



Dhivehin - Always Maldivian, Forever Independent

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Control of Expatriate Workers

PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT



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AUDITOR GENERAL'S OFFICE
Male', Republic of Maldives

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

1. The Department of Immigration and Emigration (DIE) is the principal government body responsible for the control of expatriate workers in the Maldives. In order to discharge its mandate, the DIE issues quotas to employers as a means of controlling the number of expatriates employed in various sectors in the Maldivian economy. On the application of employers holding quota, it issues permits for individual expatriate workers to enter the country; it takes deposits from employers for each such worker; and controls and manages the border to prevent illegal entry in to the country.
2. Quota is the limit allowed to employers on the number of expatriates they can employ. Quota should be obtained from the DIE before applying for employment approval. The DIE uses an automatic formula from Xpat online system to generate the number of quotas available, and the formula is based on the work type of an employer. This formula does not consider the economic need of the country. And there are situations where the number of quotas generated by the formula is more than the number of quota requested.
3. The objectives of the DIE include attracting and approving highly skilled immigrants and assisting the economic development of tourism and other industries by issuing visas and work permits. According to the DIE they have not conducted any research or implemented sound policy framework to identify the number of expatriate workers needed in comparison to the economic needs of the country. As a result there has been a rapid increase in the number of expatriate workers in recent years and preventing illegal expatriates have become one of the main objectives of the department.
4. The preliminary result of the population and housing census taken on November 2014 shows that there are 58,683 foreign expatriates working in the Maldives, out of which 20,360 expatriates are working in Male', while 38,323 expatriates are working in the islands.
5. The audit was initially scoped to examine the control of expatriate workers in the country for the past five years (2009-2013). However, the records maintained by the responsible entities – the Ministry of Human Resources Youth and Sports (MHYRS) and the DIE – prior to November 2012 were



incomplete in some areas and not always consistent between bodies. Hence, the audit examination mainly focused on the period starting from 26 November 2012, which was when the DIE started using the “Xpat online” system to maintain records relating to the expatriate workers. Furthermore, the audit focused on the DIE’s activity to control entry and exit to the country through air rather than the entry and exit to the country through sea. According to the DIE, the risk of illegal entry through the sea is low as sound controls are established to identify the illegal entrants through the sea.

6. Prior to 2014, effective enforcement measures had not been taken by the DIE to minimize the number of illegal expatriate workers in the country. In 2014, the DIE took measures to increase the number of investigations conducted to identify the illegal expatriate workers and started maintaining records of investigations conducted.

Key findings

EFFICIENCY OF THE DIE IN ISSUING QUOTAS AND WORK PERMITS

7. The criteria for issuing quotas are specified in the standard operating procedures of the DIE. We observed that out of a sample of 40 quotas taken during the course of the audit, 27 quotas (68%) were issued when these criteria were not met.
8. The DIE uses an automatic formula in the Xpat online system to generate the quota available to the employer based on the nature and size of work. We observed the number of quota generated by the system through the use of the formula was more than that were requested by the employers. Hence, the use of the formula resulted in issuing more quotas than was required. Such instances indicate that the DIE did not consider the economic needs when quotas were issued.
9. We observed that inspections were not performed of all the worksites before quotas were issued. This resulted in incorrect issuing of quotas; a police investigation report revealed issuance of quotas in respect of nineteen worksites that did not exist.
10. The DIE has not conducted any research on the number of skilled and unskilled immigrant workers that would be needed in the country. As there isn’t any sound policy framework for the number of workers needed in the country this has increased the number of expatriates in the country.
11. The criteria for issuing employment approvals or work permits are specified in the standard operating procedures of the DIE. We observed that out of a sample of 40 employment approvals taken during the course of the audit, 13 employment approvals (33%) were issued when these criteria were not met.

12. The migration of data from the Labour Ministry system to the Xpat online system was not performed in a planned and systematic manner, as a result complete information regarding expatriates prior to November 2012, is not available in the Xpat online system.
13. The responsible entities have not maintained complete records of expired work permits prior to November 2012. However, between 26 November 2012 and 31 December 2013 there were 9,914 expired work permits that were neither renewed nor cancelled.
14. We observed that some of the employers have not paid visa fees according to the Work Visa Regulation. As a result there is an outstanding visa fee of MVR 27.3m as at 24 September 2014. While the DIE is aware of these outstanding visa fees, the Department has not used its powers such as fining or holding passport of the employers which is stipulated in the clause 18 of the Work Visa Regulation to intervene and take appropriate action in respect of either employers or employees concerned – apart from blacklisting the employers.
15. The survey that was conducted during the audit revealed that a significant number of employers who took part in the survey were not satisfied with the service provided by the DIE.

