

C H A P T E R VI

PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION : SOLAPUR URBAN DIVISION

In the preceeding chapter general aspects of personnel administration of the M.S.E.B. in general and those of Solapur Urban Division in particular were discussed. In light of the responses to the questionnaire, now, major aspects of personnel administration, such as recruitment, selection, promotions, training etc. could be examined on the basis of answers to the questionnaire.

Recruitment and Selection

Recruitment is the very basis of personnel administration. If unsuitable persons are recruited, it would be very difficult for the organisation to weed from out. For handling recruitment and selection functions generally an agency is set up. The Union Public Service Commission or the State Public Service Commission, for example, are the bodies which are set up for the purpose. The M.S.E.B. has also set up such bodies.

The appointments of all posts belonging to any group and creation of posts of all categories are made by the Head Office of the M.S.E.B., Bombay. The Circle Office is empowered to appointments to all posts in pay groups III and IV at the circle level and the division office can make appointments to the posts in pay group IV, at the divisional

level. The competent authorities for selection are given in the second schedule to M.S.E.B. Employees' Service regulations.

There are seniority selection boards set-up at different levels, such as State, Circle and Division. The Composition of this boards is quite representative and fair. It consists of members and one backward class member. (See Statement No. 6.1)

STATEMENT NO. 6.1

Composition of seniority selection Boards of the M.S.E.B.

I. STATE SENIORITY SELECTION BOARD

A) General Posts

1. Chairman - Chairman of M.S.E.B.
 2. Accounts member - of the M.S.E.B.
 3. Technical member - of the M.S.E.B.
 4. Two - Non official members-of the Board
 5. Secretary/Joint Secretary
 6. Chief Accounts Officer/Chief Engineer-I/
Chief Engineer - II
 7. Member-from Backward Class Community
-

Statement No. 6.1 - Contd

B) Technical Posts

1. Chairman Chairman of M.S.E.B.
 2. Accounts Member - of the M.S.E.B.
 3. Technical Member - of the M.S.E.B.
 4. Non-official Member of the M.S.E.B.
 5. Secretary/Joint Secretary
 6. Chief Engineer
 7. Member from Backward Class Community
-

II. CIRCLEWISE SENIORITY SELECTION BOARD

1. Chairman - Member of the Board from the area
 2. Member - Superintending Engineer of Circle
 3. Member - Accounts Officer to be opted from section.
 4. Member - Administrative Officer to be opted from non-accounts section.
 5. Member - From Backward Class community
-

III. DIVISIONWISE SENIORITY SELECTION BOARD

1. Chairman - Executive Engineer of the Division.
 2. Member - Divisional Accountant/Establishment Superintendent
 3. Member - Deputy Executive Engineer/
Assistant Engineer
 4. Member - From Backward Class Community
-

There is a system of recruitment laid down in the M.S.E.B. 3/4 of the respondents feel that the system and procedure are quite satisfactory. Only 11% of the respondents did not endorse them. (See Table No. 6.1)

TABLE NO. 6.1

Distribution of employees recruitment according to their reaction about the procedure and system followed by the M.S.E.B.

Sr. No.	Responses	No. of the respondents	Percentage
1.	Satisfied	94	75 %
2.	Unsatisfied	14	11 %
3.	No reply	17	14 %
	Total	125	100 %

But they did not elaborate as to the shortcomings they experienced.

Recruitment is made by adopting both the methods viz. the direct and indirect recruitment in the M.S.E.B. The details about the same were not available.

