



Republic Of Mauritius

NATIONAL ARCHIVES DEPARTMENT
MINISTRY OF ARTS AND CULTURE

CUSTOMER CHARTER



DEVELOPMENT BANK
OF MAURITIUS COMPLEX
COROMANDEL

Tel. No: 233-2950

Fax No: 233-4299

Email: arc@govmu.org

NATIONAL ARCHIVES DEPARTMENT

“A customer is the most important visitor on our premises. He is not dependent on us, we are dependent on him. He is not an interruption of our work, he is the purpose of it. He is not an outsider in our business: he is part of it. We are not doing him a favour by serving him, he is doing us a favour by giving us an opportunity to do so.”

Mahatma GANDHI

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FOREWORD

A public archival repository such as the National Archives is recognized worldwide as a key institution entrusted with the vital duties and responsibility of preserving, safekeeping and storing methodically records of enduring value that form part of the collective memory of a nation. Usually any archival institution operates at three levels.

The first level is that of Acquisition. There are various sources from which the National Archives acquires its records: from legal deposits, from records management process (Public Records Appraisal Committee), through donation, or voluntary handing-over of private papers or sometimes, by purchasing of rare materials. It also acquires materials by exchange with other archive centres/libraries locally as well as abroad.

The second level is that of Conservation, i.e. all norms and means of preserving, protecting or restoring the archives, are put in place, to lengthen their life span.

The third level is that of Communication. It is the duty of all archivists to communicate, make known, to the nation, the various collections of archives in their custody. It is here that the National Archives interacts with the population. The National Archives, therefore, has to provide all facilities to make this interaction possible and reliable, and eventually, the necessity of having a Customer Charter.

This Customer Charter presents to all members of the public, be they, students, historians, journalists, sociologists, economists, administrators, scholars, politicians, and genealogists, whether local or foreign, Government institutions, private organisations, a layout of all the activities carried out at the National Archives. It covers all operations and in particular the services offered to all users of our archives. It enfoldes the duties and responsibilities that we have towards the nation.

National Archives Department
August 2016



Some basic information for the Customer

- **What is information?**

Information is knowledge obtained through communication or investigation.

- **What is a record?**

A record is any material that contains information.

- **What are archives?**

Archives are records of continuing value that have been selected for permanent preservation.

- **What is a National Archives?**

A National Archives is the building or institution of a country which houses the vast collections of archival records.

**Archives are of invaluable importance. Most are old and fragile.
Special attention and great care must be taken in handling them.**

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES DEPARTMENT

The National Archives is a Department of the Ministry of Arts and Culture.

OUR VISION

Our vision is to meet the challenges of the 21st century as collector, preserver and provider of information in line with modern concepts and technologies.

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to acquire, preserve and provide public access to our nation's documentary heritage in all formats for the benefit of the present and the future generations and to manage governmental records throughout the public service.

OUR CORE VALUES

- Patriotism** We are the official custodian of the documentary heritage of the Republic of Mauritius.
- Professionalism** We are guided by the highest standards of professional ethics.
- Innovativeness** We always create new ways to do right things better.
- Quality/Integrity** We are results-oriented and committed to provide the services of the highest standard to our customers.
- Teamwork** We foster teamwork and the sharing of information and resources.
- Timeliness** We are responsive and strive to meet targets.

ARCHIVES LEGISLATION

The National Archives is governed by the following legislations:

- The National Archives Act No.22 of 1999
- Government Notice No. 140 of 2001
- Government Notice No. 28 of 2002
- Government Notice No. 156 of 2002
- Government Notice No. 54 of 2011



Government House, Port-Louis, Mauritius (1850)

THIS CHARTER

This Charter sets out the services provided by the National Archives Department of the Republic of Mauritius if a member of the public is conducting research using our collection.

We strive for excellence in our service delivery and continue to raise awareness of the rich content in our collection and make them accessible.

Under this Charter we:

- set the standards and targets for our services
- list information on our various services to our customers
- inform our customers where and how to get information on our services
- provide information on addresses/telephone numbers of sections to be contacted in case of any complaint or query

CHARTER COVERAGE

This Charter lists the different Sections of the National Archives Department and outlines the services offered to the customer.

