

CHAPTER 4

STAFFING PATTERN

Village Panchayats, Panchayat Unions and Town Panchayats:

4.4.01 As the Extension Philosophy of the National Extension Service Scheme of Community Development initiated in the beginning has changed and as the people are now by and large aware of the benefits of Rural Development Programmes, there is need for restructuring the staff at Panchayat Union Level to face the challenges of intensive phase of Rural Development Programmes. Recognising this, Government (Finance Department) have agreed to constitute a Task Force at the behest of Anna Institute of Management, Chennai. However, considering the sensitive nature of Recommendations in this regard, and the fact that this is being deliberated upon at the Government level, State Finance Commission has consciously decided to be silent on these recommendations of the Task Force, leaving it to the Government to pursue the report of the Task Force, if deemed necessary. However, a few suggestions are made below:

4.4.02 With regard to daily cores of street cleaning, scavenging etc., the Commission is of the view that the work may be left to privatization on lumpsum contracts and no separate staff need be posted, in Village Panchayats; and

4.4.03 In respect of combined water supply schemes, covering more than one local body viz., Village Panchayats, Town Panchayats and Municipalities, the maintenance may be left to the Tamil Nadu Water Supply and Drainage Board. In respect of water supply services, other than combined water supply schemes, the Commission is of the view the maintenance may be with the local body which can seek if required, the assistance of the local voluntary groups in each habitation, suitably trained for this purpose.

4.4.04 The Commission therefore recommends that

i) There is a need for the Re-organization of the structure in the local bodies, particularly Rural, since the present pattern was created only at the time of entrusting the Community Development programmes to the Panchayat Unions. Recognising this, Government (Finance Department) have agreed to constitute a Task Force at the behest of Anna Institute of Management, Chennai. However, considering the sensitive nature of Recommendations in this regard, and the fact that this is being deliberated-upon at the Government level, State Finance Commission has consciously decided to be silent on these recommendations of the Task Force, leaving it to the Government to pursue the Task Force Report, if deemed necessary. Only few general suggestions are made.

ii) with regard to daily cores of street cleaning, scavenging etc., in Village Panchayats the work may be considered for privatization on lumpsum contracts and no separate staff need be posted, for the Village Panchayats.

iii) in respect of combined water supply schemes, covering a number of settlements, viz., Village Panchayats, Town Panchayats and Municipalities, the maintenance may be best left to the care of the Tamil Nadu Water Supply and Drainage Board. In respect of water supply schemes, other than combined water supply schemes, which are individually catering to each Village Panchayat, the maintenance may be left to the Village Panchayat who can seek if required the assistance of the local voluntary groups in each habitation, suitably trained for this purpose.

4.4.05 All Panchayat Union works are implemented with the assistance of a Union Engineer and Two Overseers. The value of such works ranges between Rs.80 lakhs to Rs.150 lakhs per annum. The yardstick for the sanction of engineering staff was lastly prescribed in G.O. Ms. No.1207, RD & LA, dated:11.10.80 is as indicated below:

i)	Estimate up to Rs.5 lakhs	-	1 Union Engineer and 1 Overseer
ii)	Estimate from Rs.5 lakhs to 8 lakhs	-	1 Union Engineer and 2 Overseers
iii)	Estimate from Rs.8 lakhs to 12 lakhs	-	2 Union Engineers and 2 Overseers.

4.4.06 At present the normal workload in a Panchayat Union has gone up and the works are spread over the entire habitations in the Panchayat Union, requiring constant monitoring at number of points, and there is urgent need for strengthening the Engineering staff at Panchayat Union Level. Orders passed by Government in the recent past sanctioning one additional Union Engineer for each Panchayat Union has not been given effect to till date. Mere addition of a Union Engineer to each Panchayat Union is not going to solve the problem, as the present out lay towards works is very heavy. This may even be a regular feature in the future. The Commission during its District sittings held discussions with some Union Engineers, Block Development Officers, Divisional Development Officers and a few District Collectors, and gained an impression that the present system of dual control of Union Engineers by the Highways and Rural Works Department on the one hand and the District Panchayat Administration on the other has created more difficulties. The Block Development Officers and the Divisional Developmental Officers have expressed that they are not able to make use of the services of the Union Engineers effectively, and the views of Block Development Officers and the Divisional Developmental Officers were supported by a few Collectors who also felt a sense of inadequacy in extracting work from technical staff. On the other hand, the Union Engineers have expressed grievance that they are being loaded with work, three to four times more than the norms, consequently the pressure mounted on them to complete all the works before the end of the respective financial year, inevitably resulted in poor quality of work. The Commission concedes that both sides have valid points. There is no doubt that the load of work on the Union Engineer is heavy. Since a number of works are implemented

simultaneously in a geographically wider area the engineering cell in the Panchayat Union need to be strengthened. In Town Panchayats, the technical support for implementing works either on schemes entrusted or taken from its own funds is virtually non-existent.

4.4.07 The Commission therefore recommends, that

i) with the increasing amount of works taken up in various local bodies through special schemes or otherwise, there is a growing need for the creation/strengthening the engineering cell particularly for the Panchayat Unions and Town Panchayats. The Government may examine the need with relation to the works taken up annually in the local bodies.

Municipalities and Municipal Corporations:

4.4.08 It will not be ideal to talk of effective urban local body management without addressing the management problems involved. Personnel management assumes greater importance since the municipal bodies deal with a gamut of functions and services which affect the day to day urban living and environment. Besides, in the Indian context, another important aspect is that Municipal administration is labour intensive.

4.4.09 The Commission which has gone into the recommendations of the norms committee, and the orders of the Government issued there on, recognises that the existing Government orders may be followed. For the implementation of schemes project staff may be required.

4.4.10 The Commission therefore recommends that

i) In respect of special schemes like Centrally assisted Integrated Development Programme of Small and Medium Towns, State aided Integrated Urban Development Project, Municipal Urban Development Fund, Water Supply Schemes, cost of project staff whether recruited temporarily or existing staff should be built into the project and form an integral part of the overall project cost.