

Head 304 Department of Meteorology

1. Financial Statements

1.1 Qualified Opinion

Head 304 The audit of the financial statements of Department of Meteorology for the year ended 31 December 2023 comprising the statement of financial position as at 31 December 2023, the statement of financial performance and cash flow statement for the year then ended was carried out under my direction in pursuance of provisions in Article 154(1) of the Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka read in conjunction with provisions of the National Audit Act No. 19 of 2018. The summarized reports on the financial statements of the Department of Meteorology to be submitted in terms of the paragraph 11(1) of the National Audit Act No. 19 of 2018 which contained my comments and observations had been submitted to the Accounting Officer on 07 May 2024. The detailed management report of Department of Meteorology to be submitted in terms of the paragraph 11(2) of the National Audit Act No. 19 of 2018 had been submitted to the Accounting Officer on 29 May 2024. This report in pursuance of provisions in Article 154 (6) of the Constitution read in conjunction with paragraph 10 of the National Audit Act No. 19 of 2018 is presented to the Parliament.

In my opinion, except for the effects of the matters described in paragraph 1.6 of this report the accompanying financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Department of Meteorology as at 31 December 2023, and its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles.

1.2 Basis for Qualified Opinion

My opinion is qualified based on the matters describe in paragraph 1.6 of this report. I conducted my audit in accordance with Sri Lanka Auditing Standards (SLAuSs). My responsibilities, under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of my report. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

1.3 Responsibilities of Accounting Officer for the Financial Statements

Accounting Officer is responsible for the preparation of financial statements that give a true and fair view in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles and in terms of paragraph 38 of the National Audit Act, No. 19 of 2018 for such internal control as management determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

As per paragraph 16(1) of the National Audit Act No. 19 of 2018, Department is required to maintain proper books and records of all its income, expenditure, assets and liabilities to enable annual and periodic financial statements to be prepared of Department.

In terms of Sub-section 38(1) (c) of the National Audit Act, the Accounting Officer shall ensure that an effective internal control system for the financial control exists in Department and carry out periodic reviews to monitor the effectiveness of such system and accordingly make any alterations as required for such systems to be effectively carry out.

1.4 Auditor's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

My objective is to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error and to issue an auditor's summary report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Sri Lanka Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate and its materiality depends on the influence on economic decisions taken by users on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with Sri Lanka Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- Appropriate audit procedures were designed and performed to identify and assess the risk of material misstatement in financial statements whether due to fraud or errors in providing a basis for the expressed audit opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- An understanding of internal control relevant to the audit was obtained in order to design procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Ministry's / Department's / District Secretariat's internal control.
- Evaluate the structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements including disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with the Chief Accounting Officer/ Accounting Officer regarding, among other matters significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

1.5 Report on Other Legal Requirements

As required by Sub-section 6(1)(d) of the National Audit Act, No.19 of 2018, I state the followings.

- (a) the financial statements are consistent with the preceding year.
- (b) the recommendations made by me relating to the financial statements of the preceding year had been implemented.

1.6 Comment on the Financial Statements

1.6.1 Imprest Balance

Audit Observation	Comment of the Accounting Officer	Recommendation
An amount of Rs.631,439 from the imprest received by the institution in the year under review had to be diverted to the Treasury at the end of the year under review due to the inability to carry out the work including procurement activities as planned.	The remaining amount of Rs.631,429 has been sent to the treasury.	The money received from the treasury should be utilized properly.

1.6.2 Non-Maintenance of Books and Records

Audit Observation	Comment of the Accounting Officer	Recommendation
The Security Register had not been maintained duly and up-to-date as per Financial Regulation No. 891.	Measures will be taken to maintain a formal security register in due course.	The security register should be maintained duly and up to date in terms of the Financial Regulations.

2. Financial Review

2.1 Financial Management

The following observations are made.

Audit Observation	Comment of the Accounting Officer	Recommendation
(a) The total provision of Rs.30 million allocated for a capital expenditure object and allocation of Rs. 38.37 million rupees in the range of 26 to 99.5 percent of the provisions made for 04 other capital expenditure objects had remained.	The provisions had not been utilized due to costs had not been arisen as expected, Discontinuation of training programmes delivered to remote training centers.	Arrangements should be made to utilize the treasury allocations properly.