In pursuance of the Govt. policy of reservation of posts for backward class communities, the M.S.E.B. has taken

necessary steps. It is implementing the policy. A detailed information about the same for the Solapur Urban Division is not available. However, some information in details is available. It is neatly given in the administration reports of the M.S.E.B. The administration report of the Board has furnished fairly latest information about the reservation matters. (1)

The M.S.E.B. has classified its staff into four pay groups viz. Pay Groups I to IV. In 1989, the Board appointed 8008 persons by direct recruitment out of which 7239 are invarious technical cadres and 771 are in various non-technical cadres. 70% of these persons appointed belong to backward classes. The pay groupwise break up of the backward class persons appointed in technical and non-technical cadres shows that full justice is given to persons belonging to these categories. (See Table No. 6.2 and 6.3)

1. Maharashtra State Electricity Board,
Administration Report, 1989-90
PP. 15 - 18

TABLE NO. 6.2

The break-up persons appointed by M.S.E.B.
in Technical Cadre in 1989

Pay Group	Total	Those belonging to Backward Classes				Total
		SC	ST	DT/NT	OBC	
I	62	14	9	7	-	30
II	506	119	43	25	50	237
III	1004	339	215	169	84	807
IV	5667	1216	713	433	1553	3915
Total	7239	1686	980	634	1687	4989

TABLE NO. 6.3

The break-up persons appointed by M.S.E.B.
In Non-technical Cadre in 1989

Pay Group	Total	Those belonging to Backward Classes				Total
		SC	ST	DT/NT	OBC	
I	62	23	13	7	3	46
II	67	2	11	5	3	21
III	378	103	106	54	26	289
IV	264	65	62	68	69	264
Total	771	193	192	194	101	620

Source for Table No. 6.2 and 6.3 is Administration Report
of M.S.E.B. 1989-90

The M.S.E.B. has taken some steps for safeguarding the interests of persons belonging to the backward communities. A few of them may be enumerated here -

1. An independent Backward Class Recruitment Cell is created in the Board for protecting the interests of the Backward Classes.
2. 54% of posts to be filled in by direct recruitment have been reserved for members of categories of backward classes as under :

S.C.	13 %
S.T.	7 %
DT/NT	4 %
O.B.C.	10 %
3. Upper age limit is relaxed upto 5 years in cases of persons belonging to backward classes.
4. S.C., S.T., DT/NT candidates called for the interview/written test, for all the posts, are entitled to reimbursement of Rail/Bus fare provided they are unemployed;
5. Call letters for interview and written test are sent under certificate of postings and appointment letters in respect of S.C., ST and DT/NT candidates are sent by Regd. Post A.D.
6. An officer belonging to backward class is nominated as a member of the departmental promotion selection committee as well as for direct recruitment selection committee, wherever there is reservation

of posts for backward classes.⁽¹⁾ It can, therefore, be observed that the M.S.E.B. is quite alert as to protecting interests of the backward communities. It is obvious that the same policy is meticulously followed by Solapur Urban Division.

Promotions

In case of direct recruitment and indirect recruitment i.e. recruitment by promotion the Board has accepted and implemented the policy of reservation of posts for the backward communities. In general, promotion procedure involves a departmental promotion selection committee. It goes through the application and generally follows the principles of promotion such as seniority and merit. It seems that higher weightage is given to seniority. Some of the respondents have suggested that the principle of merit should be followed while giving promotions. It may be observed that both the principles have advantages and disadvantages. A few respondents have offered suggestions that there are two posts, one is designated as Assistant Engineer and the other as Junior Engineer, however, the nature of work is the same. They want to merge these posts into one post. This involves technical aspects. The M.S.E.B. may consider this suggestion sympathetically. A few

1. Maharashtra State Electricity Board,
Administration Report, 1989-90
Page 16-17.

respondents suggested that sincere and dutiful employees should be given.

Training

The importance of training is well recognised. The M.S.E.B. provides sufficient attention to the training of employees belonging to different cadres - such as general, administration, personnel, accounts personnel and technical personnel. The M.S.E.B. has a comprehensive programme of training for its employees and it is merit-
-ulously implemented. (See statement 6.2)

STATEMENT NO. 6.2

Number of employees trained by M.S.E.B.

