GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA

KARNATAKA ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS COMMISSION-2

THIRD REPORT OF THE

KARNATAKA ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS COMMISSION-2

JANUARY-2022

English Translation of Kannada Government Order

Proceedings of Government of Karnataka

Sub: Constitution of Karnataka Administrative Reforms Commission-2 reg.

Ref: Government Order number DPAR 19 AMC 2000, dated 17.04.2000

Preamble:

An Administrative Reforms Commission was previously formed under the Chairmanship of Sri. Haranahalli Ramaswamy vide the above Government order dated:17.04.2000. The said Commission had submitted its final report on December 2001 to the Government. The said Commission had submitted a total of 256 recommendations. Of these recommendations, the State Government has implemented 234 recommendations. An evaluation of the implementation of the recommendations of the Sri. H. Ramaswamy Administrative Reforms Commission is required. In addition, governance is ever evolving and in the two decades, since the establishment of the Sri. H. Ramaswamy Administrative Reforms Commission, there has been a complete transformation of technology and various institutions of Government in all sectors. In the last five years and especially in the last one year there have been tremendous changes in the way humans interact and the way large institutions operate. The use of information and communication technology has revolutionalized the workplace and the communication among people. Therefore, there is a need to comprehensively evaluate the existing governance and governance systems. New changes and transformations need to be recommended in order to provide a good governance and governance systems for the coming decades of the 21st century.

Hence the following Government order.

Government Order No. DPAR AR 05 ASAPA 2020, Bengaluru dated 07.01.2021.

1. Government approve the formation of the Karnataka Administrative Reforms Commission-2 with immediate effect. Sri. T.M.Vijay Bhaskar. I.A.S.,(Retd) has been appointed as a Chairperson of this Commission with immediate effect and until further orders. The following subjects have been allotted to the Karnataka Administrative Reforms Commission-2

    i. Review of implementation of recommendations of Sri H. Ramaswamy Administrative Reforms Commission.

    ii. Recommendations for restructuring of departments and rationalization of staff strength at all levels of Government.

    iii. Identification of unnecessary cadre/staff in departments due to with the use of technology and the possibility of merging departments, boards and corporations

2. To comprehensively study and evaluate governance and governance systems currently in Government and State owned departments/boards and corporations and to recommend appropriate governance and structural reforms to meet the needs of the coming decades of the 21st century.

3. Government of Karnataka will grant funds to cover all administrative costs of the Commission.

4. A separate Government order will be issued for salaries, allowances and terms of service of the Commission

5. The Commission shall complete its work study and submit a final report within two years and an interim report within a period of one year

6. The Secretary to the Government DPAR(AR) will serve as Secretary to the Commission

This Government order is issued with Finance Department concurrence in note Number FD 10 Exp-12/2021, dated 06.01.2021.

By order and in the name of Governor of Karnataka

Sd/- (Swarnalata M Bhandari)

Deputy Secretary to Government DPAR(AR)

English Translation of Kannada Government Order

Proceedings of Government of Karnataka

Sub : Functions of the Karnataka Administrative Reforms Commission-2

Read : 1) Government Order number DPAR(AR) 05 ASAPA,2020Bengaluru dated 07.01.2021.

Preamble:

The Government of Karnataka in the order read at (1) above has intended to enhance the efficiency and transparency at all levels of governance. The Government of Karnataka felt that there is a need to comprehensively evaluate the existing governance system and constituted the Administrative Reforms commission-2 to recommend changes in the administration for creating good governance and a governance system for the coming decades of the 21st century. Objectives and jurisdiction of the Commission have been defined. In addition to these few points are to be included.

Government has examined the proposal and ordered as follows.

Government Order No. DPAR AR 05 ASAPA 2020, Bengaluru dated 04.02.2021.

In addition to the subjects to be reviewed by the Karnataka Administrative Reforms Commission-2, the following points are included and accordingly ordered.

1. The Commission may obtain the services of advisors, institutional consultants and professionals for any particular purpose as it deems necessary.

2. The Karnataka Administrative Reforms Commission-2 shall formulate procedures and obtain necessary information from the various departments as may be necessary for its purpose.

3. All Government Departments, Boards and Corporations, Local bodies, Grant-in-aid institutions and Service organisations shall provide all necessary information and documents to the Karnataka Administrative Reforms Commission-2. .

The Commission may consult public and experts and review any department at any level of administration to submit its recommendations to the Government. During review, the Secretary/Heads of Departments and other officers of the concerned Departments shall provide necessary information to the Commission about Departmental procedures. The Commission may initiate action to analyse specific issues pertaining to the administration of the Government or any Department/level subjects through specialist or expert institutions and through seminars on such matters.

By the order and in the name of Governor of Karnataka

Sd/- (B.S.Ravikumar)

Deputy Secretary to Government (I/c)

Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms

STAFF OF THE KARNATAKA ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS COMMISSION-2

Name	Designation
Shri. TM Vijay Bhaskar, IAS (Retd.) and Former Chief Secretary to Govt. of Karnataka	Chairperson
Shri. NS Prasanna Kumar, IAS (Retd.)	Advisor
Shri. Nagaraj Singrer, K.A.S	Special Secretary
Shri. RS Shivakumar	Deputy Secretary
Shri. BS Prashant Kumar	Under Secretary
Smt. Jaheeda N. Gachhinamahal	Section Officer
Shri. Shreenivasa	Section Officer
Shri. Rakhesh Sattyannavar	Sr. Stenographer
Smt. K Geetha	Stenographer
Shri. LS Prashanth	Data Entry Operator
Smt. Renuka Bai	Data Entry Operator
Shri. G Vijay	Office helper
Smt. Menaka	Office helper
Sri. M Manjunath	Office helper

The following individuals have worked with the KARC-2 team through the Indian Administrative Fellowship (IAF) program, The Nudge Foundation –

Name	Designation
R. Balasubramanya	Fellow Designate, IAF
Rudrashish Sinha	Analyst, IAF

ABBREVIATIONS

ADLR	Assistant Director of Land Records
AEC	Annual Electricity Cost
AH	Animal Husbandry
AJSK	Atalji Jana Snehi Kendra
ANM	Auxiliary Nurse Midwife
ANSSIRD	Abdul Nazir Saab State Institute of Rural Development and Panchayat Raj
BBMP	Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike
BBP	Bharat Bill Payment
BC	Backward Classes
BDA	Bangalore Development Authority
BEE	Bureau of Energy Efficiency
BIAAPA	Bangalore International Airport Area Planning Authority
BMLTA	Bangalore Metropolitan Land Transport Authority
BMRDA	Bangalore Metropolitan Region Development Authority
BSK	Bapuji Seva Kendra
BWSSB	Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board
CA	Civic Amenity
CC	Co-ordination Committee/Commencement Certificate
CDP	Comprehensive Development Plan
CEI	Chief Electrical Inspector
CESE	Chartered Electrical Safety Engineer
CFC	Central Finance Commission
CGS	Central Generating Stations
CGWA	Central Ground Water Authority
CMC	City Municipal Council
CODR	Centre for Open Data Research
CSC	Common Service Centre
CSG	Centre for Smart Governance
CT	Current Transformation
CUG	Common User Group
DCR	Development Control Regulation
DMA	Directorate of Municipal Administration
DSK	Digital Seva Kendra
DUDC	District Urban Development Cell
EESL	Energy Efficiency Services Limited
EHT	Extra High Tension

ABBREVIATIONS

EI	Electrical Inspectorate
EO	Executive Officer
EPC	Engineering, Procurement and Construction
EWS	Economically Weaker Section
FAQ	Frequently Asked Questions
FAR	Floor Area Ratio
FBAS	Fund Based Accounting System
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FIR	First Information Report
FSD	Further Security Deposit
FSTP	Faecal Sludge Treatment Plant
GEM	Government e-Marketplace
GIGW	Guidelines for Indian Government Websites
GK	Ganga Kalyana
GP	Gram Panchayat
GPS	Global Positioning System
HI	Health Inspector
HOD	Head of Department
IPGRS	Integrated Public Grievance Redressal System
JMC	Joint Measurement certificate
KARC	Karnataka Administrative Reforms Commission
KDP	Karnataka Development Programme
KERC	Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission
KGIS	Karnataka Geographic Information System
KMAS	Karnataka Municipal Administrative Service
KMDS	Karnataka Municipal Data Society
KPCL	Karnataka Power Corporation Ltd.
KREDL	Karnataka Renewable Energy Development Ltd.
KRIDL	Karnataka Rural Infrastructure Development Ltd.
KRRDA	Karnataka Rural Roads Development Agency
KRWSS	Karnataka Rural Water Supply and Sanitation
KSBDB	Karnataka State Bio fuel Development Board
KSRSAC	Karnataka State Remote Sensing Application Centre
KSWAN	Karnataka State Wide Area Network
KUWS & DB	Karnataka Urban Water Supply and Drainage Board
LBPAS	Land and Building Plan Approval System
LCSA	Lease cum Sale Agreement
LHV	Lady Health Visitor
LPA	Local Planning Authority
LT	Low Tension

ABBREVIATIONS

MARCCS	Multi Agency Road Cutting Coordination System
MGNREGS	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme
MGREDI	Mahatma Gandhi Rural Energy & Development Institute
MORD	Ministry of Rural Development
MPC	Metropolitan Planning Committee
MRC	Municipal Reforms Cell
MVS	Multi Village Water Supply Scheme
MW	Minority Welfare
MWSS	Mini Water Supply Scheme
NABL	National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration of Laboratories
NeSDA	National e-Governance Service Delivery Assessment
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NHAI	National Highways Authority of India
NOC	No Objection Certificate
OC	Occupancy Certificate
OFC	Optical Fibre Cable
PAR	Performance Appraisal Report
PC	Possession Certificate
PCB	Pollution Control Board
PCKL	Power Company of Karnataka Ltd.
PHC	Primary Health Centre
PID No	Property Identification Number
PK	Poura Karmika
PMS	Performance Management System
POS	Point of Sale
PPP	Public-Private Partnership
PRED	Panchayat Raj Engineering Department
PRI	Panchayat Raj Institution
PWSS	Piped Water Supply Scheme
RD & PR	Rural Development and Panchayat Raj
ROC	Registrar of Companies
RTC	Record of Rights, Tenancy and Crops
RTI	Right to Information
RWA	Residents Welfare Association
RWS	Rural Water Supply

ABBREVIATIONS

SAAD	State Accounts and Audit Department
SAS	Self Assessment System
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SFC	State Finance Commission
SHG	Self Help Group
SIRD	State Institute of Rural Development
STP	Sewage Treatment Plant
STQC	Standardisation Testing and Quality Certification
STRR	Satellite Town Ring Road
STW	Scheduled Tribes Welfare
SW	Social Welfare
SWD	Social Welfare Department/Storm Water Drain
SWM	Solid Waste Management
TC	Technical Co-ordinator
TCP	Town and Country Planning
TDR	Transferable Development Rights
TI	Tax Inspector
TMC	Town Municipal Council
TP	Town Panchayat
UDA	Urban Development Authority
UDD	Urban Development Department
UGD	Underground Drainage
ULB	Urban Local Body
WSS	Water Supply Scheme
ZC	Zonal Commissioner
ZR	Zonal Regulation

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

The first Administrative Reforms Commission in Karnataka was constituted in the year 2000 under the Chairmanship of Sri. Haranahalli Ramaswamy. The Commission submitted its report in December 2001. The Commission made 256 recommendations of which 234 recommendations were implemented.

Governance is ever evolving and in the two decades since the establishment of the Sri. H. Ramaswamy Administrative Reforms Commission, there has been a complete transformation of technology and various institutions of Government in all sectors. In the last two decades and especially in the last two years due to Covid-19, there have been tremendous changes in the way humans interact and the way large institutions operate. The use of information and communication technology has revolutionized the workplace and communication among people. The two decades have also seen many social and economic changes in the State and beyond. The outlay and reach of welfare programmes and schemes administered both by State and the Central Government have increased tremendously along with the increasing role of Government in both development and regulatory domains.

The Government of Karnataka felt that there is a need to comprehensively evaluate the existing governance system and to recommend changes in the administration for creating good governance and a governance system for the coming decades of the 21st century.

In view of the above, the Government of Karnataka constituted the Karnataka Administrative Reforms Commission-2 and appointed Sri. T.M. Vijay Bhaskar IAS (Retd.) and former Chief Secretary to the Government of Karnataka (2018-2020) as the Chairman vide Government order DPAR-AR/05/ASP/2020 dated 07-01-2021. There are no Members in the Commission. The following subjects have been allotted to the Karnataka Administrative Reforms Commission-2.

I. Review of implementation of recommendations of the Sri H. Ramaswamy Administrative Reforms Commission

II. Recommendations for restructuring of departments and rationalization of staff strength at all levels of Government

iii. Identification of unnecessary cadre/staff in departments due to the use of technology and the possibility of merging departments, boards and corporations

iv. To comprehensively study and evaluate governance and governance systems currently in Government and State-owned Departments/Boards and Corporations and to recommend appropriate governance and structural reforms to meet the needs of the coming decades of the 21st century.

The Commission is required to complete its work study and submit its final report within two years and an interim report within a period of one year. The Karnataka Administrative Reforms Commission-2 started working with effect from 11-01-2021. It is located in Khanija Bhavan, Bengaluru.

The Commission examined the number of applications received by all departments of the State Government for all the citizen services that were notified under The Karnataka Sakala Services Act. A total of 5.45 crore applications were received for all citizen services in all departments between January 2019 and February 2021. Of these it was seen that 4.32 crore applications(79% of the total) were received by just three departments viz. Revenue, Transport and Food, Civil Supplies & Consumers Affairs departments. It was therefore decided to take up citizen centric services in these three departments for detailed study. (1) 79 online services of the Revenue department including Stamps & Registration, Survey Settlement & Land Records, Bhoomi and Atalji Jana Snehi Kendras (AJSK). (2) 49 services of the Transport department including KSRTC, BMTC, NEKRTC and NWKRTC. (3) 7 services of Food, Civil Supplies and Consumers Affairs department including Legal Metrology.

The Commission made a detailed study and analysis of Revenue, Transport, Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs Departments and recommendations were made covering these three departments in its **First Report submitted to Government** in **July 2021**.

The summary statement of recommendations made by the Karnataka Administrative Reforms Commission-2 in the **First Report** is given below.

Type of recommendations	Revenue	FCS	Transport	Total
General Recommendations	120	32	39	191
Recommendations for citizen centric Services	408	79	178	665
Total Recommendations	**528**	**111**	**217**	**856**

Immediately after submission of the **First Report** to Government, the Commission started work for the **Second and Third Reports.** It took up the following Departments for the Second and Third Reports based again on the number of applications received by each department for its services.

i. **Social Welfare Department**

ii. **Scheduled Tribes Welfare Department**

iii. **Backward Classes Welfare Department**

iv. **Minority Welfare Department**

v. **Home Department**

vi. **Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department**

vii. **Urban Development Department**

viii. **Energy Department**

The Commission Chairman called on the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Karnataka, **Shri. Basavaraj Bommai,** to seek his guidance on the work of the Commission and to get his suggestions on the administrative reforms required in the State. Further, the Hon'ble Chief Minister held a detailed meeting with the Chairman of the Commission and senior officers of Government on 10-01-2022 and shared his vision about the administrative reforms required for the State.

The Commission has followed the methodology adopted in preparing the First Report. In addition to the previous methodology, it got conducted a Process Audit of actual files, physical and electronic, of service applications for major services of the departments. This Second and Third Reports incorporate inputs obtained from the following sources.

1. **Focus Group Discussions (FGD):** The Commission held meetings with selected departmental officers and officials drawn from various levels, from the frontline to the head office, representing all four regions of the state. They were formed into groups with a mix of representatives from all four regions and from different levels of the hierarchy. A structured questionnaire with 11 questions was given to these groups for discussion. The groups after detailed interaction filled in the questionnaire and gave suggestions for improvement of delivery of the service along with general suggestions for departmental administrative reform. These suggestions were presented by each group to all other groups in a plenary meeting. Opinion and suggestions were taken from the members of the combined groups. The final suggestions were considered in making recommendations in these Reports.

2. **Field Visits:** The Commission visited Raichur, Ballari, Vijayanagar, Chamarajanagar, Chikkaballapur, Davangere and Bangalore Urban Districts and held meetings at Grama Panchayats (GPs) sub-taluk , taluk, subdivision and district level offices. Suggestions and feedback about citizen services were obtained from the officials working there as well as from visitors to these offices. During the field visits, the Commission visited the following offices and institutions.

    - Social Welfare (SW), Backward Classes Welfare (BCW), Scheduled Tribes Welfare (STW) & Minority welfare (MW) hostels, residential schools and taluk and district level offices in Raichur and Chamarajanagar districts.

    - Grama Panchayat, Taluk Panchayat (TP), Zilla Panchayat (ZP) offices. Meetings and discussions were held with Deputy Commissioners, Chief Executive Officer (CEOs) of Zilla Panchayats, Deputy Secretaries, Chief Accounts Officers of ZPs, Executive Officers (Eos) of Taluk Panchayats, Panchayat Development Officers (PDOs) and other grassroot level functionaries in Ballari, Vijayanagar and Chikkaballapur districts.

- City Corporations, CMCs, TMCs, TPs, Urban Development Authority offices; discussed with their Chairpersons, Commissioners, PDs of DUDCs, Chief Officers, Engineers, Revenue Officers, Health Officers, Health Inspectors, Bill Collectors, etc in Ballari, Vijayanagar, Chikkaballapur and Bengaluru Urban districts.

- Superintendent of Police office, Fire Station office, Rural Police Station, Urban Police Station, CEN Police Station in Davangere district and DCP (Central Office), Police Stations in the jurisdiction of Bengaluru City Police Commissionerate.

- BBMP Zonal Commissioners and Joint Commissioners offices, Division offices, Sub-division offices, Ward offices of West and Mahadevapura Zones; held meetings with Zonal Commissioners, Joint Commissioners, Health officers, Engineers, Revenue officers, Tax Inspectors and Bill Collectors.

- BDA and BMRDA offices and held meetings with the Commissioner, Director KTCP, Director BMRDA, Additional Directors, Town Planning Officers and other concerned officers.

- ESCOMs district, sub-division, taluk level offices and section offices; meetings were held with Executive Engineers, Assistant Executive Engineers and Section officers in Raichur, Chamarajanagar and Chikkaballapur districts. Meetings were also held with the Chief Electrical Inspector, Additional Chief Electrical Inspectors, Dy. Chief Electrical Inspectors, Electrical Inspectors of Electrical Inspectorate.

3. **Users' Feedback:** A BPO and Call Centre agency engaged by Sakala Mission for providing helpline services, called a sample of users of major services over telephone and obtained feedback from them about their experience. A feedback questionnaire was devised. The feedback sought from the users was on the time taken to obtain the desired service; the fees paid; the number of visits made to the concerned office; the difficulties faced; their suggestions for change and overall opinion regarding the experience. The suggestions given by the users are considered while making the recommendations.

4. **National e-Governance Service Delivery Assessment (NeSDA):** The National e-Governance Service Delivery Assessment (NeSDA) framework was conceptualized and launched by Government of India in 2018. The framework primarily assesses all the government service portals on 7 key parameters namely Accessibility, Content Availability, Ease of Use, Information Security & Privacy, End-service Delivery, Integrated Service Delivery and Status & Request Tracking. These 7 key parameters are further split into 77 guidelines. The Centre for Open Data Research (CODR) and M/s KPMG were asked to test each online service by doing a dummy login for the service and assess whether the service portal complied with the 77 guidelines of the NeSDA framework. The guidelines that are not complied with and the changes required for complying with them are given as recommendations.

5. **Process Audit:** Process audit of a small sample of applications and how the applications were dealt with in the receiving office was done for some popular services of the Departments. About 42 services were taken up for process audit: Energy Dept-09 (3-BESCOM, 06-Electrical Inspectorate), Home Dept-06,   RD & PR Dept-05, SW Dept -04, UDD-18 (06-BBMP, 03-BDA, 03-BWSSB, 06-CMC). For each service, 6 applications were examined of which 2 were accepted cases, 2 were rejected cases, one was accepted but with delay and one was rejected but with delay. Staff of the Commission visited the concerned offices to examine the physical and online files. The CODR assisted the officers of the Commission in anlysing the online services. This audit brought out important insights into the actual manner in which the applications were being processed and the services delivered. These findings are incorporated in the recommendations.

6. **Suggestions from retired Chief Secretaries:** Retired Chief Secretaries of the State Government were contacted and they were requested to share their suggestions for administrative reform in the State. The Commission is grateful to Sri. B.R. Prabhakara, Sri. B.K Bhattacharya, Smt. Teresa Bhattacharya, Dr. A Ravindra, Sri. B.S Patil, Sri. K.K. Misra, Smt. Malathi Das, Sri. S.V Ranganath, Sri Kaushik Mukherjee, Sri. Arvind Jadhav and Dr. Subhash Chandra Khuntia for giving their considered and insightful suggestions.

7. **Reports of Committees:** The Government on a proposal of KARC-2 constituted a Committee under the Chairmanship of Sri. Mohamed Sanaulla IAS (Retd) to study and submit a report on 'Improving the Annual Performance Appraisal Report Forms of Group-A & B Officers and Group C staff' and on performance management for departments. The reports submitted by the Committee form the basis for the recommendation on PAR form and performance management in this report.

8. The Commission has also consulted the following reputed institutions/NGOs.

    i. Indian Institute of Management, Bengaluru

    ii. Institute of Social and Economic Change, Bengaluru

    iii. National Law School of India University, Bengaluru

    iv. Centre for Open Data Research

    v. Azim Premji University

    vi. Public Affairs Centre, Bengaluru

    vii. Janaagraha

    viii. E Government Foundation

    ix. Transact Global BPO and Call Centre

9. Finalising the Report

Based on the above inputs and suggestions, draft reports were prepared department wise and shared with the concerned ACS/Pr Secy/Secretaries and Heads of Departments of the Social Welfare, Scheduled Tribes Welfare, Backward Classes Welfare, Minority Welfare, Rural Development and Panchayat Raj, Energy, Home and Urban Development Departments with a request to offer their comments or suggestions.

After sharing the draft reports, the Commission held meetings with the concerned ACS/Pr Secy/Secretaries and HODs to discuss the departmental draft reports and recommendations with them, for obtaining their comments on the draft report and further suggestions. The meetings were held with -

- Additional Chief Secretary, Social Welfare Department, Secretary, Backward Classes Welfare, Secretary, Minority Welfare, Commissioner, Social Welfare, Director Tribal Welfare, Commissioner, Backward Classes Welfare, Director, Minority Welfare and others.

- Additional Chief Secretary, Urban Development Department, Chief Commissioner BBMP, Secretary Urban Development Department, Director, Municipal Administration, Commissioner BDA, Commissioner BMRDA, Director, Town and Country Planning, Joint Director Karnataka Municipal Data Society and others.

- Additional Chief Secretary, Energy Department, MD BESCOM, Chief Electrical Inspector and others.

- Principal Secretary, Rural Development, Principal Secretary, Panchayat Raj , Commissioner RD, Commissioner PR, Commissioner Rural Water Supply, MD KRIDL, Chief Engineer KRRDA, CEO Biofuel Development board and others.

The comments and suggestions received from the Departments have been suitably incorporated in the final reports.

10. Objectives and Themes

The major objectives and themes running through the recommendations made in the first, second and third reports are:

11. Objectives

The objectives of the recommendations made are broadly:

i. To make it easier and faster for citizens to obtain Government benefits and services

ii. To reduce unnecessary workload on Government staff and improve their productivity

iii. To reduce wasteful expenditure in Government offices

iv. To plug leakages of revenue and improve Government revenues

12. Themes

The major themes running through the recommendations are:

1. Delegation of powers to lower levels to reduce time taken for delivering services, reducing workload on senior levels and improving productivity.

2. Use of technology to integrate databases, simplify record keeping, automate processes and reduce transaction times.

3. Simplification of procedures by cutting down unnecessary levels of processing of applications and files.

4. Participation of stakeholders in improving the functioning of frontline institutions for better service delivery.

5. Rationalisation and redeployment of staff and institutions based on workload across locations for better efficiency.

6. Cutting wastage of time, money and effort of citizens and staff in delivery of services and running offices.

7. Using performance assessment and appraisal as a tool to improve functioning and effectiveness of staff and departments.

8. Providing realistic amount of funds for office maintenance and contingencies.

9. Revising fees and penalties prescribed in Acts, Rules and orders in line with inflation.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT
AND
PANCHAYAT RAJ DEPARTMENT

RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND PANCHAYAT RAJ DEPARTMENT

These recommendations are based on the focus group discussions, the user feedback, process audit of files, National E-Governance Service Delivery Assessment (NeSDA) and visits by the Karnataka Administrative Reforms Commission-2 Chairperson and Advisor to GPs, TPs, ZPs in Ballari, Vijayanagar, Chamarajanagar and Chikkaballapur districts and discussions with senior officers of the Department.

Focus Group Discussion

Focus group discussions were held on 12.07.2021 by groups consisting of selected Deputy Secretaries (DS), Chief Accounts Officers (CAO), Chief Planning Officers (CPO), Executive Engineers (EE) of ZPs, Executive Officers (EO) of TPs, Assistant Executive Engineers (AEE), Panchayat Development Officers (PDOs) and Secretaries of GPs from the Rural Development and Panchayat Raj (RDPR) dept. Feedback and suggestions for improvement of service delivery was obtained from them. A second meeting to discuss the draft recommendations was held on 10.11.2021 with selected officers and staff of GPs, TPs and ZPs in Bengaluru.

Introduction:

The Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department (RD&PR) is the administrative department for rural development for improvement of quality of life in rural areas and for Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs). Karnataka is one of the pioneers in the country in implementing the 3-tier Panchayat Raj system. It is among the top States, in decentralising the most functions, funds and functionaries to PRIs. RD & PR Department works through Zilla Panchayats (ZP) at District Level, Taluk Panchayats (TP) at Taluk Level and Grama Panchayats (GP) at Village level.

As part of its mandate of rural development, the Department focuses on provision of drinking water supply, sanitation, rural roads and wage employment. The Department has also launched several programmes /campaigns for raising economic, social and political awareness to strengthen community participation through PRIs.

The Department has the following major agencies working under it:

1. Panchayat Raj Commissionerate
2. Rural Development Commissionerate (RDC)
3. Karnataka Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Commissionerate (KRWSS)
4. Panchayat Raj Engineering Department (PRED)

5.   Karnataka Rural Infrastructure Development Ltd. (KRIDL)

6.   Karnataka Rural Roads Development Agency(KRRDA)

7.   Abdul Nazir Saab State Institute of Rural Development and Panchayat Raj (ANSSIRD)

8.   Mahatma Gandhi Rural Energy & Development Institute(MGREDI)

9.   Karnataka Biofuel Development Board

2.1 General Recommendations

1.   Karnataka is a pioneer in decentralisation of powers to Panchayats. It has taken many steps to empower the Panchayats in terms of functions, funds and functionaries. As part of the Budget documents, a separate Zilla Panchayat Link document and Taluk Panchayat Link document are placed before the Legislature. These Link documents provide details of budgetary allocations to the ZPs and TPs under various heads of account. On the same lines Gram Panchayat Link document with RDPR schemes has been prepared. It should be expanded in scope to cover all departments that have village level programmes. This would give details of allocations under various heads of account of the relevant department to each GP and enable them to monitor and prepare and implement plans for gainfully utilising the funds.

2.2 Improving essential services

2.   RDPR department has proposed a new O&M policy for drinking water projects to replace the existing one. Drinking water supply is an immediate necessity and the GP is best suited to operate and maintain GP level schemes. The Operation and Maintenance of hand pumps, mini water supply schemes and single GP piped water supply schemes has been vested with the GP. The O&M grant to the GPs for maintaining these should be enhanced by RDPR department.

3.   Piped water supply schemes covering more than one GP, Multi Village schemes covering more than one GP and Mega MVS may be maintained by the Taluk Panchayat or ZP depending on the coverage of the scheme. Bulk water meters should be installed at the entry points of the drinking water supply pipelines into the GP limits. A per kilolitre charge has been fixed by Government in 2014-15 to be collected from the GPs based on their usage depending on the bulk water meter readings. It is reported that actual billing and collection is yet to be done in many cases. The rates fixed in 2014-15 may be revised. Billing and collection of these charges should be done in all cases to bring in greater accountability of GPs and RWS for equitable and sustainable use of drinking water resources. The charges should be collected by the RWS directorate from the Escrow account kept for this purpose in the GP. The GPs will be encouraged to use GP level drinking water sources, if and when available, in an effort to reduce the drawal of bulk water. This would promote the sustainable use of water.

4. The list of drinking water supply action plan works should be given to ESCOMs as soon as the action plan is approved. The drinking water supply action plan software should be linked to the ESCOMs new connection software so that the action plan details are auto-populated. This will enable the ESCOMs to take preparatory action for energisation of the drinking water supply schemes and reduce the time required for commissioning them.

2.3 Land and Khatas

5. Sec 144 (6) of the BBMP Act, 2020 provides for collecting double the property tax payable from unauthorised or illegal sites and buildings. It reads as follows:

> 144(6) - The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike may levy and collect the property tax from every building, vacant land or both including a building constructed in violation of the provisions of building byelaw or in an unauthorized layout or in a revenue land or from a building occupied without issuance of occupancy or completion certificate except the building constructed illegally in Government land, land belonging to any local body, any statutory body or an organization owned or controlled by the Government. The property tax collected from such building shall be double the tax payable which shall be maintained in a separate register:

> Provided that levy and collection of property tax under this sub-section from such building does not confer any right to regularise violation made, or title, ownership or legal status to such building. Such buildings shall always be liable for any action for violation of law in accordance with the provisions of this Act or any other law.

There is no corresponding provision in the Karnataka Gram Swaraj and Panchayat Raj (KGSPR) Act. Though many unauthorised layouts continue to be formed and unauthorised buildings built in GP jurisdictions, they are not given Khata numbers and assessed for payment of property tax. Such unauthorised layouts/ sites and constructions enjoy the benefits of the common services provided by the GP without paying building sanction charges, development charges and property tax.   Therefore an amendment may be proposed to the KGSPR Act, 1993 and Karnataka Panchayat Raj (Grama Panchayat Budgeting and Accounting Rules) 2006 for levying a penalty of twice the property tax leviable on such buildings and vacant lands and also to collect twice the water and sanitation rates, till a final decision is taken on them. This will enable the GPs to keep track of unauthorised sites and buildings and also partly cover the costs incurred by them in providing services to such sites and buildings.

6. At the time of transition to the E Swathu system of computerised khatas (registration in property tax register) in GPs, sufficient time was given, with many extensions of deadlines, for entering the data of the earlier handwritten Khata Registers in the E Swathu system. It was reported in some GPs visited that there are still some old Khatas that have not been entered in the E Swathu system.

    Drinking water supply, sanitation, electricity and roads being basic necessities, the residents of unauthorised layouts manage to gradually get them by making representations to elected representatives and officials. The GPs begin to provide basic services but cannot recover any charges or revenue from them. This is not a sustainable situation. A transitional arrangement has to be made so that the GPs are able to recover some charges and tax from these properties, till the time that they are either regularised or removed.

    Form 11B is similar to B Khata in BBMP areas. All unauthorised properties are given B khata in BBMP without any cut-off date. For GPs also, as recommended above, if a provision on the lines of Sec 144 (6) is made in the Karnataka Gram Swaraj and Panchayat Raj Act, all left out unauthorised sites and buildings will also be brought into the tax net and there would be no cut-off date for such action. Such properties may be levied penalty every year of twice the property tax and other cesses, water and sanitation rates leviable on them, till action is taken for removal or regularisation as per law. The lands may be converted to non-agricultural use by the Revenue department by levying conversion fee and penalty on them.

7. Generally, the misuse of GP khatas for giving a veneer to "revenue" sites is mostly found around urban areas. The problem is less rampant in remote rural areas outside the peri-urban areas and local planning areas. Therefore a more liberal view can be taken of giving layout approval in GPs whose areas are wholly beyond the limits of Local Planning Authorities and of City Corporations and Municipalities as specified in the Explanation below Sec 99 CC of the Karnataka Land Revenue Act i.e.

    i.   Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike - 18 kms
    ii. Belagavi, Kalaburagi, Hubli-Dharwad, Mangaluru, Mysuru Municipal Corporations – 10 kms
    iii. Other Municipal Corporations – 10 kms
    iv. City Municipalities – 5 kms
    v.   Town Municipal Councils and Town Panchayats – 3 kms

    For such areas, the KTCP Act may be amended to vest the power to approve layouts of less than 2 acres with the Taluk Panchayat. It may not be necessary in rural areas beyond urban and peri-urban areas to reserve 50% of land for roads, open spaces and civic amenities. For such remote rural areas, a lower percentage say 30% may be prescribed. This will reduce the cost of sites for rural residents and enable them to build their houses.

8. In private layouts approved by BDA, the concerned GP has the right to collect property tax from the site owners. The Civic Amenities (CA) sites in these layouts should also be handed over to the GPs. It was reported that BDA is giving khatas in such private layouts. This may not be legal. UDD and RDPR may jointly look into the matter and issue suitable instructions to BDA and the GPs.

9. Hakkupatras (title deeds) have been issued to site-less and houseless persons under Ashraya, Dr Ambedkar and other housing schemes. These Hakkupatras have been issued by Tahsildars, EOs and Relief & Rehabilitation project officers. It has been brought to our notice that, in some cases the original records of allotment with layout details are not found, even after a diligent search is made in the concerned records, including in the Hakkupatra register, in the ZP, TP, Tahsildar and GP office. Some original allottees may not be residing in the village and may not provide their Hakkupatra. The site owners who are resident in the village are not able to get Khata in Form 9 because the allotment details and layout plan giving the chakbandi details are not available or because they do not have the original Hakkupatra. They become ineligible for sanction of new houses under the Government housing schemes, even though they may be otherwise needy and eligible. To resolve such cases of missing site allotment details, it is suggested that a meeting of all allottees and all GP Members be called. Based on the documents and information given and agreed to by them, mahajar can be drawn up and a list of allottees with chakbandi should be prepared. The list may be displayed on the notice board and objections called. If there are no objections, these records may be submitted by the PDO to the EO of the TP for approval. If approved, the PDOs should be enabled to issue Khatas in Form 9 in the E Swathu software. If a site is vacant beyond the permitted period and the allottee is not residing in the village, its allotment may be cancelled and possession resumed to Government and vested with the GP for use as a CA site. Suitable circular in this regard may be issued by RDPR Department.

10. During our visits, we came across cases where land owners have sold their lands as sites without converting them or registering the sale; the site owners have unregistered documents; the RTC records show the name of the original land owner and the heirs of the original land owner lay claim to such lands. Though the present site owners had genuinely bought the sites from the original land owner, they cannot get a khata and therefore cannot get a house allotted under the Government housing schemes. A suggestion to resolve such cases that was made in the FGD was that Form 11B should have a column showing the Occupants name on the lines of Col 12(2) Cultivators name in the RTC. This idea and its legal implications can be examined by RDPR and a suitable solution may be found to resolve such cases in the interest of the houseless site holders.

11. At present, the powers to grant land in Gramathana are with the Government. Gramathana sites are required for construction of anganwadi, school, health, village level offices etc. It is recommended that the power to grant land upto a specified area in Gramathana for Government anganwadi, school, health, village offices and for any other civic amenities be delegated to the CEO of the ZP.

12. Licensed Surveyors can be allotted to each Gram Panchayat. The productivity of LS would increase if they don't waste time in travelling from one GP to another for survey. Pendency of survey applications would reduce and citizen satisfaction would increase. SSLR may consider fixing GP wise jurisdiction for LSs.

2.4 Merging PRED and KRRDA

13. There are about 2, 25,640 Hand pumps, 51,426 Mini water Supply Schemes (MWSS), 40,115 Piped Water Supply Schemes (PWSS). About 7980 habitations are likely to be covered under 573 Multi Village Water Supply Schemes (MVS). About 18,728 RO plants have been commissioned. Jal Jeevan Mission has been taken up on a mission mode with budget allocation of more than Rs. 10,200 crore in 2021-22. Maintenance of these schemes is a big challenge because of dwindling water sources. In case of MVS schemes, operation & maintenance of pumps & motors, filtration and chlorination units, leakage detection of pipeline, concurrent water quality testing require close supervision. The Rural Water Supply (RWS) department was created because the complexity of drinking water supply installations has moved much beyond installing borewells, MWSS and PWSS to MVS and Mega Water Supply schemes. These MVS and Mega Water Supply schemes cover many GPs and taluks. They require specialised knowledge and experience. PRED (Panchayat Raj Engineering Dept) engineers, if they lack specialisation may not manage them well. There is a tendency for some PRED engineers to give more attention to roads and buildings to the detriment of drinking water supply schemes. Because drinking water supply is an essential service, the demands on and stress levels of officers working in this department are high. Engineers prefer to work in PRED than in RWS. Therefore, many posts in RWS department are not filled, while the corresponding PRED posts are filled. The average workload per sub division in the PRED, RWS and Karnataka Rural Roads Development Agency (KRRDA) as on September, 2021 is given below:

Average Workload of RWS, PRED and KRRDA sub divisions (Rs in Crore)					
	RWS -178 Sub-Dns	PRED-177 Sub-Dns	KRRDA - 50 Sub Dns		Combined PRED and KRRDA - 177 Sub-Divisions
Year 2019-20	Per Sub-Dn	Per Sub-Dn	Per Sub-Division for 50 Sub-Dns	Per Sub-Division for 177 Sub-Dns	
Total Estimated cost of ongoing works	19.36	8.21	48.79	13.78	21.99
Total Expenditure for the year 2019-20	16.2	2.82	17.88	5.05	7.87
Year 2020-21					
Total Estimated cost of ongoing works	55.85	5.7	58.06	16.4	22.10
Total Expenditure for the year 2020-21	14.29	1.74	27.31	7.71	9.45
Year 2021-22 (Till Sept-2021)					
Total Estimated cost of ongoing works	61.69	9.1	57.81	16.33	25.43
Total Expenditure for the year 2021-22(Sept-21)	7.28	0.96	9.6	2.71	3.67

It can be seen from the above table, that the workload both in terms of total estimated cost of ongoing works and in terms of total expenditure in a year in an average RWS sub division is more than the combined workload of average PRED and KRRDA sub divisions.

Drinking water supply is the most critical citizen centric service of the department and requires highest priority. The nature of works attended to by PRED are rural roads and smaller building works like Anganwadi, school buildings etc. There is a dedicated agency in the RDPR Department for construction and maintenance of roads namely Karnataka Rural Road Development Agency (KRRDA). When PRED was created, the KRRDA was not in existence. The rural roads can be entrusted to KRRDA. Being a specialised agency for roads, it may be able to maintain rural roads better. As for the building works, one option would be to entrust them to PWD, KRIDL, Nirmithi Kendra, GP etc. Another option would be rename the KRRDA as the Karnataka Rural Roads and Buildings Development Agency (KRRBDA) and entrust the building works of PRED also to this agency. Hence, there may be no need for a separate department for Panchayat Raj Engineering. In either way, it is recommended to merge PRED with KRRDA and strengthen RWS department by filling the vacant posts. Thus 177 sub divisions of PRED and 50 sub-divisions of KRRDA would be merged. The vacant excess posts in 50 divisions can be identified and abolished.

2.5 Abolition of the Karnataka State Biofuel Development Board

14. The Karnataka State Bio fuel Development Board (KSBDB) is a Society registered under Karnataka Societies Registration Act 1960 in 2010. The Board was constituted with a vision to create an enabling environment to harnessing the optimal potential of renewable energy sources with specific focus on biofuel resources. The Society/Board is functioning under the purview of Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department, Government of Karnataka.

The other objectives of the Society are: promotion/development of bio fuel projects, bio-fuel plantation; development of biomass energy and related projects; promotion of compressed biogas /ethanol; research and development on bio energy.

The budget allocation for the Board for the financial year 2021-22 is Rs.3 crore. The department has identified about 33 Bio Information Dissemination Centres and Research Institutions; their maintenance charge of about Rs.1.29 crore per annum is met by the Board and about Rs.1.65 core is being utilised for the administrative expenditure of the Board. The sanctioned staff strength including Managing Director is 14, of which 3 posts are Group-A, 6 posts are Group-B, 1 post Group-C and 3 Group-D posts. At present 7 posts are filled up of which 3 are Group-D.

The Karnataka Renewable Energy Development Ltd., (KREDL) has similar objectives of promoting renewable energy, that includes bio fuel and biomass energy, together with energy conservation in the State. KREDL works through various Governmental Agencies, Private Organizations, NGO's and Accredited Energy Auditors. Till date KREDL has commissioned about 15,226 MW of renewable energy projects in the state which is almost 50% of the total power requirement of the State. About 5000 MW renewable energy projects are under progress.

Further, about 139 MW of biomass energy projects are being commissioned and 1730 MW cogeneration projects of sugar factories have been sanctioned and are monitored by the KREDL. Production of ethanol is part of the same cogeneration projects and they are also monitored by KREDL.

Both KSBDB and KREDL have closely related objectives and projects. Bio fuel energy projects that are being handled by the KSBD Board can be managed by the KREDL. The projects of bio fuel plantation can be handed over to the Forest Department /Social Forestry. The remaining renewable energy projects along with a defunct 1 MW biomass project of KSBDB can be handled by the KREDL.

In view of the above bio fuel energy projects/schemes can be handed over to the KREDL and bio fuel plantation can be handed over to Social Forestry. All the existing bio fuel energy projects/schemes can be transferred to the KREDL and Karnataka State Bio fuel Development Board can be abolished. The existing working staff of the Board may be redeployed to the parent Departments or to KREDL. It is recommended that initially, the KSBDB be shifted to the administrative control of Energy department, since renewable energy is a subject matter of that department. The Energy department can subsequently take a decision on abolition of KSBDB.

2.6 Making it easier for citizens to use services

15. Door delivery of all services may be introduced by GPs by collecting a service charge from users on the lines of Jana Sevaka model of E Governance department. This will benefit the elderly, handicapped and daily wage workers. RDPR and E Governance departments can jointly work out the details and issue guidelines to the GPs for introducing this provision.

16. Generation of new Aadhaar card and updation are among the most demanded Government services in villages. Each Gram Panchayats should have an Aadhaar enrolment centre. This will be a great boon to villagers by saving them time, money and effort needed to go to urban areas for these services. Many GPs would be capable of investing their own funds. GPs should be permitted by issuing suitable circular/order to use their own funds to purchase Aadhaar enrolment/updation equipment like retina scanner for generation of new Aadhaar cards and for updation, if Government is not providing the equipment. GP staff should be given training and login credentials. RDPR Department should issue necessary guidelines also regarding Aadhaar equipment, installation and training.

17. Non-agricultural land conversion software and layout approval software E Vinyasa should be linked to E Swathu to make it easier for owners to include such properties in Form 9 and 11A.

18. After a layout is approved, E Swathu has provision for bulk upload of all sites, public amenities and roads of the layout. But, for lack of a Government order permitting such bulk generation of khatas, each site owner is forced to upload the same documents for each site. This is a waste of time, effort and money for both the site owners as well as for the GP. Therefore, a Government order should be issued by RDPR to GPs to permit such bulk upload. This facility available in the E Swathu software should be put to use.

19. A similar situation exists in the case of flats in an apartment complex. The software has provision for bulk upload by the builder and generation of flat wise khatas but it is not operational for lack of a Government order permitting this. A Government order should be issued in this case also to permit bulk upload of flats and operationalise the software provision.

20. Institutions like BDA, UDAs, KHB, and KIADB are issuing Hakkupatras for sites allotted by them in the jurisdiction of the GPs. However, these institutions are not supplying the corresponding layout plans/sketches and allotment details to GPs for registering khatas and collecting property tax from the allottees. As a result, the GPs are deprived of property tax income while the allottees themselves are put to trouble in having to apply for khata individually with all details. For the process to become simpler, such layout plan/sketch and allottees details must be made available to GPs though e-Swathu portal. A suitable provision with login may be made on the E Swathu portal for BDA, UDAs, KHB and KIADB to enter the details.

21. Section 269 (1) of Karnataka Gram Swaraj and PR Act provides for appeal to the Executive Officer against any original order of the GP and sub section (2) makes the decision of this appellate authority final. The only recourse for GP residents aggrieved by the decision of the appellate authority is to approach the courts. This is expensive and time-consuming for rural residents. There is a provision for second appeal under Sec 50 of the Karnataka Land Revenue Act. For the benefit of rural residents, it is recommended that a provision for second appeal to the CEO, ZP against the decision of the EO be added by amending the KGSPR Act.

22. Gram Panchayats are the closest administrative units of self-government for rural people. Many of them would have keen interest in the proceedings and decisions of the GP. It would be useful if the proceedings and resolutions of the GP meetings are displayed on the GP notice board and website. The monthly income and expenditure statement should also be displayed on the notice board and website.

23. Gram Panchayat members, being close to the rural people, are in the best position to guide citizens on how to avail various services and schemes. The GP members should be given an annual interactive training for atleast two days through SATCOM/ YouTube by SIRD covering the latest developments in different services and schemes and for answering their questions.

24. There should be an option given on Panchatantra portal for each GP to upload statutory disclosure of information under Sec 4 (1) (a) and (b) of Right to Information Act. This should be visible in public domain on Panchamitra portal.

2.7 Improving e-delivery of services

25. Bapuji Seva Kendras (BSKs) are established in all Grama Panchayats of the State to provide citizen centric services required in rural areas. At present only 59 services are listed for delivery. However, the recommendation in the First Report of the KARC2 is that all the online Government services be delivered through BSKs. It was informed that some GPs are already providing nearly 400 services through BSKs. The BSKs should be transformed into Gram Panchayat level AJSK-like and Digital Seva Kendra (Common Service Centre) like centres, a single delivery point for all Sakala and non-Sakala services.

26. BSK operator is not given login to access Seva Sindhu services as is given to AJSK operator. Login access given to AJSK operators may be given to BSK operators also.

27. A number of popular services like enrolment in PM Fasal Bima Yojana, Aadhaar updating, gas booking, pan card, passport, bus and railway reservation and other B2C services are available on Digital Seva Kendra (Common Service Centre (DSK)) platform. It would be convenient for GP residents to access these services in the GP itself, instead of going to a DSK. It is recommended that BSK be proposed as Village Level Entrepreneur to become a Digital Seva Kendra or given access to DSK services so that they can provide all other Govt of India and non-Government services also on the lines of DSKs.

28. Based on the number of applicants, many GPs may require additional DEO to work in the BSK. Government order to recruit additional DEOs has been issued. But recruitment has not been done because of litigation pending in the Hon. High Court from 2017. RDPR may take necessary steps in consultation with Advocate General to request for early hearing of the case.

29. Record of Rights, Tenancy and Crops (RTC) of Revenue department (RD) can be printed from any online computer or digital service centre. A wallet has been created for this purpose by the RD. Digital service centres load money in the wallet and are permitted to print the corresponding number of RTCs as per prescribed fees. A similar system should be put in place by Urban Development and RDPR departments for printing E Aasthi and E Swathu khata certificates of houses and sites in urban and rural areas provided there are no property tax dues to be paid.

30. BSK system should be linked to AJSK system, so that when an application for a Revenue department service is submitted online it can be transferred electronically to the concerned Village Accountant. After approval, the final certificate/sanction also should be sent from the AJSK system to the BSK system, so that the applicant can collect it from the GP itself.

31. It was reported in the FGD that a few GPs are using e Procurement platform for tendering process, while some GPs are even now following the manual tendering system. The reason mentioned was that PDO's do not have logins and digital signature. Hence a system may be put in place to provide logins and DSCs to PDOs within a time limit. Once this is done, e Procurement may be made mandatory and manual tendering stopped.

