5.1 Electronic Attendance System

5.1.1 General.

The introduction of an Electronic Attendance System (EAS) was one of the reform initiatives contained in the Action Plan 2001-2003 of the Ministry of Civil Service Affairs and Administrative Reforms (MCSA). The system which was to be implemented throughout the whole Civil Service, was estimated at Rs 20 million. However, implementation has not been according to plan, nor extended to the whole Civil Service. So far, the EAS has been implemented mainly in Ministries located in the New Government Centre (NGC).

5.1.2 Implementation.

The EAS implemented at the MCSA was to be extended to the remaining Ministries located in the NGC (Phase 1) before the end of financial year 2003-2004. Phase II of the project (in centrally situated buildings) was to be implemented during 2004-05.

5.1.3 Funding.

Most of the fund available for this project under the capital budget for the years 2004-05 and 2005-06 remained unspent. Only some Rs 330,000 and Rs 29,000 representing some three percent and less than one percent of the approved capital budget were incurred during 2004-05 and 2005-06 respectively. Some Rs 1.5 million were met out of the recurrent budget.

5.1.4 Tender procedures.

Following an invitation for tender, only two suppliers responded. The bid from one of the suppliers was recommended by the Departmental Tender Committee. Also, the Supplier was awarded an extension of the agreement at a price higher than the original quote.

The Supplier was awarded work
5.1.5 Delay in Implementation

- The EAS at MOT, due to be installed and commissioned in November 2002, was only installed in June 2003. Liquidated damages were not seen applied.
- Delay in delivery of “proximity cards” for phase I did not render the EAS fully operational as prescribed.
- Phase II of the project concerning 71 sites for Ministries/Departments involving some 6,200 officers have yet to be implemented.

5.1.6 Limitations of the EAS

At one of the Ministry where the EAS was implemented, the following were noted

- The system authenticated the card that has been scanned. However, there was no assurance to guard against impersonation.
- The officers were not required to clock their card when going out for lunch or when leaving the office within office hours.
- Of the seven management reports provided by the system, only three were made use of and one has yet to be activated.
- A manual system was also maintained to record cases where officers were granted some time off.

There was delay in delivery of the EAS. Liquidated damages were not seen applied. As of September 2006, the EAS has been applied to a limited number of officers only instead
of to the whole Civil Service. The MCSA did not avail itself fully of the funds provided for that purpose. The benefits expected were not therefore fully derived.

In view of the limitations in the operation of the EAS already installed, there is a need to consider whether these have to be addressed before extension of the EAS to the whole Civil Service.

5.2 Interdicted Officers

A survey carried out in Government agencies revealed that as of 30 June 2006, 241 public officers were on interdiction and salaries totalling some Rs 34 million were paid to them during the financial year 2005-06. Of these, 86 public officers were still under interdiction for over three years as of June 2006.

During period January 2003 to June 2006, there were 154 new cases of interdiction. But of settled cases, seven were dismissed whilst 92 officers have been reinstated. Of those 92 officers who were reinstated, 22 have been interdicted for more than five years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 38 Movement in number of Interdicted Cases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New cases of Interdiction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reinstatement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dismissal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Salary payments as well as the number of interdicted officers are considered to be on the high side. More so, a high proportion of public officers were reinstated after several years of interdiction and all benefits accruing to them were refunded from the date of interdiction for services not rendered. The public service gets affected since these posts could not be declared vacant until these cases were determined and appropriate actions taken. This may also have an adverse impact on the moral of the interdicted officers who have to wait for a long time for the cases to be finalised.

In view of the significant costs being incurred, there is a need to set up a fast track mechanism combined with an effective management system to better manage efficiently and economically cases of interdiction in the Public Sector. The legal provisions for disciplinary procedures may need to be revisited.

I have been informed that in view of the complexity of the issue, the whole matter is being referred to the High Level Public Sector Reform Implementation Unit for an indepth examination.