factors as maturity and sound judgment are easily undermined by misinformation.

2. Schedule officers should, therefore, do all they can to be well-informed so that their efficiency could be enhanced. Early in their careers, they should familiarize themselves with the sources of information in the Service. Some sources are as follows:

- (i) Public Service Rules.
- (ii) Financial Regulations.
- (iii) Circulars and Circular Letters of Ministries and Departments, especially Office of the Head of the Civil Service of the Federation, Office of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation and Federal Civil Service Commission.
- (iv) Treasury Circulars.
- (v) Official Gazettes of the Federal and State Governments of Nigeria.
- (vi) The Revenue, Expenditure and Capital Estimates of the Federal and States Governments of Nigeria.
- (vii) Laws of the Federation of Nigeria.
- (viii) Laws of the various Nigerian States.
- (ix) Guidelines for Appointment, Promotion and Discipline issued by Federal Civil Service Commission.
- (x) Federal Civil Service Hand Book.
- (xi) Reports of Commissions of Enquiries.
- (xii) Government White Papers.
- (xiii) Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria
- (xiv) Staff Lists of the Federal Government

- (xv) Publications of National and International Management Development Institutes.
- (xvi) Publications by Office of the Head of the Civil Service of the Federation.
- (xvii) Publications of the Federal Office of Statistics.
- (xviii) Annual Reports of Ministries/Departments.
- (xix) Central Bank of Nigeria Reviews/Reports.
- (xx) News Letters of MDAs.

As the above list is not exhaustive, Officers are encouraged to explore and consult other sources.

Official Abbreviations

3. Abbreviations commonly used in official correspondence, but rarely in communication with the general public, include the following:

a.b.c.	.....	at back cover
a/c	.....	account
a.f.c.	.....	at front cover
Ag.	.....	Acting
A.I.E.	.....	Authority to Incur Expenditure
ASAP	.....	As soon as possible
a.y.c.	.....	at your convenience
b.c.	.....	back cover
B/F	.....	brought forward
B.U.	.....	bring up, brought up
C/F	.....	carried forward
Cap.	.....	chapter (usually of the Laws)
c/o	.....	care of
conf.	.....	confidential
D.	.....	Director
D.A.V.	.....	Department Adjustment Voucher

d/d	.....	dated
D.D.	.....	Deputy Director
D.G.	.....	Director General
Dept.	.....	Department
D.V.E.A. Book	.....	Departmental Vote Expenditure Account Book
e.g.	.....	for example
Enc.	.....	Enclosure
E.T.A.	.....	Estimated Time of Arrival
etc.	.....	and so on
E.T.D.	.....	Estimated Time of Departure
F.& P.A.	.....	File and put away
f.f.a.	.....	For further action
f.i.o.	.....	for information only
f.n.a.	.....	for necessary action
F.R.	.....	Financial Regulations
f.y.c.	.....	for your consideration
f.y.i.	.....	for your information
H.E.	.....	His Excellency
H.O.D.	.....	Head of Department
H.C.S.F.	.....	Head of the Civil Service of the Federation
Hon.	.....	Honourable
Hqrts.	.....	Headquarters
i/c	.....	in charge
i.d.c.	.....	In due course
i.e.	.....	(id est)That is, in other words
i.f.o.	.....	In favour of
k.i.v.	.....	Keep in view
L.G.	.....	Local Government
L.P.C.	.....	Last pay certificate

L.P.O.	.....	Local Purchase Order
Misc.	.....	Miscellaneous
n.a.	.....	not applicable (or necessary action)
N.B.	.....	Nota Bene (take notice)
n.f.a.	.....	no further action
O/K.	.....	all correct
P.A.	.....	Put away/Personal Assistant
Para.	.....	paragraph
Perm. Sec.	.....	Permanent Secretary
P.S.	.....	Postscript; i.e written afterwards (or Perm. Sec)
pp (or pp)	.....	pages, papers
P.T.O.	.....	please turn over
P.U.	.....	put up (papers or suggestions to an officer)
P.V.	.....	Payment Voucher
PSR	.....	Public Service Rules
recd.	.....	received
Ref.	.....	Reference
R.S.V.P	.....	Repondez sil'vous plait (Reply if you are please
R.V.	.....	Receipt Voucher
Sec.	.....	Secretary (or Section)
s.f.c.	.....	submitted for consideration
s.f.i.	.....	submitted for information
s.f.s.	.....	submitted for signature
S.G.F.	.....	Secretary to the Government of the Federation
S.I.V.	.....	Store Issue Voucher
S.R.V.	.....	Store Receipt Voucher
"T"	.....	Temporary
T/y or T.y	.....	Thank you

u.f.s.	.....	under flying seal (to pass through a higher authority)
w.r.t.	.....	with reference to
Your let	.....	Your letter

The above list is not exhaustive.