32. Procurement through Government E Marketplace (GEM) portal has been permitted under KTPP Act. In order to popularise it RDPR and Finance departments can jointly organise Satcom/YouTube training for all PDOs on the features of GEM portal and how to use it.

33. Section 300 of the KGSPR Act requires every PDO of GP, EO of TP and CEO of ZP to prepare and place their Annual Administration Reports before their respective bodies. In the interest of transparency and suo motu disclosure of information to the public, it is recommended that a direction be issued to these PRIs to place their Annual Administration Report on the Panchatantra and Panchamitra website in the public domain.

34. A daily SMS should be sent to PDOs, EOs and CEOs regarding the pending and overdue Sakala applications with them. Earlier as soon as an application was registered on Sakala, a SMS would be sent to the PDO. It is reported that this is now discontinued. The earlier system of sending a SMS to the PDO as soon as an application or complaint is registered should be reintroduced.

35. The RDPR service website should be able to provide Kannada input option using Kannada virtual keyboard; it needs to be enabled with Kannada auto-populate option and with text to voice conversion in order ease the access for physically challenged.

36. Server issues and delays due to downtime of servers are common complaints. Suitable steps may be taken to address the server problems.

37. It is informed that GPs have to operate 29 software systems like Panchatantra, BSK, Gandhi Sakshi Kayaka, MGNREGS, SBM, BSK and E Gram Swaraj . A technical helpline should be operated from the State level by the RDPR department to give guidance to PDOs, Secretaries and GP DEOs when they face technical problems in using these applications.

38. KSWAN connections should be given to all GPs. In the first instance, KSWAN connection given to AJSKs could be extended to GP offices located in the same village as the AJSKs.

2.8 Civil Works

39. Community contracts can be given to Self help groups (SHG) for works and supplies upto a value of Rs 20 lakhs under Sec. 60B of the KGSPR Act. This has reportedly not been operationalised because guidelines have not been issued by Government. The guidelines/rules for operationalising this excellent provision may be issued at the earliest.

40. There are lakhs of Women SHGs in Karnataka. In some urban and rural areas, they have been given responsibility for sweeping and collection of garbage. Some have been given responsibility to run solid waste processing units by GPs. This is a commendable trend. It should be encouraged.

41. Most of the works entrusted to PRED cost below Rs 5 lakhs and some cost below Rs 2 lakhs. The PRED even after merger with KRRDA does not have the staff strength to prepare estimates, approve, entrust, measure and check measure, monitor quality, make payment and ensure completion of hundreds of such small works in every taluk. Apart from the GP, many agencies like PRED, KRIDL, Nirmithi Kendra are entrusted such small works in rural areas under MLALADS, MPLADS, KKRDB etc. There is every possibility of the same work being done or reported to be done by more than one agency. GPs are executing many small works under MGNREGS and other funds. To reduce the scope for duplication of work, ensure local monitoring, reduce workload on State and district level agencies and improve overall efficiency of execution, it is recommended that initially works estimated to cost upto Rs 2 lakh under any scheme of GOK be entrusted only to GPs for execution. They may be directed to execute them on the lines of MGNREGS works.

42. Estimates and measurement books should be prepared and maintained in Kannada for GP works, including MGNREGS works, to make it easier for workers, citizens and GP Members to read and understand them.

2.9 Improving revenues of GPs

43. It was informed that there are no rules framed for collecting property tax from mobile towers in rural areas. As a result, GPs are finding it difficult to collect property tax from them. RDPR should expeditiously issue rules regarding property tax to be collected from mobile towers.

44. Sanitation fees may be collected for maintenance of solid and liquid waste sanitation in public places. Earlier an Education cess of 10% was being levied, but has now been abolished. Government may consider specifying collection of a Sanitation fee at 15% of the property tax under Sec 199 (3) (j).

2.10 Improving working conditions and staff productivity

45. Annual Action Plan of GPs has to be prepared by June end every year. If for any reason, it is not prepared by then, the EO of the TP should be given powers to finalise it based on the Gram Sabha recommendations.

46. User feedback was that they could not meet GP officials in their offices even after several visits. The suggestion was to enforce bio-metric attendance and install and monitor CCTV cameras. RDPR may reiterate its instructions to TPs and ZPs that they should avoid calling PDOs and GP Secretaries for offline meetings. As far as possible, only online meetings should be held. They should not be called more than once a month for offline meeting to the TP.

47. RDPR may issue instructions that facial identification or biometric attendance system and CCTV cameras should be compulsorily installed at the entrance and inside the office by all GPs. The internet link to the CCTV camera feed should be placed in the public domain for any tech savvy resident to check if the concerned officials are available in office.

48. E-office improves productivity and speed of decision making. All GPs have computers and internet facility. They could use E Office for sending letters and proposals to TPs or other taluk level officers, if it is made compulsory. It is recommended to introduce and direct the mandatory use of e-Office in all TPs and Grama Panchayats. Initially it could be used for sending letters and proposals with the relevant scanned files online to ZP or TP or other taluk or district level offices. This will reduce delays and ensure paperless work.

49. The largest cadre in GPs, around 30 in some GPs (e.g. in Machanayakanahalli GP, Ramanagara taluk, Ramanagara district and Uyyamballi GP, Kanakapura taluk, Ramanagara district), is that of watermen and pump operators. There are 25,076 watermen and 7,986 pump operators in all GPs. This gives an average of around 5-6 watermen and operators per GP. They have been recruited by GPs based on a circular allowing recruitment of one waterman per water supply scheme. Each GP has many mini and piped water supply schemes. Therefore the watermen have a small area of operation. Some of them e.g. in Murabbihal GP, Hagaribommanahalli taluk, Vijayanagar district, have not been paid for as many as 30 months for lack of funds. It is recommended that RDPR department should immediately withdraw, if not already withdrawn, the earlier circular/order permitting GPs to recruit one waterman per water supply scheme. By installing remotely controlled switches and meters, the pumps can be operated from a remote location. Their role is much less in places where MVS drinking water schemes are functional. Some of the already recruited watermen and pump operators may be deployed to collect property taxes and water and sanitation charges. Some can be used for collection of dry waste. Those who are educated may be given training as data entry operators in local computer training centres and used for data entry work. Some excess watermen can be redeployed in other GPs if they are willing to accept the watermen. Those who are habitually absent or working unsatisfactorily can be removed by GPs.

50. In future, Government may decide that no new watermen should be appointed by GPs. Instead the work of watermen should be given to the local Women SHGs with appropriate training and tools. They may do a much better job, having direct knowledge of the ground situation.

51. In addition to bill collectors, watermen and pump operators also should be given responsibility for property tax and water rate collections and given targets. A dashboard may be provided in the Panchatantra software for EO and PDOs to monitor the collection of revenue on a daily basis.

52. Village level officials like Medical Officer, PHC, Veterinary Officer, Village Accountant etc must attend KDP and Grama Sabha meetings when they are specifically called by the GP. They may not be required to be present in every GP KDP meeting, especially if they serve more than one GP. If there is a specific subject concerning them, they should make it a point to attend the KDP meeting if called by the GP. CEO ZP/EO TP must ensure their attendance.

53. Video graphing of Grama Sabha and GP meeting is already made compulsory; however it is not fully implemented in the GPs. Information about public suggestions on civil works, selection of beneficiaries, attendance of members of Grama Sabha, presence of departmental officials, decisions of Grama Sabha should be recorded and transmitted through local cable TV network if available.

54. Technical Assistants, taken on outsourced basis, are available for all GPs for giving technical sanction, supervising and recording measurements of MGNREGS works. On an average, there is one TA for about 3 GPs, whereas there is one JE/AE of PRED for about 10 GPs. Water supply, sanitation, building, streetlight, road and drainage works taken up by the GP have to be technically sanctioned and recorded by the AE/JE of the PRED or of ESCOM. These AE/JEs are overburdened due to vacancies, holding additional charges and supervising a large number of small works. As a result, delays occur and quality of work suffers. Therefore, it is recommended that the Technical Assistants incharge of MGNREGS works may be authorised to give technical sanction, supervise and record measurements in Measurement Books (MB) for works costing up to a limit of say Rs.5 lakhs, for works other than MGNREGS works also, like those of water supply, sanitation, street lighting and civil works under Central Finance Commission, State Finance Commission, GP, TP, ZP, Swachh Bharat Mission and other funds and schemes.

55. Under MGNREGS, works costing upto Rs 50,000 do not require check measurement. For works costing more than this, the Technical Coordinator (TC) and Assistant Director (AD) jointly check measure the measurement done by the TA in the measurement book (MB). GP works are broadly akin to MGNREGS works in terms of the size of the work estimates. In order to reduce delays in check measurements and speed up work completion while reducing the workload on the AEE, it is recommended that RDPR may entrust the relevant AE/JE or the TC and AD jointly (instead of the AEE of the concerned subdivision) with the power to check measure for other GP works also upto a limit of Rs 10 lakhs

56. It is informed that AEs/JEs working under the Karnataka Daily Wage Employees Welfare (KDWEW) Act, 2012 and those taken under Jal Nirmal project are not given powers to write MBs. Outsourced TAs are given powers to write MB for MGNREGS works. There are many vacancies of JEs/AEs. Therefore, AEs/JEs working under the KDWEW Act and those recruited under Jal Nirmal project may be given powers to write measurement books with a view to expedite completion of works. Suitable orders may be issued by RDPR in this regard.

57. Audit of GPs is done by Local Audit Circles of State Accounts and Audit department (SAAD). There are 5,961 GPs in the State. The total amounts spent by many GPs have are in crores of rupees. At present due to the large number of GPs and vacancies in the SAAD, the GPs are audited by SAAD once in 3-4 years. Annual audit is already done by CAs engaged by GPs. Financial documents are stored for long periods of time till the SAAD audit is completed. If SAAD entrusts the audit of accounts to CAs empanelled by it, external audit of GPs could be done every year in a timely manner. Audit by empanelled CAs would be more cost-effective compared to audit by SAAD. The CA audit reports could be taken up for further audit on a sample basis by SAAD. Sec 246 (1) states that,

"The accounts of every Grama Panchayat shall be audited each year by such officer as may be authorised by the Controller of State Accounts".

Controller of State Accounts could entrust the audit of each GP to a particular empanelled CA each year under this provision. It is recommended that the annual audit of GP accounts, both online and offline transactions, be authorised by SAAD to empanelled CAs. Their fees may be paid by SAAD to make the audit more objective.

58. It was informed that in TPs statutory deductions of GST, royalty, Income Tax and Labour funds from TP works are deducted directly on Khajane 2 software. The same facility is not available to GPs for GP works. It is suggested that a similar deduction facility be made available for GP untied/CFC/SFC grant works on Khajane 2. This will simplify the work of remitting statutory deductions to the concerned heads.

59. There is a suggestion by RDPR department, that Khajane 2 treasury and accounting system should be extended for use by all Gram Panchayats in the interest of better account keeping and ease of remittances. It is recommended that Commissionerate, Khajane devise a suitable process to enable GPs to use the Khajane 2 system.

60. At present financial transactions from GP funds, statutory grants, payment of salaries, including payments for civil works is being done through cheques. It is recommended that payments of salaries, contracts and works by GPs be completely through online payment systems like RTGS/NEFT or UPI based payment system. Cheques and drafts should not be used. This will make it easier for GPs to keep accounts, avoid unnecessary workload and delays involved in writing cheques and delivering them.

61. A number of rules, notifications, government orders, circulars and important letters have been issued to ZPs, TPs, GPs by RDPR department since the KPR Act came into force. It would be useful to compile all such rules, notifications, government orders, circulars and important letters pertaining to ZPs, TPs and GPs, arranged subject wise, in one compendium and upload it on the Panchatantra website. A good search facility should be provided on the portal for these documents. The compendium could be printed and distributed also. Productivity of the staff would certainly improve if they could access relevant information in one place.

62. Rajiv Gandhi Seva Kendras are permitted to be built under MGNREGS. Many GPs have built these and use them as GP offices. In those GPs where Bapuji Seva Kendras do not have a separate room/building, a proposal to allow construction of BSKs under MGNREGS may be made to MoRD, GOI.

63. A monthly SATCOM/YouTube meeting with Adhyakshas and PDOs of all GPs and EOs may be held on the lines of such meetings held in previous years. These meetings could be used to communicate the latest instructions, to review progress under important programmes, to obtain valuable feedback about field level problems and to motivate the Taluk and GP functionaries. The ACS/Pr. Secy of RDPR and the other heads of department of RDPR should participate in the SATCOM/YouTube meeting for it to be meaningful.

64. GPs have to maintain 58 registers as per the KGSPR Act. On top of this, they have to maintain hundreds of registers for other civil works, E Swathu, RTI, Sakala, MGNREGS, SBM and the like. A mobile app with an integrated software system on the lines of Sneha app developed for Anganwadi workers may be developed by RDPR for GPs to reduce the burden of maintaining hundreds of registers.

2.11 Others

65. There may be quite a few GP Adhyakshas, Upadhyakshas and members who are illiterate. As was done previously, RDPR and Adult Education Directorate should jointly organise residential literacy camps for them at district level or for a cluster of districts to make the Members functionally literate.

66. Section 12 of the KGSPR Act lists the cases in which a GP member incurs disqualification. It is recommended that a sub-section (m) be added to disqualify such GP members who are found by a competent authority to have submitted invalid caste certificate while submitting nomination for being elected to a reserved constituency. On inclusion of this provision, the seat of the relevant GP member shall be deemed to have become vacant under Sec 13(1)(a) of the Act.

2.12 Process Audit

Process audit of a small sample of applications for services given by citizens and how they were dealt with was done for three popular services of Building License, Issue of Form No 9/11A and NOC to Escoms. For each service, 6 applications were examined of which 2 were accepted cases, 2 were rejected cases, one was accepted but with delay and one was rejected but with delay. Staff of the Commission visited a Gram Panchayat to examine the physical and online files/cases. They saw 18 files, 6 files each on the three services. This audit brought out important insights into the actual manner in which the applications were being processed and the services delivered.

Process Audit observations common to all three services:

* For all three services the processes are done end to end online.

* There are no time logs for each stage of the application from the time of its submission to final decision, when it is moved among officials.

* Once the documents are verified and the license/form/NOC is approved, the applicant needs to pay separately through RTGS to collect the certificate. There is no option to pay online in the service portal.

* Only a few applications are submitted through Bapuji Seva Kendra. Majority of the applications have been received manually. This is borne out at the State level also. As on date for all Sakala services delivered by RDPR dept, only 8513 applications have been submitted online. On average only 1 to 2 applications are submitted online in each Gram Panchayat.

Recommendations:

67. If an application is manually submitted then a facility should be provided to the GP staff to enter it on the online portal.

68. Online service portal should have the option to accept online payment in various modes.

69. Edit option should be enabled for the PDO. She should be able to access the service portal to check and make corrections to set right minor deficiencies in the application, if found necessary, without having to reject it or send it back to the applicant.

70. There should be a time log of the movement of each application from level to level and this should be updated on the status page of the application.

71. RDPR department should issue advertisements and conduct awareness programs to encourage citizens to apply online.

2.13 Recommendations related to services provided by RD & PR Department

1. Building License

Introduction

Grama Panchayat is the competent authority to issue building license. Applicant may submit an application online or at BSK of the GP. The process is the same for renovation or reconstruction. After receiving the completed application, 7 days public notice is issued and after hearing objections if any, it is placed before the GP meeting for approval. The Sakala time limit for providing this service is 60 days.

Users' feedback

About 915 citizens who applied for the service were called to seek feedback.

- Out of 915 calls, feedback was captured from 269 users; 426 citizens did not respond, 81 numbers were wrong numbers; 16 users asked to call back, 12 refused to give feedback; 3 applied through brokers and call details were not updated in case of 3 users.

- Out of 269 users, 256 users applied for the service in Government offices, 8 applied online, 2 applied though AJSK, one through Bangalore-One and 2 users applied through a third party.

- 18 users rated the experience as excellent, 200 as good, 45 as average and 6 users rated it as poor.

Users' suggestions:

- Officers of GP are not reporting to office on time, offices are closed for long hours, people are not aware of their whereabouts. They suggest enforcing online biometric attendance system.

- The staff should provide information about the service or give a booklet with detailed explanation about the service in Kannada. They should help users to fill the forms and give the applicants information on the application status.

- Building license service charge is very small; it can be increased.

- Officers should not ask for documents multiple times; a user stated that he submitted documents 7 times for a NOC.

- For uploading files there is limitation of file size, so users have to visit the office to personally submit the application. Increase the file size limit for uploading.

- Application fee and all other fees should be collected in one office in one place.

- Keep suggestion box in every government office to post the feedback of service taken by the citizen. The feedback must be read by the higher officers.

- Introduce doorstep service within Panchayat limits. Citizen suggested that there must be government service centres in every village that will be very useful for citizen to submit their application in their village itself.

- Server issues require serious attention.

Recommendations:

1. Property tax on buildings is calculated as a percentage of the capital value of a building under the KGS&PR Act as amended in 2015. Therefore, the property tax revenue demand of the GP rises with increase in the guidance value of land giving buoyancy to revenue receipts. However, building license fees as per KPR (ZP, TP and GP Control over erection of buildings) Model Bye laws 2015 are fixed in absolute rupee terms leading to stagnancy of revenues from this source. GPs face increasing expenditure due to salaries, costs, development works. Building license fees are a major source of revenue in local bodies. In BBMP the building license fees are calculated as a percentage of the guidance value. Even in the absolute rupee rates fixed in Schedules VII, VIII, IX and X of the above Model Bye laws, there is not much of a difference in the rates prescribed for areas close to BBMP and those GPs that are farthest from any urban area. It is therefore recommended that the building license fees be fixed as a percentage of the guidance value of the land so as to capture the increase in guidance values, building construction costs, inflation and give the much needed buoyancy to GP revenues.

2. For construction of residential houses on sites with area less than say 2400 sq. feet, the President of GP and PDO jointly, may be authorised, by amending Sec 64 of KGSPR Act, to approve issue of license on file within a shorter time-limit of 15 days after obtaining a self-declaration and undertaking from the applicant instead of waiting till the next GP meeting. The PDO and Secretary can jointly sign the license.

3. Rural residents may not be able to provide a building plan blueprint prepared by an architect/engineer. This imposes unnecessary cost on them. It is recommended that the RDPR department exempt buildings on sites with area less than 1200 sq. ft in GPs outside peri-urban areas from the requirement of producing architect/engineer approved building plan. For GPs with areas located in peri-urban limits as defined under Sec 94 CC of the Karnataka Land Revenue Act the existing provisions may continue.

4. Major building constructions are coming up in GPs in the peri-urban areas around cities like Bengaluru, Mysuru, and Hubballi. There is no mechanism in such GPs for monitoring the licensees' adherence to license conditions and for identifying violations if any. GPs with areas falling within 18kms distance from BBMP limits and 10km distance from other Corporation limits should be allowed to obtain services of additional technical staff on outsourcing basis for monitoring and regulating licensed and illegal constructions.

5. The suggestions made by users given above may be considered for implementation.

6. To submit online application for building construction license, an extract/copy of e-Swathu is required. E-Swathu may be integrated with building license module and the need for submitting a copy of e-Swathu may be dispensed with.

7. The time limit specified in Sec 64(2) of the KPR Act for this service is 60 days. This may be reduce to 45 days.

8. The file size limit for uploading documents is 200KB. It may be increased to 1 MB.

2.   Trade License

Introduction

Applicants may submit an application for Trade License online or at BSK of the GP. The Sakala time limit for providing this service is 45 days.

User Feedback

792 users of this service were called to seek their feedback. The observations are as follows:

- Feedback captured from 246 users; 150 numbers found to be wrong numbers; 155 callers disconnected and 72 did not respond; 22 users refused to give feedback and 53 were not available

- Out of 246 responded calls, 231 applied at the GP office, 8 through brokers, 4 online and 3 from CSC.

- Out of 246 users about 21 users rated the experience as excellent, 170 users as good; 51 as average and 4 as poor.

Users' suggestions

- Validity period should be printed rather than handwritten on the license. Scanned photo should be uploaded on the license so that users can identify the licensee. It should contain information about the kind of business.

- For smaller shop keepers, license fee is very high; they requested to reduce.

- Panchayat officials and staff should be given counselling on how to interact with people and maintain discipline in the office.

- An SMS reminder may be to the licensee before the license expiry date.

- In cases where application is submitted online, officials should not ask applicants to visit office and provide documents again.

- Citizens suggested that whenever a document cannot be provided due to non-availability, officers should suggest alternate documents.

NeSDA analysis

The analysis shows that 52 guidelines were complied with, and 25 guidelines are not complied with.

TRADE LICENSE

- Accessibility — 63.16
- Content Availability — 58.33
- Ease of Use — 63.64
- End-service delivery — 100
- Information Security and Privacy — 75
- Integrated service delivery — 85.71
- Status and request tracking — 37.5
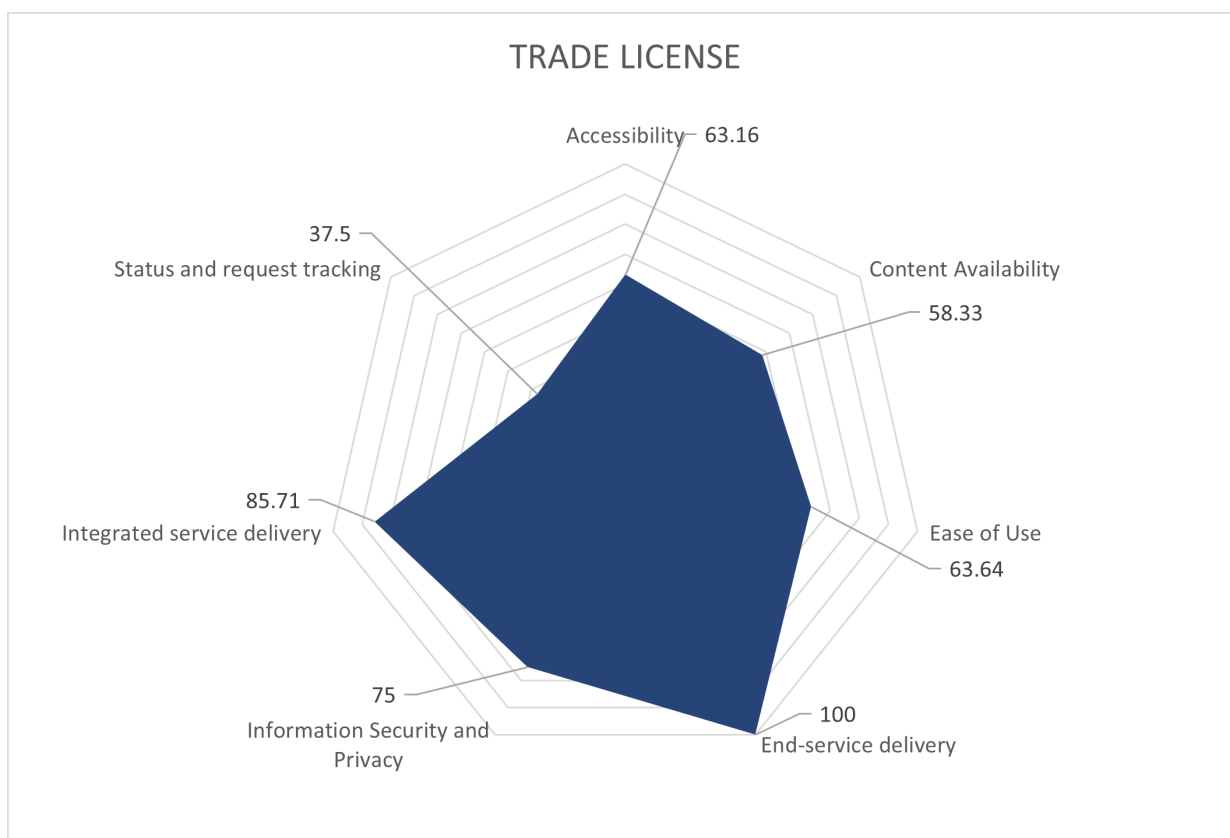
Recommendations:

1. Schedule X of the Karnataka Municipal Corporations Act lists out the purposes for which premises may be used only with a Trade licence. There is no corresponding provision in the KGS&PR Act. This is reportedly leading to disputes and refusals to take Trade license by some types of shops and establishments in rural areas. For the sake of clarity, it is recommended that RDPR issue a notification under Sec 67 and model bye laws specifying the purposes for which Trade licence has to be taken.

2. GPs may be authorised to issue trade license for premises in the areas outside the Gramathana and in unauthorised sites/layouts/buildings on private lands, only for tax collection purpose, till regularisation or removal of the structure. Suitable conditions may be imposed in the trade license that this does not imply regularisation of unauthorised sites or buildings and that owner should get the necessary land conversion approvals from Revenue department within a specified period. The trade license fee for premises on such unauthorised sites/buildings may be collected at three times the normal licence fee till the necessary approvals are submitted.

3. RDPR has already issued an order on 30/09/2020 for auto-renewal on payment of fee through the online portal and for digitally downloading the renewed license. However, it is reported that this order is not being complied with because the Trade license renewal software has not been modified. The software should be modified. Orders may also be issued to increase the validity of trade license on an optional basis upto five years on payment of fees for the corresponding number of years.

4. There is a fully developed end-to-end software application for this service. However, submission of existing licence copy and demand extract has been made mandatory while applying. These documents are available in the GP itself. They may be verified internally through the software. Uploading of these documents may be optional and not be made mandatory.

5. The license format should be revised to contain the printed, rather than handwritten, validity period, scanned photo of the licensee and information on the nature of business.

6. The suggestions given above by users may be considered for appropriate action.

7. The following 25 non-compliant guidelines of NeSDA may be complied with.

Evaluation Area	Areas that Require Compliance
Accessibility	1. Create a separate section for 'Contact Us'
	2. Provide downloadable forms for provisioning of services which cannot be submitted online
	3. Make available promotional campaigns to avail eServices
	4. Introduce provision for registered users to check details of previously availed services, transaction history etc.
	5. Make website compatible with all major browsers and ensure high screen resolutions
	6. Make available features to enable access for people with physical disabilities
	7. Enable audio and video playing
	8. Introduce facility for user to provide feedback / comments regarding eServices
Content Availability	9. Make available information about results of user feedback about online services
	10. Create a separate section for Help
	11. Create a separate section on Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
	12. Make the sitemap available

Ease of Use	13.	Make available eServices within 2-clicks from home page
	14.	Introduce a "What's New?" section which details the changes in the website
	15.	Introduce a search feature
	16.	Make provisions for complaints, resolutions etc. on the website for various aspects of the e-service provided
Information Security and Privacy	17.	Intimate user by email on password expiry, reset, change in password, change in user profile etc.
	18.	Enable mobile alerts for unauthorized access to user profile, password changes etc.
Integrated service delivery	19.	Introduce Apps for each of the services
	20.	Integrate the website with Social Media Apps like Twitter, Facebook etc.
Status and request tracking	21.	Introduce facility to log Grievances / Complaints
	22.	Introduce Ticket / Complaint No. for status tracking and future follow-ups
	23.	Enable feedback on user's complaints like email, call back etc.
	24.	Provide information about helpline for issues regarding online payments through web page
Content availability	25.	Provide for help desk, online support, and call centre for users

3. Issue of Form-9/11A

Introduction

Form 9 is a document for registering non-agricultural properties that are located inside the Gramathana or that have been converted to non-agricultural purpose by Revenue department and have obtained layout approval where necessary. Form 11A is an extract of the Demand, Collection, and Balance Register and contains tax paid details in addition to the details of Form 9. Sakala time limit for providing this service is 45 days.

Users Feedback

Around 811 users were called over telephone to seek feedback. The observations are as follows:

- Feedback captured from 198 users; 181 users disconnected calls; 161 found to be wrong numbers; 87 calls received by unconcerned persons and miscellaneous reasons for the rest of the calls.

- Out of 198 users, 191 applied at GP office, 5 applied through common service centre and 2 online.
- 41 citizens visited the office 5 times.
- 9 users rated the service as excellent; 133 as good, 52 as average and 4 users rated the service as poor.

Users' suggestions

- Counselling should be given to GP staff on how to interact with users and maintain discipline in office.
- Technical issues are raised e.g. in Gramathana Khatas are not available. In such cases clear guidelines should be given to GPs.
- Panchayat office computer systems are too slow and there are frequent server problems or connectivity issues. These have to be resolved.
- It is difficult for digital illiterates to use OTP number. An alternative system may be provided.
- Provide Help desk for help to fill the forms and updating applicants on their application status.
- Officials ask for building sketch documents for applying E-Swathu service, it is difficult to give that document
- Officials did not give proper information; they asked for more documents and user had to pay lot of money for this service.

Recommendations:

1. A special drive may be undertaken to fix the Gramathana boundaries of GPs. If SSLR cannot depute their own surveyors for this purpose, GPs should be directed to entrust the survey to Licensed Surveyors of the SSLR department and get it certified by the ADLR. All GPs in the vicinity of City Corporations, Municipalities should do this on priority.

2. GP President may be given powers to issue Form 9 and 11A, if the application has been examined and found to be in order by the PDO, and to get it ratified in the next GP meeting.

3. The property ID/number is given in the Swamitva property card along with accurate dimension of sites/properties. Action may be initiated to link Swamitva property details like tax, dimensions etc. with e-Swathu.

4. It was informed that registered documents would be transmitted from Kaveri software to E Swathu software earlier. This helped in quicker updation of khata records. Since the last few months this is not happening. Registered documents pertaining to Gram Panchayats should be pushed to the E Swathu software and those pertaining to urban local bodies to the E Aasthi software.

5. Users' suggestions given above may be considered for appropriate action.

6. Since this is an online service, Sakala time limit may be reduced to 30 days from the present 45 days.

4.   Issuing of Form-11B

Introduction

Form-11B is a document issued by GPs for registering unlawful properties i.e. properties that have not been converted to non-agricultural purpose and that are not part of approved layout plans. It is given purely for the purpose of tax collection. The Sakala time limit for providing this service is 45 days.

Recommendations:

1.   Government of Karnataka is implementing the Swamitva Scheme of Govt of India in the rural areas of the state. As on 27-09-2021, drone survey has been completed in 1,770 villages, property cards have been prepared in 156 villages, 18,385 property cards have been distributed in selected 7 pilot districts. The drone survey to cover all villages of the State may be expedited.

2.   RTCs in respect of all properties included in Form 11B should be modified automatically with entries in the Other Rights column of RTC, mentioning that they are unauthorisedly used for sites/buildings, by integration of E Swathu and Bhoomi software. This will reduce fraudulent double transactions on the same properties.

5. Registration of Unskilled Labourers and Issue of Job Cards under MGNREGS

Introduction

PDO of the GP is the designated officer to issue job cards and register unskilled labourers under MGNREGS. Applicant may submit prescribed application along with details at the GP office/BSK. The Sakala time limit is 15 days.

NeSDA Analysis

The NeSDA analysis finds that 47 guidelines are complied with and 30 are not complied.

Registration and Issue of Job Card to the Family of Unskilled Labour under MGNREGS
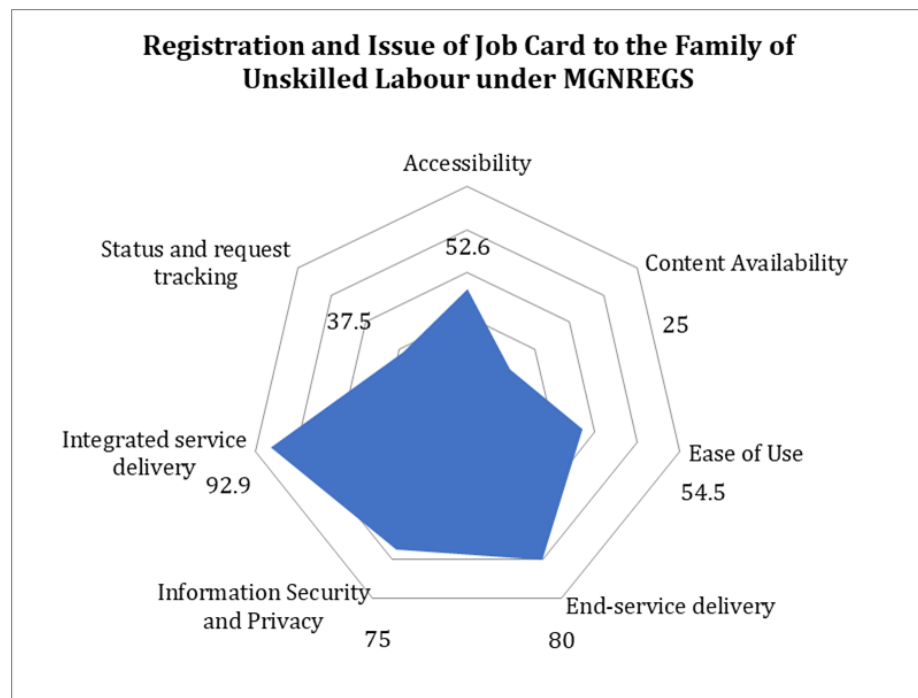
Recommendations:

1. Application for issue of Job Cards and Employment is being submitted through MGNREGS portal maintained by NIC, GOI. The portal is not linked with Sakala portal. Hence there is need for again manually entering data in Sakala portal. To avoid duplication of work, RDPR department should request to get the MGNREGS portal linked with Sakala Portal.

2. The present Sakala time limit of 30 days may be reduced to 10 days because the process of giving Job card is done at the GP level.

3. Based on the NeSDA analysis, areas that require compliance are given below for compliance.

Evaluation Area	Areas that Require Compliance
Accessibility	1. Provide contact information of Government officials/agencies responsible for the provision of specific online services/queries
	2. Create a separate section for 'Contact Us'
	3. Provide any service delivery charters which are published
	4. Make available promotional campaigns to avail eServices
	5. Make website compatible with all major browsers and ensure high screen resolutions
	6. Make available features to enable access for people with physical disabilities
	7. Enable audio and video playing
	8. Make available number of transactions
Content Availability	9. Make available information about results of user feedback about online services
	10. Create a separate section for Help
	11. Create a separate section on Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
	12. Make the sitemap available
	13. Make available Information of last updated timestamp on each page of the website
	14. Update Timestamp as of current year
	15. Make available the statistics on website usage by users (no. of visitors/ average time spent per visitor etc.)
	16. Make available the statistics on transaction count of services availed by users
	17. Make available information on how to use electronic/ digital signature facility for availing the services

Ease of Use	18. Introduce a "What's New?" section which details the changes in the website
	19. Make provisions for complaints, resolutions etc. on the website for various aspects of the e-service provided
	20. Make provision for a built-in facility within the website to populate content relevant to user's recent activity / interest
	21. Introduce a user manual to guide the users
End-service delivery	22. Publish service delivery timelines on the website
Information Security and Privacy	23. Enable mobile alerts for unauthorized access to user profile, password changes etc.
	24. Intimate user by email on password expiry, reset, change in password, change in user profile etc.
Integrated service delivery	25. Integrate the website with Social Media Apps like Twitter, Facebook etc.
Status and request tracking	26. Introduce facility to log Grievances / Complaints
	27. Introduce Ticket / Complaint No. for status tracking and future follow-ups
	28. Enable feedback on user's complaints like email, call back etc.
	29. Provide information about helpline for issues regarding online payments through web page
	30. Provide for help desk, online support, and call centre for users

6. Providing Employment to Unskilled Labourers (MGNREGS)

Introduction

Applicant may submit an application with the details of job card for employment at the GP/BSK office and can obtain an acknowledgement. The Sakala time limit for providing this service is 15 days.

NeSDA Analysis

The NeSDA analysis finds that 49 guidelines were complied with and 28 guidelines are not yet complied with.

Recommendations

1. Application for employment may be submitted through Kayaka Mitra App. But this App is not linked to MGNREGS portal and so the application details entered in it are not displayed in the MGNREGS portal. The Kayaka Mitra app should be linked with the MGNREGS portal.

2. MGNREGS has a completely online system from work demand to work completion. Ministry of Rural Development, GOI has written a letter dated 25/07/2016, directing GPs to mandatorily keep 7 registers. Three of these registers can be maintained as online registers. But in order to comply with the MoRD letter, GPs print out the muster roll report, wage list, FTO transaction details from the MGNREGS website and keep them in paper form. If these three registers are kept in electronic format, there will be saving of paper, money and time. It is suggested that RDPR issue instructions that such details be downloaded and saved as a PDF document.

3. Attendance of workers on MGNREGS works is taken manually on the NMR form. It is suggested that a pilot project using biometric or face recognition software be tried out for taking attendance. This would be more reliable than the manual system and also simplify the work of preparing NMRs.

4. Based on the NeSDA analysis key areas that require compliance are nearly the same as for Registration and Issue of Job Card under MGNREGS. The non-compliant areas may be complied with.

7. E-Payment for the Works executed under Development Schemes

Introduction

After completion of works, file will be processed for e-payment. The applicant may submit request to PDO of GP with relevant documents. The Sakala time limit is 15 days.

Recommendations:

1. To prevent duplication of works and payments, the Panchatantra accounts portal should have provision for entering or capturing the details of all works executed and payments made under various schemes of GPs like E-Gram Swaraj, Swachh Bharat Mission, Statutory grants, CFC, SFC, works under GP funds etc. by suitably linking these systems.

2. Gandhi Sakshi Kayaka software should be modified to add a provision for making e-payments for works taken up with own GP funds.

8. No Objection Certificate to ESCOMs

Introduction

The Electricity Supply Companies (ESCOMs) like BESCOM, HESCOM etc. require applicants to submit NOC from GPs for sanction of power supply for both commercial and residential plots. The Sakala time limit for this service is 45 days.

Recommendations:

1. For quicker disposal of applications, the RDPR department may issue directions that PDO of GP be delegated with the power to give NOC to ESCOMs with approval of Adhyaksha and place it for ratification in the GP.

2. A suggestion was made that RDPR may issue guidelines on the amounts to be collected for issuing NOCs based on the HP use. This would prevent disputes due to widely varying rates fixed by different GPs. The suggestion could be considered.

3. The NOC format should be modified so that it contains the house number and address of the premises for which the NOC is given. The format is now entitled as "ESCOMS – NOC". The title should be customised to bear the name of the specific Escom based on the location of the GP.

4. Suitable amendments/clarifications may be issued by the RD & PR Department as recommended in the common recommendations section to resolve the issues that GPs face while dealing with applications for issuing NOCs for buildings constructed on agricultural lands unauthorisedly.

5. By using the existing end-to-end online system, the prescribed Sakala time-limit may be reduced to 7 days from 45 days.

9. Issuing of Records Related to Population Census, Cattle Census, Persons Below Poverty Line

Introduction

PDO of the GP is the designated officer for this service. Applicant may submit online application or at BSK. The Sakala time limit for providing this service is 30 days.

Recommendation

1. Section 4 (2) of the RTI Act mandates the suo motu disclosure of information to the public by placing it in the public domain on a proactive basis, so as to minimise the need for the public to file individual applications and to make the functioning of public authorities more transparent. In compliance with this provision, the information on population, BPL list, Cattle Census, Crop particulars should be made available on the Panchatantra and Panchamitra portal. It could also have hyperlinks to the concerned departmental portals. After this has been done, this service may be dropped.

10. Liability to Pay Taxes

Introduction

This service fixes responsibility of payment of all types of taxes on citizens.

Recommendations

1. Option for self-assessment of property tax should be provided on Panchatantra portal.

2. Rules may be amended to provide that interest at the rate of 12% per annum should be levied for delayed payment of property tax, water and sanitation charges etc. An incentive of 3% may be given if the full annual tax is paid before May end.

3. At the beginning of each financial year, a system generated tax demand SMS must go to the property owner. The SMS message can be sent repeatedly every month till the tax is paid. The SMS should highlight the penalty and interest liability if payment is delayed.

4. The mobile numbers of all property owners should be collected by the GP and entered on the various application software systems.

5. Payment option through UPI mode and payment apps like Paytm, Phone Pe and Google Pay should be provided.

6. It was informed that even if tax is paid online, a manual receipt has to be issued and data entered separately. A Government order has to be issued to consider the online tax receipt valid. The online tax payment system should also be integrated with the Panchatantra accounts.

7. Taxpayers must be assisted if they face problems during online tax payment with a helpline or chat-bot.

8. Advertisements may be issued at State level informing property owners about the due dates of property tax payment.

11. Maintenance of Drinking Water-Minor repairs

Introduction

The basic infrastructure for drinking water supply like hand pumps, mini water supply schemes, piped water supply schemes, RO plants is established in all habitations. Citizens affected by breakdown of drinking water supply may register complaint online or through toll free number or orally to the GP. The Sakala time limit for providing this service is 3 days.

NeSDA Analysis

The NeSDA analysis shows that 48 guidelines were complied with and 29 guidelines are not yet complied with.

Maintenance of Drinking Water – Minor Repairs

Accessibility 63.2
Content Availability 25
Ease of Use 54.5
End-service delivery 100
Information Security and Privacy 75
...rated service delivery 92.9
...atus and request tracking 37.5
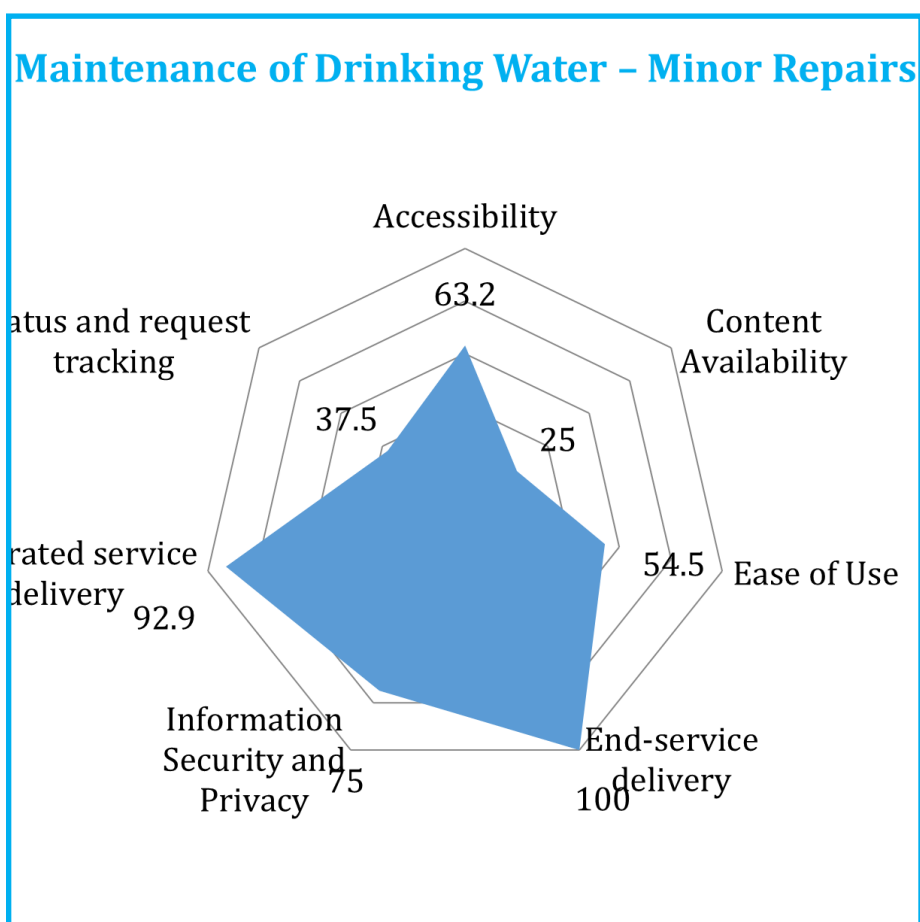
Recommendations

1. A separate note on electricity dues of GPs elsewhere in this report contains many recommendations regarding drinking water supply systems.

2. The annual maintenance grant given for O&M of drinking water supply schemes to GPs is insufficient. It may be increased to Rs. 2000 pa for hand pumps, Rs 10000 pa for Mini WSS and Rs 20000 pa for Piped WSS.

3. There is no need to ask for Aadhaar, ID details and fee under Sakala for this service. These Sakala prescribed requirements may be removed.

4. PDOs may be authorised to take up urgent drinking water supply maintenance works costing up to Rs.10,000 in consultation with the GP President subject to ratification in the next meeting of the GP.

5. Maintenance of RO plants and keeping them functional is very important. It was informed that a mobile app is being used in Belagavi district, on which every Monday, PDOs and watermen inspect and update information on the status of all RO plants. This mobile app may be adopted by the RWS directorate and modified for use by all districts.

6. Complaints made by citizens about water supply problems should not be closed till the complainant's satisfaction about the resolution has been obtained on phone.

7. To verify the online complaints, login may be provided to PDO and GP Secretary; now login is provided only to PDOs.

8. The following areas that require compliance to NeSDA guidelines may be complied with

Evaluation Area	Areas that Require Compliance
Accessibility	1. Provide contact information of Government officials/agencies responsible for the provision of specific online services/queries
	2. Create a separate section for 'Contact Us'
	3. Make available promotional campaigns to avail eServices
	4. Make website compatible with all major browsers and ensure high screen resolutions
	5. Make available features to enable access for people with physical disabilities
	6. Enable audio and video playing
	7. Make available number of transactions
Content Availability	9. Make available information about results of user feedback about online services
	10. Create a separate section for Help
	11. Create a separate section on Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
	12. Make the sitemap available
	13. Make available Information of last updated timestamp on each page of the website
	14. Update Timestamp as of current year

Evaluation Area	Areas that Require Compliance	
Content Availability	14.	Make available the statistics on website usage by users (no. of visitors/ average time spent per visitor etc.)
	16.	Make available the statistics on transaction count of services availed by users
	17.	Make available information on how to use electronic/ digital signature facility for availing the services
	14.	Make available eServices within 2-clicks from home page
Ease of Use	19.	Introduce a "What's New?" section which details the changes in the website
	20.	Make provisions for complaints, resolutions etc. on the website for various aspects of the e-service provided
	21.	Make provision for a built-in facility within the website to populate content relevant to user's recent activity / interest
	22.	Introduce a user manual to guide the users
Information Security and Privacy	22.	Enable mobile alerts for unauthorized access to user profile, password changes etc.
	23.	Intimate user by email on password expiry, reset, change in password, change in user profile etc.
Integrated service delivery	24.	Integrate the website with Social Media Apps like Twitter, Facebook etc.
Status and request tracking	25.	Introduce facility to log Grievances / Complaints
	26.	Introduce Ticket / Complaint No. for status tracking and future follow-ups
	27.	Enable feedback on user's complaints like email, call back etc.
	28.	Provide information about helpline for issues regarding online payments through web page
	29.	Provide for help desk, online support, and call centre for users

12. Maintenance of Street Light-Minor repairs

Introduction

Panchayat Development Officer/Secretary of the GP is the designated officer for this service. Applicant may register complaint online, through phone or orally to the GP. The Sakala time limit for providing this service is 3 days.

Recommendations

1. A separate note on electricity dues of GPs elsewhere in this report contains recommendations regarding streetlights.

2. There is no need to ask for Aadhaar, ID details and fee under Sakala for this service. These requirements prescribed under Sakala may be removed.

3. Street light complaints should be sent to DEO, SDAA and GP Secretary login directly instead of to the PDO login, so that quicker action can be taken on the complaint.

4. User feedback was given that low-quality duplicate bulbs are used for streetlights. It is advisable that procurement is done from authorised dealers of reputed companies.

5. Areas that require compliance as per the NeSDA analysis are the same as for Maintenance of Drinking Water – Minor Repairs. They may be complied with.