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| <p>(b) It was observed that the budget estimates had been made without a realistic basis and a proper forecasting due to having an increase or decrease in the range of 70 percent to 400 percent of the basic allocation related to 04 budget objects and an increase in the range of 67 percent to 153 percent by supplementary estimates to the basic allocation of 3 budget objects by the transfers of F.R.66/69</p> | <p>Provision had not been utilized due to the facts that costs had not increased as expected, discontinuation of training programs delivered to remote training centers.</p> | <p>Measures should be taken to make budget estimates on a realistic basis and with proper forecasting.</p> |
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2.2 Certification of the Accounting Officer

Audit Observation	Comment of the Accounting Officer	Recommendation
<p>Even though the Accounting Officer should ensure on the following points as per the provisions of Section 38 of the National Audit Act No. 19 of 2018, it had not been dealt with accordingly. The Accounting Officer should ensure that an effective system of internal control is developed and maintained by the department for financial control. The effectiveness of the system should be reviewed from time to time and necessary changes should be made to make the systems effective accordingly, and even though those reviews should have been done in writing and a copy of the same should have been submitted to the Auditor General, statements that such reviews had been done had not been submitted to the audit.</p>	<p>The instructions given will be followed.</p>	<p>The provisions of the Act should be followed.</p>

2.3 Non-compliance with Laws, Rules and Regulations

Reference to the Laws, Rules and Regulations	Non-compliance	Comment of the Accounting Officer	Recommendation
(a) National Audit Act No. 19 of 2018	Sub Section 16(2) No measures had been taken to submit the annual performance report that should be submitted with the financial statements by the Chief Accounting Officer to the Auditor General.	Actions will be taken as mentioned in due course.	Provisions mentioned in the Audit Act should be followed.
(b) Establishment Code of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka	Section 10.4 and 10.10 of the chapter XV Even though an additional copy of applications completed as per Annexure 16 and a copy of the officer's letter of approval for foreign leave should be forwarded to the Department of External Resources in respect of travel abroad for a study, training course, scholarship, conference or workshop awarded by a sponsoring foreign institution, actions had not been taken regarding 11 foreign trips of 09 officers as per the above provisions during the year under review.	After stopping the submission of letters to the Prime Minister's Office for approval for overseas travel, an additional copy of the completed application and a copy of the officer's leave approval letter had not been forwarded to the Director General of External Resources as per Annexure 16. Instructions of the Establishment Code will be followed henceforth.	Provisions of the Establishment Code should be followed.

- (c) Financial Regulations of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka
- (i) Financial Regulation 565 (5) Even though a monthly deposit summary statement prepared in General Form 71 for each month should have been submitted to the Auditor General before the end of the following month, this had not been done. Measures will be taken to prepare and submit this report from April 2024. Provisions of the Financial Regulations should be followed.
- (ii) Financial Regulation 571 (2)(3) No measures had been taken to credit the deposit amounting to Rs.348,933 exceeding 02 years to the relevant account or to the state revenue. Measures are being taken to settle these deposits according to F.R.571. Provisions of the Financial Regulations should be followed.
- (d) Public Administration Circular No 05/2008 dated 06 February 2008 Section 1.4 XVIII Even though the Charter of Citizens had been framed by the Institute, the requirements to be fulfilled at the time of preparation of the charter i.e. displaying in the office premises and on the official website had not been either reviewed at least once in 06 months. Activities have been started in this regard under the leadership of the Additional Secretary of the Disaster Management Division. The information requested from the department has been given to the Disaster Management Division. Accordingly, further work will be done after preparing the charter. Circular provisions should be followed.

- (e) Public Administration Circulars No. 3/2017 dated 19 April 2017, No. 09/2009 dated 16 April 2009 and No. 15/2001 dated 07 august 2001. An amount of Rs. 24,941,323 had been paid as 1/20 allowance and overtime payments in relation to the year 2023 without verification of arrivals and departures of officials in regional offices by fingerprint machines. Measures had been taken to purchase fingerprint machines for the regional offices based on the existing funding limit in order to control this situation.
- Circular provisions should be followed.

2.4 Issuing and Settlement of Advances to the Public Officers

Audit Observation	Comment of the Accounting Officer	Recommendation
No measures had been taken to recover the disaster loan of Rs.94,830 and the vehicle loan of Rs.27,000 due from an officer since 08 July 2010.	The files had been sent to the Attorney General's Department on 09 February 2024 to take legal action against this officer for non-payment of debt.	Measures should be taken to recover the loan balances of the officers immediately.

3. Operating Reveiw

3.1 Non-perform of Duties

The following observations are made.