The National Archives is divided into the following sections:

- The Administrative Section
- The Repositories
- Two Search Rooms
- Reprographic Unit
- Bindery Section
- Restoration Unit
- The Electronic Archives System Unit and Computer Room
- Audio-Visual Unit
- The Records Centre

OUR SERVICES TO OUR CUSTOMERS

1. SEARCH ROOMS

- **Services provided :**
 - We put to the disposal of members of the public two search rooms to allow them to make their research in a friendly and courteous atmosphere.
 - We hand over to our users documents requested, for consultation.
 - We give advice and guidance in the field of research.
 - We make copies (ordinary and/or authenticated) of documents.
 - We perform searches on request from Government and private individuals against payment of prescribed fees.
 - We provide in-house power supply to searchers using PCs.
 - We provide PCs that will allow the users to accede to our EAS database of records.
- **We inform our users that:**
 - Public archives are open to public inspection subject to the conditions mentioned in our Regulations and the payment of fees specified therein.
 - The hours of admission are as follows: from 9.30 a.m. to 3.00 p.m. on weekdays, and from 9.30 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. on Saturdays.
 - A person who consults documents has to write his/her name and full address in the Visitors' Register and on the Research Form.
 - Finding-aids like inventories, repertories, catalogues and indexes are available for consultation.
 - Our database administrator will provide information regarding access to our website and the on-line electronic collections of records.

- **To enable us to provide our users with an excellent service, we request them:**
 - To maintain silence;
 - Not to make use of ink and pens;
 - Not to take any umbrella, stick or bag or place any parcel on the table;
 - To abide by our Code of Conduct placed in the Search Rooms.
 - To place all their belongings in the pigeon-holes provided.

- **However, we wish to bring to the attention of our users that:**
 - The Officer-in-charge of the search rooms may bar from the search room any person:
 - (a) who commits a wilful breach of our Regulations;
 - (b) who shows persistent disregard of the Officer's authority;
 - (c) who damages any record or article belonging to the Department; or
 - (d) whose conduct, language, habit or dress is likely to be a source of nuisance to other users of the search rooms.
 - (e) who makes any mark, in pencil or otherwise, on any public archives preserved in the Department.

 - Private documents deposited in the Department and not open to public inspection will only be communicated to users subject to such conditions as the depositor has imposed.

 - Every person who wishes to inspect or search any record that is not available in the search rooms of the Department will be required to make a request in writing to the Director.

- **The fees charged for, as stipulated in our Regulations, are:**
 1. For searches or copies made on request by the Archives Staff, per hour or fraction thereof

| | |
|-----------------------|------------|
| (a) a Mauritian | Rs. 100.00 |
| (b) a non – Mauritian | Rs. 300.00 |

 2. Photocopy at the request of-

| | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| (a) A Mauritian citizen | |
| A3 sheet | Rs. 30.00 per page |
| A4 sheet | Rs. 15.00 per page |
| (b) A non - Mauritian citizen | |
| A3 sheet | Rs. 60.00 per page |
| A4 sheet | Rs. 30.00 per page |

 3. For inspection or consultation of documents

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| per person and per diem | Rs. 30.00 |
|-------------------------|-----------|

 4. For the authentication of certified copies

| | |
|-----------|-----------|
| per page: | Rs. 25.00 |
|-----------|-----------|

 5. For connecting searchers to in-house power supply, per hour or fraction thereof:

| | |
|-----------------------|------------|
| (a) a Mauritian | Rs. 50.00 |
| (b) a non – Mauritian | Rs. 100.00 |

- **The public may note that:**

Any person wishing to be exempted from payment of the fees specified above may apply in writing to the Minister of Arts and Culture, who, after consultation with the Director, may grant the said exemption.

- **Information:**

For more information on the services offered at the Search Rooms, users may address themselves to the officers at the counters.

2. DISPOSAL OF RECORDS

- We ensure the proper disposal of records to achieve efficient, transparent and accountable governance.

- **Procedures for Disposal**

The Public Records Appraisal Committee which has been set up under PART III of the National Archives Act No. 22 of 1999, regularly examines and appraises lists of non-current records submitted before it by various public bodies, and makes recommendations as to the disposal of those records.