EFFECTIVENESS OF THE DEPOSIT SCHEME

16. The rapid changes in the process of collecting and maintaining the deposits and as different entities used different system to maintain the records of the deposits resulted in the information relating to deposit not being kept in an appropriate manner.
17. We observed that there were instances where the DIE had not complied with the Work Visa Regulation when collecting deposits – for instance, the department has collected deposits from government institutions while this is a violation of the regulation. Furthermore, the sum of money owed by the employers to the DIE resulting from changes brought to the deposit rates have not been collected by the DIE.
18. The Work Visa Regulation states that the main purpose of collecting a deposit for each expatriate worker is to expend in sending the worker home using his or her deposit if the need arises. However, there were instances where the DIE has used other workers' deposit funds to send a body of a deceased worker back to its country. Sending a corpse abroad normally costs around MVR 50,000 and the regulation clearly says that this cost has to be borne by the employee's family or the employer where the contract says so.
19. The Work Visa Regulation states that deposits are to be refunded to employers in the event of the employee's departure, change of employer or the death of an employee. However, the DIE has



retained the deposits of the workers who have left the country under the Voluntary Departure Programme at their own expense.

20. Some expatriates whose deposits were collected and managed by the Ministry of Human Resource Youth and Sports (MHRYS) were deported from the deposit funds collected and managed by the DIE; this arrangement was approved by the Ministry of Finance and Treasury (MOFT) in July 2012 on condition of reimbursement from MHRYS funds. But reimbursements to the deposits funds of the DIE were not made at the time of the completion of this audit (October 2014).
21. The Foreign Employment Regulation requires deposit rates to be published and revised twice a year. However, we observed that deposit rates were revised last on 4 August 2011, while rates for five countries have not been published at all.

EFFECTIVENESS OF THE MONITORING AND ENFORCEMENT MEASURES

22. The Monitoring and Enforcement Section established by the DIE to identify and monitor illegal expatriates in the Maldives, had conducted only limited activities prior to 2014 to identify employers and expatriates violating the regulation.
23. Prior to 2014, deported expatriates have re-entered Maldives more than once as biometric data was not available then. We found that police investigations revealed three cases of deported expatriates re-entering Maldives prior to the bio metric system being in place. Even with the current system in place, the DIE is unsure whether deported expatriates will not re-enter at a time when system is unavailable.
24. The DIE implemented the PISCES system in 2013 to help it strengthen the control in the border and preventing illegal entry into the country. However we observed that there were difficulties with entering and editing data and the system is not integrated with the Xpat online system which is hindering the achievement of the DIE's objective in minimizing illegal immigration.
25. Data relating to workers who left the country on the Voluntary Departure Programme have not been properly maintained. The DIE has not verified whether all those workers that registered under the programme have actually left; hence, the actual number of workers that departed under the programme is unknown.
26. Accuracy of the data in the Xpat online system cannot be ensured. Those expatriate workers leaving the country using travel documents cannot be traced from the system as the information in the travel document is based on the information given by the expatriate and does not necessarily match with the information recorded in the system. The employment approval of those leaving the country using a travel document would not be cancelled from the system.



27. The complaints filed with the DIE were not maintained and handled in a systematic manner. We observed that there were some complaints that had not been attended for over a year.

Conclusion on Value for Money

28. In 2014, to reduce the number of illegal expatriate workers in the country, the Monitoring and Enforcement Section of the DIE started conducting frequent investigations and they have strengthened their enforcement measures such as levying a fine on employers violating the regulations. However, the DIE made slow progress in areas such as improving efficiency, staff capability quality of data and maintenance of complete data on the Xpat Online System. Data in “Labour Database” maintained by MHRYS, “Work Visa Database” and “dashboard” should be integrated with the Xpat Online System. This would make it easier to check all the data related to expatriates from one database and enhance the completeness and accuracy of the information.
29. The main purpose of the Xpat online system was to maintain the records of the expatriates in an efficient and effective manner. Although this was achieved to some extent there are further developments going on such as integration of the databases previously used to maintain the data of expatriates and improving the report generating function.
30. To achieve value for money in its work, the DIE must communicate regularly with the National Centre for Information Technology (NCIT) and speed up the progress of implementing changes that need to be made to the Xpat Online System to make it more efficient. The DIE must also increase efficiency of its employees in order to improve service delivery. Furthermore, the DIE has to take further action to strengthen the control and management of the border system.

Recommendations

31. **The DIE should follow the Standard Operating Procedures set for issuing of quotas and employment approvals.** In order to process the requests from public expeditiously, the DIE staff should thoroughly conduct checks at all stages so that all incomplete information or errors are communicated to the public as early as possible.
32. **Based on the needs of the economy, the DIE should establish a sound framework on the number of skilled and unskilled expatriates needed in the country.** The DIE should review the framework regularly and monitor that quota have not been issued in excess of the needs of the economy.
33. **The DIE should develop a plan to implement the process of systematically integrating the data from the Labour database system into the Xpat online system.** The system should provide information on the check-ins and check-outs related to the expatriates, provide current status of the expatriates more accurately and generate reports as required.