Sr. No.	Particulars	As on 31.3.89	During 1989-90	As on 31.3.1990
A) TRANSMISSION & DISTRIBUTION WING				
1.	Lower Division Clerks/ Upper Division Clerks (Accounts)	4365	279	4644
2.	Lower Division Clerks/ Upper Division Clerks (GAD)	3062	194	3256
3.	Lineman/Assistant Lineman	4648	282	4930
4.	Sub station Operator	1969	97	2066
5.	Pre-recruitment training and refresher courses for Sub-engineers	1029	-	1029



Statement No. 6.2 Contd

Sr. No.	Particulars	As on 31.3.89	During 1989-90	As on 31.3.90
6.	Assistant Engineer/ Junior Engineers	2122	158	2280
	Engineers working in Telecom, L.D.Stores (Deputy Executive Engineers and below)	159	-	159
	Engineers working in O & M of 400 KV Sub-station and attached testing divisions,	102	-	102
7.	Testing Engineers	186	-	186
8.	Hot Line aptitude Test	99	-	99
9.	Training for REC Engineers	33	-	33
10.	AAS/DAS	788	55	843
11.	HCS/ESS/APOs	293	22	315
12.	Meter Tester	295	-	295
		<u>19150</u>	<u>1087</u>	<u>20237</u>

B) GENERATION WING

1.	'A' Type	31	-	31
2.	'B' Type	106	-	106
3.	'C' Type	109	-	109
4.	Shift Chemists	68	-	68
5.	Chargeman Gr. I	219	-	219
6.	Chargeman Gr. II	58	-	58
7.	<u>Hydro Engineers</u>			
	a) Senior level	11	-	11
	b) Middle Level	11	-	11
	c) Junior level	17	-	17

Statement No. 6.2 Contd.

Sr. No.	Particulars	As on 31.3.89	During 1989-90	As on 31.3.90
8.	<u>NTPC (External Candidates)</u>			
	a) Analyst and D.M.Plant operators	22	-	22
	b) Electrical operators	26	-	26
	c) Executive Trainees	31	-	31
	d) Diploma holders	23	-	23
	e) Boiler and Turbine operators	63	-	63
	f) Artisan Trainees	29	-	29
9.	<u>BHEL's (Ustomary Training)</u>			
	a) Operator trainees	25	-	25
	b) Engineer trainees	26	-	26
10.	<u>G.O. 92 (P)</u>			
	a) Chargeman Gr. I	481	-	481
	b) Chargeman Gr. II	423	-	423
11.	Chargeman I trained at PEs	19	-	19
12.	<u>As per amendment to I.E.Rules</u>			
	a) Junior Engineer (Gen)	71	52	125
	b) Sub Engineer (Gen)	80	19	99
	c) Artisan Trainees	45	-	45
	d) Chemist Trainees	-	10	10
		1994	81	2077
	As per Appendix 'A' T & D wing	19150	1097	20237
	Grand Total	21144	1170	22314

Source : M.S.E.B. Administration Report 1989-90
PP 50-51

The board evinces keen interest in the training programme of its personnel. In 1989-90, 1170 persons were trained, taking the total number of employees trained to 2314. The total number of employees in the Board is about 1 lakh. It means that more than 1/5 of the staff have undergone training courses. In Solapur urban division number of respondents who have undergone training is 30%. (See Table No. 6.4)

TABLE NO. 6.4

Distribution of respondents who have undergone training

Sr. No.	No. of the respondents	Percentage
1. Who have undergone training	38	30 %
2. Who have not undergone training	75	60 %
3. No reply	12	10 %
Total	125	100 %

The Board has established a training centre at Nasik for different categories of personnel. At Nasik, one month training is imparted to Lower Division Clerks and Upper Division Clerks in GAD cadre. Special training courses for head clerks, establishment superintendents and assistant personnel officers are also conducted so as to update their knowledge of rules and regulations. These

trainees are given 'on the job training' also. For on the job training these categories of employees are sent to the offices near about Nasik.

There is a provision of training for personnel belonging to the accounts wing. The Lower Division Clerks and Upper Division Clerks in accounts cadre are given one month training at Nasik. Special training courses are also conducted for assistant auditors, divisional accountants for updating their knowledge.

