

Land Survey Council

1. Financial Statements

1:1 Opinion

In my opinion, the financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Land Survey Council as at 31 December 2012 and its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Sri Lanka Public Sector Accounting Standards.

1.2 Non-compliance with Laws, Rules and Regulations

As per the Land Survey Council Circular No LSC/CIR/02/2006 dated 02 April 2006, a certified copy of a map or a plan prepared by licensed surveyors in order to change a certain boundary or transfer the ownership of a land, should be stored at the District Survey Offices within 30 days of certification of the plan. However, action had not been taken accordingly.

2. Financial Review.

2.1 Financial Results

As per the statement of the financial performance submitted, the operations of the Council during the year under review amounted to a surplus of Rs. 1,429,573 in comparison with that of a surplus of Rs. 1,050,797 for the preceding year. A growth of 36 per cent or Rs. 378,776 in the financial result had been acquired for the year under review compared with that of the previous year. The growth had been contributed by the increase in the fees of the licences issued to the Surveyors, increase in the registration charges of Surveyors and increased bank interest income.

3. Operations Review

3.1 Performance

Following observations are made on the progress in achieving the tasks stated in the Survey Act No. 17 of 2002.

a) Section 37 (a)

A main objective of the Council was to maintain professional ethics among those who involved in surveying of lands and there were 88 complaints to be solved during the year under review with regard to acts of misconduct by the surveyors and the plans prepared by unauthorized persons. 70 complaints out of those had been solved whereas , 18 complaints were yet to be solved.

b) Section 37 (c) and (e)

It was expected to conduct 05 professional development programmes as per the Action Plan for the year 2012. Though it was stated that 06 such programmes had been held during the year under review, it was observed that only 02 programmes had actually been held by the Land Survey Council whereas, the other 04 programmes had been held by the Department of Survey.

c) Section 37 (f) and (g)

Though it was expected to conduct qualifying examinations for the profession of survey and come to a consensus with foreign countries for consolidating equal status over education, training and recognition, any action had not been taken to achieve them.

3.2 Management Inefficiencies

Even though it had been informed by the letter of the Secretary to the Ministry dated 03 July 2011 that legal action be taken against a licensed surveyor accused of transferring the ownership of lands belonging to the Government through fraudulent deeds with regard to the file No.. /5/501, the Council had failed to conduct an inquiry against the officer. Furthermore, another instance of the accused surveyor in preparing a private plan for Government lands had been mentioned in the letter of Additional Secretary to the Ministry of Land and Land Development dated 12 July 2012. However, it was observed that no action had been taken in this regard as well.

3.3 Operational Inefficiencies

A suitable software had not been used to computerize the cash book of the Council.

3.4 Staff Administration

- a) The approved cadre of the Land Survey Council was 04 including a Secretary , 02 posts for Computer Data Entry Operator/Clerk and an Office Assistant. However, no pots had been created for accounting and legal aspects of the Council.

- b) Approval had been granted by the Department of Management Services to appoint an officer on acting basis to the post of Secretary that had been remaining vacant since the year 2009. Even though an officer had been appointed since January 2009 on acting basis, action had not been taken to appoint an officer on permanent basis until the end of the year under review.

4 Accountability and Good Governance

4.1 Action Plan

Though it was expected to register 100 Surveyors during the year under review as per the Action Plan of the Land Survey Council , only 55 Surveyors had been registered.

4.2 Budgetary Control

A budget had not been prepared for the Council for the year 2012, but only an estimate for the expenses had been prepared.

4.3 Commitment to the Social and Environmental Responsibility.

It was revealed in the sample test that a Surveyor registered under the Survey Council had prepared copies of plans by using two different names. It was hence observed that the complaints submitted under the name mentioned on the plan had been unheeded and the Council had not drawn attention on the lawfulness of such copies of plans.

5. Systems and Control

Weaknesses observed in Systems and Controls during the course of audit were brought to the notice of the Chairman. Special attention is needed in respect of following areas of control.

- a) Accounting
- b) Advertising.