34. **The DIE should take action against the employers who have not paid the work visa fee.** The DIE should take action against the employer as per clause 13 (e) and clause 18 of Work Visa Regulation.
35. **The DIE should create a culture of serving the public.** This would enhance the quality of the services offered to the public. The staff should be made aware of the strategic objectives and the Department as a whole should work towards achieving these objectives. The DIE should evaluate the staff capacity against the workload and recruit more staff where necessary. A more systematic approach for handling and maintaining records of complaints also needs to be in place.
36. **Records should be maintained effectively and regularly updated.** The records relating to the expatriate workers (deposits, visa fees, arrivals and departures) should be maintained effectively and the records of expatriates should be regularly updated. Further, biometric data should be used to identify the expatriates arriving and leaving the country at all times.
37. **The DIE should collect, use or refund deposits as per the Work Visa Regulation.** Since the deposits are collected as a security to meet the potential costs of deporting expatriates, the deposit rates need to be revised at regular intervals to reflect the costs likely to be incurred. In addition, changes brought therein needs to be communicated with the employers and the incremental deposits should be collected.
38. **Deposits should be used for the purpose for which they are collected.** They should only be used for the deportation of the particular expatriate workers in respect of whom they were collected.
39. **The DIE should strengthen the monitoring and enforcement process of expatriate workers.** The DIE should increase the number of investigations conducted, should impose the relevant enforcement measure and monitor expatriate workers.
40. **Actions should be taken against the employers and expatriate workers who breach the Immigration Act, Work Visa Regulation and any other regulation of the Maldives.** The DIE should take actions against the employer and expatriate as per clause 18 of the Work Visa Regulation.
41. **Provide regular training to the staff.** To develop their skill and knowledge in using PISCES and Xpat online system efficiently, staff should be given regular trainings.



PART 1: INTRODUCTION

The main stages of development

1.1 A significant increase in the number of expatriate workers in the country has been observed since 2009 and this has received considerable media attention. The DIE does not have up-to-date records of the total number of expatriates working in the country but Figure 1 shows the trend in the number of expatriate workers registered increasing between 2009, 2010 and 2011.

Figure 1: No of Expatriates registered

	2009	2010	2011
No of expatriates registered	57,968	83,418	99,369

1.2 In addition to the increase in the number of registered expatriate workers, there has also been an increase in the number of illegal expatriate workers in the country. As a result the government has initiated several programmes to repatriate and re-integrate illegal expatriate workers in the Maldives. Under the programmes carried out from 2009 to 2011, 4,745 expatriates were repatriated and 2,507 expatriates were re-integrated by being allowed to return legally. In addition, in 2013 the DIE started a Voluntary Departure Programme under which 5,132 expatriates were registered.

1.3 Under the Immigration Act and Work Visa Regulation (R-7/2010), anyone seeking to enter the country for the purpose of working should have a valid work visa. For tourists, a tourist visa is granted if the tourist meets the requirement of having a valid return ticket and booking arrangements in a hotel; if this requirement is not met, the tourist will be deported. There have been cases where foreign nationals have entered the country on a tourist visa and overstay in the country illegally.

1.4 Minimizing the number of illegal expatriates is one of the main objectives of the DIE. Under the work visa regulation (R-7/2010), the Controller of Immigration and Emigration has the power to take action against expatriates and employers who have violated the Immigration Act and Work Visa Regulation (R-7/2010).

1.5 The key dates of the changes that had occurred in the task of recording and monitoring of expatriate workers are shown in Figure 2 and the key terms used in this report are shown in Figure 3.

Figure 2: Key dates of the changes in the task of recording and monitoring of expatriate workers



Figure 3: Key terms

Quota	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The limit allowed to employers on the number of expatriates who can be employed. Quota should be obtained from the DIE before applying for employment approval.
Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site is the place where expatriates work. Quota is issued for each site and expatriates should be working in that particular site.
Site Inspection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When the employer request for quota, the site is checked by Quota unit to verify the information provided by the employer.
Work Visa Card	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work visa card should be with the employee all the time and should be shown to any government entity when needed. Work visa card is issued for the duration of work visa and MVR 50 is charged for issuance of the card.
Work Visa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When an application is submitted requesting for work visa, the DIE checks the documents submitted and issue visa to work in the country. A valid work visa allows employees to enter the country repeatedly.
Work Visa Fee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A monthly fee of MVR250 should be paid to MIRA for each expatriate working in the country.
Reissue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issuing the Employment Approvals from Xpat Online System that was issued from the Labour Database.
Labour Database	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The system used by the MHREL to maintain data related to expatriate workers.
Employment Approval (EA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Permission granted from foreign employment division to foreigners for employment in the country. EA is used interchangeably with Work permit. Work permit was the old term used while EA is the new term.
Raid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An inspection carried out by the Monitoring and Enforcement Section in order to identify illegal expatriates and send them back to their country.
Migration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refers to a table on the Xpat online system in which data from the Labour database is recorded. If an expatriate who has been previously recorded in the Labour Database is issued with an EA from the Xpat Online system, the data on his previous employments is accessible on this tab.
Employer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual or the organization the expatriate workers is employed with.
Xpat Online System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The system developed by the NCIT and used by the DIE for the purpose of maintaining data on the expatriate workers.
Employee/Expatriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foreign employee working for a Maldivian individual or organization
Deposit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The amount of money that should be paid by the employer 48 hours before the arrival of an expatriate worker. Deposit is used to deport expatriate workers who violate the Immigration Act and the Regulations under the Act. The deposit rate reflects the economy class airfare and other expenses for accomodating a worker until the worker is sent home, if the situation arises.
Voluntary Departure Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A programme held from 23rd December 2013 until the end of 31st March 2014 to send the illegal expatriates back to their country. Expatriates had to get registered and pay for the tickets on their own to leave under this programme.