13. Maintenance of Village Sanitation

Introduction

A citizen can register a complaint online or orally or through telephone. The Sakala time limit for providing this service is 7 days.

User's feedback

About 1039 users were called to seek feedback. The observations are as follows:

- Feedback captured from 104 calls, 431 found to be wrong numbers; 158 calls disconnected, no response came from 118 calls; concerned persons were not available in case of 99 calls, applicants were not available in case of 49 calls, 35 persons asked to call back; 13 citizens refused to give feedback. 32 were for miscellaneous reasons.

- Out of 104 responsive calls, 101 citizens applied at the GP office, only 2 persons applied online and one person through AJSK.

- 12 persons rated the experience as excellent, 69 as good, 20 as average and 3 users rated it as poor.

Users Suggestions

- Citizens said that they have raised a complaint and paid certain amount but officer said it is a minor issue hence they cannot inspect the spot. The officers of GP must be instructed to attend all complaints.

- More sweepers should be engaged if work load is heavy.

NeSDA Analysis

The NeSDA analysis shows that 47 guidelines were complied with, and 30 guidelines are not complied.

Recommendations

1. Sweeping of streets, house to house collection of garbage, disposal, processing and other Solid waste management activities in GPs can be entrusted to Women SHGs as community contracts under Sec 60B of the KGSPR Act. Guidelines may be issued by RWS Commissionerate to GPs in this regard.

2. In Yadgir district, volunteers, students and labourers collected plastic waste lying on the streets and were given one kg of sugar/rice in return for one kg of plastic waste collected and handed to the GP. This model can be tried in all GPs using their own funds. The plastic waste can be baled. Cement plants are required to pick up and transport free of cost baled solid waste from a distance upto 200 kms from their plants. Baling units can be set up at taluk level or for cluster of GPs.

3. Faecal Sludge Treatment Plants (FSTP) plants may be designed for cluster of 10-15 GPs on cost sharing basis wherever feasible.

4. Material Recovery Facility may be set up in each taluk.

5. Based on the NeSDA analysis, the areas that require compliance are the same as for Maintenance of Drinking Water – Minor Repairs; it is recommended that they be complied with.

TACKLING GRAM PANCHAYAT ELECTRICITY BILLS AND ARREARS

TACKLING GRAM PANCHAYAT ELECTRICITY BILLS AND ARREARS

Background and Context

Karnataka Administrative Reforms Commission- 2 team visited urban and rural local bodies in Sidlaghatta Taluk, Chikkaballapur district during August-September, 2021. The KARC 2 team visited 3 Gram Panchayats (GPs) – Abloodu, Bhaktharahalli and Hosapete. During the course of discussions, it was reported that the total outstanding balance of electricity bills due to BESCOM from the 3 GPs for running drinking water borewell pumps and street lights as on September 30, 2021 was about ₹18 Crores. This translates to about 120 times the average annual property tax revenue of these GP's put together.   The total outstanding amount due to BESCOM for all the 28 GPs in Sidlaghatta Taluk as on April 30, 2021 is ₹ 126.50 Crores.

For field verification, the KARC team decided to visit some of the sites of these borewells and street light installations in the 3 GPs.

Observations on site visit to 3 GPs:

1. <u>No meters or meters are non-functional -</u>Most drinking water and streetlight connections either did not have a meter, or the meter was not in a working condition. Out of 17 Revenue Register (RR) numbers in the three GPs, 5 did not have meters and 7 did not have functioning meters. In some cases, we observed direct connections were given, bypassing the meter. Rounded up/flat amounts were billed for RR numbers (for instance bills of ₹. 5000, 7000, 15000 etc.) without any meter reading. Bills for as many as 74 RR numbers out of a total of 138 RR numbers i.e. 54% (as of April, 2021) in the three GPs are not based on actual meter readings, but are based on assumptions and averages of nearby installations and/or consumption over 3 to 4 months.

2. <u>Inconsistency in usage of meter types -</u> Meters installed were of inconsistent quality and not of the optimum phase (3 phase meters are needed for heavy loads).

3. <u>Sanctioned load vs. Actual load -</u> In some cases sanctioned load obtained for borewell connections by the GP from BESCOM was lower when compared to the actual electricity consumed. This is on account of pumps having to pump water from much higher depth due to depletion in the water table (upto 1,200 feet in some cases). Bescom charges a penalty for such cases leading to higher electricity bills to the GP.

4. <u>Lower quality pumps -</u> Pumps installed were not of BEE 5- Star rating and had not been maintained / serviced for quite some time. This also results in excess electricity consumption.

5. <u>Billing for defunct borewells</u> - In 3 cases the borewells have dried up, but fixed charges billing and interest thereon continues for those connections.

6. <u>Billing for defunct pumps</u> - In some cases the pumps are defunct, but continue to be billed for fixed charges.

7. Very few street lights were LED based lamps.

3.1 Financial Analysis of 3 GPs -

1. The annual property tax demand is around ₹26.37 lakhs for the three GPs, whereas the total annual electricity bill is around ₹3.78 Crore, 1400% of the annual property tax demand, revealing a highly unsustainable financial situation of the GPs.

2. Only a small portion (about 8%) of the monthly electricity bills due to BESCOM are paid during the year and that is mostly out of the 25% Central Finance Commission grants kept in an Escrow account for this purpose.

If the issue of mounting arrears is not resolved at the earliest, it may lead to a much more enormous systemic and financial burden for the GPs and the State exchequer.

State-Wide financial analysis of Gram Panchayat electricity costs and arrears

A State level analysis of the following data related to GP revenues and electricity costs, arrears has been done.

1. Total GP Revenue Demand and Collection for the year 2020-21

2. Annual electricity cost for the year 2020-21

3. GP Electricity Bill arrears status from March 2015 to September 2021

4. Status of GP arrears to each of the ESCOMs as on August 31, 2021

5. 15th Central Finance Commission grants to Karnataka and the ESCROW payments made to ESCOMs.

The key conclusions that emerge from the above analysis are as follows:

1. About 5,590 GPs (93%) are collecting annual own revenues of less than ₹20 lakhs per annum from different sources.

2. The annual electricity cost to all GPs for electricity charges during 2020-21 was ₹1,725 Crore. The total electricity bill arrears due from all GPs as on August 31, 2021 is ₹3,993 Crore. The ESCOM-wise annual electricity costs and arrears of GPs is in Table - 1 below –

Table – 1 – Total GP Annual Electricity Costs and Arrears

(Rs. In crore)

Name of ESCOMS	Annual Demand	% of Annual Demand	Arrears	% of Arrears	Rural Pop under ESCOM	Per Capita AEC	No of GP RR Number in ESCOM	% of GP Installations	Avg. Billing P.A per RR No
BESCOM	845	49%	2370	59%	9165288	922	80748	36%	104647
GESCOM	360	21%	977	24%	8088753	445	33052	15%	108919
HESCOM	245	14%	297	7%	10278825	238	46655	21%	52513
CESCOM	175	10%	274	7%	5972127	293	35579	16%	49186
MESCOM	100	6%	75	2%	3964342	252	29457	13%	33948
Total	1725		3993		37469335	460	225491		349213

Among the ESCOMS, the lions share of GPs AEC is billed by BESCOM, ₹845 crore forming about 49% of the total. Among Arrears also, the GPs dues to BESCOM is ₹2,370 crore forming 59% of the total arrears. In terms of RR numbers/installations, BESCOM carries 36% of the installations (water supply and street lights) across GPs in the state.

3. 1,019 GPs (17%) are incurring annual electricity costs in excess of ₹40 lakhs. (Refer Table - 4). Rs 40 lakhs is a relevant figure because the average annual 15th CFC grant per GP in the State is slightly less than Rs 40 lakh. This implies that even if these GPs use their entire annual 15th CFC grant only for paying electricity costs, they will not be able to clear their bill.

4. 5% of the GPs have arrears of more than ₹3 crore each, amounting to about 34% of the total outstanding arrears. 22% of the GPs have arrears of more than ₹1 crore each, amounting to about 77% of the total outstanding arrears. Relevant details are given in Annexure A on the Commissions website.

5. An analysis of 25 GPs that have the highest Annual Electricity Cost (AEC) and arrears due to ESCOMS is in **Table - 2** as given in Annexure B on the Commissions website.

The AEC indicated in the Table-2 excludes billing for interest and includes billing only for water borewell RR numbers/installations. Following are the key observations/inferences from the table –

•   About 92% of the total AEC for these 25 GPs pertains to water supply alone.

•   Per capita AEC ranges from Rs. 972 to Rs. 3509 with an average of Rs. 2346 for the 25 GPs. However, in the same districts, we observe much lower per capita costs in the range of about Rs. 99 to Rs. 574 per annum in the GPs listed in Table-3 below. This indicates that there may be best practices adopted within the close vicinity of such GPs/Taluks which may be studied and emulated.

•   Average AEC per RR number ranges from Rs. 1,40,244 to Rs. 8,08,333.

These 25 GPs are concentrated in the 3 districts of Kolar, Chikkaballapur and Bengaluru Rural, all coming under the purview of BESCOM. It may be noted that these GPs have high AEC, high per capita AEC, high AEC per RR number average (only for water supply), arrears as well as poor AEC to revenue collection ratios. Some of the reasons for higher AECs in these GPs may be due to arid conditions, pilferage of electricity billed to GPs, billing without metering, billing of defunct borewells and water-use inefficiency and/or pilferage.

Table -3 GPs with low per capita electricity costs in the same districts

Name of GP	Taluk	District	Annual Electricity Cost (AEC) excluding interest (₹ cr)	GP Population	Per Capita AEC – (₹ / Person)
Kurigepalli	Srinivasapura	Kolar	0.28	4,874	574
Kothanur	Siddlaghatta	Chikkaballapur	0.1	5,222	191
Hettakki	Hoskote	Bangalore Rural	0.05	5,066	99
Avani	Mulbagal	Kolar	0.31	7,098	437
Total			0.74	22,260	

This requires study of GPs with low and very high electricity costs to glean lessons from both. The reasons for Bescom billing the highest charges compared to other Escoms, including whether the push to reduce Transmission & Commercial losses is driving the need to bill unmetered GP connections with higher bills, also has to be studied.

6. The accumulated GP electricity arrears till 2015 were waived for GPs by Government taking on the burden of payment through bonds issued in 2017-2018. Inspite of this, arrears have accumulated thereafter and as of August, 2021 the total outstanding GP arrears stand at **₹3,993 crore**. By August, 2025, the arrears are expected to reach about **₹8,500 crore** in a business-as-usual scenario. For calculating the growth of arrears, an interest rate of 1% per month, consumption patterns projected at ₹1,500 crore per year and payments to ESCOMs at 10% of monthly consumption has been assumed. The projected arrears of Rs 8500 cr. would be more than 3 times the amount of waiver granted by the Government in 2015.

The conclusions that emerge are

- GP revenue collection is highly inadequate to meet their electricity costs;

- nearly 17% GPs will not be able to clear their annual electricity bill even if they spend their entire 15th CFC grant for this purpose;

- there is large variation in per capita annual electricity costs among GPs;

- very high electricity costs are concentrated in GPs of a few districts all coming under BESCOM;

- Comparatively very high per capita AEC in BESCOM and very high average billing per annum in BESCOM and GESCOM.

- arrears would continue to accumulate and in a business-as-usual scenario may reach Rs 8500 cr. in 2025.

Firm action needs to be taken early in the interest of financial sustainability of the GPs and the ESCOMs and to reduce the likely burden on the State Government in bailing out the GPs.

3.2 Recommendations - Drinking Water Borewells and Pumps

1. RDPR department should issue instructions that an on-the-spot survey with photos and GPS locations of the status of all drinking water borewells, pumps and meters should be conducted by all GPs. Such surveys have been conducted earlier, but it needs to be repeated at regular intervals. Each GP should maintain this information RR number wise in a register or on a MIS system on Panchatantra.

2. On the basis of the survey, GPs should complete the necessary Escom procedures like submitting Form-C to ESCOMs to disconnect electricity, terminate agreements and remove meters of defunct borewells. This should be followed up in weekly meetings of the EO, TP, the AEE, ESCOM and the concerned PDOs till all defunct borewells are disconnected and billing of fixed charges for them is stopped.

3. ESCOMS are not terminating electricity supply agreements to such defunct borewells because of arrears against the concerned RR number. As a result of not terminating the relevant agreements, though the disconnection is done, fixed charges and interest thereon continue to be levied for such RR numbers. The arrears can be transferred by ESCOMs to another RR number or accounted for separately in an appropriate manner. This step is necessary to reduce the continuing burden of fixed charges and interest being levied by ESCOMS on such defunct borewells on the GPs.

4. One specified official of the GP should be given individual responsibility of monitoring GP electricity bills. The PDO may be busy with many responsibilities and may not follow up for disconnection or for monitoring the monthly electricity bills. Therefore, it is suggested that responsibility should be fixed on the GP Secretary to ensure that monthly electricity bills are based on meter readings and that defunct borewell connections are disconnected, their agreements are terminated and fixed charges are not levied on them.

5. EO of the TP and AEE, ESCOM along with PDOs and Section Officers should review the status of agreement termination and reconciliation of accounts every month. EOs should review weekly over YouTube on disconnection and agreement termination status.

6. Negative bills are generated for a few RR numbers in ESCOMS billing section, though there are huge pending balances against other RR numbers in the same GP resulting in more interest burden on GPs. Escrow amount credited to the ESCOMs are not adjusted to the individual RR numbers hence GPs are not really able to verify at their end. GPs should pay consumption bills against each RR number in Khajane 2 to Escoms. Cheque payment should be made with a statement of RR number wise payment. Escoms should ensure that amount is credited to individual RR numbers. These issues should also be reviewed in the monthly reconciliation meeting held by EO, TP and AEE, Escom.

7. Theft of power by other consumers by hooking upto the water supply and street light electrical lines is also partly responsible for very high electricity bills charged to GPs. The instances of theft should be reported to the ESCOMS by the GPs directly and through the EO of TP. Immediate action should be taken by Escoms for removal of such hooked up lines and stringent action should be initiated on the offenders as a deterrent measure. This should be reviewed in the monthly KDP meeting by the CEO, ZP with the Superintendent of Police and the SE/EE of Escom.

8. Review of payment of electricity bills by GPs should be a fixed agenda in every monthly TP KDP meeting. The CEOs of ZPs and EEs of ESCOMS should monitor GP wise consumption and payment.

9. On the basis of the survey, if found necessary, the GP should replace defunct pumps in functional borewells with BEE 5-star pumps only.

10. RDPR may issue standing instructions to RWS Commissionerate and to GPs to compulsorily procure and install only BEE 5 star rated pumps hereafter for new borewells as well as for replacement of existing pumps.

11. A suitable instruction may be issued by RDPR to GPs with AEC of ₹40 lakhs and more (refer Table 4), to replace all their existing pumps with BEE 5-star rated/IE3 pumps and meters by using available funds. This one-time expenditure would result in cost savings in energy consumption that could soon payback the expenditure incurred. For GPs that may not have the financial resources to replace their pumps and meters, a suitable project may be taken up with KREDL or EESL.

12. A mobile app, on the lines of Crop Survey app, may be developed by the RWS Commissionerate on drinking water borewells, pumps and their meters in GPs. Such an app is reportedly being used in Belagavi district. This app would be operated by PDOs and watermen. Every Monday they should upload the status of borewells, pumps and meters in their GP. The app should contain a monthly self-certification by the PDO of the GP on each borewell, pump and meter in the GP. Specifically, defunct borewells, non-functional pumps and meters should be identified with their respective RR numbers.

3.3   Recommendations – Electricity Meters

13. All drinking water borewells of the GPs should compulsorily have working electricity meters, preferably smart meters. No bill should be raised by ESCOMs without recording the actual meter reading. If bills are raised without mentioning the meter reading in it, the GPs should send their objections in writing to the ESCOM.

14. Energy department may issue instructions to ESCOMS, that if a GP electricity meter becomes non-functional for any reason, the GP should immediately inform ESCOM, which should replace it within a week of receiving the complaint. The cost of the new meter may be added to the GP's electricity bill.

15. The rate of failure of meters in GP installations is found to be quite high. This may be attributed to two factors, one being improper installation with loose connections and another being low quality of meters used for GP. It is recommended that Escoms install the best quality meters with proper fixing and grounding to avoid frequent failure of meters.

16. Smart metering, in the sense of remotely readable and operable meters, will ensure ease of reading and accuracy of billing and infuse better accountability among GPs and ESCOMs while improving water use efficiency. A Smart Metering Program may be launched to cover the GPs that have annual energy bills of more than ₹40 lakhs, to install smart meters to their drinking water borewells and street light connections. This could be done either on a PPP model or an EPC model.
The Ministry of Power, Government of India has issued a notification (F.No.23/35/2019-R&R) on 17th August, 2021 stating that all retail and government installations shall be metered with smart meters in pre-payment mode by March, 2025. A framework for the same may be created by the RDPR and Energy Departments.

17. During the site visits and reviews with RDPR department, KERC and Energy department, it was indicated that there is need for greater accuracy on CT (Current Transformation) factor. A higher CT value compared to the actual values may be resulting in much higher consumption and vice-versa.
The respective ESCOMs should conduct a comprehensive survey of CT values for all RR numbers in GPs and ensure the accuracy and appropriateness of the CT values for all functional meters. CT values must be commensurate with actual consumption and load requirements.

3.4 Recommendations - Street Lights

18. GPs must convert all street light installations to BEE 5-star rated LED bulbs to save on electricity costs. The cost savings may range between 40-60%. Each street light installation must have a timer and an auto-on-off function. GPs may be directed to use own and CFC grants for this purpose. A separate project may be proposed for GPs that cannot meet this cost with their own resources.

19. The cost, benefit and feasibility of installing separate electricity lines for Street Lights, with an option to centrally control switching on & off provided may be studied and suitable action taken.

3.5 Recommendations - Financial

20. It is necessary to devise a system to ensure that at least in the future, the undisputed electricity bills of GPs are paid fully and arrears kept to the minimum. Most GPs cannot pay their electricity bills fully with their own revenues. To remedy this, a system of keeping 25% of the CFC grants to a GP in an Escrow account to pay electricity and water supply bills was introduced. But as seen in this report, this amount is insufficient in the case of GPs with high monthly electricity bills and the balance keeps accumulating with interest to reach enormous amounts. There is a moral hazard involved, because GPs assume that the Government would bail them out sometime in the future, even if they don't pay their bills fully. The GPs therefore do not show much interest in checking the electricity bills and raising objections. Such GPs set a poor example to those GPs that put in more efforts to raise resources and are regular in clearing their electricity bills. This tendency may become contagious. To put an end to this situation, more than 25% should be kept in the Escrow account for GPs with high electricity bills. The average annual CFC grant per GP in Karnataka is about Rs.40 lakhs. Therefore, GPs with AEC more than Rs. 40 lakhs are most financially unsustainable. It is recommended that in order to ensure that arrears are kept to a minimum and to bring in greater accountability among GPs and ESCOMS, the percentage of CFC grant kept in the Escrow account may be fixed at 75%, 50% or 25% based on the amount of annual electricity costs. GPs have been categorised in Table-4 below based on the annual electricity bills.

Table-4 Annual Electricity Cost and Escrow account

Annual Electricity Cost (AEC) of GPs	Number of GP's	% of Total GP's	Total AEC (Rs. In cr.)	% AEC	ESCROW % to be revised to
More than Rs. 40 lakhs p.a.	1019	17%	835	48%	**75%**
Between Rs. 20 to Rs. 40 lakhs p.a.	1044	17%	289	17%	**50%**
Below Rs. 20 lakhs p.a.	3904	65%	601	35%	**25%**
Total	**5967**	**(Rs.**	**1725**		

75% of the CFC grants may be kept in the Escrow account if the AEC is more than Rs. 40 lakhs pa; 50% if the AEC is between Rs. 20 lakhs and Rs 40 lakhs pa and 25% for GPs with AEC below Rs. 20 lakhs pa. Increasing Escrow allocations to 50% and 75% is likely to drive behavioural change among field level functionaries at the GP level to ensure accountability. This may be considered and a suitable Government order issued.

21. There is a large intra-district and intra-taluk disparity in per capita AEC and per RR number billing cost. It is recommended that the reasons for low and very high annual electricity and RR number billing costs in the same district, be studied in detail by the concerned ZPs, TPs and RDPR. Any best practices being followed in GPs with low electricity costs and lessons from GPs with very high electricity cost that may emerge from this study may be replicated across the entire Taluk / District so as to reduce electricity costs.

22. The reasons for BESCOM and to some extent GESCOM billing the highest charges compared to other Escoms, including whether the push to reduce Transmission & Commercial losses in BESCOM and GESCOM is driving the push to load the un-metered GP connections with higher bills, has to be studied.

23. As regards the existing electricity arrears of GPs, it is recommended that a Committee be constituted under the chairpersonship of Chief Secretary/Additional Chief Secretary with ACSs/Pr. Secys of Energy, RDPR, UDD and FD to examine and make recommendations to the Government on resolving the issue.

24. It is recommended that a comprehensive energy audit of the GPs with AEC more than Rs. 40 lakhs be done by an independent agency.

25. Short term measures - Given the nature of the issues, the build-up of arrears despite past waivers and poor financial health of the GPs, it is recommended that certain measures like disconnecting defunct RR numbers, terminating agreements, installation of meters, introducing a system of self-certification by the PDOs and revision of ESCROW mechanisms as suggested, be taken at the earliest. The roll-out of these interventions may be prioritised on the basis of the AEC as in Table - 4 with higher priority given to the GPs with AECs more than ₹40 lakhs. Other measures such as replacing inefficient water pumps with BEE 5-Star pumps, installing smart meters and adoption of solar energy in order to make GPs self-sufficient in electricity consumption, may be taken up as medium to long term measures.

URBAN DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

URBAN DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT (UDD)

Focus Group Discussions

Focus Group Discussions (FGD) were held on 20.07.2021, 22.07.2021 and 27.07.2021 by groups consisting of selected Deputy Commissioners of Municipal Corporations (DC), Municipal Commissioners (MC), Chief Officers (CO), Chief Engineers (CE), Revenue Officers (RO), Assistant Revenue Officers (ARO), Health Officers (HO), Senior Health Inspectors (SHI), Health Inspectors (HI), Environmental Engineers (Env. E), Executive Engineers (EE), Assistant Executive Engineers (AEE) , Revenue Inspectors (RI) , Tax Collectors (TC) of Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), Bengaluru Development Authority (BDA), Bengaluru Metropolitan Region Development Authority (BMRDA), selected City Corporations, City and Town Municipal Councils (CMC, TMC), Town Panchayat (TP), Bengaluru Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB), Director of Municipal Administration (DMA) Town and Country Planning (TCP) Department and Karnataka Urban Water Supply and Drainage Board (KUWSDB) from Urban Development department. Feedback and suggestions for improvement of service delivery was obtained from them. A second round of FGDs for discussing the draft recommendations with selected officers and staff was held on 16.12.2021 with those from DMA, KUWSDB and KMDS; on 23.12.2021 with those of BBMP and on 29.12.2021 with selected officers of BDA, BMRDA, BWSSB and DTCP in Bengaluru.

4.1 Common recommendations relating to UDD

1.   Sec 81 of the KTCP Act empowers the State Government to delegate by notification any of the powers and functions of the Planning Authority under this Act to any local authority or any officer of the local authority. Based on this provision, powers for approval of development plan upto 5 acres were delegated by notification to the BBMP in 2004. At present for approval of development plan for plots of more than 5 acres, the procedure is that first the application for approval of development plan has to be made and approval taken from BDA. Subsequently, an application for approval of building plan has to be made and approval taken from BBMP. This is a time and effort consuming procedure. In the interest of ease of doing business, suitable changes may be made to obtain approval of development plan and building plan from the same body. The 74th Constitution Amendment Act, 1994 enables the constitution of Metropolitan Planning Committees and District Planning Committees. It is the basic duty of BBMP/Corporations/ULBs to prepare or consolidate such Plans. A provision is also made in the BBMP Act, 2020 for establishment of Planning Section and to constitute Metropolitan Planning Committee (MPC). In this context Sec 98 (2) of the BBMP Act states that

"The Government shall depute a Chief Town Planner of the rank of

the Director of Town and Country Planning who shall be subordinate to the Chief Commissioner and Zonal Town Planner at Zonal office not below the rank of Deputy Director of Town and Country Planning and such other officers from the Department of Town and Country Planning qualified in Town and Country Planning who shall be subordinate to the Zonal Commissioner, to assist the corporation in the matter relating to Town Planning."

A comparative study of competent authorities for approval of (1) layout plan-single plot & multi plot (2) preparation of Master Plan (3) approvals of group housing/ development plan, (4) approval of amalgamation/ bifurcation of plots (5) approvals of building plan in the cities of Mumbai, Pune, Chennai, Hyderabad and Ahmedabad is given at Annexure-1. Based on the above, it is recommended that the powers for approval for single plot layout and development plans as envisaged in Sec. 14,15 and 17 of KTCP Act be delegated to the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike within its own jurisdiction (draft notification is enclosed as Annexure-2. The Chief Town Planning officer of the rank of Director of Town Planning deputed from the Town and Country Planning (TCP) department and working under the purview of BBMP should examine the proposals for approval of single plot layout and development plan as per norms of the Department. It is recommended that all powers of Director, TCP under the provisions of KTCP Act be entrusted to the BBMP Chief Town Planner. Similar notifications may be issued for other City Corporations also in the interest of removing duplication of approvals.

2.   Planning works outside the jurisdiction of BBMP can dealt with by the Local Planning Authorities (LPA) or BMRDA itself.

3.   BMRDA in addition to the existing development works dealt with by BDA, could also oversee land transport. The Bengaluru Metropolitan Land Transport Authority (BMLTA) may have the same jurisdiction as BMRDA and work under its purview.

4.   Many large multi storied complexes are being built in the BDA and BMRDA area falling under the jurisdiction of Gram Panchayats and ULBs around Bengaluru. The GPs and ULBs do not have the required trained town planning staff to examine the building plans for their compliance with the provisions of the KTCP Act and Rules. It is therefore recommended that in case of plans for multi-storeyed buildings of more than a prescribed number of floors, say more than G+2 floors, the building plans be sent to area Planning Authority for technical scrutiny before approval. Before approval of building plan and issue of OC, the GPs and ULBs should get it scrutinised by the concerned area Planning Authority. Suitable Government order may be issued by RDPR and UD departments in this regard.

5.   Powers to change land use in UDAs and LPAs outside BMRDA region under Section 14 of the KTCP Act may be delegated to the district Deputy Commissioners by Government issuing a direction under Sec 76-K (1) for the efficient administration of the Act. The direction may state that the DCs should exercise the delegated power after consulting with the jurisdictional DDTP/ADTP. For BMRDA region the power may remain with Government.

6. The power to approve the annual budgets of UDAs and LPAs, other than those of BDA and BMRDA, may be delegated from Government to the district Deputy Commissioners. Approval of budget of BDA and BMRDA may remain with Government. This will reduce delays in approving the budgets and enable Government to focus more on policy related issues.

7. As per Section 18(2) of the KTCP Act,

    "Any person aggrieved by the levy of fee under sub-section (1), may within such period as may be prescribed, appeal to the District Court having jurisdiction on the ground that the change or development is not capable of yielding a better income to the owner. The decision of the District Court on such appeal shall be final."

    A further proviso may be added to this sub-section to the effect that if fee for any area is increased and the increase is stayed by an order of a Court on appeal, the owner should pay the authority 50% of the amount of increase stayed, subject to the final decision of the court on the lines of a similar provision in the Commercial Taxes department.

8. It was informed that there are many cases wherein layout has been approved provisionally and 40% of the sites released and the developer has sold the remaining 60% sites without fully developing the remaining area. In such cases, the remaining 60% site owners may be given khatas subject to the conditions that the

    i.   area of roads, CA sites, parks and open areas are left free and are handed over to the UDA

    ii. site owners pay proportionate share of the present estimated cost of development of the layout.

    It is recommended that Government may give suitable directions to UDAs to resolve such cases on the above lines. This will bring such site owners into the property tax net, enable UDAs to collect charges and develop the layout and collect building plan sanction and development fees from them. This decision will contribute to reducing the number of unauthorised sites.

9. In some ULBs it was informed that nearly 40-50% of the properties are unlawful. In case of sites formed in layouts without conversion, conversion can be done by payment of penalty with conversion fee. In case the layout has been formed without leaving roads, parks and open spaces in the required area, the guidance value of the shortfall in area left as roads, parks and open spaces can be collected proportionately from the site-owners who are willing to pay it and compound the violations. Government may consider issuing suitable instructions in this regard. This will reduce the number of irregular sites and garner more revenues to the ULBs.

10. Sec 76F of the KTCP Act provides for Composition of offences as under: "The State Government or the Planning Authority concerned or any person authorised by the State Government or the Planning Authority in this behalf by general or special order may either before or after the institution of the proceedings compound any offence made punishable by or under this Act." Various types of violations such as unauthorised structures, building plan violations and unauthorised sites can be compounded by collecting proportionate infrastructure development charge and compounding penalty, allowing them to purchase TDR or premium FAR with suitable penalty. Compounding and penalty provisions may be introduced for other possible plan violations under the KTCP Act also such as for violations of fire code, building refurbishment, business signage, nuisance violation, urban design regulations etc. Suitable Rules may be issued under Sec 76F for compounding violations of the provisions of the Act. The Maharashtra Town Planning (Compounded Structures) Rules 2017, Punjab Department Of Housing & Urban Development, <u>Notification</u> May 6th, 2015No. 12/2/15-5hg2/869 and Composition Rules issued by the Town and Country Planning directorate of Govt. of Haryana may be usefully seen in this regard.

11. There is a provision under Sec 107 of the Karnataka Municipalities Act and Sec 112C of the KMC Act to levy penalty on unlawful buildings. But there is no provision to levy penalty on unlawful vacant land as provided under the BBMP Act. This provision has to be incorporated in both the KMA Act and KMC Act by suitable amendments on the lines of BBMP Act.

12. If general or special orders are issued under Section 76F of the KTCP Act for Composition of offences, then an owner of a B-Khata site could pay conversion fee with penalty as per Sec 96 (4) of the Karnataka Land Revenue Act in case it has not been converted to non-agricultural use. Thereafter he could pay compounding fees for not getting the layout approved as per the general or special order under Sec 76F and get the violations compounded. He could then convert his B-Khata to an A-Khata. Once he gets an A-Khata, he can apply for building plan sanction as per building byelaws by paying the requisite charges. This procedure will enable many unlawful site owners who would like to pay the prescribed penalties, compounding fees and building plan charges to get a lawful khata for their property. A single window system that would make it convenient for B-khata site owners to convert to A-khata may be developed on these lines. The system would have provision for applying for and paying conversion fee with penalty to remit to the Revenue department; for applying and paying compounding fees to be remitted to the planning authority and for applying and collecting building plan sanction charges to be remitted to the BBMP/ULB. After issue of the general or special order under Sec 76F, suitable instructions may be issued for simplifying the procedure for conversion of B-khata to A-khata properties by UDD in consultation with Revenue department to all ULBs for this purpose.

13. Urban Development Department vide letter dated 18/06/2019 has issued instructions to BBMP/ULBs not to open khatas and approve building plans for sites in revenue lands converted to non-agricultural purpose, if their layout plans have not been approved by the competent authority. As a result of this and previous such circulars/ letters, the ULBs are unable to give khatas for unlawful properties. Thus they are handicapped in keeping accounts of the property wise penalty collected from such unlawful properties as per the provisions of the KM Act and KMC Act. This is a big issue for owners of such sites and for ULBs and LPAs. In the BBMP and in Gram Panchayats, the unauthorised sites and buildings are given a separate khata called B khata in BBMP and 11B khata in GPs. The idea is to collect property tax to cover part of the costs being incurred by them for providing essential services like garbage collection, drinking water supply, roads, street lights to these sites.

Sec 144 (20) of the BBMP Act 2020 states that

"The Corporation shall provide each person who pays property tax an acknowledgement or Khata for the payment of such tax, and such acknowledgement or Khata provided shall be distinct for lawful and unlawful buildings or vacant land and the format of such acknowledgement or Khata shall be prescribed from time to time under the rules."

Sec 107 of the KM Act provides for levy of penalty on unlawful building. Sec 107(2) states that

"Penalty payable under sub-section (1) shall be determined and collected by such authority and in such manner as may be prescribed. The penalty so payable shall be deemed to be the tax due for the purpose of chapter VII. "

Similar provisions exist in Sec 112 C (2) and Sec 112 D of the KMC Act applicable to Municipal Corporations.

Thus it is clear that the penalty collected under Sec 107 of the KM Act shall be deemed to be the tax due. For accounting purposes, a register with a list of such owners of unlawful buildings has to be maintained. The extract of this register can be considered as the khata of the unlawful building. However there does not seem to be any general or special order by the Government under Sec 107 A of the KM Act or under Sec 112 D of the KMC Act directing that a survey of such unlawful buildings and vacant land or both be conducted and maintained in a separate register. Such a register would enable the ULB to identify and keep a list of the unlawful properties and to regularly collect penalty from them. At present in the absence of such a register, ad hoc arrangements seem to be made in ULBs.

The law provides for levying penalty on unlawful properties that are deemed to be tax and for survey of all buildings and vacant lands. It is therefore recommended that Government may issue a special order under Sec 107 A of the KM Act and Sec 112 D of the KMC Act prescribing the format of the register of unlawful buildings and vacant lands in the ULB. This special order would be in supersession of the above circulars and letters from UDD. The special order would enable the ULBs to open khatas for unauthorised sites and buildings on the lines of BBMP. Property tax at two times

the regular rate has to be collected from such sites and buildings till a final decision is taken regarding their status. To make it more explicit, after issuing a special order, a provision on the lines of Sec 144 (20) of the BBMP Act providing for separate khatas for lawful and unlawful buildings and vacant lands may be made in the KM Act and the KMC Act by suitable amendments.

14. The sites facing all roads with width of 18 metres (60 ft) and above may be categorised as commercial or mixed use. This will simplify the process of obtaining change of land use and contribute to economic development. ZR for BBMP area may be amended to change the existing provision of "above 24 metres" to "18 metres or above".

15. It is observed that in the existing and new Master Plans, roads are not being notified or acquired for development. Planning and local authorities are apprehensive about the cost of acquisition of land. Sometimes land owners pre-empt land acquisition by unauthorisedly converting the lands planned for road construction into sites and buildings come up on them. This leads to creation of islands without connectivity to one another; road dead ends affecting connectivity and the very antithesis of planned development. But if they are notified for development, the land owners may come forward on their own to develop layouts and give up the Master Plan road area free of cost. The notification will raise the value of lands marked as situated on future roads. It will throw open large unconnected parcels of land for development and encourage planned utilisation of land. Lands that are not handed over free of cost can be acquired by giving TDR. It is therefore recommended that in all existing and new Master Plans, roads with width of 18 metres and above should be notified for development with the list of roads, their length and width, survey numbers and area. This information is already available in the Master Plan. The notified area should be entered in the relevant RTCs under Col 11- Other Rights as "Reserved for Master Plan Road". This will protect the land from being unknowingly converted or approved as sites. Section 14 of KTCP Act may be amended to ensure that all such roads are notified after the Master Plan is approved. As soon as the Master Plan is approved, the notification for road development should be gazetted; then entered in the relevant RTC Col 11; Joint Measurement Certificate (JMC) prepared and boundaries fixed. This will serve to alert prospective buyers of unauthorised sites formed on these lands and prevent such transactions.

16. The automated Transfer of Development Rights software system has been developed by KUIDFC and the rules for operationalising them have been drafted by it and submitted to Government. Notifying these rules will help to develop a market for TDRs and give them liquidity, making them more attractive and thereby reducing land acquisition costs. It is recommended that the rules be notified early.

17. Approval of residential layouts involves atleast two steps. Firstly, conversion of agricultural to non-agricultural land and secondly approval of the layout plan by the Town and Country Planning officer. The provision for layout approval is important in urban and peri-urban areas; where land rates are comparatively higher and there is high demand for sites and in order to regulate building activity with a view to provide open spaces and sites for civic amenities. However in pre-dominantly rural areas outside the peri-urban limits, there may be no need for the TCP officer's approval, if the Gram Panchayat is given the authority and responsibility of ensuring adherence to the provision of TCP Act and Rules. This will reduce the workload on TCP officers and simplify the process of layout approval and of building houses for rural residents outside peri-urban limits.

18. The KTCP Act and Rules may be modified so that layouts of 2 acres or less need to set apart only the roads and civic amenity sites. The area that should have been kept as open space and park area can be formed as sites, if the land owner is willing to pay land acquisition charges for acquiring open space and park area in proportion to the area foregone based on the guidance value.

19. Within the limits of ULBs, certain lands are categorised as green or for agriculture use. In some cases, ULB boundaries have been vastly increased bringing into their fold large areas of still agricultural land. It may be desirable to relook at the necessity of keeping green areas/belt within the limits of ULBs. Other than eco-sensitive areas and buffer zones of lakes and streams, the other areas could be categorised for development purpose. This will reduce the burden of going in for land use change for the owners concerned. It will also be fairer because lands that are categorised as green zone tend to have lower land value than those categorised for development as residential or commercial or industrial.

20. The Niti Aayog Advisory Committee on Urban Planning Capacity in India has recommended the formation of an apex committee at the State level to undertake a regular review of planning legislations (including town and country planning or urban and regional development acts or other relevant acts). The apex committee may comprise key decision makers and multidisciplinary professionals. The scope of work of this committee would need to include review of the efficacy of the prevailing Act and other aspects. It is recommended that a committee be formed on these lines to review the KTCP Act and Rules.

21. The Hon'ble High Court of Karnataka has given directions on opening night shelters for shelterless persons in Bengaluru. The Govt. of India has also given directions in this regard. It is the duty of the urban local bodies to provide night shelter to shelterless persons. It is therefore recommended to notify a Sakala service for providing night shelter to shelterless persons. Persons may seek night shelter by calling the helpline of BBMP or any emergency service. A time limit for providing the shelter should be notified.

22. In controlling building plan violations citizens, RWAs and Area Sabhas may be actively involved. The Ward Committees, Area Sabhas and RWAs may be requested to report violations to the Chief Officer/Commissioner of the concerned ULB. Since anonymity would be preferred while reporting violations, there needs to be an online reporting system on the web and mobile portals of the BBMP and ULBs to submit complaints/reports to the relevant authority in the ULB.

23. Engineers, including environmental engineers, working in UDAs may be delegated with technical and administrative powers as per powers given to AEEs, EEs working in City Corporations.

24. The 15th Central Finance Commission has allocated grants to Million plus population cities. Of these grants 68% are allocated for meeting service level benchmarks in delivery of drinking water supply, sanitation and solid waste management. BWSSB is in-charge of drinking water supply and sanitation in Bengaluru city. Whereas BBMP is in-charge of solid waste management. BWSSB has been handed over about 9000 drinking water supply borewells by BBMP for maintenance. BWSSB spends about Rs 70 cr. on maintenance and electricity bill payment for these borewells apart from its larger role in piped water supply in the city. In the guidelines issued by MoHUA 60% weightage is given for drinking water supply and sanitation and 40% for SWM in assessing performance of the city. Keeping this in view a certain portion of the 68% CFC grants should be given to BWSSB. This will help it to maintain the borewells and piped water supply.

25. When a person dies, the khatas of his/her properties are transferred to her legal heirs or to inheritors as per the written will, registered or unregistered. In case of a registered will, the registration charges are only Rs. 200 and the stamp duty is zero. The amount charged for change of khata is 2% of the stamp value and improvement fee i.e. 2% of Rs 200 being only Rs 4. Therefore khata transfer to legal heirs brings in a miniscule amount of revenue to ULBs. The beneficiary of the will or the legal heir inherits the property. Many countries levy inheritance or estate tax which may range from 5 to 40 percent of the value of inheritance above a certain threshold. Inheritance or estate tax is under the purview of the Central Government and the State Government or ULB may not get revenue from it. Currently, no inheritance or estate tax is levied in India. ULBs however can get revenue through khata transfer fees on inherited properties. It may be worthwhile to consider increasing the khata transfer fees in case of transfer due to inheritance on the following lines: **i.** Transfer by inheritance of non-agricultural properties worth more than say three or five crore rupees or of a threshold value as decided by the State Govt, may be considered for levying higher khata transfer fees on the legal heir or inheritor. **ii.** Fees for Inheritance Khata transfer payable by the legal heir or inheritor of properties above the threshold limit may be fixed at 0.1 % of the guidance value for residential properties and 0.2% of guidance value for commercial or industrial properties or non-agricultural vacant land or sites. **iii.** If the above suggestion is accepted by Government, it may be necessary to provide legal backing for charging such a fee by suitable amendment of the relevant Acts, BBMP Act, KMC Act and KM Act.

4.2 Merging BDA and BMRDA

1. The area of the then Bangalore City Corporation in 1976 when Bangalore Development Authority was established was 75 sq km. The area under the jurisdiction of BDA was then 1217 sq km i.e. 16 times the area of Bangalore Corporation. The area under BBMP has grown more than 10 times in the last 50 years to 800 sq.km. now. If a similar scale as in 1976 is taken, the planning region for a large metropolis like Bengaluru should be between 10 to 15 times the area of the city corporation. As an example, the area of Greater Mumbai is 437 sq.km. while the area of Mumbai Metropolitan Region is 6328 sq.km i.e. more than 14 times larger. The area of BBMP being 800 sq.km, the Bengaluru Metropolitan Region should be between 8000 sq.km to 12,000 sq.km. The BMRDA has a jurisdiction of 8005 sq.km, ten times the area of BBMP. There are 10 planning authorities namely, Bangalore International Airport Area Planning Authority (BIAAPA), Anekal, Hoskote, Kanakapura, Nelamangala, Magadi, Bidadi, Doddaballapura and Devanahalli. The two development authorities in this area are BDA and Ramanagara Development Authority. The planned satellite town ring road (STRR) has a length of 204 km. BDA is both a planning and a development body, whereas BMRDA is only a planning body. The need for a development in the larger Bengaluru Metropolitan Area is felt to incorporate projects like the Peripheral Ring Road and STRR, Bengaluru Metro and the suburban railway. The Dr. Kasturirangan Committee made a recommendation to merge BDA with BMRDA. As recommended elsewhere, in the interest of ease of living for citizens and ease of doing business, the planning functions for BBMP area may be handed over to the Chief Commissioner and Chief Town Planner in BBMP. The area left outside BBMP limits and within the present BDA limits would be only about 417 sq. km. The recommendation made by the Kasturirangan Committee gains force in this scenario. The BMRDA has to be strengthened to take up development works also in the BMR. If BDA and BMRDA are merged the merged body could take up both development and planning functions in the region. The BDA Act is a comprehensive legislation covering both these aspects. The BMRDA Act is a short legislation. Only certain aspects of the BMRDA Act need to be incorporated in the BDA Act to merge the two bodies. Jurisdiction of the authority, the power to prepare a Structure Plan, control over the LPAs in the region etc. If these aspects are incorporated and the change of nomenclature to BMRDA Act is done by amending the BDA Act, the merged body would possess the strengths of both BDA and BMRDA. The BMRDA can shift to the BDA building and take over the other activities of the BDA relating to development of layouts and sites, apartments etc. Therefore, it is recommended to merge BDA and BMRDA. The jurisdiction of Metro Planning Committee (MPC) could be extended to the limits of BMRDA. BDA Act and BMRDA Act may be amended to merge BDA and BMRDA.

Annexure-1

Town Planning approval process in other States

Activities/ Functions	Maharashtra		Tamil Nadu	Telangana	Gujarat
	Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (MCGM)	Pune-Chinchwad Municipal Corporation (PCMC)	Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC)	Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC)	Ahmadabad Municipal Corporation (AMC)
Master Plan Preparation	prepares the master plan for the corporation area	prepares the master plan for the corporation area	Chennai Metropolitan Development Authority (CMDA) prepares the master plan including city corporation area CMDA comprises of 3 district of Chennai, part of Tiruvallur and part of Kanchipuram. CMDA is functioning like regional development authority.	Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA) prepares the master plan including city corporation area	Ahmadabad Urban Development Authority (AUDA) prepares the master plan including city corporation area
i.) Layout Plan approval -Single plot -Multi plot. ii) Group Housing Development	MCGM	PCMC	CMDA	HMDA	AUDA
Amalgamation and Bifurcation of plots	MCGM	PCMC	CMDA	HMDA	AMC approves Amalgamation and Sub division of land under the Town Planning Scheme
Building Plan Approvals	MCGM	PCMC	GCC	GHMC	AMC

Annexure-2

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA

NOTIFICATION

In exercise of the powers conferred by Section 81 of the Karnataka Town and Country Planning Act, 1961 (Karnataka Act 11 of 1963),the Government of Karnataka hereby accord approval for exercise of powers of the planning authority underSections14, 15, 17 relating to according approval for single plot

layout and development plans only, 18, 18-A and 24 of saidAct by the Chief Commissioner of the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike in the area under the jurisdiction of the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike, Bengaluru with immediate effect and until further orders.

The delegation of powers is subject to the following conditions:

i. The approvals shall be strictly in accordance with the land use and zoning regulations of the approved Master Plans of the respective local planning areas within the jurisdiction of Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike which are in force.

ii. The Chief Commissioner of Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike shall discharge the duties delegated under this notification with the planning opinion of the Chief Town Planner, deputed from the Department of Town and Country Planning to the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike under section 98(2) of the BBMP Act,2020.

iii. In the process, in any circumstances, if the Chief Town Planner post is vacant or not filled, the charge of Chief Town Planner shall be given to an officer not below the rank of Additional Director of Town & Country Planning deputed from the Department of Town and Country Planning.

iv. The staff and officers of theTown Planning section at central office of BBMP shall assist the Chief Town Planner in according planning approvals.

v. The powers delegated under this notification shall be exercised by collecting the fees in accordance with the rates as prescribed under section 18 and 18-A of the Karnataka Town and Country Planning Act, 1961 read with the rules as notified from time to time.

vi. This notification supersedes the earlier notification No. UDD 286 MNY 2003 dated: 26.02.2004

By Order and in the name of the

Governor of Karnataka

UNDER SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT

URBAN DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

COPIES

To all concerned……..

DIRECTOR OF MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATION

General Recommendations

4.3 Ease of use of services by citizens

1. Ward Samitis are the foundation blocks of urban governance. They have done effective and commendable work during the Covid pandemic in 2020 and thereafter. Ward Samitis have not been legally constituted in all ULBs. Government may issue directions to constitute the Ward Samitis within a given time line in all ULBs. Formation of Ward Committees is proving to be a long drawn out exercise. It may be necessary to guide the ULBs and residents in formation of Ward Committees. NGOs, SIUD and Social Science/Political Science faculty of local colleges may be roped in to hand hold ULBs in implementing this provision.

2. Many Gram Panchayats have recently been upgraded as Town Panchayats or have been merged with existing ULBs. Their E Swathu property tax, khata and mutation data is now lodged in the Panchatantra software of RD&PR Department. Action may be taken to port this data to e-Aasthi software maintained by the Karnataka Municipal Data Society (KMDS).

3. Revenue Officers and Revenue/Tax Inspectors of some ULBs have not been delegated powers to issue Khata extract and copies of Khata records. These powers vested with Commissioners, Chief Officers may be delegated to Revenue officers to enable citizens to obtain these documents more easily.

