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TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU
P.W. DEPARTMENT

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GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

18th September 1878, No. 3,674 W.

Re-organisation of the Public Works Department.

Read the following:—

Letter from the Government of India, No. 308 E.G., dated 20th February 1877.
Minutes by the Hon. Sir W. ROBINSON, K.C.S.I., dated 17th July and 14th September 1878.

ORDER THEREON, 18th September 1878, No. 3,674 W.

THE undue strain brought upon the Provincial finances by the present excessive cost of the Public Works Department has long been a source of anxiety to Government, and was the subject of much deliberation in the year 1876, when the pressure of business, which devolved on the Government owing to the famine, caused the matter to be temporarily laid aside.

2. The subject having again come under consideration, His Grace the Governor in Council considers it unnecessary to defer any longer that thorough re-organisation of the Public Works Establishment, which experience has shown to be absolutely essential both to secure greater efficiency in the department, and to prevent further financial embarrassment to the Government.

3. In carrying out these changes, His Grace the Governor in Council believes, that by utilising to the utmost the establishment and agencies that are available to the Government, it is possible, without abandoning any of the general principles on which the business of the department has heretofore been conducted, to secure a great increase of administrative efficiency and at a diminished cost.

4. As regards the Public Works Secretariat, the division of the administrative work of the department will, at present, continue as laid down in Chapter III, Section i, of the Public Works Code, which fully prescribes the responsibilities of the Chief Engineers and Secretaries in charge of the several branches and the duties which Government look to them to have thoroughly performed.

5. All correspondence from the Superintending Engineers will be addressed to the Chief Engineer of the Branch concerned, who will dispose of every thing within his own powers on his own responsibility. The Chief Engineer will submit to Government only such matters as either may be beyond his own powers, or may appear to be of sufficient general interest to require an expression of the views of Government thereon.

6. Each Chief Engineer will be allowed an Officer as Assistant Chief Engineer and Secretary, to be ordinarily of the rank of an Executive Engineer, to conduct, under the authority and responsibility of the Chief Engineer and Secretary, the current duties of the Secretariat during the absence of the Chief Engineer on his tours of inspection.

7. The question of the best method of compiling engineering statistics, and of collecting professional data and information, and the agency to be employed for this purpose in connection with the Secretariat Office will be reported on by the Chief Engineer and the Examiner for the consideration of Government.

8. The Examiner of Public Works Accounts, as Chief Financial Officer of the Department, is to be regarded as the financial adviser to the Public Works Secretaries, and their communications will be chiefly of a personal nature as members of the same office; all formal correspondence between them being, as far as possible, avoided. All questions connected with finance and account will be noted upon by the Examiner previous to being dealt with finally by the Secretary concerned, in order that Government, before passing orders on the case, may have before them not only the aspect of the case from a financial point of view, but also the bearing of all the financial rules and regulations relevant to the subject.

9. All Gazette Notifications and Government Orders, which affect the pay or service of Public Works Officers, will be referred to the Examiner before issue, to ensure that the proposed Notifications or Orders are in no way opposed to any rule or regulation of the Government of India, and provide for all necessary formalities.

10. The respective responsibilities of the Chief Engineer and the Examiner in controlling the expenditure of the department is very clearly defined in the Public Works Code III, i, 24 and III, vii, 14. Briefly, it is the duty of the Examiner to bring all items of objectionable expenditure to the notice of the Chief Engineer, and it is the duty of the Chief Engineer to summarily put a stop to all irregular expenditure directly his attention is called to it. His Grace the Governor in Council trusts that every effort will be made to reduce the number of items of objectionable expenditure that month by month are now brought to the notice of Government.

11. To enable the Chief Engineers and the Examiner to satisfactorily carry out a proper control over the expenditure of the department, it is to be considered an essential principle that all expenditure whatever, chargeable to the Imperial and Provincial Public Works grants, is to be sanctioned in the Public Works Department. No other department of the Government will take any steps that will commit the Government to expenditure in the Public Works Department, until the responsible officers of that department have had an opportunity of deciding whether the state of the Public Works grants will admit of the expenditure being incurred.

12. As regards Local Fund Works, His Grace the Governor in Council is of opinion that heretofore there has been an absence of that professional supervision and control by the Chief Engineer which are essential to the satisfactory execution of Public Works.