Expressions

4. Expressions which are frequently used in Government business are listed below. They may be used in all formal minutes and correspondences but must be underlined. Non-English words or phrases used in official correspondence should always be underlined, e.g.

ad infinitum	.....	without end
ad valorem	.....	According to value
et. eq.	.....	And the following (and what follows)
idem (id)	.....	the same
inter alia	.....	among other things
in toto	.....	Entirely
ipso facto	.....	by that very fact
pari passu	.....	on an equal footing
per se	.....	by itself, considered apart
prima facie	.....	at the first glance
pro rata	.....	proportionately
sine die	.....	indefinitely
status quo	.....	existing state of affairs
ultra vires	.....	beyond their powers
vide	.....	See
viz	.....	namely, to wit

5. When used in this handbook, the following words in the first column have the meanings shown in the second column:

Minute/Memo:- Written submission to present a view or position on an issue

Brief :- Written submission on an extant position on a subject matter

Filing Cabinet :- Racks, shelves or other repositories for files

Flimsies :- Copies of out-going letters and written submissions

Graded :- Top Secret, Secret, Confidential

Ministries :- includes Extra-Ministerial Departments

CHAPTER 18

Miscellaneous Notes and General Information

A. Secretarial Staff

The following notes should be read carefully and digested by all Secretarial Staff.

Letters

Letters which are to be sent:

- (a) by registered post;
- (b) by airmail;
- (c) under secret cover; and
- (d) under confidential cover,

should always have the appropriate wording typed in block capitals and underlined just above the inside address. Letters having attachments to them should always indicate that there are enclosures. This can be done by either of the following methods:

- (i) The first time the attachment is mentioned in the letter, 3 dashes should be typed in the margin alongside the wording referring to it; or
- (ii) at the foot of the letter, the word "Enc." (or "Encs" when more than one) should be typed. If there is more than one document attached, the total number of them should be shown as "X Enc." "X" standing for the appropriate number of enclosures.

Envelopes

2. Unless contrary instructions have been given, an envelope should be typed for each letter. Envelopes should also be typed for each of the persons to whom copies of a letter are to be sent. If the letters are going by any of the methods in (a) to (d) in paragraph 1 above, the envelopes should be marked in the same way. When (c) or (d) applies, however, a second envelope – which is slightly larger – should also be typed but the grading should not be indicated. If letters are as in (a), blue lines should be drawn downwards and sideways across the centre of front and back of the envelope.

The reference number of the letter should always be typed at the bottom left-hand corner of the envelope.

Flimsies

3. The duplicate copy of the letter should be placed in the file and its page number marked in the top right-hand corner in red. Any words, or quoted reference, in the letter which relate to earlier pages in the file should be underlined in red and marginally marked alongside with the page number of the relevant document. When copies of the letter are being endorsed or sent to other persons, a red mark should be made alongside their name on their copy of the letter.

Computer Desk Tops and Typewriters

4. Computers and Typewriters are usually issued personally to each Secretarial staff for the effective performance of their duties. It is their responsibility to ensure that they take good care of their Desk Tops, Typewriters, Photocopiers and all other machines that may be allocated to their offices. In particular, they should never permit unauthorized persons to use these machines. Whenever a defect is noticed in any of them, an immediate report should be made so that the machine can be serviced or repaired before more serious damage occurs.

Some General Hints

5. Letters and documents should always be read through after typing so that errors can be corrected before submission. Relevant chapters herein should be carefully studied for the style and format required for various documents which have to be typed. Shorthand note-books and graded waste papers must be destroyed by shredding or burning under supervision.