4. As a measure towards ease of living for citizens, the approval and sanction of building plan in sites upto 2400 sq.ft for residential use may be given instantly online based on the architects plan, engineers and owner's declaration and self-certification. Suitable declarations regarding adhering to the Town Planning rules, Zonal regulations and building bye-laws may be taken in the online application. The application should include an undertaking from the owner that the owner is personally responsible for any deviations from the rules, regulations and bye-laws and giving full authority to the municipal officials to demolish any deviation without giving notice. The owner should also declare that he is personally liable for all consequences if any incorrect or false information or documentation is given in the application. The architect and the engineer should also give an undertaking that they will supervise the construction to ensure that there is no deviation from the building bye laws, Town planning rules and zonal regulations. For such cases, there should be no need for the file to be processed and approved. The fees to be paid under various heads should be auto-calculated in the application software. An online payment link should be given to the owner to pay the required fees online. The sanction should then be generated with e-signature of the competent authority as soon as the declaration, undertaking, self-certification is e signed by

the applicant, architect and engineer and the required fees are paid. The need for separately applying for and taking commencement certificate and occupancy certificate for such buildings can also be dispensed with. In order to protect the income of the municipality, the fees to be paid for commencement certificate and occupancy certificate can be collected at the time of application itself. This will be a step towards easing the life of applicants as well as enabling the municipal engineers to give more attention to bigger and non-residential buildings.

5. The KUWSDB and Karnataka Urban Infrastructure Finance Corporation (KUIDFC) have commissioned and are operating water supply schemes and UGDs in Corporations, CMCs and TMCs. They do not have sufficient staff to attend to complaints and for maintenance of water supply and sewerage. KUWSDB and KUIDFC should post responsible staff housed in the concerned Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) so that citizen complaints can be attended to promptly and for better coordination with the ULB.

6. Status of applications filed by citizens for different services like payment of fee, notice, approval, rejections etc. may be communicated through SMS to the applicants. The correct mobile numbers may be taken from the applicant at the time of application and updated in the database from time to time, as done in Aadhaar.

7. Monthly SMS may be sent to citizens who have pending dues as reminders of property tax dues, water supply and UGD dues etc. POS machines should be used for generating the demand bill and giving on the spot receipt after collection. Tumkur Corporation has followed this method and managed to collect most of the arrears of about Rs.14 crore that it earlier had. For this purpose, mobile numbers of each property owner must be collected. RI/AROs /Bill Collectors team may be constituted. Mobile numbers must be linked to e-Swathu and property tax for sending SMSs about property tax arrears/demands etc.

8. To increase transparency, accountability and citizen participation, ULBs may be mandated by issue of suitable Government directions to publish minutes of corporation/council meetings on their web portals.

4.4 Improving essential services

9. Drinking water is increasingly a scarce and expensive resource. It has to be conserved. If metering of drinking water supply is not done, there is no incentive to use it economically. There is no check against wastage of drinking water or misuse for non-domestic purposes. Therefore, metering of all domestic and commercial water supply connections should be done by ULBs and KUWSDB. In this context, the example of Kumta Municipality may be cited. The Municipality took a decision to meter all household connections. They first shortlisted meter models and fixed rates for them.

They prepared a list of empanelled plumbers. The list of empanelled plumbers and shortlisted meters was sent to every household giving 3 months time within which households were told to fix the meters themselves. An IEC campaign was taken up to inform households that if meters were not installed, they would have to pay higher fixed charges later. At the end of the campaign, nearly 90% of the households had installed good quality meters themselves. The outcomes were heartening. Water tariff collection improved, water losses reduced and tail-enders got better water supply. DMA and KUWSDB should propagate this model of metering of water supply connections to all ULBs. UDD may give this process the necessary support by building in disincentives for ULBs that do not complete metering.

10. There are few dedicated/support staff for maintenance of water supply, sewerage and underground drainage (UGDs), street lighting, solid waste management etc. at CMC/ TMC/TP level. The O&M of water supply schemes, sewage treatment plants, street lighting, and solid waste management in CMCs/TMCs are being outsourced in many ULBs. Other ULBs may also outsource to outside agencies, instead of depending on ULB staff to maintain them. In many cases such outsourcing of O&M is done for one year only. This is cumbersome because it requires an annual procurement process to be done. Frequently this is delayed for various reasons. In such cases the existing contractor are asked to extend their O&M contract on an ad-hoc basis. This is not a satisfactory arrangement. It is therefore recommended that outsourcing for O&M of utilities and facilities should be for a period of atleast 3 years subject to satisfactory service and liable to be terminated as per the agreement if the service is consistently unsatisfactory.

11. Some Smart cities have successfully implemented PPP projects for replacement of street lights with LED lights. City wise tenders were called for Smart cities. Deputy Commissioners could be directed to call city wise bids instead of district wise packages for implementing PPP projects to replace conventional street lights with LED lights in other urban local bodies on the lines of Smart cities. This will enable local contractors to apply. They would be more responsive and could implement the project faster. The KUIDFC Smart City Mission may give training to PD, DUDCs on preparing bid documents, calling tenders, evaluating tenders etc.

12. Recommendations regarding Gram Panchayat electricity bills covering aspects of billing for drinking water borewells, defunct borewells, non-functional electricity meters, pumps, pump capacity and sanctioned loads, fixed charges etc. have been separately made in the report. Many of these recommendations are relevant to ULBs also. The ULBs may be directed to take action on the recommendations made for GPs. RDPR department has launched an app called E Belaku to link GPs and Escoms and provide a quick avenue for checking of accounts, payment of bills, intimation of defunct meters, intimation of defunct borewells and termination of agreement etc. It is recommended that the same app be modified by RDPR, UDD and Escoms to incorporate the requirements of ULBs also.

13. Enterprise Fund has been set up in ULBs. This fund has to be invested only in income generating assets but it is not being spent fully. In many cases, shopping complexes and other such income generating assets are actually not generating much income because of court cases etc. Moreover, ULBs may not have the required lands or demand for such income generating assets. Formation or widening of roads increases land values leading to increased revenues for the ULB. Therefore, this Enterprise Fund may be permitted to be used for land acquisition for formation of new roads or widening of road as per the approved Master Plan.

14. Health Cess is being collected by ULBs. They may be permitted to utilise it for spraying, fogging, malaria disinfection, dengue, chikungunya etc. management measures. The Act may be amended to permit the ULBs to retain the funds so collected and utilise it for these purposes.

15. Library Cess is being collected by ULBs. There is a standing complaint that this amount is not fully and regularly remitted to the Libraries department leading to huge arrears. In many countries, libraries are established and run by the local bodies. The Karnataka Public Libraries Act 1965 was enacted when literacy was low and the demand for libraries and books was lower. The situation has changed and libraries have become literary centres and cyber libraries in developed countries. If Libraries are handed over to the ULBs, the advantages are that the ULBs may utilise the Library cess fully for purchase of books, development of libraries, construction of new libraries, provision of equipment, computer labs etc. It is likely that due to public demand, some of the Councillors/Corporators may initiate more library development work in their ward. There is an apprehension that if the libraries are handed over to local bodies, the centralised purchase of library books will be affected, leading to higher prices and purchase of lower quality books. Safeguards can be built in for preventing this. ULBs should be mandated to utilise a certain minimum percentage of library cess for purchase of books. The Libraries department can continue to shortlist the books and fix the prices centrally. The ULBs should mandatorily purchase books from that list for upto 60% of the available funds. Of the remaining funds, 20% can be used for purchase of books that are locally demanded but not shortlisted; the balance 20% may be used for development of the libraries, including construction. The apprehensions that lesser number of books will be purchased and that centralised selection of books will be affected should be allayed. Alternatively, the percentage of Library Cess collected to be retained by ULBs may be increased from the present percentage of 10% fixed in the KPL Act to atleast 70%. The 30% to be remitted to the State Library Fund can be used for purchase of books, maintenance of the State Public Library etc. Keeping these safeguards in place, it is advisable that management of libraries is handed over to ULBs. The UDD may send a proposal in this regard to Primary and Secondary Education department and Libraries department. UDD may send a proposal to Finance department for utilisation of library cess by ULBs for Library development. Amendments to the

16. The agencies like Karnataka Rural Infrastructure Development Ltd (KRIDL), Nirmithi Kendra, KUIDFC, KUWSDB, Local Development Authority, Slum Board, Smart City Corp. etc. take up and implement various civil works under different schemes in the jurisdiction of ULBs. There is no software to compile all the civil works taken up by different agencies to help identify and delete duplicate works. There is scope for overlap in the annual action plan also. Hence all agencies working in the jurisdiction of ULBs should enter details of the works taken up by them in common work history software. The Karnataka State Remote Sensing Applications Centre (KSRSAC) may expedite the updating of work history in ULBs on the KGIS. KSRSAC should facilitate AutoCAD geo-referencing. ULBs are facing technical issues in geo-referencing in the KSRAC format. Government may direct the multiple agencies to mandatorily enter details of action plan, works taken up and status with GIS coordinates on the KGIS platform. A suitable interface should be given on the KGIS to update the status of projects. Work order should be issued to them only after they certify that they have entered the details on the KGIS platform. This condition may be incorporated in the bid document and work order. Suitable changes may be made in the draft bid documents by UDD. Government order may be issued by UDD to make the entry of work details on the KGIS platform mandatory. This should be in the public domain for being monitored by the Municipality, by the elected representatives as well as the public.

17. Suitable exemption may be given under KTPP Act for entering into Annual Maintenance Contracts for sucking and jetting machines, auto-tippers, sweepers, earthmovers and specialised solid and liquid waste management equipment in service centres authorised by the manufacturers or suppliers as per the warranty or prescribed rates without having to call for quotations or tenders. This will considerably reduce the downtime of such equipment and also transaction costs for the ULBs.

18. NOC is required from the Pollution Control Board (PCB) for use of land fill sites. Sometimes it takes more than 6 months for NOC to be issued. The procedure for issue of NOC may be simplified by the State PCB so that NOCs can be issued within 3 months.

4.5 Improving working conditions and productivity

19. Ten City Corporations in the State have been brought under the jurisdiction of the Director of Municipal Administration. For better coordination and control it is recommended to re-designate the post of Director as Commissioner and upgrade the Directorate of Municipal Administration to a Commissionerate.

20. The Department is facing difficulties as there is a tendency of officers from other department without any experience of working in Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) being posted as Chief Officers. Officers of lower cadre are also being posted to much higher posts. Under these circumstances, as a result of ignorance or intentionally, irregularities may be committed and it would take a lot of time to set them right. Only department KMAS officers and KAS officers should be posted as Chief Officers of TMCs and Municipal Commissioners of CMCs and Corporations.

21. When incharge arrangements are made from officers of a lower cadre to the posts of Chief Officer (CO) or Municipal Commissioner (MC), it is in the interest of efficient administration that only officers belonging to one cadre below the cadre of CO or MC be placed in charge of that higher post. If officials from two or three cadres below the CO or MC are placed in charge of that post, problems of hierarchy and control arise. Therefore, Government may take a policy decision that only officials belonging to one cadre below the CO or MC will be placed in additional charge of that post.

22. An imprest amount/revolving fund of Rs.50,000, Rs.25,000 and Rs.10,000 may be sanctioned to EEs, AEEs, AEs and JEs respectively working in Corporations, CMCs, TMCs and TPs for taking up emergency repair works like filling up potholes, water supply line repairs etc. BBMP and BWSSB have made this type of imprest amount/revolving fund available to Ward Engineers for taking up emergency repair work.

23. A large number of proposals for extension of time and variation of estimated amount of contracts are sent by Director of Municipal Administration to Government. This leads to delays. DMA may therefore be delegated with higher powers for revision of estimates, extra item rate list and extension of time in case of contracts. This will vastly improve speedy processing of files and completion of infrastructural works. The Director Municipal Administration has submitted a proposal to Government for delegation of such powers on 12-08-2020. The proposal may be considered for approval at the earliest.

24. Water supply, sewerage, drainage and solid waste management require specialised technical skills. DUDCs may be sanctioned one post AEE (Environmental) to give technical support to the ULBs in the districts in maintaining their SWM and liquid waste management facilities.

25. BBMP has taken the services of Marshals from among ex-servicemen on outsourcing basis for enforcing rules relating to solid waste management, Covid management etc. Other Corporations and CMCs that are financially stable can be given permission to take the services of a prescribed number of Marshals on outsourcing basis, based on their financial ability and population, for enforcement of SWM rules, Covid management rules and taking action on unauthorised constructions. They should be given POS/smart machines for on-the-spot fining and printing of receipt as is being done in some ULBs like Tumkur. KMDS should prepare software for this purpose.

26. The City Survey office in the district headquarters may be brought under the jurisdictional Corporations/CMCs. This will enable them to utilise the services of the ADLR/City Surveyor and coordinate for faster disposal of survey applications. A post of City Surveyor may be created under the ADLR for this purpose for all Corporations and CMCs.

27. ADLR and Taluka Surveyors should be given the responsibility of taking up surveys in urban areas also, including in Gramathana areas wherever required.

28. DMA receives many complaints about irregularities in ULBs. These complaints are routinely processed and therefore it is likely that many cases of irregularities continue unabated and even flourish. If DMA considers that it is necessary to verify the details given in any particular complaint, an on-the-spot inspection and enquiry would be required. But the DMA is handicapped because it lacks a separate Inspection Cell manned with technical personnel like engineers and accountants. It is suggested that a separate Inspection Cell consisting of two posts each of outsourced engineers and accountants be established in DMA.

29. The Accounting Rules prescribe 77 forms and registers to be maintained by ULBs. They should be reviewed in the light of adoption of many e governance applications; the number of forms and registers reduced and simplified. A committee consisting of selected Commissioners, Chief Officers, Accounts officers and JD, KMDS may be constituted by UDD for reviewing and giving suitable recommendations on simplification.

30. The DMA has thousands of audit paras pending since as far back as 1973. More attention should be paid to recent audit paras with greater financial implications and where relevant records and the staff responsible are likely to be available. It is therefore recommended that the pending audit paras of the period prior to the year 2000-01 may be considered for closure in the following cases: i. there are no pending court or legislature committee cases ii. financial implications are not large or where the staffs responsible are deceased and iii. relevant records are not produced by the concerned ULB because they are not found even after intensive search. Finance department may consider issuing a suitable Government order to DMA in this regard.

31. A number of vehicles like sucking and jetting machines, auto-tippers, sweepers, earthmovers have been procured in ULBs. They are procured to strengthen solid and liquid waste disposal. But there are no sanctioned posts of drivers for these vehicles. The result is that ULBs are not able to hire drivers through outsourcing agencies to operate these machines. Government has ordered that drivers may be taken on outsourcing basis only against sanctioned posts. Consequently, the vehicles procured are lying idle. Hence permission may be given by UDD and FD to obtain the services of required number of drivers on outsourcing basis for the newly added vehicles even if there are no sanctioned posts or alternatively to sanction driver posts for them.

32. Deputy Commissioners are authorised to obtain services of retired District Judges as Legal Advisors. City Corporations and CMCs also have to fight many cases relating to building plan violation, khata, and property tax. It is advisable that they should be allowed to take services of retired City Judge or Additional Govt. Pleaders as Legal Advisor. Legal cells may be strengthened in Corporations and CMCs.

33. Powers may be given to the Corporations, Councils and TPs to fix the legal charges to be paid to their lawyers. They may adopt rates for lawyers depending on the types of cases and the Court in which they have to appear in.

34. ULB staff may be re-deployed based on the population. Separate staffing pattern may be fixed for ULBs having more than 2 lakh households.

35. Municipal Commissioners of City Corporations may be notified by Finance department as delegated with powers of Divisional level officers; CMC Commissioners delegated powers as District level officers; TMC Chief Officers as Sub Divisional level officers, Chief Officers, Town Panchayats as Taluk level officers under the General Delegation of common financial powers to HODs and others issued by Finance Department. PD, DUDC may be notified as District level officer for the employees of TMCs and TPs with attendant administrative powers like sanction of time-bound increment to TMC and TP employees etc. Revenue Officers and Revenue Inspectors in ULBs may be delegated with powers of Sub Taluk level officers. EEs, AEEs and AE/JEs working in the ULBs may also be delegated with powers on par with those in BBMP or PWD. DMA may send a suitable proposal for notification on the lines of G.O. No. FD 2 TFP 2016 dated 20-01-2016.

36. Deputy Commissioners of districts have been delegated with powers of giving administrative approval to works costing upto Rs 5 crore. Many proposals have to be sent to the already overburdened DCs for approval leading to delays. In order to increase speed of implementation of works, it is recommended that the power delegated to City Corporation Commissioners for giving administrative approval for works may be raised from Rs. 50 lakh to Rs. 100 lakh; powers of CMC Commissioners Grade II may be raised from Rs 10 lakh to Rs.15 lakh; Grade I from Rs 15 lakh to Rs.25 lakh and CO, Town Panchayat from Rs 5 lakh to Rs. 10 lakh. Project Director, District Urban Development Cell (DUDC) may be delegated with powers for administrative approval up to Rs.100 lakhs for civil works. Only Senior KAS officers or Gr-1 Commissioners may be posted as PD DUDC.

37. City Corporation Commissioners may be notified as appointing authority for Group C and D staff in the Corporation. They may be given powers to impose minor penalty on Group B staff of the Corporation. Similarly, the CMC and TMC Municipal Commissioners may be given powers to impose minor penalties on Group C staff and appointing authority of D staff in their municipality.

38. Commissioners of City Corporations are IAS or senior KAS officers. They should be given powers to monitor, supervise and certify projects and works taken up by KUIDFC and KUWSDB in their Corporation areas. This will improve the quality and speed of execution of works as they will be able to resolve local issues quickly.

39. A Coordination Committee (CC) should be set up in each City Corporations by means of a Government order issued by UDD. The CC should be chaired by the Commissioner of the City Corporation and consist of heads of different wings of the Corporation, representatives of KUWSDB, UDA, Escom, KPTCL, KSRTC/NEKRTC/NWKRTC, Public Works Department (PWD), Housing Board, Slum Board, National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), Railways, City Gas, OFC companies and the local Tahsildar. It should compulsorily meet on a monthly basis and settle coordination issues that have arisen in the city.

40. Government direction may be issued that it is the responsibility of Chief Officers and Commissioners to send their ULB Action Plan if it is not approved by the elected body by 30th June to the district Deputy Commissioner for further action. In case it is not sent by the concerned Chief Officer or Commissioner, the responsibility of calling for the Action Plan by 15th July and taking action regarding approval of the Action Plan may be given to the district Deputy Commissioner.

41. Poura karmikas (PK), loaders, helpers, cleaners are being recruited as per roster system. It is informed that posts reserved for candidates belonging to Category 1, 2 and 3 are not fully filled up. As a result many PK posts remain vacant and sanitation work suffers. It is recommended that orders be issued by UDD in consultation with DPAR that after two notifications/calls, if any category posts of PKs remain unfilled, then those PK posts should be de-reserved.

42. The age limit for PKs to be considered for direct recruitment is currently 45 years. Many PKs who have worked for more number of years are not recruited while those who have worked for lesser years get appointed. It is recommended that the age limit for direct recruitment only in the case of PKs be increased to 55 years for those who have worked atleast 10 years as PKs on outsourcing basis.

43. Government has decided on direct payment by ULBs to PKs who were initially taken on outsourcing basis through private agencies. Vacancies arise among direct payment PKs for various reasons. But the procedure that should be adopted to fill up such vacancies not been spelt out. These posts remain unfilled and adversely affect sanitation work in the ULBs. UDD may communicate a suitable procedure, for instance by taking PKs first on outsourcing basis, to ULBs for filling up such posts.

44. All Corporations, CMCs, TMCs and DUDCs should be directed to send proposals only through E Office to DMA and not send it in paper form. DMA also should use E Office only to send proposals to UDD.

45. KMAS Cadre & Recruitment Rules have not been revised since 1971. A draft revision has been prepared. It may be expeditiously finalised and notified.

46. State Institute of Urban Development should arrange Satcom training for Ward Committee and Area Sabha members about their roles, powers and responsibilities.

4.6 Improving Municipal revenues

47. Revision of Various Taxes and Fines Levied under the KMC Act 1976 and the Karnataka Municipalities Act, 1964.

The taxes and fines prescribed in the Karnataka Municipal Corporations Act, 1976 and The Karnataka Municipalities Act, 1964 have not been revised for many years. They no longer serve a deterrent. These fines and taxes may be revised to reflect the present value of the rupee since they were last fixed at the time of enactment of these acts. Hence it is recommended to revise these taxes and fines to yield more revenue to urban local bodies including corporations on the following lines.

The Karnataka Municipal Corporations Act, 1976: The taxes or penalties vary from ten paisa to Rs.1000/- for various kinds of taxes such as, taxes on shops and other place of business or profession, toll rates payable on entering the corporation limits, tax on advertisements, ordinary penalties, and penalties for continuing breaches. Hence these rates of taxes and penalties need to be revised for the current year based on inflation index. It may be raised up to 25 times the original tax rate as fixed at the time of enactment of the said Act considering the equivalent value of one rupee in 1976 to a rupee in 2021.

The sections of the Karnataka Municipal Corporations Act such as, 103, 118,431, 431-A and Rules of the Karnataka Municipal Corporations Act such as, 32(a) & (b), 80(1), 114(1) and (3), 188, 190, 192(2), 192(2) and (3), 194, 208, 209, 211(1)and (2), 218(2), 218(6), 218 (8), 219, 223, 224(2), 225(2) and (4), 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 233, 236(4), 240(2) read with Section 223, 240(2) read with section 218, 240(2) read with section 218(8), 241, 242 and (3), 246(2) and (3), 247, 248, 249, 250, 252, 263(1) and (4), 272, 273(1), 278, 280, 281, 283, 285, 286, 287, 288, 290, 291(1) and (3), 292, 293(3), 294(2), 294(3), 296(5), 297(1), 298, 310(1), 319, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326(1) and (2), 327, 328(1) and (3), 329, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338(2) and (4), 339(1) and (4), 343(1), 344(a) (b) and (c), 346, 347, 349, 351 (1), 352, 353(1), 354(1) (2) (3) and (5), 355(1), 355(2). 357, 358, 363(2), 365, 367, 370, 371 (2), 372, 375, 376, 377(2), 378, 379, 381, 382, 386, 388, 392(1), 394(4), 395, 396, 397(3), 398, 400,402, 406, 408(2), 409, 410, 411(1), 412(1) and (2), 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 419, 420, 430(3) and (4), 443(7), 447, 457(1), 459, 494, 495 and 496. These rules and sections of the Act may be amended to revise the rates of taxes and penalties based on the present value of the rupee compared to when they were last fixed.

The Karnataka Municipalities Act, 1964: Majority of rates of taxes and penalties have not been revised since 1964; a few rates were revised in 1984. These rates vary from 50 paise to 1000 rupees. Even after six decades Municipal councils are levying fines and taxes from 50 paise to 5000 rupees for various violations and fees such as removal of unauthorized advertisements, fee for Jatras, Urus etc, Fee for certain permissions, forming of new extensions or layouts in private streets, displacements of pavements, obstruction and encroachments upon public streets, discharge of sewage, consumption of smoke, using offensive manure etc, tethering cattle, licensing markets, slaughter houses and certain businesses. Municipal Councils are losing huge potential revenues. These rates may be revised up to 68 times based on the present value of one rupee in 1964.

Revision of taxes may be proposed by appropriate amendments to the Acts and rules for sections such as,54, 78, 136, 138, 170, 148, 189, 190, 202, 203, 207, 208, 211, 215, 216(1) and (3), 217, 218, 219(2), 224(1), 224(2), 225, 226, 225(v), 228, 234, 238, 239, 240, 241(2), 242, 243(2), 243(3), 244(2), 247(6) and (8), 248(4), 249(b), 252(5), 254, 255(3), 256(4) and (6), 257(6), 258, 259(3), 260(3), 262(2), 263, 266, 287(5), 292, 323(3), and 324(2)(a)(b).

The proposed amendments may revise the rates of taxes, fees and fines prescribed in these sections and rules to reflect the present value of the rupee.

48. Shops and leased properties have to be auctioned after the lease period gets over. In many cases, the lessees approach Courts and get stay orders against conducting or confirming auctions. In such cases it is suggested that the rent may be increased as per the inflation index to the original lessees, if the lessees are willing, till the court cases are finalised. This will generate higher income to the ULB. The rent increase as per inflation index may be lesser than that obtained by auction, but it serves as an interim arrangement till the litigation is concluded.

49. Karnataka Municipalities (Power of Expenditure) Rules, 1986 was last amended in the year 2003. The rules may be amended to revise the rates at present market value. DMA may submit a proposal to the Government to revise the rates.

50. Property ID numbers should be linked with Escom RR numbers. This will help Municipalities in identifying commercial establishments and thus commercial rate of property tax on such establishments and also issue trade licenses to them where required. UPOR project should make provision to collect Escom RR numbers also.

51. There are no specific guidelines to give NOC and assess property tax for mobile towers. RD & PR Department has drafted guidelines for this purpose. UDD can suitably modify and adopt them for the ULBs.

Other reforms for ULBs

Janaagraha, an NGO working in the urban governance sector does an annual ranking of cities on the basis of various urban governance parameters. The latest review by Janaagraha highlights areas where improvements can be made in urban governance in Karnataka. The following recommendations are made by drawing inputs from their review.

4.7 Urban Planning

52. There is a need to expand metropolitan/regional planning to areas beyond Bengaluru. Areas around city corporations like Hubli-Dharwad, Mysuru, Mangaluru, Belagavi, Kalaburagi, Shivamogga and Tumkuru with more than 10 lakh population in the metropolitan area, require metropolitan area and regional planning for planned growth. For this purpose, the Karnataka Town & Country Planning Act (KTCP) Act, 1961 may be suitably amended.

53. The 74th Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992 provides for the creation of Metropolitan Planning Committees (MPCs) to prepare draft development plans for metropolitan areas with more than 10 lakh population in their ULBs and gram panchayats. MPCs may be set up for those areas declared as metropolitan areas by suitable amendments to the KTCP Act.

54. Currently, city corporations and other ULBs in Karnataka are not mandated to draw up city sanitation plans and comprehensive mobility plans. The KTCP Act, 1961 may be amended to mandate formulation of these plans.

55.   Sec 9 and 10 of the KTCP Act does not explicitly require participation of Ward Committees and Area Sabhas in preparing the Master Plan. For this purpose, the KTCP Act, 1961 may be amended to mandate participation of Ward Committees and Area Sabhas in preparation of the Master Plan and in giving suggestions on the draft Plan.

4.8   Urban Capacity and Resources - Finance and Human Resources

56.   The BBMP Act, 2020 Sec 142 (b) and (c) has given it powers to levy and collect tax on profession, trades, callings and employments and on entertainments and amusements. On the same lines, the Karnataka Municipalities Act and Karnataka Municipal Corporations Act may be amended to empower all Municipalities to levy and collect profession and entertainment tax.

57.   Schedule IX - Financial Rules of the KMC Act requires that the Corporation funds may be invested, with the sanction of the Government, in deposits with approved banks. ULB's may be empowered to make such investments in approved / empanelled nationalized banks complying with the latest orders issued by Finance Department regarding bank deposits, without the prior sanction/approval of the State Government. The relevant provisions of the BBMP Act, 2020, KMC Act, 1976, and KM Act, 1964 may be amended where applicable.

58.   In order to improve fiscal governance of ULBs, an independent audit of their annual accounts by an external audit agency is desirable. The Karnataka Municipal Accounting and Budgeting Rules 2006 (KMAB) may be amended to provide for such audit of annual accounts by an independent external agency appointed and paid for by the State Government, rather than by the ULB, to maintain independence. Apart from an audit of financial statements, the independent auditors may be empowered to conduct a propriety audit that verifies loss of revenues, wasteful expenditures and flags underutilisation and misappropriation of public funds.

59.   The KMAB Rules 2006 are considered to be one of the best accounting rules in municipal administration in the country. But so far the BBMP has not been brought under its ambit. It is recommended that BBMP be brought under the purview of the Karnataka Municipal Accounting and Budgeting Rules, 2006 expeditiously.

60.   An effective Performance Management System (PMS) in the ULBs would improve the effectiveness of officers and staff and improve the functioning of the bodies. Sec 128 of the BBMP Act, 2020 mandates the establishment of a PMS. The performance management system may be developed and adopted by BBMP expeditiously. It is recommended that a PMS be introduced for other ULBs also. The indicators may be drawn from metrics of revenue collection, delivery of essential services, KDP financial and physical indicators, SDG indicators, Swachh Bharat Mission indicators.

61. As per the 12th Schedule of the Constitution of India, there are 18 functions that may be devolved to ULBs by the State government. The BBMP Act, 2020 devolves all the 18 functions to the BBMP. To further empower the ULBs, it is recommended that the KM Act, 1964 and KMC Act, 1976 be amended to devolve all 18 functions of the 12th Schedule to the ULBs on the lines of BBMP.

62. In line with the Rules issued under BBMP Act and KMC Act to enable the functioning of Ward Committees and Area Sabhas, it is recommended that corresponding Rules be notified under the KM Act to enable functioning of Ward Committees and Area Sabhas in Municipalities and Town Panchayats.

63. Under the BBMP Act, one of the functions of Ward Committees is to prepare and submit Annual Ward Development Plan. Suitable guidelines may be issued to guide the Ward Committees in preparing this plan, to institutionalize the same and ensure continuity. The BBMP has allocated an untied fund of Rs.60 lakh to each Ward Committee in 2021-22. This is a commendable step. Similar guidelines may be issued and untied funds provided for other ULBs under the KMC Act, 1976 and KM Act, 1964.

4.9 KARNATAKA MUNICIPAL DATA SOCIETY

The Karnataka Municipal Data Society (KMDS) is a society registered under the provisions of Karnataka State Societies Registration Act. It is registered to provide technical support to the Director Municipal Administration to design new web applications and to upgrade existing web applications along with maintenance of services to strengthen Urban Local Bodies (ULB). The society till date has developed 442 websites of which 282 are for ULBs. There are 16 online services maintained by the Society for use of all ULBS. Fund Based Accounting System (FBAS) is made functional across all the ULBs.

General Recommendations:

1. An end-to –end property tax payment software is an urgent necessity in the Municipal Administration. It should be developed and quickly implemented in all ULBs. Some Corporations like Tumkur have developed their own property tax software through private vendors. E-Sweekruthi is the software maintained by the KMDS for receiving all taxes and fees to be paid to ULBs. In e-Sweekruthi, a Khajane-2 bank challan showing the amount to be paid and the head of account into which payment is to be made is generated at the ULBs and given to the citizen. The citizen has to go to the bank, pay the challan amount in the bank and show the copy of the paid challan in the ULB for adjustment to the payees tax account. The ULBs reconcile the amount paid by the citizens using bank passbook sheet. Whenever a rebate is announced by the ULBs for advance payment of property tax, heaps of challans are dumped in the municipal office, and the bank pass sheet runs to 40-50 pages per day. This makes the task of reconciliation more difficult for ULBs compared to the manual

system especially because there is a dearth of accounting staff. The payment data received in e-Sweekruthi is not being populated in the other modules maintained by the Society. There is no link between e-Sweekruthi- e-Khata- e-Aasthi-FBAS- Property Tax. When individual Corporations have managed to develop their own systems, KMDS has the capability and should develop an end-to-end property tax system incorporating e Aasthi, Self-Assessment System (SAS), Tax calculation, issue of demand notices, online payment, generation of receipt and preparation of Demand Collection Balance register. This should be done on a mission mode and implemented in all ULBs by end 2022.

2. As a first step property tax data needs to be collected in form-24 for ULBs. This is the foundational data for providing many other services. But digitization of Form-24 in e-Aasthi system is not yet complete. It is reported that out of an estimated 55 lakh properties listed in ULBs, data entry of only about 10 lakh properties have been done in e-Aasthi. The data entry of all 55 lakh properties should be completed by fixing a time limit, time lines and online monitoring by the DMA and Principal Secretary, UDD.

3. E Aasthi should have provision to add unauthorised properties also on the lines of B Khata properties in BBMP.

4. Property Tax Calculator is an electronic calculator developed by KMDS to calculate property tax for the use of property owners. The user needs to feed the data of property ID, house number, name and municipal assessment number to calculate the tax to be paid. This Property Tax Calculator must be integrated with e-Aasthi.

5. Provision for online payment (through net banking, debit card, credit card, UPI etc.) of property tax and all taxes and fees payable to ULBs should be made in the e-Aasthi property tax module and in e-Sweekruthi linking it to the Nirmana 2 (Land and Building Plan approval software). It is informed that negotiations are underway with Bharat Bill Payment (BBP) system for obtaining payment gateway services. It is recommended that provision for online payment be made in all online services of Municipal Administration at the earliest. This payment provision should not be restricted to certain specified banks but should be available for payment through all scheduled banks. This will save valuable time and effort of citizens, staff and banks.

6. KMDS is in the process of enabling Point of Sale (POS) machines to be used by ULBs for use by Bill Collectors for collecting tax and giving immediate receipts. Suitable software integration should be completed and POS machines introduced expeditiously.

7. The experience of entrusting application development of small size to small companies is not satisfactory because such companies are unable to provide sustainable support and demand exorbitant sums for modifications. It is advisable that any new application development be done by KMDS itself. Any additional technical persons needed may be taken from CSG or the work component may be entrusted to CSG.

8. It is reported that there is no provision to send SMS based demand notice for outstanding property tax/water tax/penalty etc. A provision may be made in the software to auto generate SMS at the month end indicating balance and interest payable, if there is a balance.

9. Fund Based Accounting System (FBAS), is implemented in all ULBs for maintenance of accounts. In FBAS the work flow for payment for works is somewhat like this: case worker creates file -goes to JE-to AEE for technical clearance - to account section for scrutiny - to Commissioner for approval - paid at accounts and file will be closed. GST, IT, royalty and other tax payment challans are not updated though the FBAS. The challan appears in FBAS sometimes after 2 days. Multiple windows cannot be opened in FBAS for verification purpose. Salary bills are not being saved. Only the amounts are passed. An excel sheet is prepared as acquittance roll for record purpose. The users are not able to generate receipts and payments statement for audit purpose. Auto reconciliation between e-Sweekruthi and FBAS should be ensured. Hence FBAS software should be upgraded to meet the ULB users' requirement.

10. Mobile apps are popular because smartphones and data connectivity coverage has improved tremendously. It is reported that two mobile apps have been developed by the Society for use of ULBs. A single mobile app should be developed to cover all aspects of municipal administration like e Aasthi, e-Sweekruthi, Jalanidhi, Grievance redressal system etc.

11. Only 13 out of all KMDS services are available on Seva Sindhu. The remaining services provided by the Society should also be made available on Seva-Sindhu.

12. All ULBs and Planning Authorities require Auto-CAD, Microsoft office and other commonly used software licenses. Instead of each ULB/Planning Authority purchasing these software separately, it is suggested that KMDS purchase a combined paper license and give it to ULBs.

13. KMDS should hike the existing charges from the ULBs for the software maintained by it and used by ULBs. This will help it to augment services, upgrade the software and partly cover recurring costs.

14. The KMDS is chaired by the Principal Secretary, UDD, with the MD, KUIDFC as Vice Chairperson and the DMA as Secretary of the Society. There is a Joint Director (Municipal Reform Cell) post that is filled by an IAS/KAS officer. The DMA is the main user of the services of the Society. She should have a greater say in the running and monitoring of the KMDS. The post of Joint Director (MRC) sees a high turnover of officers. Since there is no independent responsibility attached to the post, both IAS and KAS officers may not like to continue in the post and try to go to another posting. The discontinuity affects the work of development of new services and maintenance of existing services by KMDS. Therefore, it is recommended that the DMA be made the Vice Chairperson and Secretary of the KMDS. The post of Joint Director (MRC) is usually filled by an IAS or KAS. DPAR may not post IAS or KAS officers there. It is suggested that for better continuity, the post of JD (MRC) be filled by a software development expert taken on contract basis. The DMA would provide the necessary domain guidance to the technical person holding the post.

4.10 Recommendations related to Services provided by Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) (other than BBMP)

1. Issue of Building License and Building Construction Certificate

Introduction

Zonal Commissioner (ZC) in Corporations, AEE in CMCs, and Junior Engineer (JE) in TMCs is the designated officer for this service. Applicant may submit application online along with documents. The Sakala time limit for providing this service is 30 days.

Recommendations

1. Most owners do not apply for and obtain commencement certificate and OC because of the trouble involved in submitting many documents and following it up. The ULBs lose the revenue they would have got from the fees for the certificates. As a step towards better compliance, it is recommended that the fees for commencement certificate (CC) and occupancy certificate (OC) should be collected at the time of application for plan sanction itself.

2. The copy of the approved building site plan showing the building elevation and the setbacks allowed may be uploaded on the ULB portal for information in the public domain for use of neighbours or citizens. This will enable neighbours and citizens to report on building plan violations, if any, to the concerned officers.

3. There is no need to ask for tax paid receipt and two copies of photo with GPS tag with the application. Tax paid details can be verified by the Municipality either manually or through software, while a single photo with GPS tag is sufficient.

4. The software should have auto-save provision and provision to save each page. If an applicant is stuck due to technical or other issues, he can resume from the same point/page, instead of re-entering the previously entered details/pages once again. Re-entering the details in the form once again is treated as a fresh application and this creates confusion in the office. This problem has to be resolved.

5. The existing Nirmana -2 software is said to be very slow and takes along time to upload documents like photos. It should be upgraded. If found feasible the in-house developed Nirmana-1 software may be upgraded. The helpdesk in KMDS should be strengthened.

6. A provision to obtain mobile numbers of the owner, architect, consultant and engineer as mandatory fields should be added in the online format. If there are any mistakes in the building estimates, a provision may be made in the software to send SMS to the engineer and architect to rectify it online.

7. The Sakala time limit can be reduced from 30 days to 25 days by reducing the time allotted to AD Town Planning from 15 days to 8 days, reducing 3 days time with the Revenue Officer and increasing the time from 2 days to 7 days for inspection by AE/JE.

8. As per Appendix-IX site inspection and submission of site inspection report by empanelled engineers/architects is made compulsory. Engineers in ULBs may not have the time to keep a watch on all buildings to detect violations. It would be useful for the ULBs/Development authorities to empanel third party engineers/architects and send them for inspection. Their inspection fees may be collected from the owners at the time of building plan sanction.

2. New Building License up to 2400 sq. ft Residential for Single Dwelling Unit & Units other than Multi Storied Buildings

Introduction

AEE in CMCs, Assistant Engineer (AE) in TMCs and ZC in Corporations is the designated officer for this service. The Sakala time limit is 30 days.

Recommendations

1. Recommendation relating to instant online Issue of Building license given under General Recommendations may be implemented.

2. In the workflow Revenue Officers are verifying the documents related to ownership, khata, tax receipt etc. This stage is not required; it may be dropped.

3. Four affidavits namely, indemnity bond, affidavit by applicant, affidavit by registered architect and bond of assurance are required to be submitted along with application. These affidavits may be merged into two affidavits, one by the applicant and one by the architect.

4. Sakala time limit for this service may be reduced to 20 days from 30 days.

3.   Issue of Occupancy Certificate (OC)

Introduction

AEE in CMCs and TMCs and ZC in Corporations are the designated officers for this service. The Sakala time limit is 25 days.

Recommendations

1. Nirmana software provides for only building plan approval stage. It should be extended to provide an online application and processing system for Commencement Certificate (CC) and OC.

2. In Nirmana-2 (Land and Building Plans Approval System) (LBPAS) software, the file is sent at various intermediate stages repeatedly to the Chief Officer/Commissioner login e.g. for approval for fees to be paid. This leads to delay. The file should go to the Chief Officer/Commissioner login only at the final stage of approval to issue OC. Suitable changes may be made in the software for this purpose.

3. In the applicant's login, the software should show the present stage of the application. It should also provide for sending SMS to the applicant's mobile number at every new stage.

4. The updated version of Nirmana-2.0, e-Aasthi and E-Sweekruthi must be integrated incorporating a provision for online payment.

5. After the building construction is completed, the software may provide for sending the relevant file online to the Revenue section for assessment of property tax.

4.   Change of Property Ownership

Introduction

Revenue Officer (RO) in CMCs, RI in TMCs and ZC in Corporations is the designated officer to change property ownership. Sakala time limit is 45 days.

Recommendations

1. Kaveri software for registration of transfer of ownership etc. and Bhoomi land record software should be integrated with e-Aasthi and e Sweekruthi of KMDS to enable applications for change of property ownership to be processed on a fully online basis.

2. Provision may be made to receive applications online through e-Aasthi. Receiving of paper applications may be dispensed with.

3. The Commissioners should delegate powers to approve change of ownership to Revenue Officers of the Corporation by exercising their powers under Sec 67 of the KMC Act, wherever they have not already done so.

4. In cases of applications for change of ownership of a property in Gramathana land, the present procedure is that the Tahsildar has to certify that it is Gramathana land and not a survey number. This power may be vested with the Revenue Officers of the ULB who have better knowledge of the area. They may be authorised to conduct a spot inspection of the land for verifying whether it is Gramathana land and certify it instead of the Tahsildar. If necessary, they can get a survey done by a licensed surveyor

5. In City Corporations, the movement of a file for change of property ownership is through 7 levels DEO-Bill Collector-Case Worker-JE-Revenue Inspector/Asst. RO-Revenue Officer (RO) – Commissioner. This can be simplified by dropping three stages of Bill Collector, Junior Engineer and Assistant Revenue Officer. The file should move through only four stages. In other ULBs, two stages namely, movement of file to the DEO and Bill Collector may be dropped.

6. The fees for change of ownership was fixed vide DMA circular Pou Ni. SAS/35/2005-06 dated 30-01-2006. There is some lack of clarity in the circular. The circular says the fee for change of property ownership is in Kannada, "Chaapa kagadada beleya mele shekada 2 rashtu" in case of City Corporations. For CMCs it is 1.5% and for TMCs/TPs it is 1%. This can be interpreted in two ways. For Corporations, it can be interpreted either as "2% of the value of the property registered" or as "2% of the value of the stamp paper on which the deed was written". If a property valued at Rs 1 lakh is transacted, the stamp paper value would be Rs. 9000. By one interpretation, 2% of the property value would give a fee of Rs 2000, whereas in another, 2% of the stamp paper would give Rs 180. This lack of clarity may lead to unnecessary litigation. A suitable revised circular giving clarity in the matter may be issued early.

7. The above circular dated 30-01-2006 also fixes rates for providing copies of Khata certificate. These may be revised as per inflation index.

8. Sakala time limit of 45 days is fixed because of the statutory provision to give a public notice for 30 days in case of change of property ownership. The Sakala time limit may be reduced to 30 days by reducing the statutory notice period from 30 days to 15 days by suitable amendment of the KM/KMC Acts.

5. Issue of Khata Extract

Introduction

Revenue Inspector in the ULBs and Zonal Assistant Commissioner/Deputy Revenue Officer in Corporations is the designated officer to issue khata extract. The Sakala time limit for providing this service is 3 days where online data is available and 7 days where online data is not available.

Recommendations

1. A large number of applications are received in ULBs for Khata extract for use in applying for bank loans, building license, electricity connection etc. This takes up a large portion of time of the Municipal staff. Provision should be made in the existing software to download copies of e-signed copy of Khata Extract (form-3) directly from the software on payment of any balance property tax dues, water and UGD rates and prescribed fees on the lines of the provision for printing RTCs in Bhoomi software. This provision is already available in some City Corporations; it should be extended to other ULBs where khatas have been computerised. This will help reduce the workload on ULB staff considerably, in which time they can do other work.

2. Where the Khata register is not yet computerised, the authority to give Khata extract may be delegated to the Revenue Officer/Revenue Inspector from the Municipal Commissioner/Chief Officer. The work flow may be simplified by reducing the number of levels from the present 6 to 4.

3. Digitization of Khata registers pertaining to Gram Panchayats (GP) upgraded as ULBs and amalgamation of GPs with ULBs should be completed in a phased manner so that copies may be made available online.

4. Form 2 Khata extract should be modified to include details of previous balance, current demand, tax paid and current balance. This will give some impetus to the owner to pay the balance and act as a guide to other Municipal branches to collect the balance taxes.

5. Fee of Rs.100 for Khata extract was fixed in the year 2015. It may be revised to Rs.150 in CMCs and Rs.200 in Corporations.

6. Khata extract may be sent through email and Digi locker also.

6. Grant of Trade License as per the delegation of powers

Introduction

Health Inspector/Assistant Health officer/ Zonal Assistant Commissioner / Medical Officers /Environmental Engineer are the designated officers to issue trade license. The Sakala time limit is 15 days.

NeSDA Assessment

The National E Governance Services Delivery Assessment (NeSDA) analysis shows that 48 guidelines were complied with and 29 guidelines are not complied with.
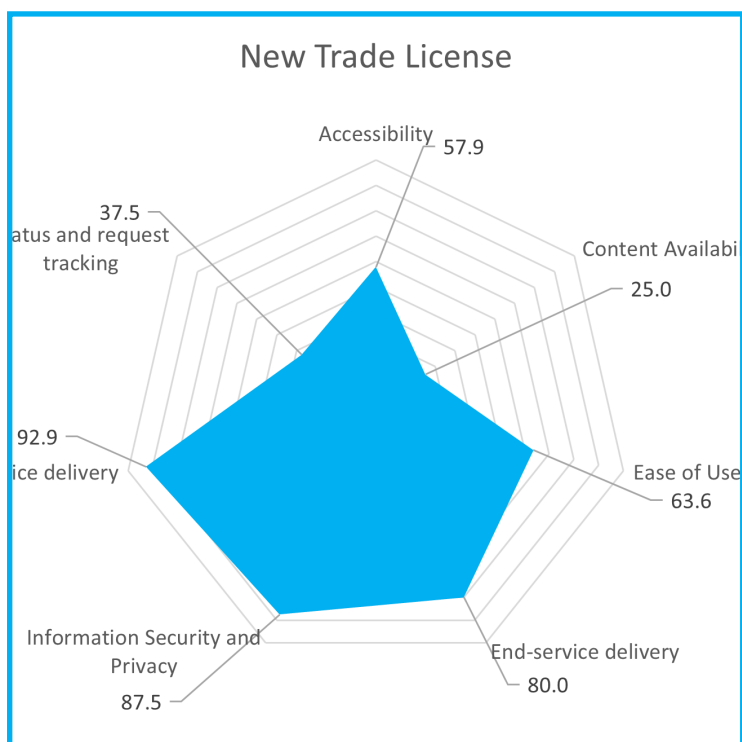
New Trade License

Recommendations

1. Karnataka Municipal Corporations Act 1976 was amended in 2003 to raise the validity of a trade license in Corporations from one to five years. Karnataka Municipalities Act does not appear to lay down any maximum period of validity or renewal of trade license. Therefore Government may issue an order allowing CMCs/TMCs/TPs to renew Trade licenses for upto 5 years on payment of the prescribed fees for the number of years. The software for Trade license renewal developed by KMDS now permits renewal for one year only. This should be modified to allow renewal for upto 5 years with corresponding increase in fees. After payment of the prescribed fees, the licensee should be able to download the license with e-signature of the concerned official from the software.

2. A model byelaw may be prepared by DMA and UDD for all ULBs and circulated to bring uniformity in levying and collection of Trade license fee. The model byelaws may fix Trade license fees separately for Corporation, CMC, TMC and TPs. ULBs may fix their own fees based on the model byelaws. The KM/KMC Act may be amended to make provision for automatic revision of Trade license fees at the rate of 3% every year

3. For issue of trade license, three stages of movement of the application in TMCs and CMCs may be dropped: case worker, environmental engineer and Chief Officer. Accordingly, the workflow may be modified in the software.

4. In TMCs and CMCs the power to approve Trade license may be delegated to the Health Officers/Inspectors. In Corporations the power may be delegated to the Health Officers.

