

**TEACHER EDUCATOR SUPERVISORS UNION – PETROL
MILEAGE ALLOWANCE (05/08/08)**

(No. B/1079) Mr J. C. Barbier (Third Member for GRNW and Port Louis West) asked the Minister of Education and Human Resources whether he will state if he has received a letter from the Union of Teacher Educator Supervisors in connection with the non adjustment of the petrol mileage allowance by the Pre-School Trust Fund, thus ignoring the different circular letters issued by the Ministry of Civil Service Affairs and, if so, the remedial actions that will be taken.

Mr Gokhool: Mr. Speaker Sir, I have not personally received any letter from the Union of Teacher Educator Supervisors but I am informed that the Mauritius Union of Pre School Educators has written a letter on 30 May 2008 to the Minister of Labour, Industrial Relations & Employment, complaining that the travelling of Teacher Educator Supervisors has not been adjusted in accordance with Circular Note No.3 of 2007 from the Ministry of Civil Service Affairs & Administrative Reforms issued on 23 November 2007.

I understand that the Teacher Educator Supervisors by virtue of the salary they draw are not entitled to travel grant. However as they performed field work, namely carrying out school visits, they are eligible for refund, on the days on which they carry field duties, the running costs for distance which is not considered as official mileage, i.e. from home to office, and for official travelling between office and site of work / for official travelling by the most economical route at approved rates subject to a ceiling, which under the PRB Report 2003, was limited to MUR 4,200 monthly. Mileage is paid subject to the officer giving evidence that he/she or his/her spouse owns a car and uses same to perform field work.

In November 2007, following hikes in the prices of fuel, new rates were applicable for refund of mileage and the Teacher Educator Supervisors were eligible to these revised rates. However, the revision of the mileage rates could not be applied at the PSTF in that some of the Teacher Educator Supervisors did not own a car or were effecting school visits by bus, even when they own a car, but were claiming mileage. The PSTF felt that there was a need to consider the whole issue and in the meantime to maintain the earlier ceiling of MUR 4,200.

The matter is now forming the subject of an industrial dispute. I also understand that as soon as the new Board of the Early Childhood Care and Education Authority (ECCEA) is appointed, action will be taken to

compensate the Teacher Educator Supervisors for cost incurred as official travelling in accordance with regulations in force.

Mr Barbier: Mr Deputy Speaker, the hon. Minister mentioned that the Ministry of Civil of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms in a circular letter dated 23 November 2007 made some adjustments, after the increase in petroleum products, to the mileage and petrol allowance. Why should there be a dispute? Is it not rationale that these officers who were entitled already to Rs4,200 monthly benefit an increase on the same *barême* as stipulated in the letter I have just mentioned?

Mr Gokhool: I asked the same question to the officers, then I came to know that the problem is with regard to payment of mileage which is tied up to the officer owing a car and using the car. The information I have been given is that some officers are claiming mileage by car, but are performing field duties by bus. It is not regular. There are some who have no car licence, but are claiming the mileage allowance and are driven by the husbands who are public officers. These are irregularities. We cannot accept it. We have to put some order and then the payment will be done.

Mr Barbier: Mr Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister is talking about some officers. But what about the general policy of the Government towards these officers concerning mileage and petrol allowance?

Mr Gokhool: This refers to mileage, but those who travel by bus are being refunded. It is only a question concerning mileage.