

**Award Ceremony of the Public Service Excellence Award 2007 –**  
**Thursday 3 July 2008 at 9 30 hrs - Sir Harilall Vaghjee Hall**

**The Secretary to Cabinet & Head of the Civil Service,**

**Mr. Seeballuck**

**Senior Chief Executives**

**Colleagues Permanent Secretaries**

**Heads of Ministries/Departments**

**The Chairman, Panel of Jury for the Public Service Excellence  
Award 2007, Mr. M. Vayid & Members**

**The President, Mauritius Quality Institute, Mrs. B.S. Seebaruth**

**Dr. Durbarry, Head School of Public Sector Policy and  
Management, University of Technology**

**Representatives of the Civil Service Trade Unions**

**Distinguished Guests**

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

It is a pleasure for me to welcome you on behalf of the Ministry of Civil Service & Administrative Reforms, to this Award Ceremony of the second edition of the Public Service Excellence Award. We are also taking the opportunity to launch the new “Guidelines on providing Quality Counter/Customer Services”. I wish to thank you all for your presence in such a large number.

2. We learn from the New Public Management teachings that: to achieve excellence in the public service, actions have to be focused at three levels namely:-

- (a) Service Excellence - i.e building a professional public service that delivers highest quality and value services to the public;
- (b) Work Environment Excellence – i.e creating a dynamic work environment that promotes innovation, learning and achievement of results; and
- (c) People Excellence – i.e building teams of passionate people who take pride in making a difference for those they serve.

And to achieve excellence at these 3 levels the public service needs to be imbued by 5 core values, namely, Integrity, Responsibility, Accountability, Respect and Choice.

3. In so far as institutionalizing a quality culture in the Civil Service is concerned, we have made considerable breakthrough by way of an innovative package of administrative reforms comprising strategies focused on Quality Management and Quality Customer Care Initiatives as well as good governance practices. To address the critical challenges<sup>1</sup> facing the Civil Service, we are acting on various fronts to build a Service which is more performance-based, innovative and customer-oriented. These are steps steadily leading us nearer to expected levels of excellence in our services. Progress achieved to date in the improved levels of services in the different parts of the Civil Service is largely attributed to the reforms that have been initiated since several years now. The different reforms taking from the quality initiatives like ISO Certification, going through the automation of systems and processes, the development

of Citizens Charters and so on have proved to be successful and capable of yielding immediate and long term benefits for the Civil Service.

4. To recognize and reward innovations and marked improvements in the delivery of public services, the Public Service Excellence Award (PSEA) Scheme was launched in 2006. This was followed last year by the 2007 edition under the theme '*In the pursuit of Excellence: Enhancing Trust in the Public Service*'.

5. This theme emphasizes on building trust between government organizations and citizens through the provision of services which people expect and which they deserve. We know that the Public Service is a value-based institution and values and ethics are its immutable core. Our adherence to these public service values must be unwavering. We must exemplify values and practise them at the highest possible level as we assume our day-to-day responsibilities and duties.

6. Today, the monitoring and evaluation of the performance of public service organizations is being put at the forefront with the introduction of the Performance Management System (PMS) and the Programme-Based Budgeting (PBB) in the Civil Service. Again both these reforms have as objective to improve accountability, promote a culture of performance, bring more transparency and hence secure and preserve citizens' trust in government institutions.

7. **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Public trust needs to be earned, nurtured, and harnessed. The performance and service delivery of public service organizations have to be continuously evaluated and reviewed so that gaps are identified and corrective measures taken in time, where necessary. In this respect, the newly conceived 'Mystery Shopping' initiative has been introduced sometime back with such an objective: i.e. gathering information on an organisation's service-related functions, so that it can take cognizance of its strengths and weaknesses from the customer's viewpoint, and thereafter take measures to improve service delivery.

8. I said earlier that one of the factors that lead to improved levels of service delivery in Public Service organizations is the work and physical environment. An important initiative of the Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms is therefore the 'Improvement of Counter/Customer Services Scheme', whereby the Ministry provides guidance and financial assistance to Ministries/Departments undertaking to improve or renovate the physical set up of their counter/customer services. Up to now some **20** projects have been implemented under this scheme and the improvements are visible and are directly benefiting the public. To support the Scheme, a user-friendly guidelines on '*Providing Quality Counter/Customer Services*' is being launched today. This document will be widely distributed to public officers especially those serving at counters in Ministries/Departments.

9. **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

We are here to celebrate the achievements of organizations that are treading the path of excellence. Their participation in the

Award Scheme shows their commitment to undertake reforms, to innovate, to improve their performance and strive to provide quality services to their customers. What is more important and commendable is that by participating in this Award Competition, they have expressed their readiness to undergo outside scrutiny of what they are doing and have achieved.

10. While new entries have also been received, we have noticed that some organizations that participated in the first edition of the Public Service Excellence Award have renewed interest by participating again. Such actions should help inspire other organizations to participate in the next edition of the Award Scheme. Very shortly we will come to know who is the winner of the PSEA 2007 and also the winners in the 4 sub-categories. In the meantime let us congratulate all **25** participants for dedication and hard work for a better public service.

11. I have to point out that the Public Service Excellence Award Scheme is being run on a yearly basis with the help of our partner organizations, namely the Mauritian Quality Institute, and the University of Technology, Mauritius. I take this opportunity to thank them for their valuable support and contribution. I also thank the Federation of Civil Service Unions for their collaboration in this initiative.

12. The adjudication of the Public Service Excellence Award 2007 must have been a challenging task for the Panel of Jury. All entries had to be scrutinized and site visits carried out, to eventually deliberate on the winners. We are very thankful to Mr. Mohamad Vayid, the Chairman of the Panel of Jury and his members, namely

Mr. Kris Ponnusamy, former Senior Chief Executive and Chairman of National Pay Council, Mr R. Jhurry, Vice-President of the Mauritian Quality Institute, Mrs P. Munhurrun, Academic Staff of the University of Technology, Mauritius and Mr M.I. Amiran, representative of the State Employees' Federation for having kindly agreed to spare so much of their precious time and accepted to undertake this exercise. We want to place on record our deep appreciation of a work well done with a high sense of dedication and trust. Once again I thank the Chairman/Members of the panel.

13. **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I also thank you for your kind attention and I have now the pleasure to invite the Chairman of the Panel of Jury, Mr. Mohamad Vayid to address you.