5. Based on NeSDA analysis, the areas that require compliance are given below. It is recommended to comply with them.

Evaluation Area	Areas that require Compliance
Accessibility	1. Provide contact information of Government officials/agencies responsible for the provision of specific online services/queries
	2. Create a separate section for 'Contact Us'
	3. Provide downloadable forms for provisioning of services which cannot be submitted online
	4. Make available promotional campaigns to avail eServices
	5. Provide information about compatible browsers and best screen resolutions
	6. Make available features to enable access for people with physical disabilities
	7. Enable audio and video playing
	8. Make available number of transactions
Content Availability	9. Make available information about results of user feedback about online services
	10. Create a separate section for Help
	11. Create a separate section on Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
	12. Sitemap should be made available
	13. Make available Information of last updated timestamp on each page of the website
	14. Update Timestamp as of current year
	15. Statistics on website usage by users (no. of visitors/ average time spent per visitor etc.) should be made available
	16. Statistics on transaction count of services availed by users should be made available
	17. Information on how to avail electronic/ digital signature facility for availing the services should be introduced
Ease of Use	18. Introduce a "What's new" section which details the changes in the website
	19. Website should provide for complaints, resolutions etc. on various aspects of the e-service provided
	20. Website should have a built-in facility to populate content relevant to user's recent activity / interest
	21. Introduce a user manual to guide the users
End-Service Delivery	22. Publish service delivery timelines on the website

Information Security and Privacy	23. Enable mobile alerts for unauthorized access to user profile, password changes etc.
Integrated service delivery	24. Integrate the website with Social Media Apps like Twitter, Facebook etc.
Status and request tracking	25. Introduce facility to log Grievances / Complaints
	26. Introduce Ticket / Complaint No. for status tracking and future follow-ups
	27. Enable feedback on user's complaints like email, call back etc.
	28. Provide information about helpline for issues regarding online payments through web page
	29.Provide for help desk, online support, and call centre for users

7. Issue of Birth, Still Birth and Death Certificates

Introduction

Health Inspector (HI) is the designated officer to issue birth, still birth and death certificates in ULBs. The Sakala time limit for providing this service is 3 days where online data is available and 7 days where online data is not available.

Recommendations

1. Health information system maintained by Asha workers is the first to capture pregnancies, births and deaths. This system should be integrated with e-Janma to get information on births and deaths.

2. Service fee was fixed in the year 1999; it may be enhanced to Rs.20.

3. A Tatkal service may be introduced to issue certificate on the same day for which a higher fee, say Rs.100, may be charged.

4. In case of accidental death, applicant should be required to submit First Information Report (FIR) copy.

5. Provision may be made to download/print copies of birth/death certificate on payment of fees by creating an online repository of e-signed birth/death certificates on the lines of the system that is available to print RTC copies.

8. Permission for New Water supply and UGD Connections/ Additional Supply connections for Residential Building

Introduction

AEE in CMCs, AE in TMCs and Corporations are the designated officers for this service. The Sakala time limit is 15 days.

Recommendations

1. There is no need for a separate application for new water supply and sewage/ UGD connection. A provision for applying simultaneously for new water supply and UGD/sewage connection should be included in the application format for building license in Nirmana 2.0 software. If the applicant applies for a new connection, the prescribed fees for new water supply connection and UGD/sewage connection may be collected along with building license fees. Permission may be given for new water supply connection and UGD/sewage along with building license if these services are available in that area.

2. If there is an existing water supply or UGD connection, additional connection/ capacity may be sanctioned without requiring any new documents to be submitted with the application. Only payment of prescribed fees along with the application for the additional service should be necessary.

9. Road Cutting (Right of Way) Permission for Electricity Supply, OFC, Gas Pipeline.

Introduction

Junior Engineer in TMCs, AEE in CMCs and ZCs in Corporations are the designated officer for this service. The Sakala time limit for providing road cutting permission in case of electricity cable and gas pipeline is 15 days and for Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) it is 30 days.

Recommendations

1. Property tax paid details can be verified internally through software. There is no need to collect these details from the applicants.

2. Sakala time limit for providing this service may be reduced to 7 days from the 15 days for electricity supply or gas pipeline and 30 days to 7 days in case of OFC.

3. A software system called Multi-Agency Road Cutting Coordination System (MARCCS) is used by BBMP for obtaining online applications for road cutting from different utility agencies and giving them permission in a coordinated manner. The same system with suitable customisation may be used by Corporations/ CMCs/TMCs/TPs. KMDS should customise this software and introduce it in the ULBs.

KARNATAKA URBAN WATER SUPPLY AND DRAINAGE BOARD

General Recommendation

1. The KUWSDB may be renamed as Karnataka Urban Water Supply and Sewerage Board to reflect the nature of its work.

4.11 Recommendations related to services provided by (KUWS&DB)

1. Permission for New Connections/Additional Connections for Water Supply and Under Ground Drainage (UGD) for Domestic and Non-Domestic Buildings /Multi-storied buildings.

Introduction

AEE, KUWSDB is the designated officer for this service. Applicant may submit application through Jalanidhi portal. Sakala time limit is 7 days.

Recommendations

1. Applicants have to apply on Jalanidhi portal and then go to the KUWSDB office to pay fees by cash. To save the applicant the trouble of going to the KUWSDB office, a provision for online payment through various methods should be provided on Jalanidhi system.

2. A checklist of documents to be uploaded by the applicant may be provided on Jalanidhi portal for helping the applicants.

3. Provision may be made in the Jalanidhi software for generation of monthly water supply and sewage bills and to communicate the bill amount and last date for payment through SMS to the consumer.

2. NOC for Borewell /Certificate of non-availability of water supply, NOC for water abstraction from Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA) and Permission for drilling of new borewells

Introduction

AEE, KUWS & DB is the designated officer to issue NOC for this service.

Recommendation

1. At present, for issue of NOC, the workflow in the software is as follows: application goes to tapal section SDA, then to Chief Officer, again to caseworker and then to the AE/JE. The same process is repeated again for issue of permission after process and approval. This may be simplified by sending the application directly to the AE/JE login. After his verification, the file can be sent for approval to the Chief Officer. Online payment system may be enabled in the software and to download the NOC after approval. Login may be provided to all AE/JEs.

3. Cleaning of Blockage of Underground Drainage & UGD Pipeline

Introduction

This service is made available for Corporations, CMCs, TMCs and Town Panchayats. Janahitha, public grievance redressal software of DMA is being used for this service.

Recommendations

1. Each ULB must procure and maintain the required number of sucking and jetting machines of different capacities like 2000 litres, 4000 litres, and 8000 litres for UGD systems (approximate cost of each machine is Rs.30 to Rs.50 lakh). The required number of operators must be hired and trained.

2. Each ULB must procure and maintain the required number of desilting machines.

3. At present in non-Amrut projects, tenders are being called for UGD schemes with provision of O & M for only one year. In all UGD schemes, the project cost must include O & M including maintenance of sewer network, manholes, Sewage Treatment Plant etc for a minimum period of 5 years.

4. Incineration units should be installed in places like hostels, apartments, lodges and hotels for safe disposal of used sanitary pads.

5. ULBs must keep standard manhole covers of medium and heavy duty as a standby. MS manhole covers can also be used depending upon site conditions. Efforts must be made to shift manholes from the centre of the road to one side of the road, when pipelines are being replaced.

DEPARTMENT OF TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING

Introduction

The Department of Town and Country Planning (DTCP) is mainly involved in the task of preparing Master plans and their enforcement and extending technical assistance to various Government Departments/Local Bodies for the orderly development of cities, towns and villages.

4.12 General Recommendations

1. All Planning Authorities are required to prepare Master Plan within 2 years from the date of declaration of local planning area as per Sec.9 of the KTCP Act. Till date 104 Planning Authorities have approved Master Plans, 43 Planning Authorities have not yet completed preparation of Master Plans even after 4-5 years. If the Development Authority does not submit the Master Plan within 2 years, the Director Town and Country Planning is authorised to publish it. Hence, the Department may set an early deadline for preparation of Master Plans. In case it is not prepared by the LPA, the DTCP may take over the process of preparation and finalise it by recovering the cost from the LPA.

2. It is also observed that some LPAs do not submit final Master Plan even after lapse of many years from the date of notification of the provisional Master Plan. In such cases it is recommended that if the final Master Plan is not submitted by the LPA within a period of 12 months time from the date of notification of the provisional Master Plan, then the Director, TCP be given powers to finalise it.

3. A notification has been issued by Government that pending finalisation of Master Plan, all existing orders for NA land conversion should be protected and that all extended areas should be considered as agricultural. One case was pointed out to us about an industry that wanted a change in the DCs NA conversion order from "residential and commercial" to "industrial". The DC sent it to the UDA for its opinion. UDA being bound by the Govt notification opined that it cannot be changed because of the Government notification to protect the NA conversion orders. To overcome this difficulty, it is recommended that a clause be added that "Till final notification of the Master Plan is issued, change of land use may be considered for approval in cases where land has been converted to non-agricultural use by the competent authority."

4. E-office and HRMS should be used in all Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) and Urban Development Authorities (UDA). The Director Country and Town Planning should issue an order to all the LPAs/UDAs to adopt E-office and HRMS in a specified timeline. All correspondence from UDAs/LPAs with DTCP should be entertained only if they are sent on E Office after a certain cut-off date.

5. CA sites available in the approved private and UDA layouts should be reserved for allotment to ULB and Government Institutions like waste collection centres, ward offices, libraries, hostels, government colleges, anganwadis and PHCs. The Karnataka Planning Authorities (Allotment of Civic Amenity Sites) Rules 2016 has many good provisions for reserving CA sites for these public purposes. But UDAs follow Rules notified in 1991 that do not contain such useful provisions. It is therefore recommended that the provisions of the KPACA Site Rules 2016 be adopted for UDAs also to replace the 1991 Rules. This will help to reserve land for public purposes in urban areas. The Deputy Commissioners should coordinate to identify the CA sites available and the requirements of the ULB and other Government departments and reserve the sites accordingly.

6. The posts of Town Planners are vacant in most of the Local Planning Authorities; these posts may be filled up on priority.

7. It is informed that officers who do not have any background in urban administration from departments such as Education, Animal Husbandry, Treasury are being posted as Commissioners of UDAs. Work would suffer, in terms of both quality and efficiency, because such officers may take a long time to familiarise themselves with town planning provisions. It is therefore recommended that Sec 12 (1) of the KUDA Act 1987 be amended to provide that officers "not below the rank of Group A in Town and Country Planning Department or KAS or KMAS officers" be posted as UDA Commissioners.

8. Online software may be expeditiously developed for approval of Layout plans for all UDAs and LPAs. The service of approval of layout plans may be notified as a Sakala service in UDD and RDPR.

4.13 Recommendations related to service provided by the Department of Town and Country Planning

1. Approval for change of land use in Urban Development Authorities/ Planning Authorities/Municipal Planning Authorities

Introduction

The Commissioners of concerned UDAs are the designated officers for this service. The proposals submitted by the UDAs scrutinized by the DTCP office before recommending the proposal to the Government. About 21 documents are to be submitted with the application. The Sakala time limit is 120 days.

Recommendations

1. The recommendations made for change of land use in BMRDA are given separately. They may be implemented as appropriate to this service.

2. As per the provisions of Karnataka Land Reforms (Second Amendment) Act 2020, Sec.79A and 79B have been omitted from the principal Act; hence there no necessity to obtain documents related to Sec. 79A and 79B of KLRF Act.

3. For this service four affidavits are being obtained viz. (1) about land acquisition notification (2) pendency of civil suits if any (3) handing over of land for roads (4) public notice about change of land use. All four affidavits can be merged to a single affidavit to simplify documentation.

4. The documents like village map, RTC can be verified online; hence there is no need to ask for such documents from the applicants.

BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE (BBMP)

General Recommendations

4.14 Ease of living for citizens

1. As a step towards ease of living for citizens, instant online approval and sanction of building plan in sites upto and including 2400 sq.ft with two kitchens or less for residential use may be given. They may be based on the architect's plan, engineers and owner's declaration and self-certification with payment of prescribed fee. Suitable declarations regarding adhering to the Town Planning rules, Zonal regulations and building bye-laws may be taken from the owner in the online application. An undertaking may also be taken from the owner that she is personally responsible for any deviations from the rules, regulations and bye-laws and giving full authority to the BBMP officials to demolish any deviation without giving notice. The owner should also declare that she is personally liable for all consequences if any incorrect or false information or documentation is given in the application. The architect and the engineer should also give an undertaking that they will supervise the construction to ensure that there is no deviation from the Town planning rules, zonal regulations and building bye laws. Such cases need not be processed and approved on file. The fees to be paid under various heads should be auto-calculated in the application software and an online payment link be given for payment online. As soon as the declaration, undertaking, self-certification is e signed by the applicant, architect and engineer and the required fees are paid, the sanction with the e-signature of the AEE/ADTP should be auto-generated. The need for separately applying for and taking commencement certificate and occupancy certificate for such buildings may also be dispensed with. The fees to be paid for commencement certificate and occupancy certificate can be collected with the fees for building license at the application stage. This step will also free up time for BBMP engineers to pay more attention to bigger and non-residential buildings.

2. The BBMP building bye laws allow for compounding of violations upto 5% of the approved plan. At present very little concrete action is being taken on buildings with higher percentage of violation, due to the sheer number of such buildings. It would be advisable to raise this limit to 15% for commercial and mixed use buildings and residential buildings in sites above 2400 sq.ft area. The limit could be 20% for residential buildings in sites of 2400 sq.ft area and less. These violations of building plans can be compounded, affording relief to the owner and revenue to the BBMP. The BBMP can focus on action against buildings with higher magnitude of violations.

3. As a step towards better space utilisation in small sites of 30ftX40ft dimension and less, the setbacks prescribed in the building byelaws may be reduced to two feet space on one side of the building. On the other side, the building may abut the neighbouring building. Building byelaws may be amended accordingly.

4. BBMP should set up a "Help desk" in each ward office to guide citizens on the procedures for availing various BBMP services. There is a Help desk in the Central office but not in the zonal or ward offices. Existing staff can be stationed at the entrance with the required application forms, printed brochures on each service, computer with internet connectivity etc. They should be trained to interact courteously and be knowledgeable about various procedures so that they can meaningfully guide those who ask for information.

5. Some roads/areas of the old city which are fully commercial like Chickpet, Cottonpet, Balepete and roads of less than 40 ft width in other areas that have become fully commercial continue to be shown as residential areas in the CDP. In the Zonal regulations all roads of less than 40 ft. also may be considered as commercial, if there is existing commercial activity on that road. These areas may be incorporated in the CDP/Master Plan as commercial areas. Provision for issue of trade licenses in such areas may be made by suitable amendments to the regulations.

6. Zonal Regulations may be amended to allow automatic permission for commercial use buildings on sites that face roads of 40 ft. and higher width. This will contribute to ease of doing business, reduce unnecessary workload and increase revenues to BBMP.

7. In the interest of better accessibility to residents, BBMP may enable Bangalore One and Karnataka One centres to accept property tax payment through debit/credit card or UPI payment with the service charge borne by the payers and accept applications for other services like Issue of Birth and death certificates, Trade license and E Aasthi.

8. Certificate of vending to street vendors is issued by the Town Vending Committee/ Municipality under the Street Vendors Act and Rules. This service may be notified as a Sakala service for BBMP and other Municipalities.

9. Ward Engineers, Health Inspectors and Electrical Engineers should be directed to compulsorily form WhatsApp groups of Resident Welfare Associations (RWA) in their wards. This will help them to respond quickly to complaints and also serve as a means of quickly communicating public health, disaster related and other messages to the ward residents through their RWAs.

10. BBMP should adopt a single toll free number for all public enquiries and complaints like Bescom.

11. The Sahaaya app of BBMP should be linked with the Janaspandana – Integrated Public Grievance redressal system (IPGRS). All grievances entered on Sahaaya app should get automatically registered on the IPGRS. The IPGRS sends grievances/complaints first to the last mile functionary level. This will help them to take immediate action on the complaints and monitor the remaining ones without any duplication. Sahaaya app should be modified such that any complaint lodged on it should not be closed till the applicant has given confirmation/satisfaction about the action taken.

12. The Common User Group (CUG) mobile numbers have been given to many officers and staff in BBMP. It should also be given to all Revenue Inspectors in BBMP to enable the public to contact them even if persons change due to transfers. This should also be introduced for public interfacing officials in BWSSB, Bescom and BMTC also.

13. Citizens and especially neighbours are the most affected by building plan violations. If they can identify plan violations and report it online on the IPGRS it would make it easier for officials to identify and take action to stop the violation. For this to happen, it is necessary that the approved site plan showing the elevation and the setbacks should be put on the public domain on the BBMP website with a separate icon for "View approved Building Plans". There is a provision in the building bye laws to display the approved site plan at the building site, but it is not followed or enforced in most cases. Therefore, BBMP should put the approved site plan showing the elevation (height and number of floors) and the setbacks on the public domain. Internal drawings need not be displayed.

14. Library Cess is being collected by ULBs including BBMP. There is a standing complaint that this amount is not fully and regularly remitted to the Libraries department leading to huge arrears. In many countries, libraries are established and run by the local bodies. If Libraries are handed over to the BBMP and ULBs, the advantages are that the BBMP and ULBs may utilise the Library cess fully for purchase of books, development of libraries, construction of new libraries, provision of equipment, computer labs etc. It is likely that due to public demand, some of the Councillors/Corporators may initiate more library development work in their ward. There is an apprehension that if the libraries are handed over to local bodies, the centralised purchase of library books will be affected, leading to higher prices and purchase of lower quality books. Safeguards can be built in for preventing this. BBMP/ULBs should be mandated to utilise a certain minimum percentage of library cess for purchase of books. The Libraries department can continue to shortlist the books and fix the prices centrally. The BBMP/ULBs should mandatorily purchase books from that list for upto 70% of the available funds. The remaining 30% can be used for purchase of

books that are locally demanded but not shortlisted. The apprehensions that lesser number of books will be purchased and that centralised selection of books will be affected should be allayed. Keeping these safeguards in place, it is advisable that management of libraries is handed over to BBMP in Bengaluru city and ULBs. The UDD may send a proposal in this regard to Primary and Secondary Education department and Libraries department. UDD may send a proposal to Finance department for utilisation of library cess by BBMP and ULBs for Library development. Amendments to legal provisions may be proposed.

15. BBMP may plan and establish ward level libraries to cater to the needs of children, youth, women and senior citizens by utilising the Library Cess collected by it.

16. Bengaluru being an international city and the IT capital of the country, the sight of cattle and pigs roaming on the streets, obstructing people and traffic, adversely affects the city's image and brand name. Action has to be taken to control this. The fine for letting cattle out on the road was fixed at Rs. 600 per head of cattle and Rs. 300 per head of calf in 2014. To catch stray cattle and pigs, the Animal Husbandry wing needs vehicles with a hydraulic lift and personnel to drive the vehicle, catch the cattle and take them to the cattle pound. The fine should be increased to serve as a deterrent and to recover the cost. The AH wing should be allowed to outsource this task to an agency on the lines of towing vehicles engaged by the Traffic Police. The agency should deploy the prescribed number of vehicles and staff and be reimbursed on the basis on number of cattle and pigs caught. This would make it a self financing mechanism.

4.15 Solid Waste Management and Health

17. Healthcare is a high priority especially after the Covid pandemic. ANM posts should be sanctioned @ one ANM for 10,000 population as per National Urban Health Mission norms. For 29 PHCs the sanctioned posts of ANMs are 123, but the requirement as per population is 239. Additional ANM posts should be sanctioned as per norms. ANMs should be given Lady Health Visitors (LHV) training to make them eligible for promotion as LHVs.

18. There are many commercial hubs in the city that see business activity till late night. But SWM operators are engaged to collect waste in only one shift; except in Majestic, Chickpet and KR Market where it is collected in two shifts. The second shift is not monitored as well as the morning shift during which the supervisory officials are more active. The waste that accumulates during the daytime gives a shabby look during the evenings. Other commercial areas like Malleshwaram, Jayanagar, and Brigade Road etc. should also have a well monitored second shift of garbage collection. Extra autos may be given for the evening shift or existing autos can be paid for 2-3 hours additional duty at evening time.

19. Mechanisation of various activities of BBMP is a necessity because of rising labour costs and shortage of labour for certain tasks. It is recommended that more mechanical sweeping machines be procured either by purchase or by hiring at the rate of one for every ward i.e. 243 machines for the city. The monitoring system for ensuring that the tendered work is turned out by all machines should be manned 24x7 in the BBMP/Zonal Control Room.

20. Due to increasing mechanisation, a mechanical wing with a minimum number of automobile engineers may be constituted for inspecting vehicles and guiding proper maintenance of vehicles. It is not advisable for BBMP to set up its own workshops because of past experience. It is better to use BMTC, KSRTC workshops or authorized service centres.

21. The mechanical sweeping machines have to travel long distances to dump the dust collected during sweeping. This reduces their uptime on the job. Therefore, transit dumping points should be set up in suitable places for the sweeping machines to dump their dust and continue sweeping. This would improve their productivity.

22. Contracts for removing wet and dry waste have been given to different contractors/agencies in each ward. It was felt in the FGD that if there is only one agency for all sanitation work in a ward it is easier to get work done by them. If there is more than one contractor, it becomes more difficult to monitor and tackle them to get work done. This difficulty that is experienced at the field level may be given consideration and a suitable decision taken on whether to go in for a single contract for both dry and wet waste or continue with two separate contracts.

23. It has been pointed out that there are more than 10 types of waste that have to be collected and properly disposed of. If each type of waste is handled by a different wing of BBMP, it would be difficult to keep footpaths and streets clean. Therefore, all types of waste including removal of debris, animal carcasses, dry leaves, tree branches, logs and wood, cut cables etc should be handled by a single agency, the SWM wing. A suitable order to clearly spell out responsibility may be issued by the Chief Commissioner, BBMP.

24. Removal of animal carcasses should be added in the SWM bid and contract conditions for wet waste. Rendering (recycling) plants should be set up for processing animal waste on PPP basis on the lines of Construction waste & Debris (C&D) facilities set up under PPP mode. BBMP should identify suitable sites for setting up these plants and call for bids.

25. Health Inspectors /Jr. Health inspector are not able to collect spot fines for littering, violations of trade license etc. Hence POS machines should be issued to Senior Health Inspectors and Jr. Health Inspectors for collection of spot fines.

4.16 Civil Works

26.   Ward drains are to be desilted regularly by silt and tractor crews. But the task of lifting heavy footpath slabs and manually desilting and lifting it onto tractors is backbreaking. Without machinery to help them, the existing silt and tractor crews may not be very productive. It is therefore suggested that each silt and tractor crew should include a hired mini-excavator (JCB) with driver. At present hiring of mini excavator is allowed only for a few days a month. This is insufficient. The mini excavator should form part of the crew. So it should become an excavator (JCB) cum tractor crew. This mini excavator will lift footpath slabs, remove heavy stones and silt from the drains. It will make the crews more productive. By using ward wise mini excavator with tractor crews, desilting can be done more extensively. Flooding of vulnerable areas would reduce.

27.   As per IRC specifications, when a road is asphalted, the old tar has to be scraped out and new asphalting done after scraping. Not following this IRC specification leads to reduced quality of asphalting. It also results in sunken manholes or concealing the manhole cover of BWSSB, OFC, Bescom or other utilities. BBMP should issue an instruction that IRC specification with regard to levels around manholes during re-asphalting should be invariably followed.

28.   Tenders are being floated for regular maintenance like for street lighting, silt and tractor crews, community toilet cleaning, data entry, security staff and maintenance staff following KTPP procedure. If tender premium in such cases is less than 5%, approval by the Standing Committees can be dispensed with and powers given to the Zonal Commissioners.

29.   BBMP should mandate using E Procurement and contract management system for preparation of e-Estimates and E-Measurement Book.

4.17 Towards improving E–delivery of services

30.   BBMP provides 13 online services like Property Tax payment, Khata Certificate, Trade License, Building Plan Approval, Tree cutting permission, Road Cutting permission etc. Citizens residing in Bengaluru, being the IT capital of the country would have high expectations of extensive use of IT by the BBMP. The War Room set up in 2020 for Covid management brought together BBMP officers, IT specialists from companies and volunteers to work in it. It became an award winning model for other cities in the country. The present IT Cell in BBMP does not have the capacity to handle the services and apps required for a city with more than 120 lakh residents and some more floating population. The software systems being used in BBMP were

developed by different vendors; some by philanthropic foundations, some by NIC, some by private agencies and some in-house. All of them require to be integrated for better e governance. They also require regular upgradation because of emerging new technologies, amendments to rules and guidelines, user requirements and security levels. The volume of data keeps growing in all services. IT services in BBMP is usually given as an additional charge to a Special Commissioner. It may not be given the attention IT requires and thus IT related work usually languishes. Therefore, a dedicated post of Joint Commissioner or Director, IT may be created in BBMP along with necessary support staff as in Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC). BMTC has a post of Director, IT with posts of Chief Systems Manager, Systems Manager, Asst. Systems Manager and 5 Systems Assistants. The required number of technical posts may be created in the BBMP and approved for filling up by Government. The post of Director IT can be held by an officer from the All India Services and the posts of technical personnel under him can be filled by taking persons on contract.

31. BBMP should have its own Computer Wing at the head office and staff at the zonal level for maintaining and updating the property tax system headed by a NIC officer who designed the BBMP property tax software system.

32. BBMP should issue an order to adopt E-office compulsorily for all correspondence and file work from the last mile functionary upwards in the Head Office, Zonal, Division, Sub-Division and Ward offices of all wings: Revenue, Engineering, Health and Welfare etc. The movement details of E-office files and sanctions, orders should be available in the public domain on the BBMP website.

33. KSWAN or VPN connectivity should be given to Ward, sub-division, and division levels for this purpose. KSWAN Video conferencing facility should be given in EE or RO offices to save their commute time in going to zonal offices for attending meetings and VCs.

34. It is informed that incorrect Aadhaar and incorrect mobile number are being entered usually by authorized persons/brokers in the application forms for various citizen services. Many of the OTPs and messages reach these authorized persons mobiles. To partially remedy this, it is suggested that the application forms should have provision to obtain the Aadhaar number and mobile number of the owner as well as that of the representative/intermediary. This will help build a correct database of owners' details and messages would reach the owners directly.

4.18 Towards improving coordination

35. Coordination, internal and external, is one of the major tasks in BBMP. Right now, the entire responsibility of coordination among different wings in BBMP falls on the Chief Commissioner. Due to work pressure, the Chief Commissioner may not be able to respond quickly or attend to local issues. Now that posts of Zonal Commissioners (ZC) are in place it is necessary that effective coordination happen at the zonal level. Orders may be issued for strengthening the role of Zonal Commissioners as early as possible. Recommendations for issue of orders are:

   i. Zonal Chief Engineer (ZCE) and EEs of all wings like Road Infrastructure (RI), Storm Water Drains (SWD), Optical Fibre Cable (OFC), Lakes, Projects, Electrical and Solid Waste Management (SWM) should report to the ZC.

   ii. ZC should be notified as the Reporting Officer for Performance Appraisal Reports of Joint Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, ZCE and zonal and divisional level officers of all wings including RI, SWD, OFC, Lakes, Electrical, Projects, SWM, Wards

   iii. ZCs may be authorized to transfer AEs, JEs, RIs and all Group C officials within their zone in an online system to keep the head office in the loop.

   iv. Delegation of administrative and tender approval for budgeted works costing upto Rs 2 crore to ZCs.

   v. Delegation of powers relating to administrative sanction, approval of tenders, extension of time for tenders etc. to ZCs.

36. Coordination Committees (CC) should be set up at zonal level by means of a Government order issued by UDD. The Zonal CC should be chaired by the ZC and consist of all officials of different wings of BBMP working in the zone. It should also consist of representatives of BWSSB, Bescom, Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC), Metro, Public Works Department (PWD), Gail Gas, BDA, Housing Board, Slum Board, National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), Railways and the local Tahsildar. It should compulsorily meet on a monthly basis and settle coordination issues that have arisen. It should also follow up on directions given by the Chief Secretary in his coordination meetings.

37. Now that Zonal Commissioners are in place and there is a statutory push to decentralize more functions to zonal level, it is appropriate that officers of various wings now sitting in the BBMP Central office, should be shifted to the Zonal offices. The zonal officers in charge of Road Infrastructure (RI), Storm Water Drains (SWD), Lakes, Projects, OFC and Executive Engineer of the division should sit in the zonal office. This will foster better coordination among these wings, improve their monitoring of projects at field level and bring them closer to citizens.

38. The jurisdictions of divisions in BBMP works wing are coterminous with the boundaries of legislative assembly constituencies. In the interest of better coordination, the territorial jurisdiction of divisions in Bescom and BWSSB may be made as far as possible, without increasing the number of posts, coterminous with the jurisdictions of one or more BBMP divisions.

39. Electricity bill related to streetlights may be reconciled regularly with BESCOM Engineers. Metering of all street installations and payment based on meter reading should be ensured. Joint inspection of all meters to replace non-functional meters should be done by BBMP and Bescom staff. Joint inspection of drinking water supply borewell RR numbers should also be done for replacement of non-functional meters, disconnection of unused installations and cancellation of agreements.

4.19 Increasing Revenue collection

40. At present if there is a dispute regarding property tax pending, the BBMP insists on full payment of current tax with all arrears and undisputed amount along with the disputed amount. It does not accept payment of current tax alone or undisputed amount alone or part payment. This is not the system followed in the Commercial Taxes department of the State Government. There the assessee is free to pay any amount while filing the return. No payment is blocked because it is partial or because assessment is considered to be wrong. The same system may be followed by BBMP. In case arrears are under appeal or a notice has been issued by the ARO, the assessee should be able to pay the current and undisputed tax. The balance could be recovered with interest. As a measure of caution, the receipt should show the previous year's balance or the disputed amount balance printed in bold font. It should state in bold font in the title itself that it is "Part Payment Receipt" and that "this receipt should not be considered as proof of full payment of all dues of property tax". The Revenue department of BBMP has some hesitancy in adopting this system because they feel that property owners may pass off the current year's tax payment or partial tax payment as proof of having paid fully paid all balance property tax dues. But this apprehension can be overcome by issuing the receipt in the manner suggested above. All wings/divisions of BBMP can also be informed not to accept such "Part Payment receipt" as proof of "no dues remaining to be paid". An algorithm should be built in the software to adjust the part payment first towards property tax interest of the earliest year and so on. The software should apportion the part payment that has been received head-wise, cess-wise towards year-wise principal, interest and show the balance. The NIC should make necessary changes in the software. To start accepting such payments, what is required is only the administrative decision of the Chief Commissioner. This would considerably increase BBMP's revenues.

41. The following modifications are required in the property tax Self-Assessment System (SAS) software:

i. The system does not generate a printable computerised demand notice with name and amount in the prescribed format. The officials have to manually fill in the demand amount on a paper form. The software should be modified to generate printable computerised demand notice/show cause notice with e-signature that can be issued to defaulters.

ii. There is no provision in the SAS for Revenue Inspectors to generate and issue demand notice or show cause notice for collection of tax, penalty and arrears. They have to get prior approval of the ARO to issue it. The Revenue Inspectors should be given powers to issue demand notice for payment of property tax and other arrears for all residential, mixed and commercial buildings. Login and access to SAS should be provided to Revenue Inspectors also.

iii. Tax Inspectors (TI) and RIs are not able to contact property owners for collection of tax arrears because the owners' mobile numbers are masked. The mobile numbers of owners should be available to the RIs and TIs.

iv. There is no provision in the SAS software to calculate the interest on arrears up-to-date and generate the demand. This acts as a brake on RIs and AROs who wish to take initiative to collect more revenue. Hence provision must be made in SAS for calculating interest up-to-date, generating demand notice of arrears with interest and for receiving payment of arrears, interest and penalty.

v. The challans are generated to the exact paisa. The system only accepts payment of the exact amount including paisa. It should be modified to round off the demand to the next higher rupee.

vi. If buildings are built in violation of approved plans, a provision has been made in the new BBMP Act 2020 vide Sec.144(6) to impose two times property tax for the portion built in excess of the sanctioned plan. The software should be modified to enable payment of double property tax in such cases either on self assessment basis or after approval of the ARO from his login.

vii. The application form for building plan sanction and the plan sanction order should contain a note informing the owner that if there is any violation of the approved plan he is liable to pay two times the property tax for the violation portion.

viii. NIC should provide login to AROs to enter payment details in the property tax software because AROs are collecting arrears through Demand Drafts also. They do not have login to enter the amount collected by them on the property tax system. They should be able to enter the payment as provisional and once it is received in the BBMP accounts, it can be considered as a firm payment.

ix. More than one SAS application is sometimes generated for a single property. As a result a single property may have two application numbers. There may be no provision to continue with one form if there is some erroneous entry or one form may be generated by the owner and another by a middleman. Provision should be made for deleting the duplicate applications after obtaining the consent of property owners. NIC can resolve this issue at the backend. If a PID number is entered, the system should give an alert if there is another PID number for the same property.

x. If an applicant makes an erroneous entry about the ward or if there is a change in the ward in which a property is situated, the software should either auto correct based on the location details or there should be an option for the receiving official in BBMP to redirect the application to the correct ward/zone anywhere in BBMP and to intimate the applicant of this change.

xi. The information about property, owner, previous tax paid and dues are not being auto populated in the Sakala application forms. Hence information that is already available in the software may be auto populated either in Kannada or English based on the users' choice.

xii. Aadhaar number should be taken for new and for existing SAS applications.

xiii. The tax paid receipt should contain a note informing the owner, that if he has made a wrong declaration about whether the property is self-occupied or rented and whether it is residentially or commercially used, then he is liable to pay penalty at the prescribed rate.

xiv. Ratings for prompt and big taxpayers like "Golden Star", "Silver Star" can be computer generated and sent by email, SMS to motivate prompt payers on the lines of the Income Tax department.

xv. Entry of property details in E Aasthi software is completed for some core wards. It should be completed on priority for the remaining wards.

42. The zonal classification of properties for property tax assessment has not been changed from 2016, though guidance values have been revised more than once in this period. The software should be modified to ensure that the zonal classification is changed automatically by importing the revised guidance values.

43. Many properties may be used for commercial purposes, but may not be paying property tax at the rates applicable to commercial properties. They may not have taken Trade license. BWSSB and Bescom staffs are more knowledgeable about commercial use of properties because they go every month to check the meter readings. Therefore the BBMP property IDs and Trade license system should be linked to RR numbers of Bescom and BWSSB. Software should be modified to enable identification of commercial properties that are not paying commercial rates of property tax or have not taken trade license. The AROs should levy property tax accordingly. The MOHs should give them trade licenses as applicable.

44. Many big property taxpayers litigate and question the assessment of property tax. If such queries are answered correctly litigations will reduce. There will be continuous revenue loss if disposal of tax litigations is delayed. For this purpose, a dedicated wing to handle tax queries and litigations may be set up as a part of the legal cell in the BBMP central office.

45. The BBMP should maintain computerised list of different types of properties like A-Khata, B-Khata, properties with OC, without OC etc. This information may be collected in a time bound manner. This would be a useful database.

46. The BDA and KIADB are collecting property tax for properties in their layouts within the jurisdiction of BBMP. There are three systems of levying and collection of property tax within BBMP area. As a step towards simplification, SAS software can be used by both BDA and KIADB for assessment of tax and maintenance of Khata. The uniformity in assessment of tax and maintenance of Khata records will ease the process of transfer of these layouts and properties by BDA and KIADB to BBMP. The SAS software may be suitably modified to provide logins for BDA and KIADB.

47. In the case of private layouts approved by BDA within BBMP jurisdiction, it is informed that BDA is giving khatas and collecting property tax. The legality of this practice needs to be examined. In any case, after completion of work on the private layouts, BDA should hand over the layouts, roads and civic amenities sites to BBMP without delay along with all khata registers/data etc.

48. Property Tax officers/Revenue officers and inspectors are supposed to inspect tax assessable properties in their jurisdiction. They should be given a target of inspection and certification of one third of all properties in their jurisdiction every year. In three years they should complete the survey and certify that all properties in their jurisdiction have correctly filed the property tax self-assessment return. They should reconcile properties in every apartment block, the number of flats sanctioned in the building plan and the number of flats that have taken khatas. This should be reviewed in the Tax officers' meetings.

49. A rebate of 5% is announced every year by BBMP for full property tax payment made during April, May and sometimes in June also. The rebate is given to encourage property owners to pay their tax early, thus easing the cash flow situation in BBMP at the beginning of the financial year. But the rebate makes a considerable dent in property tax collections. The present bank loan interest rates may be in the range of 7-9%, much less when compared to the double digit interest rates that were prevalent in the past. Therefore, it is suggested that BBMP may consider reducing the rebate for early payment to 3-4%.

50. Property Tax collection officials who achieve their tax targets should be appropriately recognised by giving certificates and honouring them. Awards may be given to those who achieve the highest excess above their given targets.

51. Vacant sites are levied property tax at lower rates, because they do not generate income for the owner. But these vacant sites become dumping grounds for all sorts of garbage and harbouring harmful weeds. The owners especially if there is no litigation involved keep the sites vacant as an investment. Land has to be optimally utilised to house the growing population. But the vacant sites deprive people who need housing and become an eyesore for neighbours. Owners who build houses contribute to the economy by investing on construction, they add to the housing stock. But owners of vacant sites do neither. In the case of sites allotted by BDA or KHB they also get the sites at subsidised rates. They violate the allotment condition that houses should be constructed within a given period. If the layout is handed over to BBMP and many site owners have built houses, the owners of vacant sites in the same layout cannot cite lack of infrastructure for not taking up construction. There is a need to disincentivise keeping sites vacant and incentivise construction on those sites for all the above reasons. It is recommended that the vacant site tax be increased such that it disincentivise owners from keeping it vacant. A site should be considered as vacant unless a building plan has been sanctioned by the BBMP and construction has been completed as per the plan. A housing cess and SWM charge may be charged from such vacant sites. This may be double the existing property tax. Alternatively, the property tax on vacant sites may be fixed at 50% of the property tax leviable for a residential building with built up area as per the maximum applicable FAR on the site.

52. It is informed that some Revenue officers in BBMP spend more time and effort on khata related matters than on collection of property tax and arrears. To give greater emphasis on their role in tax collection, it is recommended that Revenue officers be renamed as Property Tax officers.

53. An internal audit mechanism should be engaged by BBMP for concurrent audit of receipts and expenditure. External agencies with trained Chartered Accountants can do the internal audit, checking accounts on a monthly basis. This will prevent misappropriation of monies and help in proper accounting.

4.20 Improving the financial system

54. Integrated Financial Management System (IFMS) is good software. But certain modifications are required. As an example, for making payment to 100 outsourced employees, a BBMP official has to first upload details by entering 100 OTPs. Thereafter another 100 OTPs have to be entered for payment i.e. 200 OTPs have to be entered for payment to 100 payees. This has to be modified and provision made for bulk payment to payees or outsourced employees with a single OTP. The Deputy Controller of Finance should be authorized to push with a single OTP. It should also be modified to generate Cash book and Bank Reconciliation Statement.

55. The present system for remitting statutory deductions from contractors' bills is a long drawn out one and can be simplified. At present the EEs send the contractor's bill to the Chief Accounts Officer (CAO) of BBMP. The CAO makes payment of the net amount to the contractor and sends the statutory deduction amounts for paying IT, CGST, SGST, royalty, CBF, Further Security Deposit (FSD) to the EEs bank account. The EE then issues cheques towards the various deductions and gets it entered in the relevant registers. The IFMS has all the required details for payment of statutory deductions at the level of CAO himself. Except for FSD, the remaining statutory deductions may be directly remitted to the relevant heads of account at the CAO level to save time and effort. The FSD may be returned to EE for keeping it till the defect liability period expires. The schedule generated after remitting the statutory deductions can be sent to the EEs office for record purpose. Therefore, instructions may be issued that CAO make all deductions except FSD at head office. Suitable changes may be made in the procedure and in the IFMS software.

56. Demand Drafts are still being taken by BBMP for payment of property tax, development charges etc. Taking out a DD is cumbersome for the payer who has to go to a bank for the purpose. Once it is submitted to BBMP, it has to be entered in a register, credited in a bank and accounts reconciled. There have been cases of lost DDs and single DD used for double payment. DDs were relevant when other online modes of payment were not available. Now many other payment options are available. Therefore, it is recommended that BBMP should declare a policy of not taking DDs for any sort of payment.

57. Regular contractor bills in BBMP are not being paid for years together due to shortage of funds. The bills are to be paid as per a queuing system. Since payment of bills for day to day essential maintenance works cannot be kept pending, BBMP has opened an Escrow account for collecting funds and paying bills relating to regular essential maintenance works. Collection of property taxes should be first credited to the Escrow account to meet the requirements of funds for essential maintenance works. Once the required amount has been fully credited in the Escrow account, the remaining property tax collection can be credited to the regular BBMP fund. Essential maintenance expenditure on SWM contract bills, streetlight contract bills, pothole filling, desilting of drains, silt and tractor and earthmover crews should be met from the Escrow account.

4.21 Zonal Legal Cells

58. DC offices in districts have been permitted to avail the services of a retired Judge for legal advice. The Zonal Commissioners are incharge of zones containing a higher population than many districts. They have to handle a large variety of legal cases. At present the Legal Cell in BBMP Head Office is deluged with thousands of cases. It is suggested that these legal cases should be handled at zonal level for faster and better drafting of applications, counters and statements and for follow up. Legal Cells with a retired District Judge and two legal staff to handle legal cases should be set up in each zone.

4.22 Improving revenue from BBMP Assets

59. As per Sec.136(4) of the BBMP Act, the BBMP shall undertake a survey of immovable properties under its ownership, management or control once in 5 years and publish such survey in the public domain in a manner as may be specified. BBMP should instruct the concerned officials to conduct the survey and update the database of BBMP properties.

60. Thousands of BBMP properties are on lease beyond the approved lease period without approval for continuation of lease or increase in the lease amount or rent. As per rules, these properties have to be leased again by auction. Notices issued to tenants to pay higher rents or lease amounts are usually challenged in courts and they remain pending due to various reasons. This inflicts a huge loss on BBMPs revenue. Therefore, BBMP may examine the possibility of making an application in the Hon High Court of Karnataka to transfer to itself such cases from the lower courts and hear them together or give suitable directions to the lower courts.

4.23 Improving productivity and working conditions

61. BBMP should have fresh infusion of talent at higher levels as in Government. It is recommended that 25% of ARO posts be filled by direct recruitment. Out of the direct recruitment quota, one half can be set apart for direct recruitment by internal competitive examination from among serving Tax Inspectors/Revenue Inspectors.

62. DCs of districts are permitted to recruit Village Accountants directly on the basis of marks obtained in the PUC exam. A similar provision should be made in BBMP to recruit Tax Inspectors so as to give a fillip to tax collection. Tax inspectors may be directly recruited based on PUC exam marks (without any recruitment test or interview) and reservation roster. Chief Commissioner, BBMP may be permitted to recruit tax inspectors on this basis as and when vacancies of Tax Inspectors arise.

63. Tax Inspector circles should be created in BBMP on the lines of Village Accountant circles in rural areas. The Tax Inspectors should be given login in the property tax system for properties in his circle. He should be made responsible to survey all properties in his circle and bring them into the tax net. This will be useful in raising property tax demand especially in the outer zones.

64. The number of TI and RI circles should be readjusted based on the number of properties.

65. BBMP Act may be amended to provide for transfers of all Group C and D staff only through computerized counseling.

66. Biometric attendance systems are not being used due to fear of Covid infection. Instead face recognition attendance systems should be set up by BBMP for taking daily attendance of poura karmikas, health inspectors, clerical staff and officers in ward, zone and central offices and in PHCs, schools, PK mustering centres, hospitals etc.

67. There is only one AEE and one JE electrical for all 46 wards in West zone for attending to all street light related issues. Around 50% of the AE civil posts are reported to be vacant. AEs/JEs are at the cutting edge in the provision of satisfactory civic services like pothole free roads, walkable footpaths, garbage free spots, lit up streetlights, restored road cuttings and for monitoring encroachments, building violations etc. It is extremely sub-optimal for the city administration to keep these posts vacant. Therefore, all vacant Civil and Electrical AE/JE posts should be filled by direct recruitment at the earliest. In the interregnum, till these posts are filled up through regular recruitment, BBMP should be permitted to take AEs/JEs to fill all the vacant posts on outsourcing basis.

68. Ward level AE/JEs are at the cutting edge of providing essential civic services in BBMP. These services can be maintained by taking up minor maintenance works but the delay in taking them up due to procedures involved causes a lot of dissatisfaction. Citizen satisfaction would increase if these minor but important maintenance works are attended to without delay. Therefore the AEEs of the subdivision should be given Rs 1 lakh and the AEs/JEs should be given Rs 50,000 as imprest/revolving fund for taking up urgent maintenance works.

69. ARO offices are allotted a contingency fund of Rs 25,000 per annum fixed in 2006 to cover office printing, stationery and other contingency expenses. For the khata registration process, though it is supposed to be fully online, it was informed that they have to print out the application with all the attached documents because there is no E office system to move the file from one level to another. All applications with documents for voter enrolment also have to be printed because the election Observers ask for paper copies. The number of pages to be printed out for khatas, election and other work may reach 60,000 pages annually according to some AROs. The printing of the entire set of khata application with documents defeats the very purpose of making the system fully online. Firstly, the BBMP should immediately start using the E office system or modify the khata software to move the entire file with attached documents electronically from one level to another. If the movement of file becomes fully online, there is no need to print. Secondly, the contingency fund given to the ARO offices may be increased to Rs 1 lakh to cover the expenses incurred. The Revenue DC, RO and AROs may be asked to print only the checklist, instead of the entire set of documents.

70. A compendium of operative portions of important court judgements relating to property tax matters, leased properties, rentals and advertisement tax should be prepared in Kannada and given to all Property Tax staff from TI and above.

71. Section 229 of the BBMP Act empowers the Zonal Commissioners (ZC) to issue notice and remove encroachments. Immediate action has to be taken to remove encroachments as soon as they occur. Encroachments occur on vacant public lands, roads, footpaths, storm water drains and lakes. Therefore, the ZC exercising powers under Sec 74 (d) of the BBMP Act may delegate powers to remove encroachments under Sec 229 to the AEEs of ward works subdivisions, Road Infrastructure, Storm Water Drains and Lakes.

72. HRMS used by BBMP should ensure correct entry and remittance to National Pension Scheme (NPS). An official in BBMP should be sent for training in NPS to the NPS office and after training, given charge of answering queries from staff members on NPS matters and guiding them.

4.24 Recommendations related to services provided by BBMP

1. Registration and Transfer of Khata

Introduction

Khata refers to the information of property and owner details maintained by the BBMP for property tax purposes. The property owners can register and transfer their Khatas by applying online on the Sakala portal.Assistant Revenue Officer (ARO) in BBMP is the designated officer for the service. The Sakala time limit for providing this service is 30 days.

Users feed back

Process Audit: A process audit of files was done by Centre for Open Data Research (CODR) for 6 files including files that were approved, rejected, and delayed.

File Movement: Applicant submission **->**Revenue Officer (RO) -> Document verified by Revenue Inspector (RI)->Verification by Manager ->Approval/ Rejection by RO->Fee payment details by RI ->Fee payment by applicant ->Fee payment verification and Khata Certificate preparation by RI ->Khata Certification verification by Manager ->Dispatch of Khata

Observation: The documents are handled physically by multiple officers. There is no time limit for fee payment which results in applications pending for many months until the payment is done. Office login does not have a log of movement to track the application status. Insufficient documents, property litigation in court, third-party objection with valid reasons, pending fee payment are the most common reasons for rejection of the application.

