

Republic of Lebanon
Office of the Minister of State for Administrative Reform
Center for Public Sector Projects and Studies
(C.P.S.P.S.)

Research & Guidance Administration

OMSAR / PMC / RGA

November 2000

1. Mandate and Mission:

According to Decree Law 115/1959, the Research and Guidance Administration is responsible for guiding the public administrations to the means for improvement and efficiency, especially with regard to:

1-Submitting proposals for the organization of the departments in order to meet the real needs and the citizens' interest, as well as to build their capacity to reach the objectives at the least cost;

2-Improving work procedures by conducting technical studies, simplifying transactions, automating office work, unifying publications' models, organizing archives, organizing the engineering of administrative buildings, unifying office furniture and equipment, and issuing publications;

3-Conducting studies and collecting statistics about the administrations and staff.

According to Decree No 12740 dated 13 May 1963, the RGA became responsible for organizing the rental of buildings for all the public administrations, autonomous agencies and municipalities that are subject to the control of the Court of Audit. The RGA examines the rental contracts and transactions and their cost, and evaluate the extent to which they meet their needs and the citizens' interests.

Problems / Observations

-The RGA is not executing its role as stipulated in DL 115. The bulk of work centers on examining rental contracts and transactions. The RGA is overburdened with this executive function. There is no annual program according to which organizational studies are conducted. The RGA acts upon receiving a request from an administration for reconsidering the cadre, or structure or organizing its administrative building. Consequently, the RGA is not conducting comprehensive organizational studies related to the mission, objectives, structure and work procedures in the administrations. Despite the fact the RGA can take the initiative in conducting studies, it waits for miscellaneous requests submitted by the administrations for some minor issues (consideration of the cadre, staff increase, requests for renting buildings).

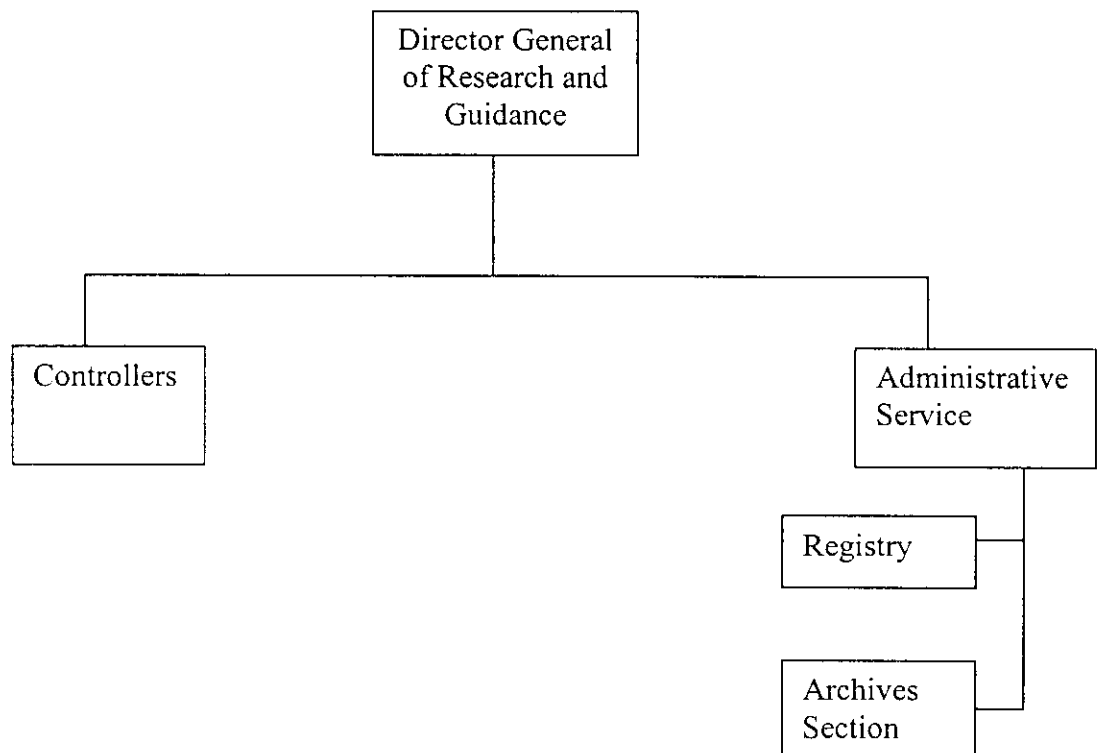
-The annual cost of rental contracts is estimated at L.L 62 billion. The Ministry of Education alone costs L.L 25 billion. The RGA has submitted a study on building special premises for the public administrations to the previous Council of Ministers.