Scope and methodology of the AGO examination

1.6 The audit examined the process and procedures as well as the measures taken by the government for the control of expatriate workers. The audit assessed performance against five main criteria:

- The compliance with the norms and procedures established by the DIE when issuing quotas and work permits.
- The effectiveness of the measures taken by the government to identify and reduce illegal expatriate workers
- The efficiency and the effectiveness of the Xpat online system
- The effectiveness of the deposit scheme
- The effectiveness of the monitoring and enforcement procedures

1.7 The audit was conducted based on the ISSAI (International Standards of Supreme Audit Institutions) for Performance Audit. The audit examined:

- Efficiency in issue of quotas and work permits (Part 2) – Whether quotas and work permits are issued as per the criteria set, considering the economic needs and in an efficient manner.
- Effectiveness of the deposit scheme (Part 3) – Whether deposits collected are maintained and recorded appropriately and the deposits are used for the intended purpose.
- Effectiveness of the monitoring and enforcement of the regulations for foreign employment (Part 4) – Whether investigations are conducted and enforcement measures taken against illegal immigrants and employers identified.

PART 2: EFFICIENCY OF THE DIE IN ISSUING QUOTAS AND WORK PERMITS

- 2.1 Under the Immigration Act (1/2007) and the Work Visa Regulation (R-7/2010), expatriates who enter the Republic of the Maldives for the purpose of working should have a valid work visa. Employers of expatriates should have approval to employ expatriates, and be allocated a quota setting the maximum number of expatriates they may employ. Quotas and work permits/employment approvals are issued when the criteria stated in the Work Visa Regulation (R-7/2010) are met; failing to comply with the said criteria renders the expatriate an illegal expatriate worker that makes the employer guilty of an offence.
- 2.2 The DIE has further established certain criteria in its Statement of Operating Procedures to be followed when quotas and work permit are issued. Following these criteria would strengthen the fairness and equality of the DIE when issuing quotas and work permits.
- 2.3 On 26 November 2012, the DIE stopped using the “labour database” to record data on expatriate workers and implemented a new online system, called the “Xpat online” developed by the NCIT; the purpose of which was to improve the efficiency of the service (eg. issuing quota and work permit) provided by them. Figure 4 shows the total number of quotas and work permits issued between 26 November 2012 and 31 December 2013 from the Xpat Online system.

Figure 4: Quotas and work permits issued (26th November 2012 to 31 December 2013)

Details	Number
Quotas issued	3,920
Work permit issued	65,984

- 2.4 This part studies the norms and procedures that the DIE follows in issuing quotas and work permits. The main objective of this part is to assess whether quotas and work permits are issued on a fair basis and to assess the efficiency of the DIE. We examined the main activities needed to meet this objective as follows:

- The norms and procedures followed by the DIE when issuing quotas and work permits.
- Quotas and work permits were issued by considering the economic needs of the country
- DIE’s action on the outstanding visa fees and expired work permits.
- The efficiency of DIE in issuing quotas and work permits.

Quota issued when criteria were not met

2.5 The standard operating procedures (SOP) established by the DIE set out the criteria to be met before a quota is issued to an employer. According to the SOPs the DIE staff has to verify the documents (employment contracts, relevant approval from government authority, passport copies, etc.) submitted and perform a surprise site inspection prior to the issue of the quota. The documents submitted by the employer are checked by the DIE staff in three stages: preliminary check stage; verification stage; and approval stage. In these stages the DIE staffs are instructed in the SOPs to perform a check whether the documents submitted by the employer are relevant and reliable. In addition, during the site inspection the DIE staffs are required to verify that the information submitted is factually correct. However, in our audit of a sample of 40 sample cases, we found that in 27 (68%) out of the 40 cases the quotas issued did not meet the criteria set by the DIE. This occurred as a result of not performing proper checks during the three stages. As a consequence, quotas were issued even though site inspection was not carried out and relevant documents were not attached. Furthermore, the DIE has issued quotas despite site inspection highlighting problems in the sites. Hence, more quotas were issued for more workers than required while some quotas issued did not meet the criteria set by the DIE.