Audit Observation	Comment of the Accounting Officer	Recommendation
(a) The action plan for the year 2023 had been submitted for audit on 15 June 2023 and it had not been prepared and presented in accordance with the revised budget provisions. The total allocation was Rs. 493.1 million according to the action plan, and the provision was Rs. 515.1 million according to the revised budget.	The action plan for the year 2023 had been submitted for audit on 15 June 2023 according to the preliminary estimate approved for the year 2023 as per the standard budget of the Parliament, and it had not been prepared and presented in accordance with the revised budget provisions.	The action plan should be prepared in accordance with the revised budget provisions.

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| (b) | The progress of the projects implemented under CRESMPA Modernization Project included in the composite plan prepared from the year 2021 to 2025 of the institute and related information had not been included in the annual action plan. | Even though the modernization project (CResMPA) had been included in the five year Compact Plan 2021-2025 of Meteorological Department, the information related to that project and its progress had not been included in the annual action plan and it had also not been included in the Annual Action Plan 2024 by omission. Measures will be taken to correct this. | The progress of the projects implemented in the corporate plan and related information should be included in the annual action plan. |
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3.2 Procurements

Audit Observation	Comment of the Accounting Officer	Recommendation
An amount of Rs.15.6 million allocated for 06 procurement activities had been canceled due to inability to obtain the specifications.	This had been canceled due to non-availability of the specifications.	Tasks should be done according to the procurement plan.

3.3 Assets Management

The following observations are made.

Audit Observation	Comment of the Accounting Officer	Recommendation
(a) 35 out of 38 automatic meteorological systems worth Rs. 570 million received under Japanese aid (JICA) in year 2008 measure parameters i.e. temperature, humidity, rainfall, wind speed and direction, pressure, and solar radiation ,and the opportunities to acquire needed facilities had been lost by allowing high-value equipment to remain underutilized as the remaining 03 systems had not been installed at Katunayake Airport, Trincomalee and Maliboda by the audit date of 31 May 2023.	Agreed with the observations.	Measures should be taken to utilize the high value equipment properly.

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| (b) | The data received only from 14 out of the 35 automatic weather systems installed in the Department of Meteorology under the GPRS technology as prescribed, and battery life of 10 centers remained inactive due to expiry. The automatic data retrieval capability is critical in situations of sudden weather change, and it was observed that the desired objectives had not been achieved through the establishment of systems due to this reason. | Agreed with the observations. | Investigations should be conducted regarding the automatic meteorological stations which are in inactive condition should be and formal measures should be taken. |
| (c) | 453 traditional rain meters had been fixed throughout the island, and it was observed that data is not receiving continuously from 44 rain meters according their current functioning and the receiving data since they are not properly maintained. | Agreed with the observations. | A proper maintenance method should be established for rain meters to which data received continuously and should be maintain so as to receive data continuously. |
| (d) | There are 122 automatic rain meters established by the department, and nearly 70 rain meters are in implementation status as at 31 May 2023. Accordingly, 52 rain meters had been inactive and maintenance had been done for only 36 rain meters as at 30 November 2023. | Agreed with the observations. | Inactive rain meter should be activated and properly maintained. |
| (e) | A cab of which departmental cost is Rs. 1,985,000 had been repaired for 06 years from year 2018 to 2023 ,and removed from running without use and an amount of Rs. 30,117 had been paid as an insurance fee of the year under review. | Prices have been called for maintenance work of the cab. The last date on which prices should be submitted is 30.04.2024. Repairs of the vehicle are carried out after the said date considering the prices submitted. | Vehicles should be properly repaired and put in to running. |

3.4 Uneconomic Transactions

Audit Observation	Comment of the Accounting Officer	Recommendation
<p>Since the relevant institute had not taken action to supply food, drinking water, sanitary facilities required for officers who participated for the training programme conducted for Meteorological Observer Officers of the Sri Lanka Technological service at International Training Institute of Irrigation and Water Management located in Kotmale satisfactorily, the employee motivation expected from the programme had not been fulfilled, and it was observed that the amount of Rs. 415,800 spent for the same is an uneconomical expense. The second programme planned to be conducted had to be cancelled due to non-participation of an adequate number of officers.</p>	<p>Agreed with the observations.</p>	<p>Participating the courses given by the institutes by the officers and preparing a proper method to complete them, conducting training courses according to a proper plan.</p>

3.5 Management Weaknesses

The following observations are made.