-The Council of Ministers usually adopts the decisions of the RGA on rental contracts and revokes only 5% of the decisions.

2. Organizational Structure:

The Research and Guidance Administration is part of the Central Inspection. The law that transfers it to the Civil Service Board has been passed. However, the organizational decrees have not been issued, yet.

The structure of the RGA is based on teamwork. This ensures flexibility that is needed by the administration.



Observations / Problems:

-The attachment of the RGA to the Central Inspection has given the RGA a negative image in the eyes of the other administrations. The policing, controlling and penalizing functions of the inspection bodies have outweighed research and organizational development, the core function of the RGA.

-The RGA is not involved in the preparation of the new organizational decree. Ironically, it is responsible for developing organizational decrees for the other administrations. The RGA has no idea whether the decree is under preparation by another body or not.

-The transfer of the RGA to the CSB is expected to burden the former with miscellaneous studies of personnel needs by the administrations, instead of initiating comprehensive organizational studies.

-The future location of RGA is still under question. One option could be attaching it to prospective central reform machinery.

-The existence of RGA as a central body has kept a distance with the other administrations. Neither there are offices for RGA in the administrations, nor are there coordinators. The RGA is not fully aware of many organizational and technical changes that have taken place in the other administrations.

-Controllers are not grouped according to the studies that they work on. There is no sectoral basis for work distribution.

3. Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation System:

The Research and Guidance Administration does not develop an annual program according to which it works.

The RGA highlights the output of its work in a small section in the annual report of the Central Inspection. The RGA makes an inventory of studies conducted and transactions examined.

Type of Transaction	1999	Completed	Not Completed
Transactions received	1081		
Organizational studies		155	
Employment		33	
Rental of government buildings		227	
Miscellaneous		47	
TOTAL		462	619

The slow down in the completion of transactions is due to incomplete information provided by the administrations.

The following are examples of the achievements of the RGA:

**Organizational studies:*

- Draft law of the new regulation for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Assessment of the need for the establishment of an autonomous agency known by the name "Civil Aviation General Board"
- Draft law on the transformation of the Directorate General of Antiquities into an autonomous agency
- Draft decree on a new structure for the Railways and Transportation Authority, employment conditions, the cadre and salary scale

- Draft decree on the amendment of the decree that establishes the Judicial IT Center at the Ministry of Justice
- Giving opinion regarding the draft law of the reorganization of the Ministry of Information
- Developing a new regulation for the laborers of the Municipality of Beirut

**Employment Transactions (33 studies):*

- Conducting contests to fill vacant positions of land surveyor, draftsman, and trainer
- Studying the application for conducting contests to fill positions of tax controller, collection controller, accountant, in the cadre of the Directorate General of Finance.

**Rental Transactions:*

-227 transactions have been studied. The increase of transactions is estimated at 26.8% in 1999 compared to 1998.

-The RGA has conducted a comprehensive survey of rentals and gave proposals to construct government buildings and schools to reduce the cost.

**Various Studies:*

****Simplification of procedures:** The RGA has followed up on this issue with the administrations concerned according to the Council of Ministers' Decision No. 12 dated 30/12/1998 and Circular No. 24/99 of the Prime Minister dated 29/4/1999.

- The Ministry of Economy and Trade has submitted a study to the RGA dated 22/9/1999.
- The Ministry of Public Health has submitted a study to the RGA dated 29/9/1999.

The RGA is still following up on the issue of simplification of procedures in the other administrations.

****Key Activities Cards:** The Presidency of the Council of Ministers issued a Circular No. 5/98 dated 26/2/1998 calling on all the administrations, agencies and municipalities that are subject the control of the CSB to develop Key Activities Cards for all the staff. This was supposed to facilitate the work of the employees, speed up transactions processing and facilitate performance evaluation by the superiors on an objective basis. Accordingly, a committee was set up by the Head of Central Inspection on 30/7/1999 headed by the Director General of Research and Guidance Administration and composed of delegates from the RGA and the General Inspectorates. The committee was responsible for studying the cards and speeding up their development. As a first step, the work groups studied and corrected the Key Activities Cards in the following ministries:

- Ministry of Interior
- Ministry of Labor
- Ministry of Public Health
- Ministry of Post and Telecommunications
- Ministry of Hydraulic and Electric Resources
- Ministry of Public Works-Directorate General of Urban Planning

****Unifying office furniture:** The RGA has conducted a study on the unification of office furniture in the administrations. The RGA seeks to develop a decree on the issue in order to save money and prevent wastage of resources.