NeSDA Analysis

There are 38 areas that require compliance as per the NeSDA analysis of this service portal. The compliance scores as per various parameters are shown in the following diagram.

NeSDA Scores by Parameters

- Accessbility — 55.56%
- Content Availa — 16.67%
- Ease of U — 54.55%
- Information security and Pr — 37.50%
- End Service Delivery — 60.00%
- Delivery — 22.22%
- equest tarcking — 25.00%
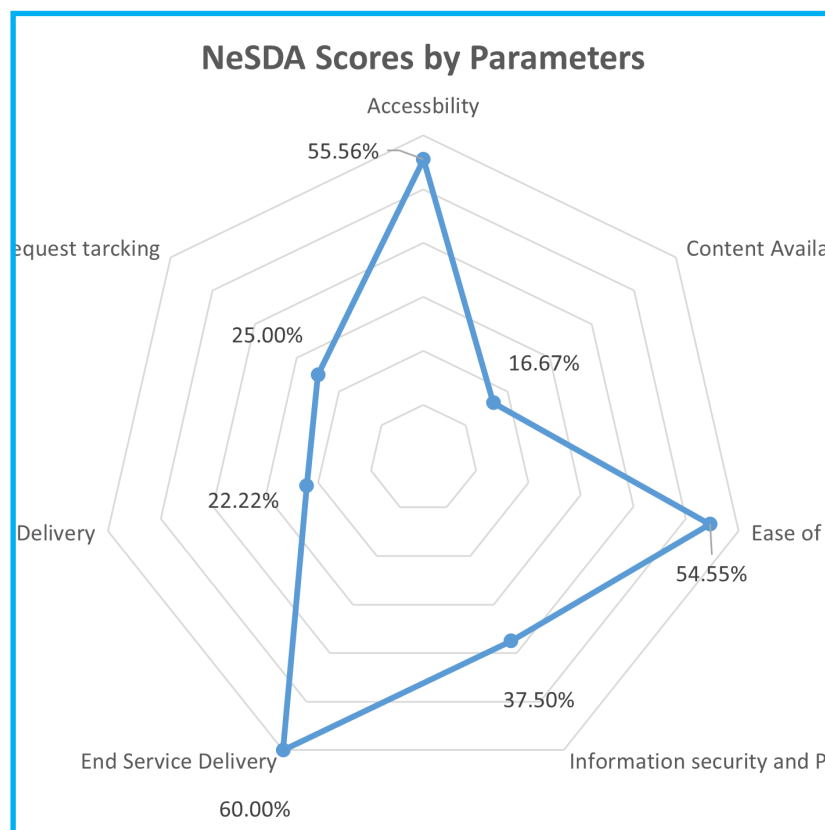
Recommendations

1. The power to register khatas for sites with area up to 6,000 sq. ft may be delegated to Revenue Officer, between 6000 sq.ft and 10,000 sq.ft to Deputy Commissioner (DC) and for sites with area above 10,000 sq.ft. to Joint Commissioner (JC), to reduce one level of processing and time taken.

2. For the GPs and ULBs or parts thereof that have been merged in BBMP their e-Swathu and e-Aasthi property data should be fully ported to BBMP khata database.

3. The Appellate Authority under Sakala Act for all four Khata related services is now the Chief Commissioner or Zonal Additional Commissioner (AC)/JC. This is inconvenient for applicants. The higher officers may not have the time to hear the appeals expeditiously. Therefore, the BBMP RO of the concerned jurisdiction should be notified as the Appellate Authority.

4. New khata "Uttara Patra" Revenue Dept. (RD) form no. 42 is now being filled in manually and given to khata holders. It should be generated in a printable format by the khata registration software to save time and effort of the staff.

5. A declaration should be included in the application format to the effect that the applicant has not encroached on any Government land to enable faster processing.

6. Khata registration fee of 2% of stamp value and improvement fee is to be paid by cash or DD in the Bengaluru-one centres or in the ARO office. To save time, an online payment system should be enabled to pay the fees through net banking/debit/credit card/UPI payment/wallet etc.

7. The Improvement fees (Sudharana veccha) of Rs 250 per sq.m for outer zones and Rs 200 per sq.m for core zones were fixed in 2014. The cost inflation index has risen from 240 in 2014-15 to 317 in 2021-22. Therefore, the fees may be revised as per inflation index to Rs. 330 per sq.m and Rs 270 per sq.m respectively.

8. As soon as khata registration fee and improvement fee are paid online, there should be a provision for the applicant to automatically print out the khata certificate with the e-signature of the competent authority from the online system.

9. It was informed that nearly 9500 Khata applications are pending because applicants have not yet paid the required fees. BBMP should fix a time limit for applicants to pay fees. SMS/email reminders should be sent to them to pay within the time limit. If payment is not made within the time limit, the application should be automatically rejected.

10. Aadhaar number and mobile number of both applicant and authorized person should be taken compulsorily. SMS should be sent to the applicant's registered mobile number along with a link for making payment online. A second SMS may be sent to the applicant for confirmation after receiving payment.

11. As per the NeSDA analysis report, once an applicant completes and submits the application, this error message pops up: "The information you're about to submit is not secure". After clicking on "Send anyway" it redirects to a fresh application. Hence applicants cannot submit the application form. This software glitch has to be corrected.

12. The software should have a provision to show the present status of the application if an applicant logs in.

13. Login to be created for users. Log history of each user may be maintained to identify delay and send alert messages.

14. All necessary fields and documents in the online application should be made mandatory. The software should prevent the applicant from saving or submitting the application until all the mandatory fields are filled and the required documents are uploaded.

15. While detailed recommendations are given below, some of the quick wins that could help enhance the e-service delivery include:

    i.   Include, on the home page, information about browser compatibility to ensure that users are utilizing the right browser required for optimal user experience

    ii.   Display the step by step procedure for applying on the website to guide the applicants and the end to end process followed for dealing with the application

    iii.   Provide a separate page for help

16. The key areas that require compliance are given below for compliance:

Assessment Area	Areas for compliance
Accessibility	1. Publish a service delivery charter outlining various services offered by the department, key nodal officers for these services, Sakala timelines and mode of delivery (online/offline)
	2. Display promotional campaigns in the form of a banner or pop-up window on the department page to create more awareness on the e-services which that can be availed online
	3. Provide details of all channels (portal, mobile, Kiosk, others) that are available for users to apply for the service
	4. Include, on the home page, information about browser compatibility to ensure that users are utilizing the right browser required for optimal user experience
	5. Provide a "screen reader" option in the portal for aiding visually impaired users
	6. Ensure that the portal supports audio and video content for richer user experience
	7. Ensure GIGW compliance. In order to be compliant, the portal should be certified by Standardization Testing and Quality Certification Directorate(STQC), a Government of India body under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology. Upon certification, a CQW mark indicating this certification is to be provided on the home page
	8. Display useful statistics such as number of transactions on the home page to give confidence to the users on utilizing the portal
Content Availability	9. Provide a page with a snapshot of user feedback on the service and details of any action taken based on this feedback
	10. Provide a separate help section on the portal to address certain basic user queries pertaining to the portal and navigating the portal
	11. Provide a feedback form on the portal to gather user feedback and comments on the department, its portal and e-services delivered
	12. Include a sitemap feature on the portal to provide users with a bird's eye view of all the webpages and help them navigate to the right page
	13. Ensure that the content on the portal is updated every week and information such as a timestamp (last updated/modified date) is provided to assure users of the content's recency and relevance
	14. Display useful statistics such as number of users accessing the portal, services availed by them and average time spent to give confidence to the users on utilizing the portal
	15. Provide information on how users could leverage electronic/ digital signature facility for availing the services

Ease of Use	16.	Provide an option for users to print or download service application forms so that they can save completed applications or complete it offline before submitting online
	17.	Ensure that the proposed department webpage auto populates relevant content based on the user's recent activity / interest
	18.	Provide a search box on the portal to help navigate users to the right page and right content
	19.	Provide a separate section on the portal for applicants to record their grievances with regard to service application process or timelines
	20.	Provide a user manual with step-by-step instructions to guide users while applying for the service
Information security	21.	Secure and encrypt the information exchange between the user and the department by obtaining a SSL certificate for the portal
	22.	Ensure that the portal is W3C compliant so that users get consistent web experience across different browsers
	23.	Include a privacy policy on the portal so that users are able to understand the safeguards put in place to secure their personal information
	24.	Engage a third-party to audit the website from information security standpoint and highlight this information on the home page to assure users of the portal's information security safeguards
End Service Delivery	25.	Try and eliminate manual touchpoints in the service delivery process, as much as practically possible
	26.	Ensure that the service is end-to-end online with users obtaining NOCs/other certificates/licenses in a digital format
Integrated Service Delivery	27.	Make it easy for users to register on the portal via an Aadhaar-based Single Sign On. This feature also helps the department to authenticate users in more reliable manner
	28.	Link the service application to Digital Locker/digital document wallet to help users submit their documents quickly and efficiently, and help the department in speedy verification of these documents
	29.	Provide an option to avail the service via a mobile app and advertise the availability of an app on the home page
	30.	Integrate service-specific content with data from dependent departments/data sources to ensure that relevant user information is auto-populated while submitting service applications
	31.	Integrate service-specific content with data from dependent departments/data sources so that any relevant auto-calculations are done while submitting details online
	32.	Integrate the portal with social media apps like Twitter, Facebook, etc.
	33.	Try and eliminate manual touchpoints in the service delivery process, as much as practically possible
Status and Request Tracking	34.	Provide a separate section on the portal for applicants to record their grievances with regard to service application process or timelines
	35.	Provide Ticket / Complaint No. for status tracking and future follow-ups
	36.	Provide SMS and email alerts to alert applicants at each stage of their application process. For instance, after application submission, payment, etc.
	37.	Provide users with feedback on their on the status of their complaints via SMS, email or phone calls
	38.	Provide a helpline number/email id on the payments page for users to register and get resolved any issues they are facing while making payments

2.   Amalgamation and Bifurcation of Khata

Introduction

The ARO in BBMP is the designated officer for this service. The Sakala time limit is 30 days.

Process Audit: A process audit of files was done by CODR for 6 files that included approved, rejected and delayed files.

Files movement: Applicant submission **>**ARO Login> receiving clerk > case worker> RI (Rejects / Approves) > ARO/RO/JC > Applicant

Observations: The office login does not have a log of movement. Application tracking is not available. Common reasons for rejection are insufficient documents, property dispute in court, third party objection with valid reasons and pending fee payment. There is no prescribed time limit for fee payment, which results in overdues for years.

Recommendations

1. On the lines of delegation recommended for registration of khatas, the power to amalgamate and bifurcate khatas of sites with area upto 6,000 sq. ft, 6,000 sq. ft and 10,000 sq. ft and above 10,000 sq. ft may be delegated to RO, Zonal DC and Zonal JC respectively.

2. For bifurcation of khata in an apartment/housing complex, multiple applications equal to the number of flats are being received. This should be simplified. For instance, if an apartment complex has 400 flats, an option should be provided in the Khata registration/bifurcation software for taking only one application for all 400 flats with the OC, required documents and flat wise dimensions. Based on the details given, the registration fee, bifurcation fee and improvement fees can be collected and property tax assessed for every flat at one go. This single bulk application could be filed either by the developer or by a group of owners. This would save enormous workload on the flat owners and BBMP staff.

3. If a bulk application is not filed as explained above, for the registration of a first khata of a bifurcated property, all required documents have to be submitted. As a step towards reducing unnecessary documentation, it is suggested that for bifurcation of subsequent khatas of other flats in the same complex only the sale deed may be insisted upon. The rest of the data must be auto populated from the details in the first application. The other common documents should not be asked for in subsequent khatas. This will save citizens' time, effort and BBMPs processing time and data space.

4. The Sakala application form for bifurcation does not include an option for bifurcation of apartment complexes. It only has option for bifurcation of individual buildings and vacant land. This should be provided. The bifurcation application form should include an explanatory note that the option of bifurcation of apartment complexes should be selected for khata registration of flats.

5. Many of the recommendations made for the service of "Registration and Transfer of Khata" are also applicable for this service. They may be implemented.

6. Sakala time limit may be reduced from 30 days to 20 days for bifurcation of khata. For amalgamation, change may not be necessary.

3.   Issue of Khata Extract / Certificate

Introduction

ARO in BBMP is the designated officer to issue Khata extract/certificate. The Sakala time limit for providing this service is 3 days where online data is available and 7 days where online data is not available.

Recommendations

1. Digitisation of property tax registers in old wards has been completed. This data should be linked to the property tax database and software provision made to download Khata extract/certificate by paying the prescribed fee online or through cyber centres who can pay through a wallet service. After digitisation of property registers of the new wards is completed, similar automatic downloading provision should be enabled for them also. Such a system exists for taking RTC copies. This will considerably reduce the time spent by applicants and BBMP staff on this service.

2. For GPs and ULBs amalgamated in BBMP action may be initiated to port their property tax data from the RDPR Panchatantra software and from the KMDS software.

3. Wherever provision exists for obtaining Khata extract online, the practice of giving manual Khata extract should be disallowed by issuing instructions from the BBMP to all concerned officers.

4. The fee of Rs.125 for obtaining a Khata extract was fixed in the year 2000; it may be revised to Rs.500.

4. Grant of Trade License as per specified category under rules

Introduction

Medical Officer of Health (MOH)/Deputy Medical Officer (DMO)/ Health Officer (HO) are the designated officers for this service. The Sakala time limit is 30 days.

Process Audit: A process audit of application files was done by CODR for 6 files including those that were approved, rejected and delayed.

File Movement: Applicant submission **->**MOH ->Chief Health Officer (CHO) (Approval/ Reject)

Observations: Trade licenses are being issued at zonal level. If the applicant registers in the wrong zone there is no option for the officials to transfer the application to the correct zone; instead they have to reject the application. The applicant needs to pay all the fees in advance while registering but in case of rejection there is no refund of fees. If at any intermediate stage it is observed that the application has some deficiency, nevertheless it has to be forwarded to the higher authority, which is an unnecessary step and further delays the process.

NeSDA Analysis

The NeSDA analysis shows that 48 guidelines were complied with and 29 guidelines are not complied with. The compliance rate on various parameters is given below.
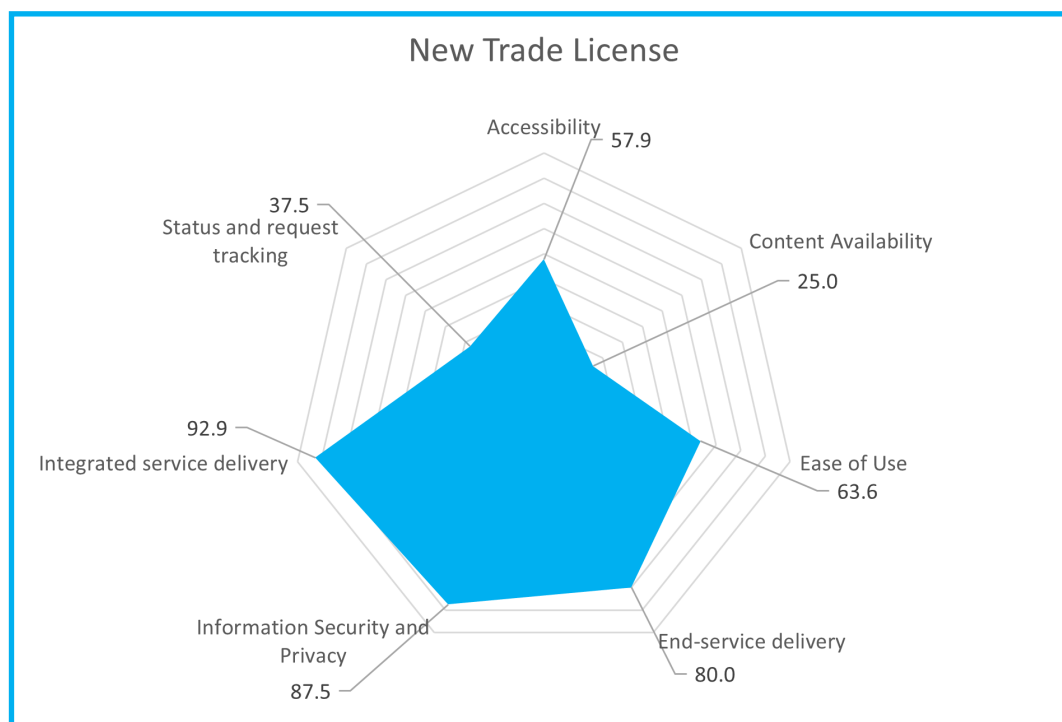
Recommendations

1. Power to approve issue of trade license may be delegated as under, based on the installed power capacity in the establishment:

    i. Up to 5 HP – from MOH to Senior Health Inspector (SHI)

    ii. Between 5 HP to 25 HP delegate from HO to MOH

    iii. Between 25 HP to 80 HP delegate from JC to HO

    iv. More than 80 HP to Joint Commissioner

2. MOHs are unable to retrieve the documents that were uploaded by applicants with the application for Trade license, for giving them to Right to Information (RTI) applicants. Provision should be made in the trade license software for the MOH to view and retrieve these documents.

3. MOH should be given the option to reject and close applications for bar-license if they are ineligible or violate court orders.

4. A provision should be made for online payment of fines in the Trade license software.

5. All applications are presently being received and dealt with by the Senior Health Inspectors (SHI) in the MOH login. A separate user name and login may be created for SHIs and applications sent directly to the SHI level for processing to save time.

6. SHIs should survey the areas under their jurisdiction and with the help of Bescom and BWSSB commercial RR numbers, they should identify the establishments that have not yet taken trade license and ensure that they take them.

7. The application software should auto-generate the relevant zone/ward/location based on the pin code and forward it to the relevant official to prevent waste of time involved in redirecting wrongly addressed applications.

8. Property tax paid information should be auto populated in the application form.

9. Unless all the conditions for grant of a Trade License are satisfied, the software should not allow payment of fees. This will obviate the need to reject and refund the fees of an ineligible application. In any case, it is advisable that a provision be made in the software for refunding fees of rejected applications.

10. Based on the NeSDA analysis, the areas that require compliance are given below for compliance.

Evaluation Area	Areas that require compliance
Accessibility	Provide contact information of Government officials/agencies responsible for the provision of specific online services/queries
	Create a separate section for 'Contact Us'
	Provide downloadable forms for provisioning of services which cannot be submitted online
	Make available promotional campaigns to avail eServices
	Provide information about compatible browsers and best screen resolutions
	Make available features to enable access for people with physical disabilities
	Enable audio and video playing
	Make available number of transactions
Content Availability	Make available information about results of user feedback about online services
	Create a separate section for Help
	Create a separate section on Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
	Sitemap should be made available
	Make available Information of last updated timestamp on each page of the website
	Update Timestamp as of current year
	Statistics on website usage by users (no. of visitors/ average time spent per visitor etc.) should be made available
	Statistics on transaction count of services availed by users should be made available
	Information on how to avail electronic/ digital signature facility for availing the services should be introduced
Ease of Use	Introduce a "What's new" section which details the changes in the website
	Website should provide for complaints, resolutions etc. on various aspects of the e-service provided
	Website should have a built-in facility to populate content relevant to user's recent activity / interest
	Introduce a user manual to guide the users
End-Service Delivery	Publish service delivery timelines on the website
Information Security Privacy	Enable mobile alerts for unauthorized access to user profile, password changes etc.
Integrated service delivery	Integrate the website with Social Media Apps like Twitter, Facebook etc.
Status and request tracking	Introduce facility to log Grievances / Complaints
	Introduce Ticket / Complaint No. for status tracking and future follow-ups
	Enable feedback on user's complaints like email, call back etc.
	Provide information about helpline for issues regarding online payments through web page
	Provide for help desk, online support, and call centre for users

5.   Issue of Birth, Still Birth and Death Certificates

Introduction

MO/Deputy MO/ Superintendent in big hospitals and Assistant Statistical officer is the designated officer for this service. Applicant may submit application with the prescribed fee. The Sakala time limit is 3 days where online data is available and 7 days where online data is not available.

Process Audit Observations: There is no edit option for the officers; no option to send back or to other departments if any clarification is needed about the documents; no option available other than to accept or reject the application. Rejected application will be notified to the user via SMS. There is no log of the status to keep track of the application.

Recommendations

1. There is no regular system in BBMP now for obtaining and registering information of births and deaths. In rural areas, the Village Accountants can get information from Gram Sevaks, Asha workers, Anganwadi workers and Panchayat officials. Urban residents may not be aware of where or with whom to register births and deaths or may not take the trouble to do so. In case of non-registration, persons who want these certificates have to obtain a Non Availability Certificate. Therefore a system should be established on the lines of rural areas. It is suggested that a Birth and Deaths WhatsApp group be formed by each Health Inspector in BBMP. The Asha worker, Poura karmika supervisors, tax officials, ANMs, crematoria incharge, RWAs etc. should be members of this group. The members should report and share information on births and deaths occurring in their jurisdiction. This should be followed up by the SHI and get them registered.

2. Power may be delegated to Medical Officers of BBMP hospitals for issue of birth certificates for births in their hospital.

3. The power to issue birth/death certificate from one year up to 5 years should be given to the jurisdictional Medical Officer for ease of citizens.

4. Crematorium incharge should be instructed to enter the details of dead bodies brought for cremation on e-Janma software the same day. The system should send it online to the jurisdictional MO for issuing the death certificate. It should have a provision for online payment. This will save the applicants the effort of going to the crematorium, taking the document of cremation to the MO and applying for a death certificate.

5. Edit option may be enabled for the officers to correct any minor mistakes in the application. The officials should be enabled to view the application and make minor changes. Revert option needs to be enabled to the authority as there are chances of human error in filling the application. There should be a log of the applications movement and the applicant should be enabled by login to track the status.

6. For additional copies of a birth/death certificate, the existing fee of Rs.5 per copy may be raised to Rs. 10. A provision for making online payment through UPI/net banking/card etc. may be enabled.

6. Sanction of Building Plan in sites up to 2400 sq.ft. for Residential Single Dwelling Unit.

Introduction

AEE is the designated authority for this service. Sakala time limit is 30 days.

Process Audit: A process audit of application files was done by CODR for 6 files including those that were approved, rejected and delayed.

Process Flow: Applicant submission **->** Architect -> Inward clerk -> (TP/AE/JE) -> Assistant Director, Town Planning (ADTP)-> Chief Engineer (Approval/ Reject)

Observation: Access to view the status of file is not available; only sub-division office can view the status. The drawing reaches the applicant only after making the payment. Whenever a user submits the application and pays the fees online an automatic PNR number is generated, which will be available to the architect, but there is a long delay to forward it to the next officer. There is no time limit for fee payment, which leads to a lot of pending applications.

Recommendations

1. As a step towards ease of living for citizens, the approval and sanction of building plan in sites with area including and upto 2400 sq.ft with 2 or less kitchens for residential use should be given instantly online based on the architects plan, engineers and owner's declaration and self-certification and payment of prescribed fees online. There should be no need for the file to be processed and approved. The printable sanction should be generated online with e-signature of the AEE/ADTP. Further details are given in the General Recommendations.

2. An option may be included in the application to apply for premium Floor Area Ratio (FAR) and add Transferable Development Rights (TDR), if the applicant wishes to construct a building with higher dimensions than that allowed under the prescribed FAR.

3. Applicants and his authorized persons Aadhaar linked mobile number must be taken while applying online. There should be a common online platform for this purpose, to be followed in the BBMP, to make application processing easier. Every officer responsible for this service should have access to view the status of the file.

4. Building plan approval software should be linked to the Property tax software system; the ADTP and AEE can view the tax paid and dues details of the property online while processing the application.

5. Time limit should be fixed for payment of fee. Fee payment pending should be taken as pending with the applicant instead of with the officials. There should be automatic rejection of the application if payment is not made within the given time.

6. Immediately after sanction, the plan must be pushed automatically to the ward AE and sub division AEE logins and intimation sent to their mobile numbers by suitably modifying the software. This will enable them to supervise the construction and stop plan violations.

7. Under building byelaws the copy of approved site plan showing the building elevation and the setbacks allowed may be uploaded on the BBMP portal for information in the public domain for use of neighbours or citizens. This will enable neighbours and citizens to report on violations if any to the concerned officers.

8. As per Appendix-IX site inspection and submission of site inspection report by empanelled engineers/architects is made compulsory. Engineers in BBMP may not have the time to keep a watch on all buildings to detect violations. It would be useful for the BBMP to empanel third party engineers/architects and send them for inspection. Their inspection fees may be collected from the owners at the time of building plan sanction.

7.   Building License for Units Other than Multi Storied Buildings

Introduction

Zonal ADTP/Joint Director (Town Planning) (JDTP) is the designated **officer for this service. The Sakala time limit for providing the service is 30 days.**

Recommendations

1. The software system being used in BBMP to issue building license may be extended with additional modules to issue commencement certificate (CC) and occupancy certificate (OC). This will reduce the burden on the applicant for submission of the same set of documents three times.

2. If an incomplete application is submitted for building plan sanction or commencement or occupancy certificate a message goes to the applicant to rectify the deficiency. But in the next attempt a new application is created. Duplicate applications are created for the same property. The previous incomplete application remains pending. The previous incomplete application for the same property should be deemed to be rejected if there is no further login by the applicant after a prescribed time limit. Suitable changes should be made in the software for building plan sanction and in Sakala.

3. Atleast four affidavits namely, indemnity bond, affidavit by applicant, affidavit by registered architect and bond of assurance are required to be submitted with the application. These may be simplified and merged into a single or at most two affidavits.

4. Providing the mobile numbers of the owner, consultant, engineer and architect should be made mandatory fields in the application form.

5. If there are any mistakes/deficiencies in the application, the software should have a provision to send an SMS to rectify the mistake to the registered mobile number of the owner, engineer and architect..

8. Issuance of Building Commencement Certificate

Introduction

ADTP/JDTP in BBMP is the designated officer for the service. The Sakala time limit is 30 days.

Recommendations

1. Many building plan license holders do not apply for commencement certificate due to lack of awareness or because of the extra cost and effort required. It would be easier for them and for BBMP to ensure payment of commencement certificate charges at the time of plan sanction itself, but without giving the certificate. The certificate may be given after inspection. The owner is saved the trouble of applying again, while the BBMP gets the revenue due to it.

2. The engineers and architects plan are submitted while applying for plan sanction. There is no necessity to ask for them again. These documents may be auto populated from the database.

9. Issuance of Building Occupancy Certificate

Introduction

ADTP/JDTP in BBMP is the designated officer for the service. The Sakala time limit is 30 days.

Recommendations

1. In the new software for building plan sanction developed for Ease of Doing Business, a provision may be made in the OC format to enter the built up dimensions of each flat for all flats in the apartment complex to enable generation of Khatas for all flats automatically. Format of OC may be modified accordingly.

2. If OC is not issued within the Sakala time limit or is rejected, appeal lies with DC (Development). It may be amended as Zonal DC; the second appeal can be to Zonal AC /JC instead of to Commissioner.

3. Format of OC varies from building to building, depending on the authority competent to issue it. But OC format issued by the BDA is simplified. Both BDA and BBMP can adopt same OC format. BDA can use BBMP software for issue of OC.

10. Road cutting (Right of Way) Permission for obtaining Electricity and Water Connection.

Introduction

AEE in BBMP is the designated officer for this service. The Sakala time limit for the service is 15 days.

Users' Feedback.

Called around 35 applicants to seek feedback and the observations are as follows:

Out of 35 calls, feedback was captured from 8 calls. 8 were found to be wrong numbers, 11 calls were not connected, applicants did not respond to 6 calls, 2 calls were disconnected. All applicants applied at office. 7 applicants rated the service as good and one as average.

Recommendations

1. Road cutting rates were fixed in 2009-10. It should be revised to cover the present cost of restoration and other charges.

2. At present a manual system is in force for giving road cutting permission to individual citizens who apply after starting construction. For utility agencies, there is an online system called Multi-Agency Road Cutting Coordination System (MARCCS). A similar online system should be introduced for giving permission to individual applicants who apply after the start or completion of construction.

3. BBMP may issue guidelines on the process to be followed for giving permission for road cutting for buildings constructed on B Khata sites.

4. For giving road cutting permission, building OC is being insisted upon. In case of completed building without OC, double the usual road cutting charges may be collected.

5. For giving water supply connections, BWSSB asks applicants to obtain prior road cutting permission from BBMP. Bescom should also insist on getting prior road cutting permission from BBMP for new electricity connections drawn from underground cables across the road.

6. Permission for road cutting should be shared in view mode with the Ward Engineer to check if road cutting is as per plan and to take up quick restoration.

7. At present, road cutting fee is being collected at the time of plan sanction. If road cutting permission is needed after completion of the building, there is no provision available in the system. This provision may be introduced.

8. If road cutting is done without prior permission by individuals or by utility agencies like BWSSB, Bescom, GAIL, Telecom companies, OFC companies they may be charged three times the regular road cutting charges. Suitable amendments may be made in the bye-laws.

11. Tree Cutting / Tree Canopy Management

Introduction

Deputy Conservator of Forest is the designated officer for this service. There is an online application for this service. The sub-services for this service are tree cutting in private land, tree cutting in government land and cutting of branches. Sakala time limit is 125 days.

Recommendations

1. Range Forest Officer (RFO) /Deputy RFO may be authorised to give permission for the sub-service of cutting of branches and lifting and transporting branches felled during clearance.

2. Guidelines may be issued by Government for simplification of documents and procedure to be followed by the Tree Expert Committee.

3. During summer, a huge quantity of dry and green leaves is collected while sweeping roads, parks etc. Shredders may be provided by BBMP in its parks for composting the leaves and branches.

4. The online system is not working smoothly. Details required for applying for cutting trees are different from those for removing/cutting branches. An applicant needs to fill data for both sub-services even though she wishes to apply for a single sub-service. Data entry form may be separated for the two sub-services.

12. Sahaaya 2.0 (Management of Street Lighting, Pot-hole filling)

Introduction

EE in BBMP is the designated officer for the service. BBMP has developed a unified application "Namma Bengaluru (Sahaaya2.0)" for citizens to register their grievances. Grievance modules of BBMP, BESCOM, BWSSB, BMTC, BMRCL, BMRDA and BDA are integrated. This app provides a single platform to register their grievances through various sources like text, photos and videos. Applicant can submit grievance and view the status of action taken on it on the app.

Recommendation

1. All control rooms under the purview of BBMP, BESCOM, BWSSB, BMTC, BMRCL, BMRDA and BDA may be integrated with Sahaaya App , so that complaints registered with different control rooms may be monitored from a single app. Manual registration of complaints in registers kept in the BBMP control rooms may be dispensed with. BBMP Control room personnel should be asked to register all complaints received over phone, multi-media or in writing on the Sahaaya app on their computers or through smartphones. It would be easier to monitor grievances on the app than from manual registers.

13. Registration and Renewal of License of Contractors

Introduction

EE (Planning-Center-1) is the designated officer for the service. The Sakala time limit for providing this service is 30 days.

Recommendations

1. The requirements for registration of license of contractors are exhaustive and burdensome. To reduce the workload, it is recommended that contractors registered with PWD, Irrigation department and NHAI may be registered by merely obtaining a declaration/affidavit and solvency certificate; they need not submit the other documents. The other 12 documents should be asked for only if the contractor is not registered with PWD, ID or NHAI.

2. By entering the contractor's license number, the full details of the contractors' performance like works awarded, works under progress, works completed in stipulated time, quality of works etc. must be made visible on the e-Procurement site. This data must be updated as and when works are completed. It would be useful for evaluation of bids.

3. In e-commerce sites, after every purchase, the customer is asked to rate her satisfaction with the transaction. After every work is completed, the concerned EE of BBMP should mandatorily rate the contractors work on different criteria. This rating must be made visible in the e-Procurement portal to other bid evaluation officers.

4. An online payment system should be enabled on the application portal.

BANGALORE DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Introduction

Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) was established by the Bangalore Development Authority Act of 1976 with the responsibility to plan, regulate, control, monitor and facilitate urban development in Bangalore Metropolitan Area to ensure its sustainable and orderly growth. The BDA has taken up both planning functions and developmental functions. Since inception, the BDA has allotted 76,000 sites to individuals for construction of residential buildings and allotted about 800 civic amenity (CA) sites for use by various public utilities, organisations, etc.

The recommendations made below are based on suggestions and discussions in the Focus Group Discussions with staff of the BDA and BMRDA, suggestions made during visits by the Commission and its officers to the BDA and BMRDA offices, feedback obtained from users by calling them, observations of process audit of files dealing with citizen applications and analysis of citizen services delivery portals of the authorities.

Recommendations:

4.25   Providing more sites and services to citizens

Since inception, the land acquired by the BDA for site formation and infrastructure development is about 37,000 acres. Formation of layouts is incomplete because of two reasons. Firstly, nearly 11,000 acres of land acquisition is under litigation. About 6400 cases are pending before various courts, of which around 1500 cases are pending before the Hon'ble High Court. Secondly, about 354 acres of granted land is the matter of dispute among grantees. Their phodi (sub-division) is not done, making it difficult to identify owners and their plots.

1. As regards the acquisition of lands under litigation, it was informed that many litigant land owners may be willing to close the cases and hand over the land if they are offered a suitable compensatory scheme. At present, the BDA is acquiring land as per a scheme wherein 60% of developed land is retained by BDA and the remaining 40% is given to the land owner. One acre has 43,560 sq ft area, of which developed land would be 55% or 23,958 sq.ft. Of this 40% i.e. 9,583 sq. ft of developed land is given to the land owner. If this scheme is retrospectively offered to the litigants, many would accept the offer and thousands of acres of land would become available for formation of sites. If such an offer was made, out of 11,000 acres under litigation, it was informed that BDA could expect about 5000 acres to become available. This proposal is recommended for consideration.

2. In order to resolve the issue of granted lands that are under dispute and phodi is not done, it is recommended that a committee be constituted under the chairmanship of a retired High Court Justice with retired Revenue department officers and a Police officer. The committee may examine all the relevant land records of the granted lands, the grant order, actual possession of land by the grantees, pending litigation etc. and give a fair hearing to the land grantees. Based on this, the Committee may give its report with recommendations regarding the ownership and area of all plots in these lands with a survey sketch. The BDA should obtain and give the committee satellite images of these lands taken on different dates relevant in the land acquisition process: dates of preliminary notification, final notification, award, taking possession and Gazette notification. These satellite images could be obtained from the Karnataka State Remote Sensing Applications Centre. The satellite images would help the Committee in preparing its report.

3. Land acquisition by BDA is a matter of many grievances, disputes and litigation. Precautions should be taken to gather enough information right at the beginning of the land acquisition process to avoid disputes in future. Therefore, for all ongoing land acquisition cases at various stages and for all new cases, it is recommended that satellite images be taken of the lands to be acquired as on the important dates of preliminary notification, final notification, award, taking possession, Gazette notification etc. For new cases drone imagery may be taken. These images will form valuable evidence for the BDA to be submitted to courts in land denotification petitions and resolving grievances.

4. BDA has taken a commendable step by starting a Land Audit using GIS technology in 2019. The audit will identify lands and sites owned by BDA and document them. It is recommended that the land audit be completed at the earliest.

5. The BDA has also started a Sites Audit on the lines of land audit to identify unallotted sites and land parcels in BDA layouts and BDA approved private layouts. This should be expedited. BDA should take possession of CA sites that have not yet been taken over in the BDA approved private layouts.

6. BDA approves the layout plans of private developers and House Building Cooperative Societies (HBCS). At the time of release of sites in these layouts for sale, relinquishment deeds are executed by the private developer or HBCS handing over CA sites, roads and parks in them to the BDA. Subsequently after development of the layout is completed, BDA hands over these roads, parks etc. to the BBMP/local bodies. This process may take as many as 10-12 years. In the meantime, the CA sites, roads and parks may get encroached upon or sometimes fraudulently sold to unsuspecting buyers. BDA takes some more time to clear the encroachments and hand them over to BBMP/local bodies. To cut short and simplify this process, it is recommended that relinquishment deeds of roads and parks in existing and in new private layouts approved by BDA may be executed by the private developers and HBCSs directly in favour of BBMP or to the local bodies, instead of to BDA.

7. Construction and operation of sewage treatment plants (STPs) is compulsory for approval to sell sites in private layouts. At present, the complete construction of a STP with the full planned capacity is insisted upon for obtaining completion certificate from the Pollution Control Board (PCB). But houses are constructed gradually, over a period of 10-15 years. By the time houses are constructed on all sites, the STP may have become non-functional because it has not been put to full use and maintained or outdated. The developer may not take responsibility to make it functional once again. Sometimes the old STP may have to be junked and a completely new one built. This is a waste of resources, natural and financial, at the societal and at individual levels. Keeping this in mind, it is suggested that the PCB should not insist on completion of the full capacity STP at the very beginning. It may allow modular or staggered construction of the STP based on the progress in construction of houses.

8. The BDA exercising powers under Sec 28 B (Levy of tax) and Sec 28 C (BDA deemed to be local authority for levy of tax) has been opening khatas and collecting property tax from the allottees in BDA layouts. This tax is used to maintain services in the layout. After the BDA layout is fully developed it is handed over to the BBMP. But the site allottees have to open khatas twice. They may also suffer because of lack of clarity as to which agency is responsible for maintenance and development. To remove doubts and bring in clarity, it is suggested that while development of the planned facilities should be done by the BDA because the development charges are collected with the site charge, the opening of khata, collection of property tax, giving building plan sanctions etc should be transferred to the BBMP/local bodies after allotment of sites. This will remove the dual control and confusion. Allottees would be spared the trouble of opening khata twice, once with BDA and then with BBMP/local bodies. BDA should be responsible for one-time development of facilities. It may collect maintenance charges from the allottees till the development works are completed. This is the case in private layouts where development and maintenance is done by the developer, while the khata is given by the BBMP/local bodies. It is informed that KERC has also directed that once the electricity lines are laid in the layout, they should be handed over to the Bescom for further maintenance by remitting 5% of the estimated cost of the work. Handing over to Bescom need not wait for other developments or site constructions to happen. This change would benefit BDA also by freeing it up for its core work of comprehensive development planning, development of layouts and provision of housing.

9. The following recommendation made in the case of BBMP is applicable to BDA also: As a step towards ease of living for citizens, instant online approval and sanction of residential building plan in sites upto and including 2400 sq.ft with two kitchens or less should be given. They may be based on the architects plan, engineers and owner's declaration and self-certification with payment of prescribed fee. Suitable declarations regarding adhering to the Town Planning rules, Zonal regulations and building bye-laws may be taken from the owner in the online application. An undertaking may also be

taken from the owner that she is personally responsible for any deviations from the rules, regulations and bye-laws and giving full authority to the BDA officials to demolish any deviation without giving notice. The owner should also declare that she is personally liable for all consequences if any incorrect or false information or documentation is given in the application. The architect and the engineer should also give an undertaking that they will supervise the construction to ensure that there is no deviation from the Town planning rules, zonal regulations and building bye laws. Such cases need not be processed and approved on file. The fees to be paid under various heads should be auto-calculated in the application software and an online payment link be given for payment online. As soon as the declaration, undertaking, self-certification is e signed by the applicant, architect and engineer and the required fees are paid, the sanction with the e-signature of the AEE/ADTP should be auto-generated. The need for separately applying for and taking commencement certificate and occupancy certificate for such buildings should also be dispensed with. The fees to be paid for commencement certificate and occupancy certificate may be collected along with the fees for building license at the application stage. This step will also free up BDA engineers time to pay more attention to bigger and non-residential buildings.

10. Allotment of alternate sites is required when the original site becomes unavailable for any reason. The original allottee is allotted an alternate site. There is a lot of discretion involved in this process, leading to allegations and litigation against the BDA. In the interest of transparency, it is recommended that the allotment of alternate sites be done through lottery and not on the basis of pick and choose by the allottee.

11. Based on an order dated 30/01/2015 issued by UDD, private layouts are required to provide 10% of the sites and apartments in private complexes as affordable units of 20*30 ft sites and 1BHK apartments for allotment to Economically Weaker Sections. This provision may be incorporated in the BDA Act. It may also be prescribed that allotment should be on the basis of lottery from among eligible applicants for these EWS units.

12. Section 13 (e) of the Zonal Regulations states that "Fresh permissions for development shall not be accorded in the valley zone". Similar provisions exist for buffer zones of lakes. These provisions may be applied prospectively and not retrospectively to sites allotted prior to the date of the regulations coming into force. A proviso may be added that this shall not apply to layouts and sites that were approved prior to coming into force of the relevant regulations.

13. In the interest of providing more space for housing in smaller sites, it is recommended that the Zonal Regulations be amended so that setback is not required in sites with 20*30 ft dimension and for sites of 30*40 ft the setback may be 2 feet on one side only.

14. Some important changes have been made in the Zoning Regulations under the Revised Master Plan 2015 for Bengaluru since they were issued by BDA in 2008. These changes are not incorporated and shown in the ZR document available on the BDA website. The Zoning Regulations 2015 should be updated to incorporate the important changes made after it was approved, re-printed and uploaded on the BDA website. It would also be useful to prepare a handbook clearly bringing out the specific provisions in the Zoning Regulations for easier understanding of the general public.

15. Allotment of sites on BDA land to slum dwellers is done as Slum Allotment at a subsidised price of 15% of the site registration value. But these are reportedly being registered as absolute sale deeds. There is thus every incentive for the allottee to sell the site instead of building a house on it. It is therefore suggested that these sites should be allotted on 15 years lease agreement and not on absolute sale deed.

4.26 Improving productivity and work conditions

16. More than 50% of posts in BDA are vacant since long. Permission may be given for direct recruitment of a critical number of Group B and C posts, especially posts like AEs/JEs, accounts staff and FDAs through KPSC.

17. Commissioner, BDA has been vested with many powers even in routine matters that occupy most of her time. She has little time left for more important and impactful work. In the interest of efficient functioning and better administration, it is advisable to delegate some of the Commissioners powers to other senior officers in BDA. It is recommended that the following powers vested with BDA Commissioner be delegated as proposed below:

     i.   All land acquisition matters - full powers may be delegated to the Deputy Commissioner (Land Acquisition).

     ii. All powers related to site matters and issues, unless they are policy related, may be delegated to the Secretary, BDA and certain powers to the Deputy Secretary, BDA.

     iii. Powers of sanctioning leave encashment, leave, medical reimbursement etc except pension sanction to Group A and B officers may be delegated to the Secretary.

     iv. Technical and administrative powers may be delegated to the various levels of engineers on the lines of delegation done by the BBMP.

     v.   Powers to approve payment for routine expenditure on items like utility bills, contingency, advertisement bills etc. upto Rs 1 lakh may be delegated to the Section heads. Finance Member may be given powers for payment upto Rs 10 lakhs.

     vi. Powers to amalgamate and bifurcate site in private layouts, including corner sites, may be delegated to the Town Planning Member.

18. The BDA Special Task Force is mandated to protect BDA properties from encroachment and give assistance to recover encroached properties. It should be strengthened by taking ex-servicemen on outsourcing basis to work alongside the policemen and officers.

19. The Planning section in BDA should have a GIS Cell tasked with updating the Master Plan on a day to day basis by incorporating new developments and details of approved changes of land use.

20. It has been separately recommended that BDA and BMRDA be merged and the merged authority work from the BDA office. In the merged entity atleast 50% of the Group A, B and C staff may be permanent staff of the BMRDA cum BDA. At present the permanent staff in BDA number only 9 among officers and about 60 among staff. These staff members are mostly recruited on compassionate appointment basis. Staff and officers may be directly recruited by KPSC to fill atleast 50% of the direct recruitment vacancies of JEs, AEs, Draughtsmen, Asst. Town Planners, Town Planners, Revenue Inspectors and FDAs. This will provide the much needed continuity and sense of ownership among the staff and improve quality of administration in BDA.

4.27 Improving revenues

21. Thousands of allotted house sites are kept vacant without building houses in BDA layouts, even decades after formation. While some may be kept vacant due to personal problems, there may be no strong reason for most of them not building houses. House loans are now available freely at low interest. Many owners of revenue sites build houses on them even when there are no infrastructural facilities whatsoever. On the other hand, BDA layouts have a minimum level of infrastructure. So lack of sufficient infrastructure may not be a valid reason for not building on vacant sites. Infrastructure developed in the layouts like water supply lines, sewage lines, drains, streetlights are unutilised or are stolen because very few site owners build houses. These infrastructure facilities have to be regularly redone at considerable cost to BDA. It is felt that many allottees may be keeping sites vacant considering it as an investment, giving better returns than bank deposits etc. As a result many needy houseless persons are deprived of housing. The BDA suffers due to repetitive expenditure needed to redo the infrastructure and loses income from building plan approvals etc. The economy suffers because of loss of investment in construction activity. BDA must initiate stringent action to ensure that the vacant sites are built up. The option of cancelling the allotment may not be feasible for various reasons. Therefore initially 5 years' time from the date of registration may be allowed for construction of houses. Every five years, the property tax may be increased. From the sixth year, it is recommended to levy two times the property tax on the vacant sites for the next five years. The property tax may be increased in the eleventh year to three times the property tax, in the sixteenth year to four times and so on. This may be levied till a building with an approved building plan has been constructed on the site.

This will ensure that more houses are constructed and the real objective of formation of layouts is achieved. The BDA may modify site allotment conditions and make suitable amendments in the BDA Act and Site Allotment Rules. In the case of older layouts handed over to BBMP also, the property tax for vacant sites in such layouts may be increased on the same lines.

22. If building construction is done in violation of approved plans, a provision has been made in the new BBMP Act 2020 vide Sec. 144(6) to levy two times property tax on the extent of violation till a final decision is taken. A similar provision may be made in the BDA Act for buildings built in violation of plans approved by BDA.

23. At present the BDA Act provides for auction of corner sites alone. But intermediate sites also appreciate in value. They may also be disposed of in auction to prevent undue gain to the new allottees. The BDA Act/rules may be amended to provide for auction of intermediate sites also.

4.28 Improving e-governance

24. In 2009, BDA got scanned about one crore pages of records of land acquisition, sites, layouts etc. About 7 TB data was digitised. Now it is informed that the scanned data is not recoverable from the media. It is necessary to internalise data management system in BDA to prevent such problems. A dedicated in-house IT cell headed by a Director, IT and 8-10 technical staff on the pattern of the IT Cell in BMTC may be established in the BDA office. It should be responsible for maintaining and modifying various IT applications like FMS, GIS, LAQ, CCMS and MIS.

25. It is recommended that existing software like E Office, E Aasthi, Integrated Financial Management System, Khata software and other software being used by BBMP and other ULBs be used with customisation in BDA. Applications like HRMS, Khajane 2, and E –Procurement developed by Government departments should also be fully used for efficient administration. It is not advisable to go in for development of new software for these purposes when existing systems are available and proven. With some customisation they may be used in BDA. Centre for Smart Governance (CSG) may be entrusted with the work of integrating existing applications, customising the applications available in Government and BBMP, developing new applications if they are not available elsewhere and modifying the existing ones. Attempting to entrust this work to a private vendor may be a long drawn out process (taking much more time than CSG if the time for procurement, litigation, development etc is taken into consideration) and going by past experience may not be very satisfactory. CSG has the advantage of being a Govt sponsored agency and therefore BDA can be assured of continued support on transparent terms.

26. An integrated software system should be developed by BDA for development schemes (layouts). It should encompass all stages starting from online receiving of applications for site allotment, online examination and allotment of sites, registration of lease cum sale deed, online generation of possession certificates, online opening of khatas or maintenance accounts of allottees and building plan sanction if the power is not handed over to BBMP. The space and time required for manually receiving and dumping lakhs of sets of records can be considerably reduced.