Audit Observation	Comment of the Accounting Officer	Recommendation
<p>(a) Even though provisions of Rs. 563.58 million had been allocated from year 2019 to 2022 for the installation of Doppler radar systems at Puttalam and Pothuvil meteorological centers, the expenditure had been only Rs. 0.462 million by the end of 2023. Even though 05 years had been passed since the contract had been signed and the construction of the radar system should reach its final stage by the end of year 2020, the construction work of the project had not started due to insufficient provision resulted by rising prices at present. Even though there is a strong need for a Doppler radar system in meteorological forecasting, it was not possible to determine</p>	<p>Even though the availability of Doppler radar systems is helpful in obtaining accurate data in meteorological forecasting, it is not the only method that provides data for forecasting. It is kindly inform that climate change had been identified in advance and forecasts had been provided with reliability based on the limited resources and provisions available and in the face of circumstances beyond the control of the</p>	<p>Accordingly, there is a strong need for a Doppler radar system in meteorological forecasting and efforts should be made to make this project successful.</p>

whether it would be able to issue forecasts and predictions with greater accuracy and reliability having provided meteorological forecasts and forecasts for almost 15 years without that system.

Department, and efforts had been made to save Sri Lanka from many environmental disasters thereby.

- (b) Even though upper air observation, air pressure temperature, humidity, wind speed and wind direction, upper air observation data had been obtained through the radiosonde instrument, Upper atmosphere observational data for 141 out of 156 terms to be sent in 2022 and 83 out of 104 terms to be done by 31 August 2023 had not been obtained due to not carrying out procurement activities according to proper planning. The number of times the radiosonde observations had not been made was only 86 percent out of the approximate number of times that it should be done.
- Agreed with the observations. Measures should be taken to obtain the upper atmosphere observation data from the radiosonde balloon as per the prescribed procedure of the department.
- (c) Even though pilot balloons should be observed at 04 observation stations on every day at 03 times as per day as the prescribed procedure of the department to measure wind speed and direction from low level to medium level, the terms of observation to be done in year 2023 had not been performed as scheduled due to the fact that the process of procuring 4000 pilot balloons required for that purpose had not been carried out in a planned manner.
- Agreed with the observations. Measures should be taken to obtain low to medium level observation data through data pilot balloons as per the prescribed procedure of the department.
- (d) Hydrogen gas is used to fill radiosondes and pilot balloons, and the hydrogen generator is used to produce hydrogen gas in Colombo. It was observed during the physical inspection conducted at the Colombo Meteorological Center that unsafe practices such as not wearing protective clothing by those officers during hydrogen production and when sending balloons, parking vehicles near hydrogen plant, staring vehicles frequently etc. occur even though the hydrogen production process is very dangerous.
- Agreed with the observations. Hydrogen production process is very dangerous and safety measures should be followed for it.

- (e) During the inspection of obtaining weather data from the Meteorological Center which had been established near the Ratmalana Airport in order to provide the necessary weather data for flights, the maintenance of communication equipment etc., it was observed the fact that's that failure to prepare the instrument box as per the guidelines of the World Meteorological Union, the Gust Recorder which should have been there to check the sudden gusts, its speed and direction had been idle for many years, the computer system transmitting to the Regional Meteorological Office had been inactive since the year 2019, deterioration of the poles of the boxes where the thermometers had been stored in the instrument box. Agreed with the World meteorological guidelines should be followed.
- (f) No measures had been taken to take over 09 land areas i.e. Anuradhapura, Batticaloa, Katugastota, Mahailuppallama, Mannar, Ratnapura, Kurunegala, Vavuniya, Mullaitivu where Meteorology Regional Offices located to the department. Agreed with the Necessary measures should be taken to take over the relevant areas to the department.

4. Human Resource Management

Audit Observation	Comment of the Accounting Officer	Recommendation
The approved number of posts in the department is 462 as at 31 December 2023, and the number of vacant posts is 113 as the actual number of employees is 349. 16 vacancies out of them are senior level positions of the company, namely Additional Director General, Internal auditor, 04 Director positions, 08 Meteorologist positions and 02 Electronic Engineer positions, which had been vacant for a long time. The non-action to recruit officers for those	16 senior level posts of the institution had been remained vacant and further measures are being taken to fill those posts.	Efforts should be made to fill the vacancies of basic posts in the department.

positions had hindered the performance, objectives and functions of the institution as the functions of these positions contribute immensely to the achievement of the organization's objectives.