Quotas issued more than the number of quotas requested by the employer

2.6 The number of quotas to be issued is generated from a formula in the Xpat online system. The number of quotas generated thus depends on the nature of employment. We observed that issuing quotas based on the numbers generated by the system through the use of the formula resulted in the DIE issuing more quotas than were requested by the employers. This could lead employers to take personal benefit by selling the extra quota to other employers which would further increase the number of illegal expatriates in the Maldives and the Police officers informed that some companies are formed for this purpose. Moreover, quotas exceeding significantly over the actual work permits implies that quotas have been issued in excess of the needs of the economy.

Case Study 1

Company A had a quota for 310 workers available prior to 2012. In 2012, the company requested an increase in the quota for an additional 90 workers. The DIE used the automatic formulae to generate the number of employment approvals to be issued to the company; and the formulae generated a figure of 554. Even though the company requested for an increase in quota for 90 workers, the DIE issued an increase of 224, which was 154 more than the number requested.

Quotas issued to sites that does not exist

- 2.7 According to the Site Inspection Guideline the DIE has to conduct site inspection of the requested site when the site is located in Male', Villingilli or Hulhumale. If the site is located elsewhere, the Island Council conducts inspection of the sites in the island and sends a report to the DIE. In our audit we observed that the DIE had not conducted site inspection prior to 2013 and from the documentary evidence, there is no record of MHRYS having conducted site inspections in the period they issued quotas. Furthermore, we observed that Maldives Police Service conducted an investigation on the quotas issued from MHRYS in response to a request from the DIE. The investigation reported that quotas were issued to nineteen sites that did not exist; and that the MHRYS had not verified the site inspection report submitted by the employer when quotas were issued.
- 2.8 The site inspection guideline states that site inspection will not to be carried out for safari boats, resorts and vessels. The DIE has not given any explanation on the reasons for these sites being exempt. This exemption could be misused to increase the quotas by the employers. For instance, we observed that, while requesting for an increase in the quota for a resort, the employer has included the number of local staff working in the head office located in Male' as staff working in the resort; in an attempt to increase the quota – the formula used to generate additional quota for resorts is based on the local staff working in the site. Hence, as the site inspection was not carried out for the resort the additional quota was issued as requested.

Quotas and work permits were issued without considering the economic needs

- 2.9 The objectives of the DIE include attracting and approving highly skilled immigrants and assisting the economic development of tourism and other industries by issuing visas and work permits. However, the DIE has not conducted any research on the number of workers that would be needed for each industry and the number of skilled and unskilled immigrant workers that would be needed in the country. As a result the number of expatriate workers is not based on a sound policy framework for the number of workers needed for the country's needs and this has significantly increased the number of expatriate workers in the country.

Employment Approval (Work permit) issued when criteria were not met

- 2.10 The DIE has established the criteria that should be met prior to the issue of an Employment Approval. As a control measure on whether these criteria have been met, the DIE performs checks on three stages namely, preliminary checks stage, verification stage and approval stage, which are performed by different staff designated to the stage of performing the check. However in our audit we identified that out of 40 samples checked 13 Employment Approvals (33%) were issued when

the criteria were not met. This implies that the checks were not performed sufficiently and with due care. The issues identified are as follows;

- Discrepancies between information contained in various documents
- Salary stated in the letter of appointment differed from that stated in the contract
- Year of birth differed between passport and contract
- Occupation stated in the application differed from that stated in the contract
- Indistinct certificates and letters of experience accepted
- Letter of appointment not stamped in red or blue (to verify it as original) by the company to ensure the authenticity of the document.
- Employment approvals not linked to “migration” data in the system (this issue is described in more detail in paragraph 2.11)
- Employment Approval issued for periods exceeding the contract period.

2.11 Data on the quotas and employment approvals issued from the “Labour Database” is stored in the “migration” tab in the Xpat Online system. One of the criteria in issuing employment approvals is that the DIE should check the previous employment approvals issued to the employer from “migration” tab and ensure that they are registered in the Xpat online system. Any new applications can only be processed if all the previous Employment Approvals issued are registered in the Xpat online system and if the given quota does not exceed. In a sample tested for five of the small companies we observed that for one of the companies, employment approvals recorded in the “migration” tab were not registered in the Xpat online system. Due to this, two additional employment approvals in excess of the quota given were issued. Further, we observed that this task was not performed by the DIE for large entities as the DIE have to perform it manually and as it is a tedious task. Hence, there is a possibility that employment approvals issued to large companies might be in excess of the quota issued to them.

