

**MANAGEMENT AND FUNCTIONAL REVIEW OF THE
NATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION**

PUBLIC SECTOR REFORM UNIT (PSRU)

August, 2018

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GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACC	-	Anti Corruption Commission
ASSL	-	Audit Service Sierra Leone
CEO	-	Chief Executive Officer
CRF	-	Consolidate Revenue Fund
CSO	-	Civil Society Organisation
EVD	-	Ebola Virus Disease
GDP	-	Gross Domestic Product
GIS	-	Geographic Information Systems
GoSL	-	Government of Sierra Leone
HRMO	-	Human Resource Management Office
ICT	-	Information Communications and Technology
IMC	-	Independent Media Commission
ITU	-	International Telecommunications Union
MDAs	-	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
MFR	-	Management and Functional Reviews
MIC	-	Ministry of Information and Communications
MOF	-	Ministry of Finance
PFM	-	Public Financial Management
PSRU	-	Public Sector Reform
PTT	-	Performance Tracking Table
TSA	-	Treasury Single Accounts

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In recent times, Sierra Leone has witnessed rapid development in the Telecommunications industry ranging across from mobile companies to radio and TV stations. With the emerging expansion and improvement in the telecommunications industry there was a need for the Government of Sierra Leone to create a body known as the National Telecommunications Commission (NATCOM) to regulate and manage telecommunications activities in the country.

NATCOM is a statutory body established by the Telecommunications Act 2006 (amended in 2009) to license and regulate the Sierra Leone telecommunications sector, protect consumer interest and ensure fair competition among service providers. The Commission since its establishment crafted the strategic direction that it should adopt with a clearly stated Mission and Vision to surmount the various challenges in the telecoms industry so as to catch up on time lost in its late establishment as a national regulatory authority.

As a way of improving the systems and processes of NATCOM and making the institution more financially prudent, the Ministry of Finance (MoF), engaged the Public Sector Reform Unit (PSRU), to conduct a Management and Functional Reviews (MFR) for six Extra Budgetary Agencies, with the final reports for the reviews to be submitted on or before the 31st August 2018. The six Extract Budgetary Agencies are as follows:

- Petroleum Regulatory Agency
- Petroleum Directorate
- Road Maintenance Fund Administration
- Environment Protection Agency
- National Telecommunications Commission and
- Sierra Leone Maritime Administration

MFRs are one of the productive tools employed by the PSRU to undertake reforms in the Civil Service aimed at improving the efficiency and service delivery mechanisms of the institution under review. Based on an existing Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with key institutions, a joint review team including HRMO and ACC with PSRU as a coordinating and leading entity was set up to facilitate the completion of the exercise within the stipulated time frame of 31st August 2018.

The methodology used has followed guidelines agreed to by MoF and PSRU in the Inception Report submitted on 4th July 2018. The Inception Report followed briefing sessions held with the Deputy Director General and Management Team on 27th June 2018, where Power Point presentations outlining the purpose, importance and methodology in carrying out the MFR exercise was made. A question and answer session provided an opportunity for staff to request clarification of the process and express their initial concerns.

The review focused primarily on management structures and systems. Thus, there is an urgent need for some of the statutory instruments that gives the institution the leverage in improving the telecommunications industry in Sierra Leone, to be reviewed and harmonized for effective service delivery.

In this regard, we have recommended to the Senior Management to review the current Act of the Commission in order to take advantage of recent development in a dynamic telecommunications industry. Other urgent issues that need to be immediately addressed is the commitment of Government to provide the necessary funds for the completion of the ongoing building project which is expected to ease the accommodation problems facing the Commission. There is also the inherent issues of accommodation in the regional offices with staff shortages, effective financial and strategic management practices.

In recent years, the Commission has made some improvements, but there is more to be done. The institution maintains that the limited financial support receives from the government is one of the contributing factors affecting its performance, which has also negatively impact the efforts to meet its annual targets.

A full summary of our recommendations follows.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Statutory Framework

1. **We recommend that** the Telecommunications Act 2006 (amended 2009) be reviewed to state in very clear terms its roles, responsibilities and relationships with the Ministry of Information and communications (MIC). We further endorse the Ministry's position of focusing on policy formulation for this sector and creating an enabling environment for the industry to thrive.

Human resource

2. **We recommend** that NATCOM should review the job descriptions for each post to include the qualification and experience requirements.
3. **We also recommend** the preparation of a Scheme of Service for the respective positions that will ensure upward mobility for staff. If the skills are not available within, we recommend the services of a professional Human Resource Consultant to prepare the scheme.
4. **We also recommend** to the incoming Board that action should be taken to approve the HR Manual, distribute to staff and ensure that they are sensitised on its content. This is very important as the absence of it affects staff retention as staff members are always looking out for job opportunities.

Age Profile

5. **We recommend that** the Agency prepares a Succession Plan.

Recruitment

6. **We recommend** that the Commission filled all vacancies according to laid down policy guidelines for recruitment with a view to ensuring a free, fair transparent and competitive process for all Sierra Leoneans.

Staff Training

7. **We recommend** that a Training Needs Assessment is conducted in accordance with the felt needs of every employee, which should culminate into the development of a Training Plan..
8. **We further recommend** that Management should include a training budget in its annual budget since trainings offered by donors at times not always fit into the planned programmes of the Commission.

Records Management

9. **We therefore recommend that** the Commission takes the issue of records management and establish a records center manned by a qualified personnel. This is crucial to the survival of the Commission regarding monitoring and emerging issues in the telecommunications industry.

Equipment/Logistics

10. **We recommend** that the Finance Department works in collaboration with other departments to prioritize the expenditure on equipment during the preparation of the Commission's budget. This should be clearly stated in the Budget, justified in the Procurement Plan, and reflected in the Government's allocation and disbursements to the Commission.

Accommodation and Material Resources

11. **We recommend** that Government should provide the necessary funding for the completion of the multi-storey building project at Hill station. **We further recommend that** the Commission should assess and address staffing requirements and equip the other offices outside the Headquarters with computers, photocopiers, scanners and computer ancillaries.

Communications with Stakeholders

12. **We recommend** that the Commission approve the draft Communication Strategy, which should be revised on a yearly basis to address emerging issues.

Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation

13. **We recommend** that NATCOM should use the same indicators and targets in its Annual Work Plans, and the PTTs signed by the Heads to be able to effectively monitored achievement against planned activities.
14. **We further recommend** the creation of a Unit to be responsible for coordinating the preparation of monitoring and evaluation plan of the Commission.

Information Communication and Technology

15. **We recommend** that the Commission strengthen the capacity of the ICT unit within the Engineering Department.

Finance and Budgeting

16. **We recommend** that the Commission continues its engagement with the Audit Service Sierra Leone to fast track the auditing process and procedures to help guide the operational function of the Commission.