13. The principle involved in the administration of Local Fund Works is to leave all financial arrangements and the initiation of works in the hands of the Local Fund Boards, and to leave the engineering of, and the accounting for, such works in those of professional Officers under definite professional control. The Chief Engineer will, therefore, consider himself as directly responsible for the professional control of Public Works carried out from Local Funds as for those carried out from any other Public Works Grant. Designs for Local Fund works, the cost of which exceed Rupees 5,000, will be submitted to the Chief Engineer for professional check, and the formal sanction to the estimate for such works, after the approval of the Board of Revenue has been conveyed, in ordinary course, to the project, will be given in the Public Works Department, the necessary funds for the execution of the work being provided in the Financial Department. Proposals for transfers of Local Fund appropriations for Public Works, which exceed the powers of the Board of Revenue, will be dealt with by Government in the Public Works Department.

14. For purposes of supervision, the Presidency will be divided into five Circles, each under charge of a Superintending Engineer or of an Executive Engineer of the 1st Grade acting as such. The head-quarters and territorial limits of each of these Circles are shown in Appendix A.

To the office of each Superintending Engineer will be attached an Assistant Engineer to act as Assistant to the Superintending Engineer, and to carry out, under his authority and responsibility, the current duties of the office during the absence of the Superintending Engineer on duty.

15. For purposes of construction, each Circle will be divided into Executive Divisions, each of which will ordinarily be in charge of an Executive Engineer or some other professional officer of the Engineer Establishment. The names of the divisions, altogether 39 in number, are shown in Appendix B. The question of the exact territorial limits to be assigned to each Executive Division is referred to the Chief Engineers for early report in communication with the Collectors and the Local Public Works Officers, the importance being borne in mind, of making the limits of the Public Works Executive Divisions, as far as possible, coterminous with those of the Local Fund Circles.

16. The duties, powers, and responsibilities of the Superintending Engineers and of the Executive Engineers will be found very fully described in Chapter III, Sections ii and iii of the Public Works Code.

17. The numbers of the Engineer Officers attached to the Presidency being sufficient for the proposed new charges, no change is at present intended in the strength of the Engineer Establishment, except that, with the sanction of the Government of India, two 2nd Grade and four 3rd Grade Assistant Engineers will be substituted for the present sanctioned number (seven) of 3rd Grade Assistant Engineers, the monthly charges involved in each case being nearly the same.

18. With regard to the Upper Subordinate, the Lower Subordinate, and the Petty Establishments, no final arrangements will be decided upon until the Superintending Engineers have acquired some practical knowledge of the requirements of their several Circles.

His Grace the Governor in Council believes, however, that the numbers and cost of the Overseers, the Lower Subordinate and the Petty Establishment, especially of the Overseers, will be found to be in excess of permanent requirements under the new arrangements, and that it is advisable with a view to securing greater elasticity in the Public Works Establishments to employ temporary hands to a far greater extent than has hitherto been the case.

19. The Superintending Engineers will, as soon as possible after taking charge, review the Subordinate and Petty Establishments of their Circles, and will submit, for the information of Government, statements in Public Works Form No. 71, showing the minimum number of permanent men they wish to retain, and the extent to which they propose to employ temporary establishments.

20. On savings being effected in the cost of the Subordinate and Petty Establishments, His Grace the Governor in Council will be prepared to consider the advisability of appointing to each Circle a small permanent establishment of qualified Surveyors.

21. As regards Office Establishments and the Establishment of Accountants, the reduction in the number of the Public Works offices will lead to a considerable reduction in the numbers of the Accountants and Clerks employed, and in the aggregate cost of these two establishments. The scale of Accountants and Clerks now sanctioned, which is ultimately to be worked up to in each office, is shown in Appendices C and D.

22. The aggregate effect financially of all these changes is shown in Appendix E, containing a comparative statement of all the Public Works Establishments, existing and proposed. The net result is a saving of about Rupees 1,15,000, exclu-

sive of the further saving that is expected in the cost of the Subordinate and Petty Establishments.

23. In Appendix F will be found a statement of the relative cost of the several establishments and of the aggregate cost of the Public Works Establishment as a per-centage of the grants for works and repairs compared with similar establishments obtaining throughout India; these figures being derived from the review by the Accountant-General, Public Works Department, of the Public Works Budget Estimates for the year 1875-76. From this statement the cost of the Upper Subordinate Establishment appears relatively high, while that of the Engineer and Accountant Establishment is very moderate. The charge for travelling allowances in this Presidency appears to be so exceptional, that His Grace the Governor in Council desires that a special report may be submitted to Government by the Examiner on the subject.