Data Migrated without proper planning and complete information not available on the new system

2.12 The system used to manage and record data on the expatriate workers was changed from the “Labour Database” (previous system used to record data on expatriate workers) to the “Xpat online system” (the current system) on 26th November 2012. The DIE informs that this change was abrupt and we observed that the process of this change was not conducted in a planned and systematic manner. A migration plan was neither drafted nor adopted.

The Labour Database was developed by a private contractor and during the period of the contract MHRYS had not obtained the ownership, source codes and system manuals of the database. Due to these flaws in the contract between the contractor and the MHRYS, the entities responsible for this –



the DIE and the NCIT – were unable to get assistance as required from the contractor to extract required data from the system. Further, the DIE and the NCIT were unable to ensure the accuracy of the data already existing in the previous system. Hence, the complete records on the old database were not migrated to the new system other than that information stored in the “migration” tab on the record of work permits issued from the “Labour database”.

Due to the above mentioned reasons, as the DIE and the NCIT were unable to provide information on the status of the quota and work permits issued from the Labour Database, we were unable to perform the tests relating to quotas and work permits that were issued prior to 26th November 2012.

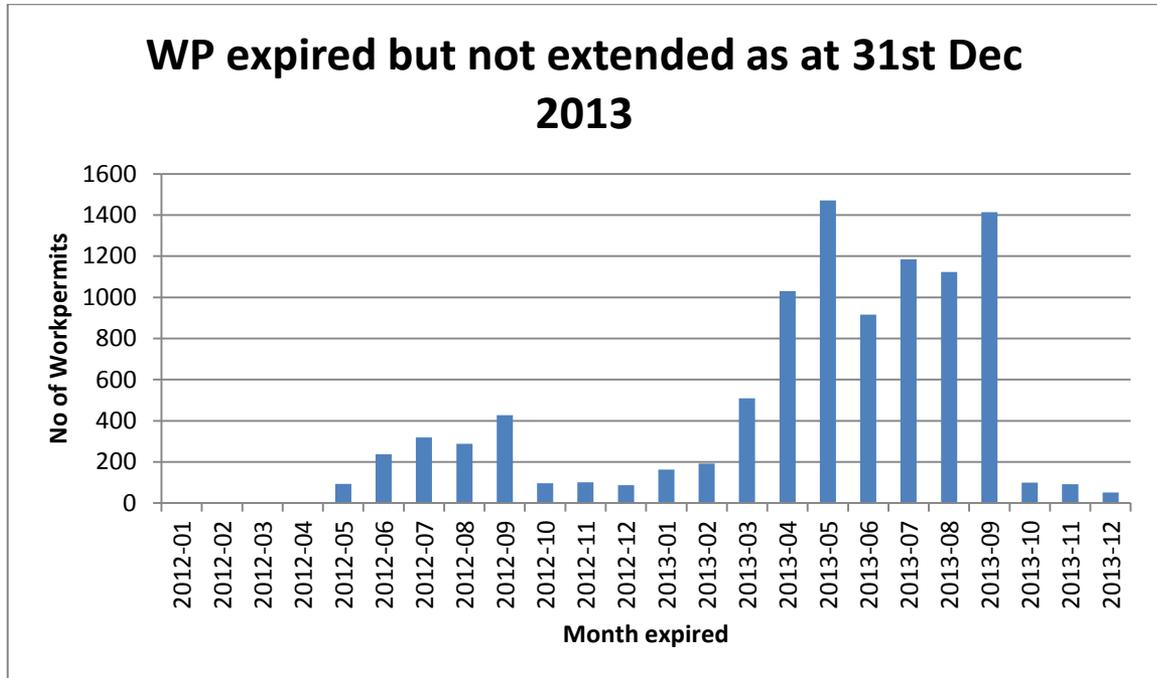
Record of expired work permits not maintained prior to 2012

2.13 Work permits are issued to an expatriate worker for a year and have to be renewed annually. For those expatriates who leaves the country the employer has to request to cancel the work permits. If the work permits are not renewed annually the expatriate worker is staying in the country illegally. To determine the total number of illegal expatriates working, we requested data on the total number of the expired work permits from 2009 till 2013. The DIE was unable to provide this information for the requested period, but was able to provide a list of expired work permits for the period from 26 November 2012, when the Xpat online system was established. Although previous work permits issued have to be linked to Xpat online system through “migration”, this data is not integrated with the system– hence, the reports generated by the Xpat online system will not include the data stored in the “migration”. Further, neither the DIE nor NCIT can assure that the “migration” includes all the records of quotas and work permits issued by the previous system. Hence, the total number of expired work permits during the period of 2009 to 2013 cannot be verified.

In the list provided by the DIE, 9,914 expired work permits were recorded for the period 26 November until 31 December 2013. The work permits issued prior to 26 November 2012 are not included in this count. This means that government has lost at least an estimated value of MVR 29.7¹ m as work visa fees receivable on these expired work permits. Figure 5 shows the number of work permit expired and not extended.