- Whenever a Government institution or statutory body wants to dispose of its non-current records, the responsible officer should inform the Director of the National Archives by way of an official letter.
- The latter will afterwards request the former to prepare and submit a list (s) of records to be disposed of as per the Second Schedule of the Government Notice No. 28 of 2002.
- A meeting will be convened with all the members of the Committee to examine the list(s) of records, in the presence of a representative of the public or statutory body. The latter will have to bring a specimen of each item of records mentioned in the list.
- The Public Records Appraisal Committee, after consultation and deliberation among its members, will decide on the mode of disposal, i.e., retention for a limited period, transfer to the National Archives or outright destruction.

- Where the Committee decides that a public record is to be destroyed, it has to give public notice of its decision in the Government Gazette and in two daily newspapers. Any person may object to the destruction of that public record within 30 days of the publication of the notice.
- Where no objection is received after the said period of 30 days, the responsible officer of the public body shall cause the record to be destroyed by burning in the presence of any officer deputed by him.
- The officer present at the destruction of the public record shall certify to the Director of the National Archives that the public record has been duly destroyed, in the form specified in the Third Schedule of Government Notice No.28 of 2002.

3. OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

- **We inform our customers that:**
 - We are always glad to welcome them to a guided visit throughout the various sections of the National Archives.
 - We hold open days destined to Secondary Schools every year to allow students to get acquainted with the National Archives and to know its functions and learn about its holdings.
 - The National Archives Research and Publication Fund promotes and encourages research in our archives, finances the publication of research works of archival value, and puts publications on sale.
 - The Director and Senior Officers of our Department inspect regularly, within office hours, and after due notice has been given, public archives lying in repositories other than those of the National Archives, to give advice on ways and means of good and safe keeping of records according to Records Management principles.
 - With a view to valorizing our organization, we regularly participate in outside-office exhibitions, informative activities to make people know our Archives, its holdings and functions.

4. OUR ENDEAVOURS AT COUNTERS AND SEARCH ROOMS

- **We commit ourselves to provide our users with:**
 - A warm welcome when they come at the National Archives;
 - A good comfort and a friendly and quiet atmosphere in our Search Rooms;
 - Guidance and help in their queries and searches;
 - The necessary finding-aids like indexes, inventories, catalogues, repertories for their pre-research investigations;
 - Records and documents in good and well preserved condition.
- **Meeting the requests of our users:**
 - We bind ourselves to meet their requests for information as courteously and quickly as possible;
 - We shall provide them with any document they ask for as quickly as possible, say within minutes after their request;
 - We shall provide them with the copies you apply for not later than one week after their application and payment.

5. DEALING WITH ENQUIRIES

- **If we receive telephone calls from members of the public:**
 - We shall do our best to answer their calls within seconds;
 - Our staff will be courteous and identify themselves by name and section;
 - We shall ensure that you get the correct information from the right section and the right person.
- **If we receive a request in writing:**
 - We shall acknowledge receipt of the letter within three days after receipt;
 - Our replies will be relevant, clear and easy to understand;
 - Our replies will contain, where necessary, reasons and explanations.

- **If we give an appointment to a client:**
 - We shall ensure that the client meets with his/her correspondent as far as possible;
 - We shall take time to listen to the client and we shall answer to his/her queries on the spot, but if we cannot do so, we shall let the latter know why and when he/she can expect a reply;
 - If need be, we shall arrange for another appointment **at the earliest possible**.

FEEDBACK AND COMPLAINTS

We welcome all feedback, suggestions and complaints to improve our services to our customers. All complaints received either orally or in writing will be acknowledged within three days. After investigation, a reply will be sent to the complainant.

If, a member of the public is not satisfied after receiving our reply regarding his/her complaint, the latter may write to the Ministry of Arts and Culture, 7th Floor, N. P. F. Building (Renganaden Seeneevassen Building), Port -Louis.

Suggestions are most welcome.



Le Marchand du Lait (1850)



The Musalman Barber (1850)
Le Barbier Musulman (1850)



Port - Louis Water Front (1835)

OUR ADDRESS

- Our address is:

National Archives Department
Development Bank of Mauritius Complex
Coromandel

- Our telephone numbers are:

233-2950, 233-3848, 233-4211, 233-4199

- Our fax number is: 233-4299

- Our e-mail address is: arc@govmu.org

- Our website address: <http://nationalarchives.govmu.org>

To assist you to locate the National Archives, we have provided you with a site plan.