27. Many private layouts are being developed around Bengaluru. The approval of private layouts should be included as a Sakala service to be provided by BDA and BMRDA within a time limit. The process should be simplified to reduce the number of documents that are asked for, by using the existing databases of Government and BDA. An online application software system with online payment facility should be developed and used for this service.

28. The software system being used for auction of sites should be computerised end-to-end, for all stages of post-allotment work upto opening of khatas, to reduce routine workload. For instance, steps like sending intimation by email and SMS for payment of second instalment to successful bidders should be automated.

29. Revenue Officers in BDA should get information of any court stay/orders regarding any plot or site during opening and transfer of khata. The khata opening and transfer software system of BDA should be linked to the Court Case Monitoring System of the Government and a request may be made for providing API of Judicial Case monitoring system of the Hon HCK and lower courts.

30. Land acquisition and allotment records should be fully scanned to prevent loss of records or fraudulent insertion of pages in them. The records of private layouts approved by BDA should also be scanned and digitised. This will enable BDA to fight court cases effectively. The scanned files and records should be uploaded everyday onto the State Data Centre for security.

31. It is informed that there have been cases of creation of fake CDRs (correct dimension report) in order to sell BDA sites fraudulently. To prevent such frauds, BDA should stop issuing manual CDRs and should issue only electronic CDRs.

32. BDA should publish a service delivery charter outlining various services offered by it; the key nodal officers for these services, Sakala timelines and mode of delivery. Separate sections should be provided in the BDA portal with answers to FAQs pertaining to the service or BDA and for applicants to record their grievances with regard to the service application process or timelines.

33. The xerox documents submitted with the applications for various services have to be authenticated by fetching the details from different BDA sections. Therefore, records from the SLAO office, allotment section and E Janma portal may be integrated with the BDA citizen services applications.

34. The software should automatically select the correct division of BDA based on the pin code and location given in the application and send it to the relevant division directly.

35. Time limit may be fixed for payment of fee, so that applications for which payment is not made within the due date may be rejected.

36. Edit option should be provided to the applicant as well as to the officers to make corrections and to resubmit the application online; rejection and human errors can be rectified, without generation of a fresh application.

37. SMS should be sent to applicants at every stage of the application. Seva Sindhu and BDA service portal should maintain a movement log of the application.

4.29 Recommendations related to services provided by BDA

1.   Issue of Possession Certificate for sites allotted based on lease/ sale agreement executed

Introduction

Deputy Secretary (DS) in BDA is the designated officer to issue Possession Certificate (PC) for sites allotted based on lease/ sale agreement by BDA. The Sakala time limit for providing this service is 7 days.

Users Feedback

Called around 479 applicants to seek feedback from those who had applied for the service and the observations are as follows:

- Feedback captured from 170 calls; 208 calls were not connected, 40 calls found be wrong numbers, 31 called persons refused to give feedback, applicants were not available for 13 calls,9 applied through brokers and 8 calls were disconnected. Out of 170 applicants, 127 applied online, 37 applied in the offices, 6 applied through a third party.

- 19 applicants rated the experience as excellent, 125 as good, 18 as average and 8 as poor.

Users' suggestions

- Do not reject the application or again ask for documents when all the documents are submitted as per requirements

- Provide Help desk - for updating the citizens on their application status, helping to fill the forms.

- Provide proper justification for rejecting applications

Process Audit

File Movement: Applicant submission **->**DS -> Document verification by Case worker ->Superintendent verification ->DS (Approval/ Reject)

Observations:

i. Edit option is not given to applicants or officers; for corrections user needs to apply afresh; hence multiple applications are submitted by the same user.

ii. While applying for this service if applicant chooses the wrong division, there is no option to transfer it to the correct division hence the officials reject the application without refunding the fee.

iii. If an application is transferred to legal section, no message/communication is given by the legal cell about the status.

iv. Log details of the service are not maintained in Seva Sindhu portal.

v. All the processes are done physically; nothing is done online.

The recommendations arising from the Process Audit are given under the General Recommendations.

Recommendations

1. All the documents required for giving PC are either submitted by the applicant while applying for the site or are generated by BDA and available internally. There should be no need to apply for a PC because possession has to be given after execution of the lease/sale deed. A separate application for this purpose is redundant. The requirement of a separate application and submission of documents for obtaining PC for sites may be dispensed with. When the lease cum sale agreement has been prepared and kept ready, simultaneously the PC should also be prepared and kept ready. Immediately after the registration of the lease cum sale agreement (LCSA) in the Sub Registrars office, the original copy of the agreement should be taken from the allottee by the BDA officials and the Possession Certificate handed over to the allottee at the same time of registration. This will save the allottee the trouble of applying again and also reduce the workload on the BDA officials to process the application etc. It was informed that for some years around 2014-16, all three documents, lease cum sale agreement, PC and opening of khata were being done and given to the allottee on the same day. This is highly commendable. The same practice should be resumed for LCSA and PC, if khata is to be taken from BBMP. If khata has to be taken from BDA, all three documents should be issued on the same day to the allottee.

2. Suggestions made by users may be considered for appropriate action.

2. Opening of Khata of properties in BDA layouts and BDA approved private layouts not handed over to BBMP.

Introduction

Revenue Officer (RO) is the designated officer for the service. The Sakala time limit is 15 days.

Recommendations

1. Immediately after registration of lease cum sale agreement of a site in BDA layouts, the process should be automated to open BBMP Khata, using BBMP online service with BDA login. There is no need for BDA to open a Khata because in due course the layout and khatas have to be handed over to BBMP. This will save allottees the trouble of opening khatas twice, once with BDA and next with BBMP.

2. In private layouts approved by BDA also the BDA may not open khatas for the site allottees. The site allottees in such layouts should open khatas directly in BBMP/local body and further transactions like paying property tax, transfer of khata, building plan sanction should be done by the BBMP/Local body.

3. As soon as 100% of sites in a BDA approved private layout have been released, the BDA should send a proposal suo motu to Government to hand over the layout to BBMP/local body.

4. If khatas continue to be opened in BDA, the online application service for BBMP khata may be utilised by the BDA also. This will bring in uniformity of documents and make it easier to transfer the Khata to BBMP at a later stage.

5. Some of the documents to be submitted while applying for opening of khata, like sanction/approval of site or layout, map, release order, lease or purchase deed, proof of identity etc are either collected at the time of applying for the site or are issued by the BDA itself. They are available within BDA and should be shared internally. These documents should not be asked for once again. The list of documents sought should be reduced.

3. Transfer of Khata in cases of death of landowner, sale of property and gift deed.

Introduction

Revenue Officer (RO) is the designated officer for the service. The Sakala time limit is 30 days.

Process Audit

File Movement: Applicant submission **->**RO -> Revenue Inspector (RI) ->Put up -> Manager -> RO (Approval/ Reject) -> Fee payment by applicant -> RI -> Khata dispatch -> Delivery to applicant

Observation:

- The observations in the process audit done for these service files are the same as those for Issue of Possession Certificate. The recommendations are given under General Recommendations.

NeSDA Analysis

NeSDA analysis shows that 33 guidelines are not complied with. The scores in different parameters are shown below.

NeSDA Scores by Parameters
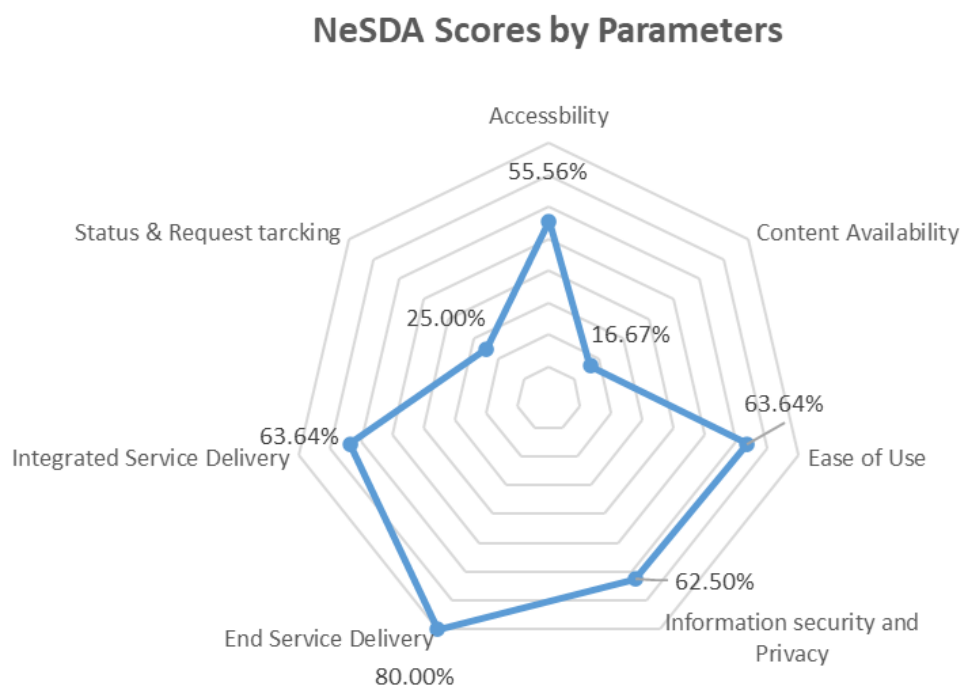
Recommendations

1. The need to obtain copies of sale deed, EC, GPA may be avoided if the registration software "Kaveri" is linked to the BDA khata software and the BDA Revenue officials are enabled to view and download the required documents from Kaveri. It will also help to verify the genuineness of the documents submitted.

2. The fee for transfer of khata should be auto-calculated on entering the relevant dimensions, location details by the software system itself. There should be no need for the Revenue Inspector to calculate the fee, get approval and intimate the applicant to pay the fees.

3. The applicant receives an error message while e-signing the application form, reading "Due to some technical error document is not signed properly, Please re-try". Hence they were unable to complete their application. This should be addressed in the service application form.

4. As per the NeSDA Analysis the following areas that require compliance may be complied with

Assessment Area	Areas for compliance
Accessibility	1) Publish a service delivery charter outlining various services offered by the department, key nodal officers for these services, Sakala timelines and mode of delivery (online/offline)
	2) Display promotional campaigns in the form of a banner or pop-up window on the department page to create more awareness on the e-services which that can be availed online
	3) Provide details of all channels (portal, mobile, Kiosk, others) that are available for users to apply for the service
	4) Include, on the home page, information about browser compatibility to ensure that users are utilizing the right browser required for optimal user experience
	5) Provide a "screen reader" option in the portal for aiding visually impaired users
	6) Ensure that the portal supports audio and video content for richer user experience
	7) Ensure GIGW compliance. In order to be compliant, the portal should be certified by Standardization Testing and Quality Certification Directorate (STQC), a Government of India body under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology. Upon certification, a CQW mark indicating this certification is to be provided on the home page
	8) Display useful statistics such as number of transactions on the home page to give confidence to the users on utilizing the portal
Content Availability	9) Provide a page with a snapshot of user feedback on the service and details of any action taken based on this feedback
	10) Provide a separate help section on the portal to address certain basic user queries pertaining to the portal and navigating the portal
	11) Provide a separate section for addressing FAQs pertaining to the service or department
	12) Include a sitemap feature on the portal to provide users with a bird's eye view of all the webpages and help them navigate to the right page
	13) Ensure that the content on the portal is updated every week and information such as a timestamp (last updated/modified date) is provided to assure users of the content's recency and relevance
	14) Display useful statistics such as number of users accessing the portal, services availed by them and average time spent to give confidence to the users on utilizing the portal
	15) Provide information on how users could leverage electronic/ digital signature facility for availing the services

Ease of Use	16) Optimize the portal for search engines so that users are able to find relevant pages of the portal within the top five search results
	17) Ensure that the proposed department webpage auto populates relevant content based on the user's recent activity / interest
	18) Publish an internal workflow describing the way in which the department processes all applications along with responsible individuals and timelines
	19) Provide a user manual with step-by-step instructions to guide users while applying for the service
Information security	20) Ensure that the portal is W3C compliant so that users get consistent web experience across different browsers
	21) Include a privacy policy on the portal so that users are able to understand the safeguards put in place to secure their personal information
	22) Engage a third-party to audit the website from information security standpoint and highlight this information on the home page to assure users of the portal's information security safeguards
End Service Delivery	23) Try and eliminate manual touchpoints in the service delivery process, as much as practically possible
Integrated Service Delivery	24) Try and eliminate manual touchpoints in the service delivery process, as much as practically possible
	25) Integrate service-specific content with data from dependent departments/data sources to ensure that relevant user information is auto-populated while submitting service applications
	26) Integrate service-specific content with data from dependent departments/data sources so that any relevant auto-calculations are done while submitting details online
	27) Integrate the portal with social media apps like Twitter, Facebook, etc.
Status and Request Tracking	28) Provide a separate section on the portal for applicants to record their grievances with regard to service application process or timelines
	29) Provide Ticket / Complaint No. for status tracking and future follow-ups
	30) Provide SMS and email alerts to alert applicants at each stage of their application process. For instance, after application submission, payment, etc.
	31) Provide users with feedback on their on the status of their complaints via SMS, email or phone calls
	32) Provide a helpline number/email id on the payments page for users to register and get resolved any issues they are facing while making payments
	33) Provide information regarding help desk, online support, call centre, grievance redressal processes for users on the webpage

4. Registration of Sale Deed.

Introduction

Documents required for this service are original lease cum sale deed, original possession certificate, updated EC, Aadhaar, photos etc.

Recommendation

1. If an allotted site is sold or transferred within the prescribed lease period, a penalty of 25% of the registered sale deed value or guidance value whichever is higher is collected for registering the sale deed. To serve as a stronger deterrent it is recommended that the penalty be fixed and collected at 50% of the value instead of 25%.

5. Building plan approval for sites and civic amenities (CA) sites for buildings up to 15-meter height and more than 15-meter height in BDA layouts and BDA approved private layouts not handed over to BBMP

Introduction

The concerned AEE is the designated officer for buildings in sites with dimension 30*40 sq. ft, EE for 40*60 sq. ft and Engineer Officer for above 50*80 sq.ft. The Sakala time limit is 30 days.

Recommendations

1. As a step towards ease of living for citizens and to free up the time of officials to monitor violations, it is recommended that there should be instant approval online for residential building plans in sites with dimensions upto and including 40*60 sq. ft. based on self-certification, undertakings given by the owner, architect, engineer and consultant. The same recommendation has been made for BBMP also. Details are given in the General Recommendations.

2. Power may be delegated to sanction building plans in sites above 40*60 sq. ft to 50*80 sq.ft area for buildings less than 15 metres in height, including commercial buildings, to Executive Engineer and in sites above 50*80 sq.ft area and buildings above 15 metres height to Engineering Officer.

3. An option may be included in the application to apply for premium Floor Area Ratio (FAR) and add Transferable Development Rights (TDR), if the applicant wishes to construct a building with more built up area than that allowed under the prescribed FAR.

4. The Aadhaar linked mobile number of both the applicant and his authorized person must be taken while applying online. There should be a common online platform for this purpose, used by all sections of BDA, to make application transfer and processing among sections easier. Every officer responsible for this service should have access to view the status of the file.

5. A time limit should be fixed for payment of fee. If fee payment is pending, the application should be taken as pending with the applicant instead of with the officials. The application should be automatically rejected if payment is not made within the given time.

6. Most owners do not apply for and obtain commencement certificate (CC) and OC because of the trouble involved in submitting many documents and following it up. The BDA loses the revenue it would have collected for the certificates. As a step towards better compliance, it is recommended that the fees for commencement certificate and occupancy certificate should be collected at the beginning i.e. at the time of application for plan sanction itself.

7. BDA should use the same building plan approval software system as BBMP for approving building plans outside BBMP areas also in the interest of making it better understood by citizens. The BDA may use the BBMP software with suitable modifications.

8. Auto DCR (Development Control Regulation) software used by the BBMP may be used by the BDA also. If BDA, BBMP and BMRDA use common online software and ask for the same documents, within the limits of BBMP, it would be easier for citizens. Officials could more easily monitor violations of building plans. The existing software being used by BDA and BMRDA may be entrusted to Centre for Smart Governance to modify it on the lines of BBMP software.

9. All the 15 odd documents received from the applicants may be verified and saved in the BDA database. Access may be given to users of different wings within the BDA office who need to see the same documents for providing other services.

10. Immediately after sanction, the plan sanction order must be pushed automatically to the jurisdictional AE and sub division AEE logins and intimation sent to their mobile numbers by suitably modifying the software. This will enable them to supervise the foundation laying and nip plan violations in the bud.

6. To obtain Commencement Certificate for beginning of construction work where building plans are approved

Introduction

Engineer Officer is the designated officer to issue commencement certificate (CC) for building works. The Sakala time limit is 12 days.

Recommendations

1. BDA should use BBMP building license approval software and extend it with additional modules to issue CC and occupancy certificate (OC). This will reduce the applicant's burden in submitting the same set of documents three times.

2. The engineers and architects plan are submitted while applying for plan sanction. There is no need to ask for them once again for obtaining CC. The documents submitted initially may be auto populated in the application from the BDAs database.

3. Power to issue CC may be delegated to plan sanctioning authority.

4. Under the building byelaws the copy of the approved site plan showing the building elevation and the setbacks allowed should be displayed at the site for public information. This is generally not done nor enforced. Therefore the Planning section should upload the building elevation (showing the number of floors) and site setbacks on the BDA portal for information in the public domain. This will enable neighbours and citizens to verify and report if building plan violations occur to the concerned officers.

5. As per Appendix-IX, site inspection and submission of site inspection report by empanelled engineers/architects is made compulsory. If the number of building constructions to be checked in BDA is large and engineers do not have the time to check all buildings, BDA may consider empanelling third party engineers/architects and send them for inspection. Their inspection fees may be collected from the owners at the time of building plan sanction.

6. The status of the application may be communicated by SMS at each stage to the applicant's mobile number.

7. The building license, CC and OC software system should be linked to the property tax system, so that details of the latest tax paid and arrears of the applicant's property are visible to him and to the official processing the application. There should be no need to ask for property tax paid receipt and khata extract if this is done.

7. Issue of Commencement Certificate (CC) for land where change of land use is already approved under Sec.14(A)(3) of KTCP Act-1961

Introduction

Joint Director, Town Planning is the designated officer for the service. The Sakala time limit is 30 days.

Recommendation

1. The recommendations made regarding "issue of CC for beginning construction work where building plan is approved" are also applicable for this service and may be implemented.

8. Issue of Occupancy Certificate/Habitable Certificate for buildings after completion

Introduction

As per the provisions of KMC Act and Building bye-laws, Occupancy Certificate (OC) has to be obtained by owners of newly constructed buildings to ensure that construction is as per the approved plan. The Engineering Officers are the designated officers for this service. The Sakala time limit is 12 days.

Recommendations

1. Recommendations given relating to the services of Building plan approval and Commencement Certificate are also applicable to this service. They may be considered and implemented as applicable.

2. Power to issue OC for all residential buildings in sites with dimensions up to 60X40 sq. ft is presently delegated to Executive Engineer. Power to issue OC to buildings in sites with dimensions less than 60X40 sq.ft including commercial may be further delegated to the jurisdiction AEE. EE may be delegated power to issue OC for buildings upto 15 metres height, including commercial buildings. For buildings with more than 15 metres height the power may remain with EM.

9.   Sending information to Revenue Dept in land conversion cases

Introduction

Assistant Director, Town Planning is the designated officer to send information. The Sakala time limit for providing this service is 7 days.

Recommendations

1.   This is a government to government service. It may be removed from the Sakala list of services.

2.   For conversion of agricultural land to non-agricultural purpose, the Revenue Department has implemented an affidavit based land conversion system for conversion to land use as marked in the Master Plan. In this module applicants can directly file their application online. Logins may be given to BBMP, ULBs, UDAs, BDA, BMRDA, KIADB and Commerce and Industries department to view the status of land conversion and also to down load conversion orders after completion of the process.

10.   Approval for change of land use in BDA limits

Introduction

As per Sec.14 (a) of KTCP Act, Government permission is required for change of land use. Town Planning Member is the designated officer for the service. The applicant is required to submit application with about 25 documents. The Sakala time limit for providing this service is 120 days.

Recommendations

1.   The applicant needs to submit about 25 documents for change of land use. The FGD suggested dropping some documents as not required. These include documents issued by BDA itself and available with it, Sec 79 (A) and (B) certificate, village map, RTC and consolidation of affidavits to be submitted as self-declarations in the application form, etc. Accordingly, it is recommended to reduce the number of documents sought and simplify the application format.

2.   An online system may be developed for this service to submit application along with the required documents and for payment of fee online.

3.   The online portal so developed may be integrated with the portals of Survey Dept, Revenue department, NHAI, PWD, KSPCB, ASI and Forest Dept. and role-based logins may be given to the different departments. After an application is submitted all relevant departments may sign-in to the portal and submit their opinion online regarding   change of land use. This will save the applicant the trouble of visiting the concerned offices along with separate sets of documents.

4.   To help the concerned agencies to verify and give their opinion, a detailed survey sketch showing all details like public road, HT line, kharab land, presence of nala, trees, catchment area etc. may be appended to the online application.

BANGALORE METROPOLITAN REGION DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (BMRDA)

Introduction

The Bengaluru Metropolitan Region Development Authority (BMRDA) was constituted on 01-02-1986 under the Bengaluru Metropolitan Region Development Authority Act 1985, for planning, coordinating and supervising including planned development of the areas within Bengaluru Metropolitan Region (BMR). BMR comprises Bengaluru Urban, Bengaluru Rural & Ramanagara districts. The total area of BMR is about 8005 sq km. Within the BMR the following authorities are constituted for the respective local planning areas:

Bangalore Development Authority (BDA), Ramanagara Urban Development Authority, Bangalore International Airport Area Planning Authority and Planning Authorities in Anekal, Hoskote, Kanakapura, Magadi, Nelamangala, Channapattana, Doddaballapura, Greater Bangalore Bidadi Smart City Planning Authority and Satellite Town Ring Road (STRR) Planning Authority,

The functions of the Planning Authorities are to plan for orderly development and control in development of land uses under the Karnataka Town & Country Planning Act, 1961.

The Revised Structure Plan - 2031 was approved by Government on 08-05-2017. The Planning Authorities / Urban Development Authorities prepare/revise the Master Plan for the respective local Planning area under the provisions of the KTCP Act 1961 by incorporating the proposals of the Structure Plan.

4.30 General Recommendations

1.   LPAs under BMRDA have a fund of more than Rs 275 cr. reserved for land acquisition. Very little of this is being used. The Karnataka Planning Authorities (Amendment) Rules, 2020 notified on 25/02/2020 amended Rule 37A to provide for reserving 1/3rd each of the collected funds for land acquisition for public purposes, for administration and for town planning schemes. In practice, there is very little progress on town planning schemes and the actual expenditure on administration is less than the reserved amount. Thus the large unspent balance. It is therefore recommended that the above Rules be amended to insert a proviso that any shortfall in expenditure on town planning schemes and on administration should be utilised for the purpose of land acquisition of lands reserved for parks, roads and open spaces as per the Master Plan. Acquisition of land for major roads may be the first priority and land acquisition for parks, playgrounds and open spaces could be the second priority.

2. Rule 37A referred to above may be amended to reduce the proportion of funds allocated for administration and for town planning schemes and to increase the proportion of funds allocated for land acquisition for roads, parks, playgrounds and open spaces. About 15 % may be reserved for administration, 15% for Town Planning Schemes and the remaining 70% for land acquisition.

3. In order to facilitate land acquisition for the purposes of developing roads, parks and playgrounds it is recommended that the KAS officers working in BMRDA may be notified as Special Land Acquisition Officers (SLAO) in BMRDA area. Outside BMRDA area, Commissioners of UDAs who are KAS officers may also be notified as SLAOs to enable them to acquire land for roads etc in their jurisdiction.

4. STRR Planning Authority has issued work order for preparation of STRR Master Plan to M/s WAPCOS in 2018. The Master Plan is not yet submitted by WAPCOS. This may be followed up and got done expeditiously.

5. BMRDA has issued more than 5900 NOCs for conversion of agricultural land for non -agricultural purpose. Circular/order may be issued by UDD informing the Revenue Department that obtaining NOC from BMRDA is not necessary for conversion to land uses that are the same as marked in the Master Plans. Hence issue of NOC by the BMRDA for conversion of agricultural land to non-agricultural purpose may be dispensed with. The Deputy Commissioners and Assistant Commissioners of Revenue department may be given copies of the Master Plan and maps with individual survey numbers to guide them in examining the land conversion applications.

6. Issue of copies of plans, maps, layout plans, reports etc. are not notified as Sakala services. They may be notified as Sakala services.

7. BMRDA and LPAs should adopt E Office and send their correspondence to BMRDA or to Government through E Office only. They should also adopt HRMS for personnel management.

8. Cheques and DDs are being received in BMRDA and LPAs. This may be stopped and online payment system introduced and made mandatory. This will help in easier accounting and reduce the possibility of frauds.

9. Giving Commencement Certificates and Occupancy Certificates for buildings in BMRDA area should be notified as Sakala services and time limits fixed.

4.31 Recommendations related to service provided by BMRDA

1. Approval for change of land use in BMRDA limits

Introduction

Sec.14 (A) of KTCP Act provides for changing land use category as marked in the Master Plan to another category of land use. The proposal for change of land use received from concerned Planning Authorities is scrutinized and forwarded to the government for approval by BMRDA. The Member Secretaries of the concerned Planning Authorities are the designated officers. The Sakala time limit for providing this service is 120 days.

Recommendations

1. At present there is no online software system for change of land use in BDA, BMRDA and Town Planning. A common online system may be expeditiously developed for use of BDA, BMRDA, LPAs and Town Planning department. Provision may be made in the software for automatic calculation of fee and online payment of fee.

2. The applicant needs to submit about 25 documents for change of land use. After interaction with the Group it was felt that there is scope to drop 10 documents that are not required. These include Sec 79 (A) and (B) certificate, village map, RTC, consolidation of four affidavits to be submitted as a single affidavit or as self-declarations in the application form, etc. Accordingly, it is recommended to reduce the number of documents sought and simplify the application format.

3. Provision should be made in the online software to certify, and upload attested documents. The E-Governance department has developed an app for e-authentication of documents; Government of India has also developed e-SANAD for attestation of documents. These apps may be integrated with the software.

4. The online portal so developed may be integrated with portals of Survey Dept, Revenue department, KIADB, NHAI, PWD, KSPCB, ASI and Forest Dept. and role-based logins may be given to the different departments. After an application is submitted all relevant departments may sign-in to the portal and submit their opinion online regarding change of land use. This will save the applicant the trouble of visiting the concerned offices along with another set of documents.

BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD (BWSSB)

4.32 General Recommendations

1. BWSSB has not raised its tariff rates and pro rata charges for many years, while costs keep rising. This is financially unsustainable for BWSSB. BWSSB Act may be amended to give authority to the BWSSB to raise tariffs and pro-rata charges at the rate of 3% every year on a specified date, say on 1st October, to partially offset inflation and rising costs of electricity, salaries and other inputs.

2. It was informed that though rules for installing Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) in apartments with more than 20 flats or 2000 sq. metres area were notified in 2016, some such apartment complexes have not installed STPs for lack of space. Many of them are illegally letting out sewage into BWSSB sewers or into BBMP drains or into open areas causing stagnation of sewage water, breeding of mosquitoes and causing inconvenience to neighbouring residents. In recent years, provision of STPs has been made a requirement for approval of building plan and therefore the scope for not constructing STPs is very little now. But in the interregnum between 2016 and 2020 some apartment complexes have not installed STPs. It was suggested that a one-time opportunity may be given for such apartment complexes containing 20 to 50 flats and with built up area of less than 5000 sq.mt constructed between 2016 and 2020 to get sewage connection by imposing a suitable penalty. They could be charged three times the normal sanitary cess as penalty and deterrent against future violations.

3. BWSSB has adopted many aspects of E Governance in its working. It should adopt E Office at all levels, from Section Office to Head Office, for all correspondence and proposals.

4. The following services may be added as Sakala services
    i.   Conversion from domestic to commercial and vice versa
    ii. Reconnection of disconnected service
    At present both services are dealt with offline in BWSSB. Online application systems may be developed for both services and offline processing may be discontinued. The Sakala time limit for each service may be fixed at 14 days.

5. BWSSB may be given permission to recruit for filling up vacant posts of critical last mile functionaries for better delivery of services.

4.33 Recommendations related to services provided by the BWSSB

1. Addressing complaints on water supply to households.

Introduction

Assistant Executive Engineer (AEE) is the designated officer for this service. Complaints may be made to AEE office. The Sakala time limit is 3 days.

Recommendation

1. Kaveri water is supplied at odd hours and in varying intervals of days. Householders face anxious moments waiting for the water supply. Users have given a suggestion that alerts should be sent to residents about the time and date of water supply. Mobile numbers of residents are mostly available with BWSSB. They can be sent bulk SMS about the next date and time of supply, barring unforeseen circumstances. Ordinarily, supply should be done at the intimated time. Caveats may be introduced to take care of unforeseen circumstances and to protect the Board from any liability. This will be most useful to all householders. The monthly cost of bulk SMSs to be borne by BWSSB can be recovered from users by adding it as a fixed fee in all monthly water supply bills.

2. Clearing of blockage of underground drainage pipelines and replacement of damaged/missing manhole cover.

Introduction

AEE is the designated officer for this service. There is no application fee for the service. Complaint may be made with address and mobile phone number, location through Jalanidhi portal. The Sakala time limit is 3 days.

Recommendations

1. Many householders knowingly or unknowingly connect the roof rainwater harvesting pipes to underground sewerage lines. During heavy rains, this rain water flows into sewers that are not designed to cope with such heavy flow. The result is overflow of sewage mixed with rain water from manholes onto the roads and into houses creating an unhealthy mess. For stopping this, it is recommended that intimation letters be sent to all owners with BWSSB connections to forthwith disconnect rainwater pipes connected to sewerage pipes, if they have made it. The intimation letter should inform them that a heavy penalty equal to double the water bill charges would be levied till it is disconnected in addition to charging them double the cost of disconnection done by BWSSB, if they do not disconnect within a prescribed time limit. Before the start of the monsoon season,

BWSSB may itself take up a drive to disconnect the rainwater pipes linked to the sewerage pipes. The owners may be charged double the cost of disconnection incurred by BWSSB, if they have not themselves disconnected the lines. Necessary amendments may be made by BWSSB to the regulations/rules for this purpose. Plumbers should also be given an orientation giving strict instructions not to connect rain water pipes to sewerage lines and on disconnecting them if already done.

2. The cost of installing, operating, maintaining and upgrading sewage treatment plants is a big item of expenditure for the BWSSB. Now sufficient capacity has been created to treat most of the water supplied in Bengaluru city and most of the sewage is being treated. Conveyance pipes have to be laid to bring the sewage to STPs. The STPs have to be run with huge expenditure on electricity, chemicals, staff, quality testing. They have to be upgraded to comply with new PCB norms. All this is a huge burden for the BWSSB. The BWSSB is presently collecting 25% of the water supply bill as Sanitary Cess towards sewage treatment charges. Around 80% of the water supplied is let out as sewage that has to be treated. The cost incurred by BWSSB is nearly 100% of the water supply charges. For financial sustainability, the BWSSB should be able to meet the actual charge of sewage treatment. It is therefore recommended that that sanitary cess be increased to 80%. This would enable BWSSB to cover a higher percentage of its sewage treatment costs.

3. Sewerage lines of BWSSB and road side drainages of BBMP should be cleared of silt and garbage before the start of the rainy season. Areas where blockages and overflows occur should be targeted first.

3. New Connections/Additional Connections for Water Supply and UGD for Residential Buildings / Multi Storied Buildings

Introduction

AEE is the designated officer for this service. Applicant may submit application through Jalanidhi portal. The Sakala time limit for providing this service is 14 days for new and additional connections for residential buildings and 42 days for multistoried buildings.

Users Feedback

Called around 40 applicants to seek feedback from those who had applied for multi-storied building connections and the observations are as follows:

Out of 40 calls, feedback was captured from 9 calls; 20 calls were not connected, 3 found to be wrong numbers, 1 call was disconnected, users did not respond to 3 calls, 4 users refused to give feedback. 5 users applied online, 4 applied through third party agents. All users rated the experience as good.

Users Suggestions:

- Action should be taken to remove the role of brokers who wait outside the office to charge more amount to fill the application.

Permission for new connection/additional connection for water supply and underground drainage for residential buildings excluding apartments

Called around 74 applicants to seek feedback from those who had applied for residential building connections & the observations are as follows:

Out of 74 calls, feedback was captured from 23 calls; 30 calls were not connected, 7 found to be wrong numbers, 2 applicants asked to call back, one applicant was not available, applicants did not respond to 2 calls, 9 refused to give feedback.4 applicants applied online, 10 applied through third party agents and 9 applied at office. One applicant rated the experience as excellent; 16 as good and 6 as average.

Users Suggestions: -

i. Alert notification or information should be given to users on the time of water supply on a daily basis.

ii. Action should be taken to plug leakages in water supply pipelines in areas where the water supplied looks muddy.

Recommendations

1. BWSSB should send SMSs at the end of every month indicating the arrears, interest and current month demand with the last date for payment without interest.

2. Issue of building license software by the BBMP must be linked with the BWSSB system 'Jala-dhare', so that the application process and documentation is simplified and BWSSB can start the process of giving new connection after completion of the building.

3. The fee for new connection was last revised in 2016. It may be revised in line with the increase in inflation index in the last 5 years.

4. Verification and replacement of faulty meters.

Introductions

The applicant needs to submit a copy of the water bill along with application to the AEE, who is the designated authority. Sakala time limit is 8 days.

Recommendations

1. There are two separate services, one for verification of faulty meters and the other for replacement of faulty meters; both can be clubbed into a single service. At present, if on verification, the meter is found to be faulty, the applicant has to apply once again for its replacement. By merging the two services, if an applicant applies, first the meter can be verified and if there is any fault it may be replaced.

2. The fee of Rs 200 and Rs 500 for different meter sizes was last revised in 2013. It may be doubled.

5. Issue of NOC regarding non-availability of BWSSB/Kaveri water and permission for new borewell in BBMP jurisdiction

Introduction

There are two separate services (1) Issue of NOC regarding non-availability of BWSSB/Kaveri water supply (2) Permission for new borewell in BBMP jurisdiction. AEE is the designated officer to issue NOC regarding non availability of BWSSB/Kaveri water. The Sakala time limit is 10 days.

Member Secretary/DCE/EE of the BWSSB, Senior Geologist of Groundwater Directorate is the designated officer to issue permission for borewell in BBMP jurisdiction. The Sakala time limit is 60 days.

Recommendations

1. An applicant usually/only applies for NOC with the purpose of getting borewell permission. The two services of NOC of non-availability of BWSSB/Kaveri water and issue of permission for drilling of new borewell may be clubbed into one service.

2. The fee for NOC is Rs 500 and for borewell permission it is Rs 500. The combined fee of Rs. 1000 may be doubled to Rs. 2000 for the merged service.

3. It was informed that there are many cases where borewells are dug without obtaining prior permission. At present, there is no provision to give them post facto permission, and therefore they continue to be used without any permission. In such cases, it is recommended that a penalty clause be adopted to give post facto permission to such borewells by collecting a suitable deterrent penalty amount of say Rs 50,000 as against the normal fee of Rs 3000 to Rs 5000.

4. The Sakala time required for both the services is 70 days. If they are merged, the Sakala time limit may be reduced to 60 days.

ENERGY DEPARTMENT

ENERGY DEPARTMENT

The Energy department oversees the functions of generation, transmission and distribution of electricity and renewable energy in the State including its regulatory aspect. The following agencies are under the purview of the department:

1. The Karnataka Power Corporation Limited (KPCL), the mainstay of power generation in the State through its hydro, thermal and renewable energy stations.

2. Karnataka Power Transmission Corporation Limited (KPTCL) for carrying out transmission and distribution functions

3. Electricity Supply companies of Bengaluru Electricity Supply Company Limited (BESCOM), Mangalore Electricity Supply Company Limited (MESCOM), Hubli Electricity Supply Company Limited (HESCOM), Gulbarga Electricity Supply Company Limited (GESCOM) Chamundeshwari Electricity Supply Corporation Limited (CESCOM).

4. Power Company of Karnataka Limited (PCKL) to supplement the efforts of KPCL in generation capacity by way of setting up new power projects through bidding process and long term procurement of power

5. Karnataka Renewable Energy Development Limited (KREDL) for promoting renewable energy and energy conservation in the State.

The Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission (KERC) is the regulatory body for the sector.

As on 31-03-2021, the state has a total installed capacity of 30,004 MW distributed to 287 lakh consumers consuming 57,969 million units. The average power purchase cost is Rs.5.09 per unit, supplied at Rs.7.81 per unit. The annual revenue demand is Rs.42,334 crore.

Out of the total installed capacity of 30,004 MW, hydro/thermal is 8697 MW, renewable energy is 15261 MW, Central Generating Stations (CGS) contribute 4966 MW and Independent Power Producers 1080 MW.

The total outstanding dues from the BBMP/BWSSB/ULBs/PRIs and other Government agencies is about Rs.6300 crore of which dues from PRIs alone is about Rs.4000 cores.

Recommendations

These recommendations are based on the focus group discussions, the user feedback, process audit of files, National E-Governance Service Delivery Assessment (Nesda) assessment and visits by the Karnataka Administrative Reforms Commission 2 Chairman and Advisor to offices of Escoms in Raichur, Chamarajanagar, and Chikkaballapur districts and discussions with senior officers of the Escoms and Electrical Inspectorate.

Focus Group Discussion

Focus Group Discussions were held on 02.07.2021 and on 05.07.2021 with officers and staff of the Escoms and Electrical Inspectorate (EI). The Groups gave their recommendations on the changes/improvements to be made. This was presented and discussed among all participants and further suggestions came from the rest of the participants. A second meeting to discuss the draft recommendations was held on 30.11.2021 with selected officers and staff of EI and Escoms in Bengaluru.

General Recommendations for ESCOMs

5.1   Rationalisation of services

1.   About Rs.4000 crore is outstanding as electricity dues from GPs to the 5 Electricity Supply Companies (ESCOMS). These accrued dues are for water supply and streetlights. The Commission and its staff visited 3 Gram Panchayats in Chikkaballapur district. Based on the visits, discussions held with KERC, ESCOMs and field level officers of ULBs/GPs and considering the alarming situation a separate note with recommendations is given on Gram Panchayat electricity bills and arrears.

2.   The Government of Karnataka is supplying subsidised electricity for irrigation pumpsets of capacity up to 10 HP. There are about 30,64,600 IP sets in the state consuming about 21,500 million units, constituting 37% of the total electricity consumption in the State. The subsidy demand for these IP sets is about Rs. 12,300 crore per annum. The existing Government order implies that meters are to be fixed on all IP sets with capacity more than 10 HP and they are to be billed. It is reported in the field that mostly no meters are installed and no billing is done on such IP sets. Metering is done only in some districts like Udupi, Shivamogga and Kodagu. It was also reported that bills are not generated in case of individuals IP sets of higher than 10 HP capacity. The Government order dated 04/09/2008 also states that the subsidy is not applicable to Income tax and professional tax payees, State and Central Government employees and employees of State and Central boards, corporations, Universities, aided institutions. With the Kutumba database of all agricultural families in place it would be easy to identify such ineligible IP set users and remove them from the subsidised IP set owners beneficiaries list. It is recommended to integrate the IP set owner data with Kutumba database. Escoms may install meters and bill the pumpsets with more than 10 HP capacity in accordance with the existing Government order.

3. New IP set applications should ask for Aadhaar number with Bhoomi details and RD number. Aadhaar number can be obtained for IP sets by issuing a suitable Government notification, because Government benefit of subsidised electricity is provided to IP sets. The Escoms should also complete the exercise of collecting the latest names and Aadhaar numbers of all existing IP set owners also. This should be linked to Kutumba ID database. This will give a complete user database and help to identify SC and ST beneficiaries for the purpose of giving data of SCP and TSP fund utilisation.

4. Certain State Governments like Punjab and Telangana have introduced schemes to encourage IP set owners to voluntarily fix automated electricity meters to their pumpsets. They are allotted certain units and if they show savings in consumption they are paid an incentive for each unit saved. They are not charged if they consume more units. This incentive can be lower than the average cost of power supply. The automated meter uses GPS technology to store and relay pump usage data to the Escom for energy accounting and calculation of savings and incentives. The incentive is directly paid into the bank accounts of the pumpset owners. The scheme would result in more rational extraction of groundwater and savings in consumption of subsidised electricity. Karnataka can consider introducing the scheme with suitable features for IP sets below 10 HP.

5. It is reported that though the actual cost of energisation of borewells under Ganga Kalyana scheme is about Rs 1.50 lakhs to Rs. 3.5 lakh, only Rs.50000 is being paid by the Social Welfare and Backward Classes Welfare departments. Action may be initiated to reimburse the actual cost of energisation or to increase the lumpsum amount.

6. There is a disparity in the charges collected from Ganga Kalyana (GK) beneficiaries and from non-GK beneficiaries towards cost of energisation where new infrastructure has to be provided. The rates for non-GK beneficiaries is Rs 10,000 fixed in 2011. This may be raised to Rs 50,000 or actual cost of infrastructure, whichever is higher, on par with GK beneficiaries.

5.2 Ease of delivery of services to citizens

7. The power sanction process of Escoms should be simplified. Now depending on the type, applications move from Section Officer to AEE, EE, SE and in some cases to CE. Escoms have an interest in on-boarding new customers since the State is energy surplus now. They should take action to reduce delays in providing connections, especially to high-tariff paying commercial and industrial customers. Applications need not go through so many levels leading to months of delays. Since feeder capacity and existing load information is available to see by all higher officers on computers, there may be no need for moving files through the entire hierarchy to take a decision. Just as in the Secretariat, there is a need to restrict the levels of movement of any file, so also in the Escoms. Instead of applications being moved through all levels of the hierarchy, it is recommended to restrict the number of levels before final decision to two or maximum three by suitable delegation of powers and/or level jumping.

8. As part of Ease of Doing Business requirement of the World Bank, Bescom has simplified and fast-tracked its procedure for certain new connections. The same simplification and fast track procedure should be adopted by other Escoms also. The software systems of Escoms and Municipalities/GPs should be suitably integrated to provide a common platform to consumers.

9. Industrial HT consumers are among the highest tariff category of consumers for ESCOMs and contribute significantly to both revenues and cash flows of ESCOMs. Applicants for HT connections should be given quick and personalised service to clear their applications in the most efficient and timely manner with least trouble to them. Currently, the sanction process for new HT connections involves about 22 steps and needs close coordination with other agencies like KPTCL, Electrical Inspectorate and BBMP. Any applicant would find the process onerous and time-consuming. Such HT applicants have to interact with the local BESCOM offices and visit it multiple times which may be frustrating and may not be a good experience. The following recommendations are made to give fast service and personal attention to new Industrial, commercial and large apartment complex HT connection applicants.

    i.   Set up an institutionalised HT Cell at the Escom corporate office for receiving and following up all applications for new HT connections for 2,000 KVA and above. Once such an application is given, the HT Cell should interface with the concerned local Escom division / sub-division to provide hassle-free and speedy connection. The Cell should relieve the applicant from the burden of having to visit the local Escom office multiple times and deal with many offices. Appropriate orders for delegation of powers may be issued to facilitate this process.

    ii. BESCOM and probably other Escoms currently uses N-soft software for processing new sanctions. The software should escalate applications that are delayed beyond the Sakala time limit to the MD Escom for her to intervene and resolve pending issues for quick sanction.

    iii. A monthly review of all exception cases by the MD of Escoms.

10. About 75% to 80% of new connections are for less than 5 KW. Power sanction procedure may be simplified for such connections. Authority to sanction power up to 5 KW may be delegated to the concerned Section officers. These installations may not require electrical supervisor, wireman NOC, test report and service diagram and they can be dispensed with.

11. In case of new connections for less than 7.5 KW, wiring diagram from the contractors is not insisted upon in Bescom. It is recommended that going further, applicants for new connections, name change, tariff change, amalgamation, bifurcation of RR numbers for less than 20 KW need not apply through licensed contractors. The Electrical Inspectorate may make suitable changes in its orders to facilitate this. This step towards ease of living may be extended to all the ESCOMs. A suitable checklist regarding safety measures taken may be prescribed to be filled in by the customer and submitted with the Completion Report. This step will considerably reduce delays and cost to the customer and reduce workload of the Escom staff.

12. Services like Change of tariff, Change of KW should not require a fresh agreement. Only a wiring diagram may be necessary. Suitable amendments may be made in the supply conditions.

13. BESCOM has introduced Fast-track procedure for certain new connections. One of the documents to be submitted for this fast-track application is an agreement on stamp paper as prescribed by KERC. It is learnt that applicants face problem due to non-availability of stamp paper. It is suggested that instead of taking the agreement on a stamp paper, a self-declaration may be taken. Alternatively, Bescom should tie up with Stamps and Registration department to provide E Stamp paper if payment is made on the online application itself. The software can transfer/remit the amount paid for the E stamp paper to the Stamps and Registration dept.

5.3 Improving productivity and working conditions

14. For attracting new customers and giving them faster service, Escoms should delegate greater powers of technical and administrative sanction to AEEs and EEs. The best practices in delegating more power to lower level officers and staff that are followed in Bescom or any other Escom may be adopted by other Escoms also. This will also reduce the overall workload.

15. Bescom has delegated powers for sanctioning estimates costing up to Rs.10 lakh to EE and Rs.5 lakh to AEE. In Escoms, other than Bescom, also the power to sanction estimates costing up to Rs.10 lakh for execution of service mains and other infrastructure works for layouts, multi storied buildings and HT installations can be delegated to EE and the power to sanction estimates costing upto Rs.5 lakh to AEE.

16. In addition to the above, the power to sanction service and service infrastructure up to 1000 KVA can be delegated to EEs and upto 250 KVA to AEEs in the interest in efficiency.

17. The workload norms were determined in the ESCOMs in 1978. Now there is a steep increase in the power consumption and also in the number of installations. The dedicated staff allocated for installation of new connections, billing and maintenance need to be revised based on the new technologies in use and the workload/distribution load. Hence it is recommended to revise the workload norms considering the use of technology and after doing process re-engineering in all the ESCOMs and to re-allocate/redeploy the available staff based on the requirements without increasing the total salary cost. The number of billing staff may be reduced to offset an increase in maintenance staff posts without increasing the overall salary outgo.

5.4 Improving e delivery of services

18. Though there is an online application system for the Ganga Kalyana scheme, it is not functional and not linked with the ESCOMs energisation software. Old software is being used for Ganga Kalyana Scheme in some places. A recommendation has been made elsewhere in the report to develop common Ganga Kalyana scheme software to cover the entire process from submission of applications to commissioning. It should cover all Nigamas and Escoms. It should have provision for data entry by Nigamas at 3 stages. i) selection of beneficiaries ii) successful borewell drilled iii) pump and materials provided. The beneficiary list may be provided immediately to ESCOMs after selection to avoid delay in energisation. The software system will give the coordinates of the beneficiary's site to Escom, who will inspect the spot, estimate the requirement of poles and wires, funds required and be ready for energisation. The software will give a true picture of the delay at various stages. It can be kept in the public domain to inform applicants of the status of their project. The system should also include an online payment option for payment of the prescribed energisation fee of Rs 50,000 for the RR number.