In addition to the training, research and development activities the training, Research and Development Department at Nasik conducts departmental examinations for officers and other employees. These examinations are used for confirmation, promotions or fulfilling certain requirements of the appointment. The examination cell conducts departmental examinations for officers and other employees.⁽¹⁾ These examinations cover a sizeable number of employees from different cadres. (Vide Statement No. 6.3)

1. M.S.E.B., Administration Report,
1989-90, P. 23

STATEMENT NO. 6.3

Number of employees appeared and passed
Department examination

Sr. No.	Name of Exam.	Total Exams conducted as on 31.3.90	Total Employees as on 31.3.90		No. of Employees during the year	
			Appeared	Passed	Appeared	Passed
1.	Professional Examinations	43	17817	3001	120	47
2.	Higher Acotts. Examinations	43	15015	1099	549	54
3.	Lower Acotts. Examinations	43	26435	5112	574	133
4.	Higher GAD examinations	49	5642	560	206	22
5.	Lower GAD Examinations	69	12516	2173	469	54
6.	Marathi Language Examination	50	9083	6217	281	183

Source : M.S.E.B. Administration Report
1989-90, P. 24

For certain categories of employees, the departmental examinations are essential for continuation/confirmation in service. These posts include (i) Upper Division Clerk, (ii) Assistant Accountant, (iii) Divisional Accountant, (iv) Senior clerk, (v) Head Clerk/Establishment Assistant; (vi) Superintendent; (vii) Accounts Officer; (viii) Assistant

Personnel Officer/Adm. Officer.

As the direct recruited persons are expected to pass the prescribed departmental examination within a maximum period of two years. Until that period and passing of the examination the appointment is considered as temporary and the employee is on probation. (1) The M.S.E.B., as noted above, has made elaborate arrangements for holding such examination. This device must be certainly helpful in getting a well trained and well versed staff for the Board.

Retirement benefits

The M.S.E.B. has fixed the superannuation age for its employees and included the same in Employees' Service regulations. The age varies from category to category. 58 years is the superannuation age for employees in pay groups in I, II and III. The employees belonging to pay group IV superannuate at the age of 60. (2) It is not known why this variation in superannuation age is made. Perhaps, the Board must have followed the relevant regulations laid down by the Govt. for its employees. It is further laid down that every employee shall retire with effect from the afternoon of the last day of the month in which, he attains the age mentioned against the respective category in the regulations. (3)

-
1. Source : Information supplied by the Office.
 2. M.S.E.B. Employees' Service Regulations, Dec. 1980, P. 16
 3. M.S.E.B. Employees' Service Regulations, Dec. 1980, P. 15

The superannuated employees receive provident fund only. There is no provision for giving pensions. By way of a good gesture, the board issues a 'Letter of Appreciation' of service to their employees at the time of retirement of the employee. (1)

Other Benefits

The regular employees drawing basic salaries upto a certain level receive bonus. But bonus is not a regular feature. The employees contribute 8.33 % of their basic salary towards their Provident fund as usual. This practice is found almost everywhere where the Provident fund scheme is applied.

Background Information

Generally employees should have general information of the agency or organization in which they work. Therefore a few questions were included in the questionnaire. These questions referred to the year of establishment of the M.S.E.B. (Q. 35), Number of members in the apex body of the Board (Q. 36), Name of the chairman of the Board (Q. 37) number of zones and their names, names of zones and the circle in which their office is included (Q. 38 to 41) and so on.

1. M.S.E.B., Administration Report, PP. 11-12.

About 3/5 of the respondents could tell the name of the chairman of the Board. 1/5 of the members did not know the name at all and the remaining respondent could tell it correctly. The respondents giving answers of last two types belonged to the Class III and Class IV. As a part of the general knowledge, they should know the name. The table shows that except the last question pertaining to the mode of selection of members of the Board (Q. 41) the general knowledge of the respondents, in this respect was found to be quite satisfactory. (See Table No. 6.5)

TABLE NO. 6.5

Distribution of respondents as to their replies to questions pertaining to the background information about the M.S.E.B.