****The cadre of the Ministry of Education:** The RGA has conducted a statistical study on the cadre of the ministry-the Directorate General of Education. The RGA made a recommendation calling for the observation of certain conditions when seconding teachers to administrative jobs in the ministry. This requires amendment of Decree No. 5257/66 in order to include clear standards for secondment.

Observations / Problems

The recommendations of the RGA are not compulsory. The administrations concerned may not recognize the RGA's opinion.

4. Human Resources:

Currently, there are 12 controllers (grade 3 civil servants) and First Controllers (grade 2 civil servants), in addition to 9 administrators. The total cadre of the RGA has 24 positions.

Observations / Problems:

-The cadre does not meet the volume of work. The RGA was established in 1959. Since then, the cadre remained almost the same. The number of administrations, agencies, and municipalities has increased significantly.

-Vacancies in the cadre are filled by graduates from the NIAD who are holders of degrees in history, literature, antiquities, etc. Despite the importance of these studies, they do not meet the job requirements of the RGA.

-There are no job descriptions for controllers. The experienced controller teach the newly appointed ones.

-Controllers do not receive transport compensation to conduct their studies, as opposed to inspectors. There was a draft decree under preparation in this respect, but was not issued. This negatively affects the motivation of controllers.

5. Training and Development:

Controllers are appointed through the CSB after undertaking a pre-entry training session at the National Institute of Administration and Development. Controllers are promoted to be First Controllers after spending 5 years in service and undertaking a post-entry training session at NIAD.

Controllers and First Controllers are sent irregularly to attend seminars and workshops.

The RGA does not have a library. Controllers do not have an access to the Internet to make their research and be up-to-date with the best practices.

Observations / Problems:

-The staff lack specialized training in the fields of organizational development, management, policy analysis and computer. Controllers have used, in the past, to attend training sessions in the U.S.A and France (ENA). This is not the case anymore. The RGA used to be more advanced in the field compared to the other administrations. Today, it is the other way round.

-Research and development is the core function of the RGA. It cannot function properly without being able to be up-to-date with recent developments in the field of administrative development worldwide. This requires a modern library, subscriptions with professional journals and publications and access to the Internet.

7. Work Processes and Procedures

The Research and Guidance Administration interacts with the administrations through the Civil Service Board. The administration concerned sends its needs to the CSB for new employees, amendment of the cadre, filling vacancies or organizational changes. The CSB transfers the file to the RGA. The transaction is first registered at the Registry, then conveyed to the Director General, who in turn distributes transactions on the Controllers. The latter make their studies and recommendations and send them back to the Director General. Then the studies are typed and registered. The RGA submits the studies to the CSB. The CSB can take a different position and contact the administration concerned directly. The CSB can amend the cadre and structure without informing the RGA about the changes. Sometimes the ministries concerned send their transactions directly to the RGA, but the response of the latter is conveyed through the CSB. The RGA might receive transactions from the Secretariat General of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers in case the issue is on the work agenda of the Cabinet.

The autonomous agencies send their transactions directly to the RGA to support their decisions before getting the approval of the tutelage authority. Municipalities send their transactions to the RGA through the Ministry of Interior.

Observations / Problems:

-Since the CSB and the administration concerned may not inform the RGA about organizational changes, the RGA is not up-to-date with the organizational developments in these administrations. Besides, the recommendations of the RGA are not mandatory. Hence, the RGA does not have a full inventory of all the jobs in the administrations.

-Documents and studies require proper archiving. There is a need to establish an electronic archiving system that the Archives Section in the Administrative Service lacks. Coordination with the National Archives Agency should be emphasized. The RGA did not know about many old studies conducted by the RGA itself and were saved at the National Archives Agency. These were discovered by coincidence.

8. Information Technology and Office Equipment:

There are only 2 PC's used for typing reports. There is no access to the Internet and no IT positions established in the cadre.

Observations / Problems:

-The Research and Guidance Administration is probably among the most neglected Lebanese administrations in the field of IT.

-Controllers cannot be up-to-date with the international best practices in the fields of administrative reform and development without having a modern library and access to the Internet.

-There is a need to develop an electronic archiving system to facilitate the storage and retrieval of reports and transactions. No enough space for the big volumes of papers is available.

-There is no enough office space available for the staff.

-There is shortage of the volumes of legislative texts that are frequently used by the controllers. They can be made available on CD.