24. The Chief Engineer will at once submit, for the approval of Government, a list of the officers he recommends for the charge of the several Circles and Divisions. On approval, these appointments will be notified in the Gazette in order to give the whole staff the earliest possible advice of the arrangements decided upon.

25. In order to give effect to these orders with the least possible inconvenience to all concerned, the Chief Engineer will at once take steps to relieve from their present charges the five officers selected for the charge of the five Circles of supervision, other officers being appointed to act temporarily as District Engineers in their places. On relief, they will immediately proceed to the head-quarters of their Circle, and there take over charge of the District Engineer's Office.

26. On their taking charge as Superintending Engineers of the present District Engineer's Office at the head-quarters of their Circles, the present District Engineers in the Circle will proceed to take charge as Executive Engineers of the present Range Offices at the head-quarters of the Divisions to which they are appointed. The records of the District Engineers' Offices other than that at the head-quarters of the Circle, together with one or two Clerks from each District Office (as may be locally arranged by the Superintending Engineer) will be transferred to the head-quarters of the Circle, and the Clerks so transferred, together with the whole establishment of the District Office at head-quarters, will form the provisional establishment of the Superintending Engineer's Office.

27. In a similar manner, the records and the establishment of the present Range Offices will be distributed to the new Divisional Offices, and the Clerks so transferred will form the provisional establishment of the Divisional Offices. Nominal rolls, showing the distribution of the existing establishments amongst the various offices in the Circle will be submitted as early as possible by Superintending Engineers to the Examiner, to admit of the salary bills being duly audited. All subsequent transfers of the establishment will be similarly advised.

28. The scale of office establishment to be ultimately worked up to, as shown in Appendices C and D, consists, it will be noticed, of fewer Clerks and Accountants with slightly increased salaries, the whole classified in accordance with the Public Works Code, Chapter I, Section i, 10-12. No immediate reductions, appointments, or promotions will be carried into effect in order to make the existing establishment agree with the new sanctioned scale. This latter will be arrived at gradually only as casualties occur.

29. In the Office Establishments, on the occurrence of a vacancy, it will be open to the Superintending Engineer concerned to utilise one-half of the salary thus made available in making promotions of properly qualified persons to the minima salaries of the sanctioned grades to which they may be appointed. The other half of the salary will lapse to Government as a saving. Without the special sanc-

tion of Government, no new appointments will be made until the excess hands have been completely absorbed. The Examiner will be held responsible for reporting for the orders of Government, any case of the kind that may occur.

30. The above remarks do not apply to the Office Establishments of the Secretariat, of the Presidency Engineer, and of the Consulting Architect to Government, in which no change has been made beyond classifying the present Office Establishments. In all these cases, the Clerks will draw the minima salary of their grades together with such a number of increments as may make their total salary at least equal to what they are drawing at present.

31. In order to keep the whole body of officers alive to their duties and responsibilities under the new arrangements, His Grace the Governor in Council desires to impress upon the Public Works Code Committee the desirability of completing the Public Works Code at the earliest possible date. The Chief and Superintending Engineers and the Examiner will bring to the notice of the Public Works Code Committee any clauses in the Code they may deem inapplicable to the present circumstances of the department, and these, if found necessary, will be modified in ordinary course by the issue of standing orders.

32. With these modifications, His Grace the Governor in Council looks to the Chief Engineers and to the Examiner, in their several branches of the Department, to see that the whole of the Public Works Code as issued is scrupulously adhered to, and that the time of Government and of all officers concerned is no longer wasted by a general want of method and system throughout the Department and by constant references on minor points of principle or practice which will be found once for all clearly laid down in the Public Works Code for general information.

33. The Manual for the business in the Public Works Secretariat and the book of Specifications, the former of which has been a long time in type, should also be taken up and completed by the Public Works Code Committee.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) E. A. FOORD, Colonel, R.E.,
Secretary to Government, P.W.D.

To All District Engineers.
To the Chief Engineer for Irrigation.
" Chief Engineer, Public Works Department.
" Consulting Engineer for Railways.
" Consulting Architect to Government.
" Examiner, Public Works Accounts.
" Financial, &c., Departments.
" Revenue Department.
" Military Department.
" Revenue (Famine) Department.

REGISTRATION OF
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

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PUBLIC WORKS.

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION

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Registration of the Public Works
Department, Washington, D. C.