Ques. No.	Replies (No. of Respondents)			Total
	Correct	Incorrect	Not Known	
35	69	30	26	125
36	63	32	30	125
37	95	10	20	125
38	68	29	28	125
39	91	11	23	125
40	93	10	22	125
41	20	28	77	125

Employee-Employer Relations

The relations between employer and employee should be cordial and co-operative. Then only the organisation functions efficiently. In case of M.S.E.B. which is a public utility, it is more true. Supply of electricity is a service which is needed round the clock. Hence, the importance of cordial relations between employee and the employer.

The Trade union activity is a legitimate activity and a part of the regular vital democratic process. Like in other fields, the M.S.E.B. workers are organised. But as it is found in other fields, there are a number of unions of workers. There are in all nine different workers organisations operating among the M.S.E.B. employees throughout Maharashtra. But in Solapur urban division only five of them are operative, viz. (1) Veej Kamgar Sangh; (2) Workers' Federation, (3) Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC), (4) Tantrik Kamgar Union, and (5) Subordinate Engineers' Association. As the names show that two unions, Tantrik Kamgar Union and Subordinate Engineers Association are confined to certain technical categories of employees of the M.S.E.B.

Among all these five workers' organisation, Veej Kamgar Sangh (21,000 members) is most popular among M.S.E.B.

employees in Maharashtra State. But in Solapur Urban Division, Solapur circle of M.S.E.B., the Workers' Federation (700 members) is dominant followed by Veej Kamgar Sangh (650 members) (See Table No. 6.6)

TABLE NO. 6.6

Classification of Trade Unions according to their membership

Sr. No.	Name of Trade Union	Number of Members	
		M.S.E.B. Maharashtra State	Solapur Circle
1.	Veej Kamgar Sangh	21,000	650
2.	Workers Federation	17,000	700
3.	INUC	10,000	100
4.	Tantrik Kamgar Union	6,000	200
5.	Subordinate Engineers Association	12,000	300
	Total	66,000	1,950

Source : Information supplied by the Workers' Organisation

All the respondents are members of one or other workers' union. They feel that the unions are useful and help them to protect their interests. They raise their bargaining power.

The employees of the M.S.E.B. and Solapur Urban division participated in strikes. In 1967, there was great

agitation and it was finally successful. In 1981, the engineers of the M.S.E.B. went on strike in support of their demands. Again in 1984, the employees of the M.S.E.B. went on a strike for five days. Thus it is obvious that these employees resorted to agitational devices whenever necessary.

The issues in disputes were of various nature. They include : (1) Pay Scales, (2) Work Procedure, (3) Supply of tools, etc. (4) Unjust actions of the M.S.E.B. (5) Promotions, (6) Pension, (7) Employment to the heirs of deceased employees of the M.S.E.B. etc.

On the whole, it seems, as the respondents have mentioned that the relations between the M.S.E.B. and them are cordial.

Women Employees :

As it is found in other fields, women employees in the M.S.E.B. and in the Solapur Urban division are small in number. In this division there are 610 women employees out of 610 total number of employees. A few women employees occupy higher positions. Most of the women employees are working in Class III or Pay Group III. There were 18 (i.e. 14%) women respondents out of the total number of 125 respondents; 14 of these respondents belonged to Class III and 4 respondents to Class IV. Besides the main questionnaire a supplementary special questionnaire was circulated to them

for eliciting information of their particular problems specially regarding amenities.

They have offered a few suggestions which are quite relevant. The suggestions refer to (1) rest room for women employees, (2) separate space for them in reading rooms and canteens, (3) proper seating arrangement for them in the office, (4) permission to work on part time basis, (5) the M.S.E.B. should the canteen departmentally and give certain concessions to women employees, (6) provision of creche (7) transfer within 10 KM distance from their residence, (8) certain programmes for their personality development and so on.

Some of the suggestions like canteen, reading room rest room facilities, transfer at a short distance place, provision of creche, etc. are worth considering. A little more attention should be given to the women employees by the M.S.E.B.