¹ Estimated Figure= MVR 250 (Visa fee per month) x 12 months x 9,914 (number of expired work permits)
=MVR 29.7m

Figure 5: WP expired but not extended as at 31st December 2013



The Figure 5 shows the number of work permit expired in each of the months from January 2012 to December 2013. The trend on the number of work permits expired have increased in some of the months and decreased in others. In total there is 9,914 work permits expired till 31st December 2014.

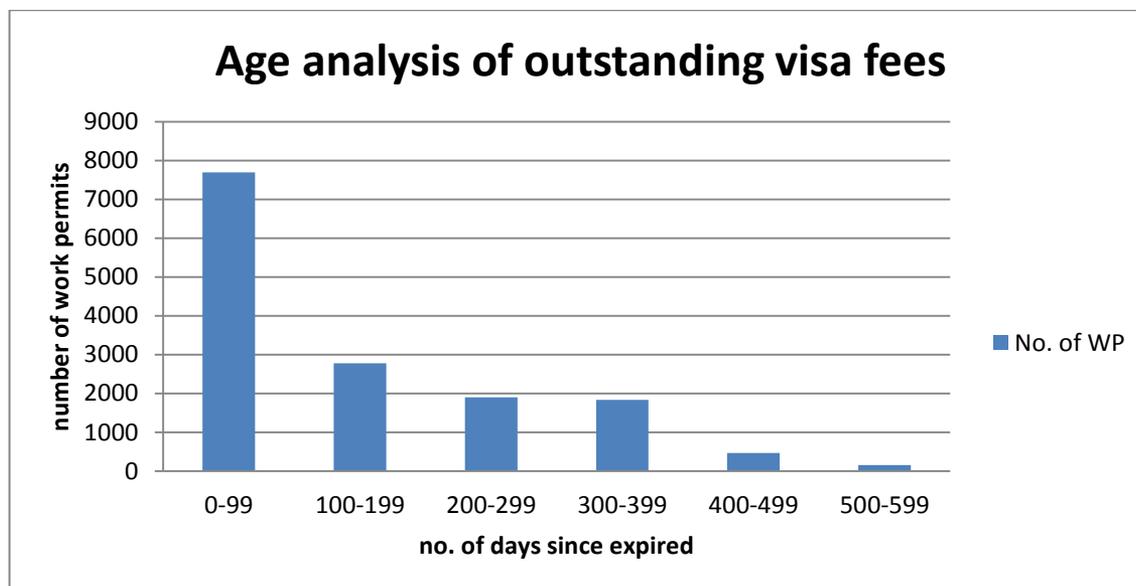
Outstanding Visa fees of MVR 27.3 million and appropriate action was not taken by the DIE

2.14 According to clause 13 (a) of the Work Visa Regulation (R-7/2010), it is the responsibility of the employer of the expatriate worker to pay a monthly fee of MVR250 as work visa fee. Clause 13 (e) of the regulation states that the Controller of Immigration and Emigration has the power to deport the expatriate worker and take action (as per clause 18 of the regulation) against an employer who has not paid the visa fee. However, we observed that the DIE had not taken any action against the expatriates or the employer who have not paid the outstanding fees; while outstanding visa fees amounted to MVR 27.3 m for the period starting from 26 November 2012 till 23 September 2014. The outstanding visa fees prior to 26 November 2012 could not be determined as the records were not maintained properly. Furthermore, despite the visa fees not being paid by the employers, there are instances when the government had to bear costs such as accommodation and food for the expatriate workers who were arrested in the investigations conducted.

Figure 6 shows an age analysis of the work visa fees outstanding from 26 November 2013 to 23 September 2014.



Figure 6: Age Analysis of outstanding visa fees



The Figure 6 shows that visa fee for 7,693 work permits were not paid for up to 99 days, visa fee for 2,781 work permits were not paid between 100-199 days, visa fee for 1,903 work permits were not paid between 200-299 days, visa fee for 1,834 work permits were not paid between 300-399 days, visa fee for 469 work permits were not paid between 400-499 days and 158 work permit were not paid between 500-599 days.