B. Stores Staff and Stock Verifiers

6. Stores Officers and Stock Verifiers must maintain accurate records of all in-coming and out-going goods in the manner laid down in the Financial Regulations and other relevant official orders or instructions. They should never order reprints of forms until they have been authorized to do so by the appropriate authority, who should also direct as to the quantity to be ordered and any amendments which may be necessary. Stores Officers are responsible for the safe custody of all stores under their control and should be provided with suitable locking devices for this purpose. They should be courageous enough to do what is right at all times.

C. Drivers

7. Drivers must ensure that they always hold valid driving licenses. They should always wear their uniforms when on duty. They are responsible for the care and maintenance of the Government vehicles assigned to them. They should ensure that the vehicles are washed and polished at regular intervals and that the engines are also kept clean. They should report immediately to the officer-in-charge of transport whenever defects (even of a minor nature) are detected. If they are involved in any accident, they must report at once to the Transport Officer. Drivers should inform Transport Officers in good time when vehicles are due for routine servicing. First thing every morning, vehicles must be checked to ensure that the radiators are full, the oil and battery levels are correct and that there is sufficient petrol in the tanks for the journeys likely to be undertaken that day. When requisitions are needed for these purposes, these must be quickly obtained from the Supply Officer (Transport). **Drivers of staff buses must ensure that they arrive in the office premises before 8.00 am and must not leave the premises before 4.15 pm**

D. Clerks

8. Clerks should always put in-coming materials in an officer's "In" tray and unless such materials have priority grading, they should always be placed at the bottom of the tray. If an instruction has been given that papers must be passed to an officer by hand and the addressee is not available, the clerk must not leave the papers in his tray but must immediately report back to the sender for further instructions concerning delivery of those papers. Papers with top priority or immediate attention should still be placed in the "In" tray but they should be put on top of any other paper in the tray, and the officer's attention should be drawn to them. At regular intervals, clerks should clear their officer's "Out" tray, and they should record and deliver all out-going files in accordance with the procedure laid down in their offices. They are expected to dress properly and smartly at all times. Clerks are forbidden from reading any files they handle and, unless special Departmental instructions exist otherwise, they should never handle graded papers. If these should by accident come into their hands, they should immediately pass them on to their officers and explain how the papers came into their possession. Clerks are not permitted to use Government typewriters and desk tops.

General Information

E. Hours of Work

9. Except as may be officially varied in certain Ministries and on public holidays, the hours of work in Federal offices are from 8.00 am. to 4.00 p.m. on Monday to Friday. All staff on GL. 03 – 13 are required to sign the Attendance Register on arrival at the Office in the morning as well as at close of work at the end of the day. Not later than 8.00 am, a red line should be drawn across the register each day so that staff who come late have to sign below the red line. Late-comers should be required to explain why they were late. The officers responsible for staff should keep a close watch on the Attendance Register and take appropriate action against habitual offenders.

F. Telephones

10. When any matter has been resolved in the course of a telephone conversation, it should always be recorded in writing in one of the following ways:

- (i) on all important matters, a letter or minute should be issued confirming, concisely, the details of the matter which had been resolved.
- (ii) on less important matters, a file note should be made in an appropriate file stating briefly anything resolved during the telephone conversation and the date it took place.

Government telephones should only be used for official business. No officer is permitted to make long distance private calls at Government expense.

G. Official Transport

11. Most Government Offices have pool or utility vehicles which should only be used for official business. Restricted use of Government vehicles, for private purposes, is permitted subject to payment being made at the official rate for specified types of journeys provided circumstances justify the use of official vehicles. Payment for private use of official vehicles should be made in the manner laid down in the Ministry.

12. When the vehicle is used for official purposes, the officer must first ensure that he has the necessary authority to use the vehicle. On completion of the trip, he must sign the work ticket after checking that the details recorded thereon are correct. He should keep his own record of journeys made and the

reasons for them, so that if queries are raised at a later date, he can give a detailed explanation.

13. **Government vehicles should only be driven by authorized Government drivers,** and the officer responsible for transport should ensure that all drivers under his control hold valid driving licences.

H. **First Aid Kit**

14. Each Ministry should have a well-stocked first aid kit, and all staff should be informed of its location so that immediate assistance can be obtained if an accident occurs or if any of the staff suddenly becomes indisposed.

I. **Safety Precautions**

15. At the close of work each day, all lights, all air-conditioners and all fans should be switched off in order to conserve energy and ensure the safety of the equipment and premises.