Privatisation of M.S.E.B.

To-day winds are blowing in favour of privatisation certain concerns in the public sector in India. The M.S.E.B. is one of them. As the Soviet Russia, the cradle of communism is opting for privatisation, some concerns in the public sector in India are running loss and the Govt. is

experiencing a revenue crunch, it is, therefore, demanded that the Govt. should go in for privatisation at least some of the concerns it owns.

Arguments can be put forth in favour of privatisation and against it. The pressure of privatisation have alerted the employees of the M.S.E.B. also. Their unions are voicing opposition to the move of privatisation of public concerns.

Almost all the respondents oppose probable privatisation of the M.S.E.B. on the grounds of fear of retrenchment, insecurity of jobs, exploitation, reduction in salary, less useful to the society, particularly the weaker sections and so on. Some of the fears like retrenchment, insecurity of jobs, closure of uneconomic schemes, suspension or rural electrification, etc. are worth considering. It would be better if the Govt. takes into account all the issues before arriving at this policy decision.

Suggestions offered by the Respondents pertaining to selection, promotion etc.

A few searching questions were included in the questionnaire inviting suggestions for reforms in personnel administration of the M.S.E.B. in general and the Solapur Urban Division in particular. Some of the major suggestions offered by them may be summarised as below I

1. Selection of employees should be based on merit of the candidate only.
2. In making promotions, talented and meritorious employees are put aside.
3. Integrity and industriousness of the employees should be taken into account at the time of giving promotions by the authorities.
4. Some of the respondents expressed their displeasure about the interview method adopted in selection procedure.
5. New posts should be created in proportion of increase in number of consumers and work-load.
6. The seniority list is prepared leisurely and vacant posts are not filled in. The M.S.E.B. should take proper steps to improve the situation.
7. The conditions of service were laid down during the British rule. All the contexts are changed. Therefore, they have become outdated. The M.S.E.B. should hold discussions on this issue with the representatives of the employees and bring out a revised version of the hand book pertaining to the employees' service regulations.
8. The employees should be informed about the modification made in their service rules.
9. There should redistribution of work in the office and in the field. It should be implemented with rigour and

the truants should be dealt with ruthlessly after giving them three occasions for improvement.

10. All the employees should be trained by the M.S.E.B. before joining for the actual work.

11. The employees should be made to undergo refresher course after every two years.

12. About giving promotions the respondents have offered opposite suggestions. One recommends merit the other prefers seniority as the sole basis for giving promotions.

13. There is a very little scope for promotions. It should be expanded.

14. After every certain fixed period, the employees should be given promotions.

15. Respondents have made a number of suggestions about training :

- a) Training is not given to all, it should be given to all and made compulsory.
- b) Employees should be trained well particularly in handling latest machines.
- c) Duration of training period should be increased. It should be at least for a period of one month,

- d) Training programmes should be arranged not far off from the working place.
- e) Training should not be delayed. It should be given at the beginning of the career.
- f) The employees should be exposed to the organisation and methods and intricacies of operation of the M.S.E.B.
- g) All necessary amenities like lodging, boarding and recreational should be made available to the trainees.

16. Some of the respondents are in favour of discontinuation of the Confidential Report (C.T.) system. They feel that it is outdated. Some feel that a work of an employee should be observed throughout the year and C.R. should be written in a casual manner.

17. Some of the respondents, against computerisation as they feel that this may lead to retrenchment of the staff.

18. Some of the respondents have offered a typical suggestions, for examples -

- a) the employees have become lazy. They should be disciplined.
- b) The M.S.E.B. administration should be firm and alert.

c) The concerned Executive Engineer should be given powers for dealing with cases pertaining to theft of electricity.

19. A few respondents have become cynic so far as the administration of the M.S.E.B. is concerned. Therefore, they are inclined not to offer any suggestion as they will not effectively implemented.

Thus, most of the respondents have offered constructive varied suggestions. The M.S.E.B. should give them due consideration implement them in due course of time.

oooooooooooo