19. In Manvi Gescom office, it was observed that the number of documents required to be submitted by a SC/ST applicant for a Ganga Kalyana scheme was 16. These are: Paper receipt for registration, requisition for supply, declaration, Development corporation letter, application for water pump, wiring completion report, wiring

diagram, power supply agreement, Small/marginal farmer certificate, caste certificate, income certificate, ration card, Aadhaar, voter ID, RTC copy, Water rights certificate. By suitably integrating the online application system for Ganga Kalyana with Kutumba ID database, many of these documents may be fetched from the Kutumba database. Escoms and the development corporations can work together to reduce the number of documents asked for.

20. Each of the five ESCOMS has a different module for providing non IPDS, non-RAPDR connections, HRMS, financial system, billing and complaints monitoring system and ERP. It may be better to have a common software system or platform for all Escoms at state level to provide all these features and services so as to reduce expenditure. The best software developed by any of the Escoms can be customised for the other Escom as per their needs. Urja Mitra Mobile App is being used very effectively for outage of load and complaints in CHESCOM. Other ESCOMs can also make use of the App more effectively.

21. In the interest of encouraging greater use of technology for improving efficiency, Escoms should provide tablets/smartphones to the lowest field functionaries and/or pay data charges monthly. In the focus group discussion, participants also suggested that hardware at sub-division and section offices should be upgraded. Online applications have been introduced in ESCOMs for services like change of ownership tariff, new connection etc. These services are now available through a mobile app developed by Bescom. The same app may be used by all Escoms with suitable customisation. It is necessary to train the staff as and when software is upgraded.

22. Daily SMS/WhatsApp message should be sent by Escoms to the concerned Section Officer and AEE about pending complaints and applications.

23. A new service of "Disconnection and penal action on illegal power connections" may be introduced under Sakala. This will enable public to lodge complaints with the Escoms and ensure that time-bound action is taken on them.

5.5 Others

24. Each ESCOM has a dedicated vigilance team headed by a senior police officer. It is reported that FIRs have been filed against power theft cases, but charge sheets have not been submitted to courts even after years of delay in some cases. It is reported that hundreds of charge sheets are yet be filed in Bescom and other Escoms. Action should be taken by MDs of Escoms to review this on a regular basis and ensure that charge sheets are filed and pursued till the final disposal of the case.

25. Land and sites are required in rural and urban areas for the purpose of construction of Service Stations and for erection of transformers. Government order may be issued by Revenue department and UDD that the Deputy Commissioners and other Urban Development Authorities should reserve land and civic amenity sites based on the local requirement/demand received from the ESCOM/KPTCL officials.

5.6 Recommendations related to Services provided by ESCOMs

1. Application for New Connection and Additional Load

Introduction

Assistant Executive Engineer (AEE) of the subdivision is the designated officer to issue additional load and new connection. Sanction of new power supply connections involves four stages. 1. Internal work completion 2. Service main/line work execution 3.Issue of completion certificate 4.Testing and servicing. The Sakala time limit for LT-2/LT-3 up to 7.5 KW is 30 days, 60 days for HT connections, 180 days for EHT connections and 30 days for IP connections.

Users' feedback

About 2150 citizens were called to seek feedback & the observations are as follows:

- Feedback captured from 349 calls, 542 found to be wrong numbers.

- About 192 citizens applied through agents

- 289 calls were disconnected, in case of 530 calls applicants/ concerned persons were not available. 212 citizens did not respond

- In case of 36 calls either user refused to give feedback or numbers were not updated/ application was rejected.

About 306 users applied for the service in Government office, 27 users applied online, 15 users applied through brokers and 1 user through CSC.

16 users rated the experience as excellent, 309 users as good and 16 as average.

Users Suggestions

a. Monthly electricity bills should be generated. It will be difficult for them to pay if bills are generated once in 3 or 4 months

b. When users ask for clarification on bills, officers should be able to explain to the citizen.

c. Detailed bills should be given for the temporary meters used

d. Applicants guide should be provided to those who apply to know the procedure and other details.

Process Audit observations:

- One of the common reasons for rejection of applications is nonpayment of prescribed fee.

- Though there is a fully developed online system, the process followed in the office is manual, i.e. a printout of online application will be taken and processed in the office. After approval through manual process, the required service certificate will be generated and uploaded to the system. Message will be sent to the applicant to download the service certificate.

NeSDA Analysis

The NeSDA analysis shows that 50 guidelines were complied with and 27 guidelines are not yet complied with.

Non-RAPDRP Load Enhancement
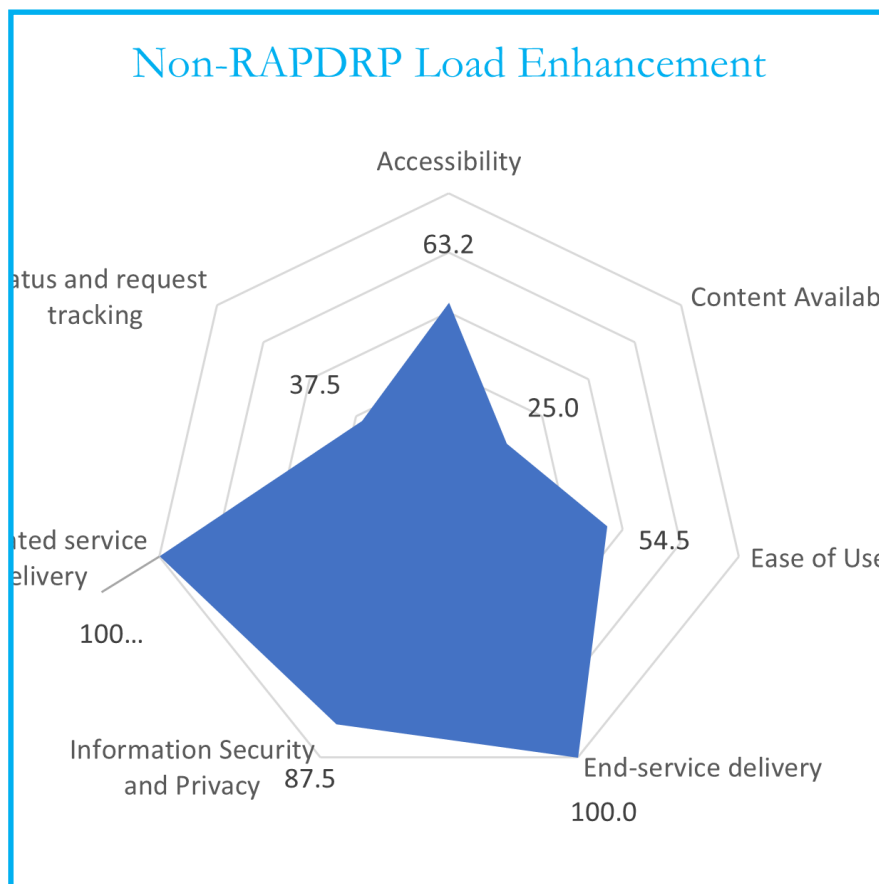
Recommendations:

1. All the service processes should be fully online; manual process must be dispensed with in all offices.

2. At present for a new connection, internal work completion, service main/line work execution, issuing of completion certificate, test and servicing is done by a single electrical contractor as per existing practice. Usually for residential buildings, internal work is done by a

small contractor, thus reducing cost to the owner. There should be scope for engaging different contractors separately, for internal wiring, service line work execution and testing and inspection. The online application should have option for selection of different contractors for different works as per the applicant's choice. A list of contractors available locally may be made available through a dropdown list in the software for the guidance of the applicant.

3. Many applicants are told to pay a lumpsum to the contractor for connection charges. They may be under the impression that this entire amount is paid to the Escoms, whereas the Escoms may get only a small part of the amount charged. The applicants may not be aware of the breakup between Escom charges and the contractor's service charge. To bring in transparency and make the consumer aware of the Escom charges, the applicant should be intimated by SMS about the amount he has to pay to Escom at different stages of the connection process. The intimation copy of charges should be sent directly to the consumer by SMS/WhatsApp and email. He can then negotiate on the service charge to be paid to the contractor. This will enhance the image of Escoms and reduce exploitation of consumers.

4. The contractor's completion certificate can be obtained at the time of registration itself, if internal work is completed. This will reduce the time required for providing the service.

5. There should be provision in the software for the applicant to directly pay Rs 50 registration charge at the time of registration itself.

6. The Municipal and Gram Panchayat building bye-laws should be amended to make it mandatory to show place in the individual site plan for the electrical transformer in an application for building plan sanction, if the built up area is more than 500 sq.mt. or if the required load is more than 25 KW.

7. If the applicable fee is not paid by the applicant and action is pending with applicant himself, a provision may be made in Sakala software to show that the application is 'pending with applicant'. Accordingly, the number of days it was pending with the applicant may be deducted from the Sakala time limit prescribed for the service.

8. At present the applicant is required to pay fees for a required connection in three stages namely, registration fee, initial deposit based on load sanctioned and infrastructure fee. All applicable fees, charges and deposits may be collected along with application in the beginning to save time and effort of all concerned.

9. Applicants pay supervision charges at the rate of 10% of the estimated cost of work, to the Escoms. Due to reasons like shortage of staff etc., it is reported that such supervision does not actually happen in many cases. This leads to situations where owners may make unintended mistakes in installation and thereafter have to incur additional expenditure for shifting transformers etc. from unsuitable locations if they are not properly guided about where to locate the transformer. If Escoms collect funds for supervision, it is very well their duty to send staff to supervise and guide the consumers. There should be system to document the supervision being done. It is recommended that instructions be issued that Section Officers should take GPS enabled photographs of their supervision visits and upload it on the new connection software. AEEs should monitor to ensure that supervision is done in all cases.

10. In applications for new connections for layouts, the estimated cost of transformers is collected upfront. The transformers are installed later depending on the actual constructions coming up. It was reported that, in such cases, when a demand is made for installing transformers when new buildings are constructed, instead of installing new transformers, old ones are installed and that too after avoidable delay, leading to consumer complaints. It is therefore advisable that the amount collected for transformers should be kept in a separate account to be used only for purchase of transformers and not be diverted, so that new transformers can be bought and installed without delay when the demand arises. Another suggestion that can be considered is to allow the developer to install the first transformer on self-execution basis, so that there is no delay. The subsequent transformers can be installed by the Escom.

11. In the interest of transparency and reducing exploitation, it is recommended that Electrical Inspectorate should fix the rates to be charged by Electrical contractors for giving Completion Report for various types of installations. Penalty should be imposed on the relevant contractor if complaints of overcharging are received and found to be correct. In case of repeated complaints of overcharging that are found correct, penal action should be taken against the concerned contractor.

12. Suggestions given above by users may be considered for appropriate action.

13. The current link on Seva Sindhu gets redirected to another page. The service should be made available on Seva Sindhu platform.

14. The Sakala time limit may be reduced to 30 days broken up into 3 stages. To give intimation of power sanction to the applicant – 15 days

    i. For giving work order after payment of charges by the applicant – 3 days

    ii. If Departmental execution – 12 days

    iii. If self-execution – more time can be given as per requirement.

15. Based on the NeSDA analysis the areas that require compliance are given below for compliance.

Evaluation Area	Areas that Require Compliance
Accessibility	Provide contact information of Government officials/agencies responsible for the provision of specific online services/queries
	Create a separate section for 'Contact Us'
	Provide downloadable forms for provisioning of services which cannot be submitted online
	Make available promotional campaigns to avail eServices
	Make available features to enable access for people with physical disabilities
	Enable audio and video playing
	Make available number of transactions
Content Availability	Make available information about results of user feedback about online services
	Create a separate section for Help
	Create a separate section on Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
	Sitemap should be made available
	Make available Information of last updated timestamp on each page of the website
	Update Timestamp as of current year
	Statistics on website usage by users (no. of visitors/ average time spent per visitor etc.) should be made available
	Statistics on transaction count of services availed by users should be made available
	Information on how to avail electronic/ digital signature facility for availing the services should be introduced
Ease of Use	Make available eServices within 2-clicks from home page
	Introduce a "What's new" section which details the changes in the website
	Website should provide for complaints, resolutions etc. on various aspects of the e-service provided
	Website should have a built-in facility to populate content relevant to user's recent activity / interest
	Introduce a user manual to guide the users
Information Security and Privacy	Enable mobile alerts for unauthorized access to user profile, password changes etc.
Status and request tracking	Introduce facility to log Grievances / Complaints
	Introduce Ticket / Complaint No. for status tracking and future follow-ups
	Enable feedback on user's complaints like email, call back etc.
	Provide information about helpline for issues regarding online payments through web page
	Provide for help desk, online support, and call centre for users

2.   Distribution Transformer Failure

Introduction

Section officer is the designated officer to attend to complaints of distribution transformer failure. There is no specific application or fee for this service. Consumers complain to the helpline number 1912.

The Sakala time limit for providing this service is one day.

Recommendations:

1. Transformer failure is frequent due to over loading that in turn may be due to unauthorised load. All efforts should be made for removal of unauthorised load to avoid over loading.

2. Identification and regularization of unauthorized power connections may be done and penalty levied to regularize the unauthorized connections so that overloading of conductors and leakage of power may be controlled.

3. Conductors and other electrical equipment are found stored or lying unused in compounds of Escom offices. Efforts may be made for optimum utilisation of such unused conductors and other equipment

4. Periodical maintenance and systemic improvements are necessary for quality uninterrupted power distribution. The required insulators, fuse units, transformer oil, bolts and nuts etc., should be procured timely and made available for maintenance without delay.

3.   Issue of Certificates

Introduction

Assistant Account Officer (AAO) is the designated officer to issue copy of letters, service certificates, details of the deposits and other certificates for registered consumers. Generally, they are requested for taking loan. The Sakala time limit for providing this service is 24 hours.

Recommendations:

1. End-to-end online system should be developed for this service with online payment of prescribed fee and an option to download e-signed certificates or send to Digilocker.

2. The fees were reportedly fixed in 2001. They may be revised in line with increase in inflation index.

4.   Line Breakdown

Introduction

Section officer (SO) is the designated officer to attend to complaints of breakdown of electrical line. User may submit the complaint to the Section officer orally / directly in Section office/ through helpline number 1912 or Urja Mitra. No written application is required. The Sakala time limit in urban areas is 6 hours; if electrical pole is broken down it is 10 hours; in rural areas the time limit is 24 hours.

Recommendations:

1. Over loading of conductors/over loaded conductors may be attended on top priority to avoid line breakdown

2. Dilapidated conductors may be replaced on priority.

3. Periodical maintenance/supervision may be done to check the breakdown of line/electrical pole.

4. Routine and regular systemic improvements may be undertaken to cater to the growing load demand.

5.   Meter complaints and resolution of complaints on Consumer Bills

Introduction

Assistant Executive Engineer (AEE) of the BESCOM sub-division is the designated officer.User may submit complaint to AEE using 24X7 helpline or by calling the AEE's office. At present inspection fee and meter cost is being paid through cash at the counters. If paid through RTGS, the UTR number needs to be furnished. There is an online application for registering consumer complaints.

Recommendations:

1. The entire service delivery process is presently paper based. This takes time and imposes unnecessary workload on the applicant and the staff. An end-to-end online application may be developed to submit application and make online payment. There may be no need to raise a bill if the logic is built into the software for specifying the applicable fee and making online payment. A provision may be made in the software to send SMS to Section officer or AEE as soon as a complaint is raised and for updating the status tracking module. Bescom reportedly has developed a module for this service; it may be customised and utilised by all other ESCOMs.

2. AEE may be fully authorised to correct errors in erroneous bills. This power has been delegated to AEE in Bescom. Similar delegation may be made by other ESCOMS

3. There should be an internal messaging system for supply of materials.

4. The fee for checking meter was fixed in 2005. Suitable action may be taken to revise it as per actual costs

6. Reconnection of Power supply following disconnection

Introduction

Assistant Account officer (AAO) is the designated officer to attend to request for reconnection of power supply following disconnection. User may submit application with proof of payment of bill/arrears/dues directly to the SO/sub-division office. KERC has prescribed fee for this service.

The Sakala time limit is one day after payment of dues or bill.

Recommendations:

1. Immediately after generation of the monthly electricity bill a SMS/information must be sent to the consumer with online payment link for making payment. The message should also convey the last date with a warning about disconnection and implications and cost of reconnection. Another SMS and email should be sent 2 days before disconnection as a last warning.

2. An online system may be developed for this purpose. The payment details are available with ESCOMs. There is no need to ask the consumer to apply for reconnection, if he has paid the bill/arrears. Reconnection should be suo motu by ESCOMs and automatically.

3. The programme for installation of pre-paid meters may be expedited.

7. Refund of Deposit

Introduction

Assistant Account Officer is the designated officer to refund deposits. Applicant may submit an application along with original deposit receipt or indemnity bond to the AAO or revenue section. The Sakala time limit is 60 days.

Recommendations:

1. At present the entire process is paper and contact based. The Escom would have all details of the consumer in its database. There is no need to ask for original documents from the consumer. An end-to-end online system should be developed for refund of deposit.

2. Very old documents like agreement, indemnity bond may be not available with the consumers. Small deposits of up to Rs.5000 can be refunded after obtaining an undertaking from the applicant in the online application itself without asking for an indemnity bond.

3. Power may be delegated to the EE to refund deposits up to Rs.50,000.

4. Sakala time limit may be reduced to 30 days from the existing 60 days.

ELECTRICAL INSPECTORATE

General Recommendations

5.7 Improving productivity and working conditions

1. A large number of installations are under the purview of the EI. Apart from providing 18 services under Sakala, it has to regularly inspect electrical installations, ensure electrical safety in big public gatherings, VIP programmes, investigate electrical accidents etc. It may not be possible for the organisation to carry out all these functions effectively with the available staff. Rather than sanctioning new posts, it is recommended that inspection can be outsourced to empanelled private agencies under the supervision of the CEI. The Dept. of Legal Metrology faces a similar problem and GOI has made a provision to approve Government Authorised Testing Centres under Legal Metrology. A similar system of Chartered Electrical Safety Engineers (CESE) has been framed by the Central Electricity Authority by issuing guidelines regarding authorizing the CESE circulated to States vide its letter dated 21st June, 2018. The Government may issue a notification to authorize CESEs for issuing charging clearance for the installation of notified voltage and below as per the guidelines. Further steps to conduct test/interview to authorize CESEs. Retired CEI/EI may be notified as CESEs by exempting them from taking test/interview.

2. *The periodicity of inspection prescribed in case of certain installations can be increased, with a view to free up the Inspectors time for more critical inspections. The periodicity of inspection of Multi-storied residential buildings with LT connection, Lifts and DG sets in these buildings may be increased to once in 5 years.*

3. New power generation plants in solar, wind, cogeneration, biomass, small hydro are being regularly commissioned. They have to be inspected before commissioning by the Chief Electrical Inspector. Inspection by the Chief Electrical Inspector is also required for addition and alteration of capacity of the power plants. At present inspection powers for all categories of plants are vested with the Chief Electrical Inspector. It is recommended to delegate powers of inspection and approval of plants of up to 1 MW to the jurisdictional Additional Chief Electrical Inspectors. Further it is also recommended that inspection and approval powers for any alteration/modifications if required, within any approved capacity may also be delegated to the concerned Additional Chief Electrical Inspectors in the interest of ease of doing business.

4. New roof top solar installations of capacity of 500 KW and above may be brought under the purview of CEI for imposition of tax for captive consumption. An automatic system for application and approval may be developed so that units are not unnecessarily burdened for getting approval.

5. The approval power of licensing of Supervisors, Wiremen and Renewals of Electrical contractors may be delegated to the relevant officers of the Inspectorate depending up on the load/capacity and ratification may be obtained subsequently in the Board meeting whenever such meetings are convened.

6. Certain licensing powers of the CEI and Board can be delegated to the Additional CEIs by notification under Section 162 of the Electricity Act because as per Cadre and Recruitment Rules the eligibility conditions for promotion to ACEI post is the same as that for CEI post.

7. Revision of the Departmental Inspection Manual of 1987 has been proposed; but the Government notification approving the revised Manual is not yet issued. Hence Government Notification may be issued at the earliest.

8. In every sub-division, 8 manual registers are maintained. There may be no need to maintain manual registers since online records are maintained. The CEI may examine and do away with the requirement of maintaining manual registers.

9. Existing fee for various services may be revised in line with increase in cost inflation index.

10. At present tests are done in KPTCL and NABL accredited laboratories. A suggestion was made in the FGD that the Electrical Inspectorate should have its own testing lab in each district. This would have considerable financial implications. Instead, the present practice of using laboratories in engineering colleges and institutes in districts should be further extended to more colleges and institutes and testing done there by paying fees.

5.8   Improving delivery of services to citizens

11. All the services of the Electrical Inspectorate are being provided online. The system has to be made more user friendly by incorporating features like auto-fill in Kannada with available data.

12. The service of approval for roof-top solar installation is likely to become more popular in the coming years. It has not been notified as a Sakala service as yet. It is recommended to notify it as a Sakala service.

13. An online system for application and approval should be developed for the service of roof top solar installation.

14. In the online service application for all EI services, the uploading of every required document should be made mandatory in the online application form. If all the required documents are not uploaded then the system should not allow the application to be submitted. This will avoid the need to sendback incomplete applications to the applicant.

15. For all online services, an edit option of correcting the name, date of birth and mobile number should be given to the relevant DEIs to enable them to correct any mistakes pointed out after submission, instead of rejecting or returning the application.

16. All online services are developed and maintained by the NIC. It is reported that NIC takes a long time even for effecting simple modifications in the software. Hence, Energy Department in consultation with e-Governance Department may use the services of CSG to provide additional support to strengthen software development and maintenance.

17. Electrical drawings on large paper size are being uploaded to the system. These drawings need to be approved by the department after verification. At present computers of lower configuration with lower screen size and resolution are being provided. It is recommended to provide computers with larger screen size and required specification.

5.9 Recommendations related to Services provided by Electrical Inspectorate

1. Permission to erect New Lift/Escalator/ Passenger Conveyor. Lift/Escalator/Passenger Conveyor inspection and recommendation and Grant of running license
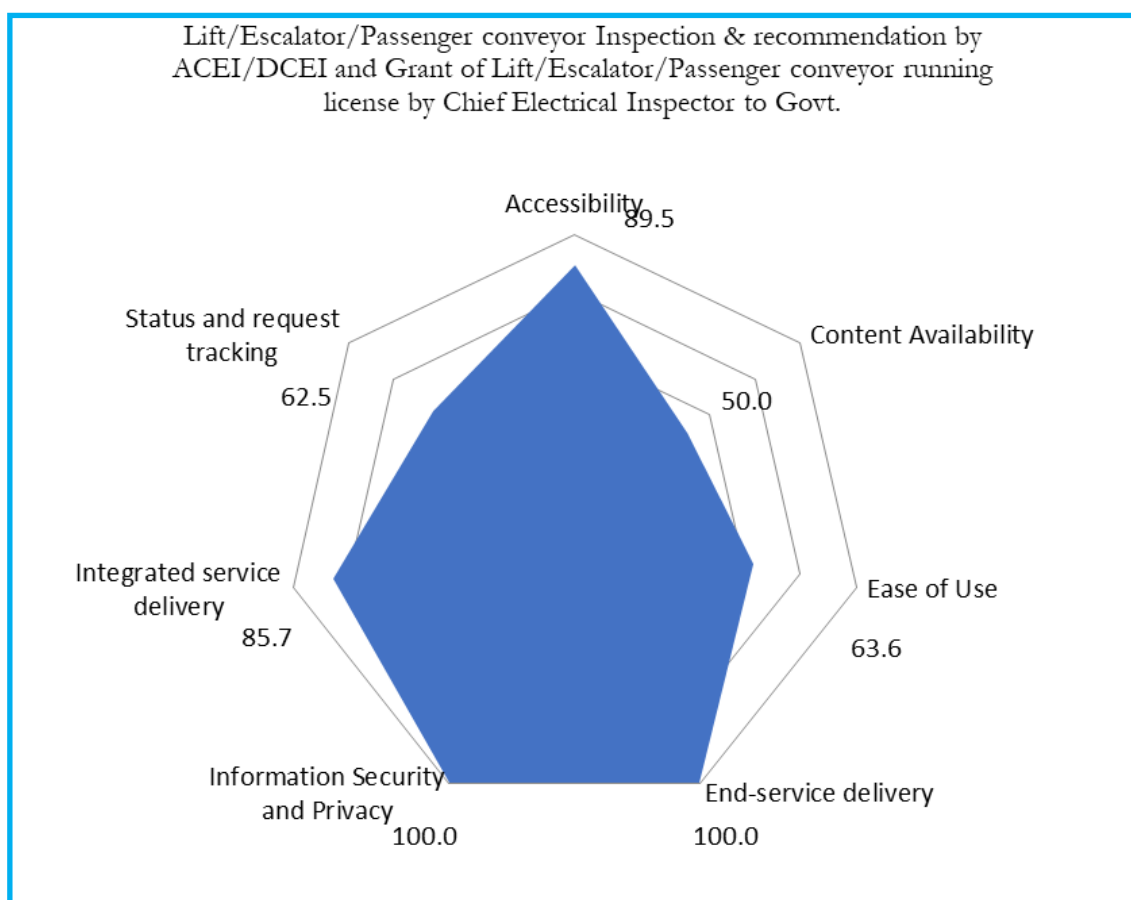
Introduction

Permission to erect new Lift/Escalator/ Passenger Conveyor: The service is to permit registered lift companies to install lift etc in accordance with the applicable rules. Sakala time limit is 20 working days.

For inspection, recommendation and grant of running license: Time limit for this service is 40 working days.

NeSDA Analysis

The NeSDA analysis finds that 60 guidelines were complied with, and 17 guidelines are not complied wit h

Lift/Escalator/Passenger conveyor Inspection & recommendation by ACEI/DCEI and Grant of Lift/Escalator/Passenger conveyor running license by Chief Electrical Inspector to Govt.

- Accessibility 89.5
- Content Availability 50.0
- Ease of Use 63.6
- End-service delivery 100.0
- Information Security and Privacy 100.0
- Integrated service delivery 85.7
- Status and request tracking 62.5

Process Audit

Work flow between -AE -DCEI-Site Inspector File Movement: Applicant submission **>**Online fee payment >Application forwarded to AE Officer >Forwarded to DCEI (Accept/Reject) >Site verification >Applicant receives the approval

Observations:

- There is an end-to-end online process established for the service, applicant has been notified about the status of application through SMS.

- If information is not properly furnished or clarification is required, it will be sent back to the applicant for compliance within 7 days. If applicant doesn't comply or fails to make payment of required fee, then it is rejected.

- Approval is communicated to the applicant after the approval in the Board meeting.

- Most common reason for rejection of application is non-payment of required fee and non-submission of documents and fees within 7 days.

Recommendations

1. Applicants are entering data of form-A1 for lift and form-A2 for escalator in online application, so uploading of A1 and A2 copies can be dispensed with. Similarly, uploading of form B1/B2/B3 can dispensed with. Declaration for commencement of work form-A3 can also be dispensed with. Accordingly, Karnataka Lifts, Escalators and Passenger Conveyors Rules, 2015 may be amended.

2. There are many cases, where building owners are unable to submit OCs. EI does not entertain applications from such owners. But many of them install the lifts etc. without taking permission, thereby risking the lives of users. In some cases, either the location of the lift shown on the approved plan is changed or the decision to install a lift is taken after approval of the plan. Therefore, for the purpose of approval of lift/escalator permits, the plan approved by the empanelled architect with certificate of structural stability can be considered instead of the plan approved by the Municipality/ GP/competent authority. Similarly, the lift/escalator location can be identified from the same plan document approved by the architect. There is no need for taking/uploading document obtained from the competent authority about location.In such cases, the owner may be charged double the applicable fees as a deterrent. This will enable EI to verify the safety of the installation. The relevant Rules of 2015 may be amended accordingly.

3. In the interest of faster service delivery, the approval power may be delegated to the respective Additional CEIs of the circles (since the eligibility conditions for promotion as ACEI and CEI is the same as per Cadre and Recruitment Rules) by suitable notification.

4. While each lift would cost not less than Rs. 10 lakh, the inspection fee is only Rs.1000 and license fee is Rs. 2500. The fees can be increased to Rs. 2,000 and Rs.5,000 respectively.

5. Sakala time can be reduced to 10 working days from 20 working days for permission and 20 working days from 40 days for inspection and running license.

6. Based on the NeSDA analysis, areas that require compliance are given below for compliance.

Evaluation Area	Areas that Require Compliance
Accessibility	1. Make available promotional campaigns to avail e-Services
	2. Enable audio and video playing
Content Availability	3. Introduce facility for user to provide feedback / comments regarding eServices
	4. Make available information about results of user feedback about online services
	5. Create a separate section for Help
	6. Create a separate section on Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
	7. Make the sitemap available
	8. Update Timestamp as of current year
Ease of Use	9. Make available eServices within 2-clicks from home page
	10. Introduce a search feature
	11. Make provisions for complaints, resolutions etc. on the website for various aspects of the e-service provided
	12. Make provision for a built-in facility within the website to populate content relevant to user's recent activity / interest
Integrated service delivery	13. Introduce Apps for each of the services
	14. Integrate the website with Social Media Apps like Twitter, Facebook etc.
Status and request tracking	15. Introduce facility to log Grievances / Complaints
	16. Introduce Ticket / Complaint No. for status tracking and future follow-ups
	17. Enable feedback on user's complaints like email, call back etc.

2. Approval of drawings of the electrical installation and Grant of commissioning approval (Industrial installation only)

Introduction

For approval of electrical drawings before the establishment of power plants to ensure that the power plants are safe. The Sakala time limit is 25 working days.

For Grant of commissioning approval to power plants the Sakala time limit is 30 working days.

User Feedback

About 82 applicants for "**Approval of drawing of electrical installation**" were called to seek feedback & the observations are as follows:

Out of 82 calls, 36-calls were not connected, 25 calls found to be wrong numbers, feedback captured from 10 calls, 5 users refused give feedback and rest of the callers found to be non-responsive.

All 10 applicants applied online. 2 users rated the serviceas excellent, 6 as good, one as average and one user rated the service as poor.

Suggestions from the users

- Once all the documents are uploaded online, officer should not ask to submit the same at office.
- Officers should give proper information to applicants about the service

About 63 applicants for "**Grant of Commissioning Approval**" were called to seek feedback & the observations are as follows:

- Out of 63 calls, feedback was captured from 13 users.
- Out of 13 users, 11 users applied for service online, the other 2 applied through third party
- 3 users rated the service as excellent, 5 as good,2 as average and 3 users rated the service as poor.

Suggestions from the users

i. Server problems and technical issues should be resolved
ii. Reduce the time limit fixed for the service

Process Audit

File movement >Applicant submission **>**Online fee payment->Application forwarded to AE office > Forwarded to DCEI (Accept/Reject) >Site verification ->Applicant receives the approval

Number of Documents-10

Observations:

- The process is done online end-to-end. Applicant has been notified with updates about the application via SMS.

- Approval is being communicated after approval of the Board.

- Most common reason for rejection of application is non-payment of fee and non-submission of required documents within 7 days.

Recommendations

1. A Departmental Technical Committee may be constituted by the Government to propose revisions to simplify the process envisaged in Central Electricity Authority (Measures relating to Safety and Electric Supply) Amendment Regulations, 2018, for the purpose of this service and its recommendations may be forwarded to Government of India for consideration.

2. There may be no need for submitting copy of the certified drawing and power sanction confirmation letter of ESCOM. The requirement can be dispensed with.

3. Form Z, the Estimate and Agreement on stamp paper between the consumer and the contractor, has to be submitted. Since it is between the consumer and the contractor, asking for Form Z can be dispensed with.

4. Being an online system, provision should be made in the system to auto populate all details of the contractor license and endorsements, already available in the system, on entering the license number instead of asking for these documents again.

5. Work Commencement Report in form-A1 can be dropped for grant of commissioning approval.

6. The fees for the service were fixed in 2008. They may be revised as increase in the inflation index.

7. Based on the NeSDA analysis, the 17 areas that require compliance are the same as for Permission to erect new Lift/Escalator/Passenger conveyor. It is recommended to comply with these areas.

3. Change of Address of Electrical Contractor License, Electrical Supervisor Permits and Wiremen Permits.

Introduction

The purpose of this service is to approve the changed address of the licensed electrical contractors / supervisors / wireman. The Sakala time limit for the service is 15 days.

Recommendations:

1. The requirement of submission of existing electrical contractor license/electrical supervisor permits/wiremen permits can be dropped as they are available in the online system for verification.

2. Service Delivery Charter is not published on the Seva Sindhu website but all the information about the service and delivery timeline is mentioned under the service website. It would be better if it is made available on Seva Sindhu portal also.

3. Based on the NeSDA analysis, the 17 areas that require compliance are the same as for Permission to erect new Lift/Escalator/Passenger conveyor. It is recommended to comply with these areas.

4. Change of authorized signatory, Partners/ Directors in case of Partnership Firms/ Company and change of instruments.

Introduction

The purpose of this service is to approve the signature of the changed Partners / Directors and newly added Partners / Directors. Documents pertaining to changed Partners / Directors with the details of the existing Directors are to be submitted. The Sakala time limit for the service is 15 days.

Recommendations:

1. This service is working effectively; however, a copy of changes made in the license/permit may be intimated to the Registrar of Companies also.
2. Sakala time limit may be reduced to 7 working days.

5. Issue, Renewal and Endorsement of Electrical Supervisor General Permits

Introduction

The purpose of this service is to issue, renew and endorse Supervisor's license to skilled persons in the field of Electrical Engineering to perform the work of the supervisor while the electrical contractor undertakes works. The Sakala time limit is 90 days for issue and renewal and 15 days for endorsement.

Process Audit:

Process Flow (File Movement): Applicant submission **>**Online fee payment >Application forwarded to DEI >Superintendent >EI licensing officer >Approval/ Rejection

General Observations

- There is an end-to-end online process

- Status and updates about file movement will be intimated to the applicant through SMS

- Whenever application/documents are not clear, it will be sent back to the applicant for compliance; if applicant doesn't comply within 7 days or make payment by stipulated date, the application will be rejected.

- Applications are being disposed after Board meeting

- Most common reason for rejection of application is non-payment of payment fee and non-submission of required documents within 7 days.

Sakala time limit for delivering this service is 90 days; it can be reduced to 30 days

Recommendations

1. Validity of Supervisor permit or license may be increased from 1 year to 5 years and fees can be increased to Rs.2000/-.
2. Validity of renewal may be increased from 5 years to 10 years with an increase in fees to Rs 2000.
3. Validity of the certificate of physical fitness may be raised to three months from the present one month.
4. The power of issue of license can be delegated to the jurisdictional Deputy Electrical Inspector, by amending the Karnataka (Licensing of Electrical Contractors, Special wiring permit and grant of certificates and permits to Electrical Supervisors and Wiremen) Rules, 2012. Approval/rejection may be communicated by SMS and email to the applicant.
5. The service time limit can be reduced to 30 days from 90 days.
6. Documents already available with the EI viz. existing license/permit need not be asked for at the time of renewal and for endorsements. Aadhaar number can be made compulsory for these services.

7. All the information about the service and delivery timeline is mentioned under the service website. The same may also be published on the Seva Sindhu website

8. Based on the NeSDA analysis, the 17 areas that require compliance are the same as for Permission to erect new Lift/Escalator/Passenger conveyor. It is recommended to comply with the areas that require compliance.

6. Issue, Renewal and Endorsement of Electrical Supervisor Mines Permits

Introduction

The purpose of this service is to issue/renew/endorse license to the skilled persons to supervise underground power and lighting installations in the mines and to supervise the electrical contractor while he undertakes the works. The Sakala time limit for issue and renewal is 90 days and for endorsement it is 7 days.

Recommendations

1. Deputy Electrical Inspector can be authorized to issue license by making suitable amendments to the The Karnataka (Licensing of Electrical Contractors, Special wiring permit and grant of certificates and permits to Electrical Supervisors and Wiremen) Rules, 2012.

2. The validity of the certificate of physical fitness may be increased from one month to three months.

3. Validity of supervisor permit or license may be increased to 5 years from one year and fees can be increased to Rs.2000/-.

4. Validity of renewal may be increased from 5 years to 10 years and fees increased to Rs 2000.

5. The service time limit can be reduced to 30 days from 90 days.

6. For renewal and endorsements, copy of existing license/permit need not be asked. Aadhaar number can be made compulsory for these services.

7. Both Issue and Renewal are separately mentioned in the website, they may be mentioned together.

8. Based on the NeSDA analysis, the 16 areas that require compliance are mostly the same as for Permission to erect new Lift/Escalator/Passenger conveyor. It is recommended to comply with the areas that require compliance.

7. Issue and Renewal of Special Wiring Permits

Introduction

The purpose of this service is to issue Special Wiring Permits to skilled persons. The permits are issued and renewed separately for class of voltage above 33 KV and below 33 KV. Sakala time limit for this service is 90 days.

Recommendations

1. The power to issue special wiring permit can be delegated to Chief Electrical Inspector from the Licensing Advisory and Examination Board by making suitable amendments in the rules.

2. For new special wiring permit, documents required can be reduced and simplified. Passport size photograph can be taken along with specimen signature in one single document. Original Solvency certificate, Business address proof, Solvency undertaking can be dropped. Aadhaar card can replace documents like address proof and photo ID.

3. For renewal, the requirement to submit documents of details of work done, original solvency certificate, solvency undertaking, copy of special wiring permit, copy of ROC, and copy of MOA/AOA may be dropped.

4. Provision should be made for auto-renewal by suitable provision in the rules. By uploading the required documents and online payment of fees, auto-renewal of the permit may be done.

5. Fees can be increased from Rs 200 to Rs 500.

6. The Sakala time limit can be reduced to 30 days from 90 days

8.   Issue, Renewal and Endorsement of Wireman Permits

Introduction

The purpose of this service is to issue, renew and endorse provide electrical wiring permit to perform electrical installation work. Sakala time limit for issue and renewal is 90 days and for endorsement it is 15 days.

Users' feedback

Around 551 users were called to seek feedback & the observations are as follows:

- Feedback captured from 131 users, not connected calls-226; 118 found to be wrong numbers, 23 applicants applied though brokers; 19 applicants refused to give any feedback; 18 calls were disconnected; 16 applicants could not be contacted for the reasons like, not responding, not available, call back etc.

95 applicants applied online, 33 applicants applied through government office, one applied at Bangalore one centre and 2 applied though others.

9 applicants rated the experience as excellent, 110 as good, 12 rated the service as average.

Suggestions from Users

- While writing the certificate spelling and other mistakes should not occur

- Seal and signature can be done by District officer instead of visiting Bangalore head office

- Website has to be user friendly so that instead of going to cyber centre, citizen can apply for service on his own

- Give edit option after applying for service, so that if any mistake is made, it can be corrected

Process Audit for - Issue and Renewal of Wireman permits.

Process Flow (File Movement): Applicant submission **-** online fee payment-Application forwarded to DEI-Superintendent -EI licensing officer Approval or Rejection

Observation:

- Applications are being disposed after the decision in the Board meeting.
- One of the common reasons for rejection of application is non-payment of required fee and non- submission of additional documents within 7 days.
- Sakala time limit for delivering of this service is 90 days, service delivered within 30 to 45 days.

Recommendations

1. Power to issue and renew Wireman permit may be delegated from the Board to the Deputy Electrical Inspector by suitably amending the rules.

2. One single document like Aadhaar with identity proof, address, photo and signature can be obtained and obtaining of three different documents can be dispensed with. Asking for copy of existing wiremen permit can be dropped as it is available in the same office.

3. Validity of Wireman permit may be increased from 1 year to 5 years.

4. The validity of physical fitness certificate may be increased from one month to three months.

5. The service period can be reduced from 60 days to 30 days by reducing stages like clearance from LA & EB and re-submission etc.

6. Provision should be made for auto-renewal. By uploading the required documents and online payment of fees by the Wiremen, auto-renewal of the permit may be done. For auto-renewal and endorsements, the number of documents asked can also be reduced. Photograph and specimen signature can be in a single document; copies of existing permits should not be asked, since they are available in the office; Aadhaar card can replace documents of address proof and photo ID.

7. Renewal period can continue to be ten years and renewal fees may be increased to Rs.500.

8. Information about the service can be made available inside Seva Sindhu website it-self to avail the service, though it is available in the website after going to the link.

9. Suggestions given by users above may be considered for appropriate action.

10. Based on the NeSDA analysis, the 20 areas that require compliance are mostly the same as for Permission to erect new Lift/Escalator/Passenger conveyor. It is recommended to comply with the areas that require compliance.

9. Issue and Renewal of Electrical Contractor License

Introduction

Sakala time limit for this service is 90 days.

Users' feedback

About 772 citizens were called to seek feedback & the observations are as follows:

- Feedback captured from 325 users, about 331 calls were not connected and 30 were wrong numbers, 45 applicants refused to give feedback; 14 calls disconnected, 12 applicants were not available, 1 rejected application; Remaining 14 applicants either applied through brokers or not responded.

273 applicants applied online, 53 applied through govt office and 7 applied through third party agents.

32 applicants rated the experience as excellent,311 as good, 12 as average and 4 applicants rated the experience as poor.

Users Suggestions

- Reasons should be given for rejecting an application

- Once all the documents are submitted online, office should not ask to submit any document again

- Give updates on the application status online or in office

Recommendations

1. Affidavit-5 and Affidavit -6 can be replaced by a single self-declaration. Affidavit -2 (Bank solvency letter) need not be asked since Bank Solvency Certificate is given.

2. The requirement of submitting Bank Solvency Certificate by applicants for licenseup to Class-II contractor can be dropped, to benefit unemployed ITI and Diploma holders to make a beginning in the profession.

3. Bank Solvency Certificate from scheduled and cooperative bank can be accepted in addition to those from nationalised banks by suitably amending the rules.

4. At present, if an applicant has not passed SSLC examination, there is a provision to issue license is he has 10 years of work experience. This period of work experience can be reduced to 5 years.

5. At present BE/Diploma Electrical engineers are eligible to get Class-I contractor license directly. As per CEA regulations, Mechanical /Electronics / Instrumentation engineers are also eligible for class-I license directly. This regulation may be adopted and implemented in the State also by issuing suitable amendments.

6. Validity period of the license can be increased from 1 year to 5 years with increase in fees from Rs 3000/- to Rs.10,000/-

7. The Sakala time limit can be reduced to 30 days from 90 days.

8. For renewal, since there is an online system, the details of existing license copy, wireman permit endorsement and supervisor permit endorsement can be auto-fetched from the database instead of asking for their copies. There is no need to ask for Affidavit -1 (Challan for payment of professional tax), Affidavit -2 (Bank Solvency letter) and Karya nirvahana certificate.

9. Renewal period may be increased from 5 years to 10 years and fees increased to Rs 10,000/-.

10. Based on the NeSDA analysis, the 16 areas that require compliance are mostly the same as for Permission to erect new Lift/Escalator/Passenger conveyor. It is recommended to comply with the areas that require compliance.

10. Registration for cinema operator's examination / Issue of Cinema Operator's License / Issue of Duplicate Cinema Operator's License/ Renewal of Cinema Operator's License.

Introduction

Registration for cinema operator examination conducted by the Karnataka Cinema Operator's Examination Board: Sakala time limit for this service is 10 working days

NeSDA Analysis

The NeSDA analysis finds that 48 guidelines were complied with and 24 guidelines are not complied with.

Issue of cinema operator's license
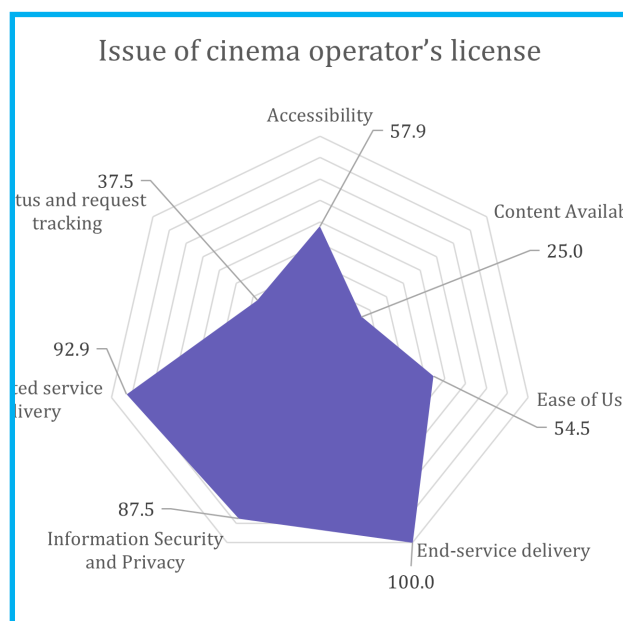
Recommendations

1. Cinema operator certification is mandatory in cinema theatres under the provisions of Karnataka Cinemas (Regulation) Rules, 2014. Since, there is no projection of film in digitally operated cinema theatres, it is recommended that the requirement of acinema operator be prescribed only for cinema theatres operated through projector and can be dispensed for multiplex digitally operated cinema theatres.

2. Under the Cinematography Rules, Cinema Operator license holder is required for renewal of cinema theatre license. This requirement may be done away with in the case of permission or renewal of license for digital cinemas, that don't need a cinema operator.

3. For registration to write the examination, only three documents of SSLC certificate, Form A and Aadhaar card may be needed. Other documents are not necessary. If address on Aadhaar is not correct, an affidavit may be taken. There should be no need for approval by CEI to register to write the exam. The online system should be designed to allow submission of only fully complete application with documents. SSLC certificate and Aadhaar number can be verified online. If both are verified, no further approval may be necessary to register to write the examination.

4. Candidates who pass the Cinema Operators Examination, should be automatically given the Cinema Operators license, without the need for him to apply separately for the license or submit any additional documents, if he pays the required fees online.

5. For issue of copy/duplicate license, the existing licenses may be digitised and provision made for online payment of fee and printing of the e-signed copy of the license. Digital license may be made available in the Digi-locker. There will then be no need for applying for duplicate license and the service can be dropped.

6. Auto-renewal/regrant provision may be made in the rules for auto renewal up to a period of 10 years or to the prescribed age limit/physical fitness on application online with Aadhaar number and payment of prescribed fees.

7. Based on the NeSDA analysis, the areas that require compliance are given below for compliance.

Evaluation Area	Areas that Require Compliance
Accessibility	Provide contact information of Government officials/agencies responsible for the provision of specific online services/queries
	Create a separate section for 'Contact Us'
	Make available promotional campaigns to avail eServices
	Make website compatible with all major browsers and ensure high screen resolutions
	Make available features to enable access for people with physical disabilities
	Enable audio and video playing
	Make available number of transactions
Content Availability	Make available information about results of user feedback about online services
	Create a separate section for Help
	Create a separate section on Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
	Make the sitemap available
	Make available Information of last updated timestamp on each page of the website
	Make available the statistics on website usage by users (no. of visitors/ average time spent per visitor etc.)
	Make available the statistics on transaction count of services availed by users
	Make available information on how to use electronic/ digital signature facility for availing the services
Ease of Use	Introduce a "What's New?" section which details the changes in the website
	Make provisions for complaints, resolutions etc. on the website for various aspects of the e-service provided
	Make provision for a built-in facility within the website to populate content relevant to user's recent activity / interest
	Introduce a User Manual to guide the users
	Enable mobile alerts for unauthorized access to user profile, password changes etc.
Information Security and Privacy	Integrate the website with Social Media Apps like Twitter, Facebook etc.
Integrated service delivery	Introduce facility to log Grievances / Complaints
Status and request tracking	Provide information about helpline for issues regarding online payments through web page
	Provide for help desk, online support, and call centre for users