Work visa fee paid shown as pending visa fee from the Xpat online System

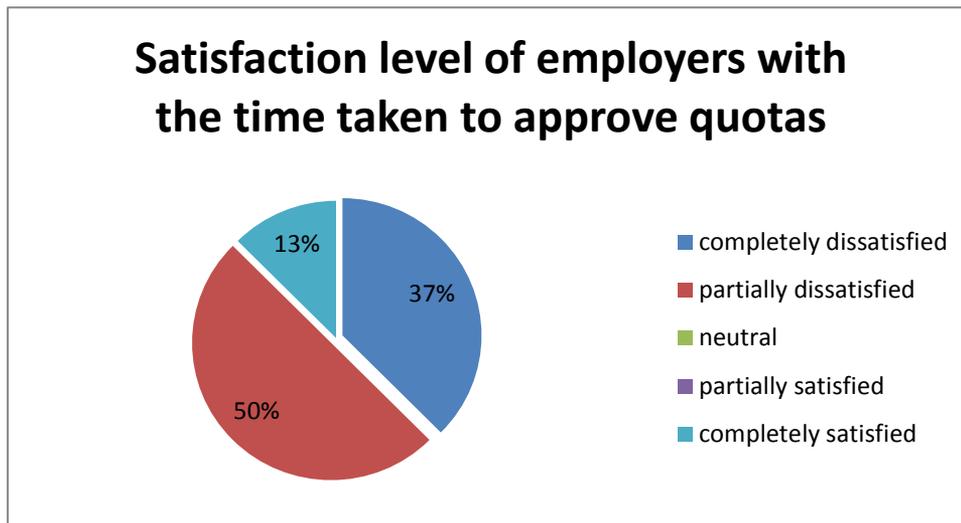
2.15 Some of the work visa fees that have been paid by the employers were shown as pending (unpaid) visa fees from the Xpat online system. The NCIT informed that there are instances where the work visa fees could be shown as pending even if the visa fee has been paid by the employer. Such instances are when the refunds of deposits are pending or when a work permit has been cancelled. Due to this error in the system, the reports of the outstanding work visa fees generated from the Xpat online system cannot be relied upon as it include some work visa fees that have already been paid by the employers.

Employers not satisfied with the service provided by the DIE

2.16 During the audit we conducted a survey to identify the satisfaction level of the employers regarding the time taken to issue and reissue work permits. The survey forms were sent to 26 random employers (companies and individuals) who get services from the DIE. Out of the 26 employers 10 employers filled the survey forms.

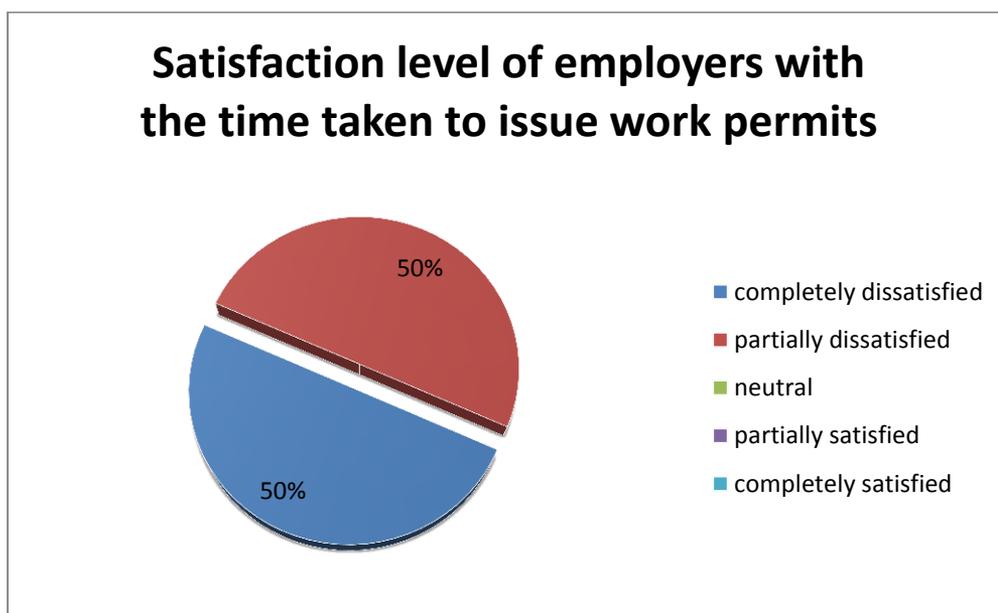
2.17 The result of the survey in Figure 7 shows that 37% of the employers were completely dissatisfied with the time taken to approve quotas and 50% of the employers were partially dissatisfied with the time taken to approve quotas and 13% of the employers were completely satisfied with the time taken to approve quotas. DIE informed that the delays and backlog were caused due to the system difficulties and inadequate resources.

Figure 7: Satisfaction level of employers with the time taken to approve quota



2.18 The result of the survey in Figure 8 shows that 50% of the employers were completely dissatisfied with the time taken to issue work permits and 50% of the employers were partially dissatisfied with the time taken to issue work permits.

Figure 8: Satisfaction level of employers with the time taken to issue work permit



2.19 The survey result on the Satisfaction level of employers with the time taken to reissue work permits, Figure 9 shows that 50% of the employers were completely dissatisfied with the time taken, 37% of the employers were partially dissatisfied with the time taken and 13% of the employers were completely satisfied with the time taken to reissue work permits.

Figure 9: Satisfaction level of employers with the time taken to reissue work permits



2.20 The survey also disclosed that 20% of the participants highlighted that the staff of DIE deals with the employers impolitely when they give services. Furthermore they highlighted that the staff in the counters did not had enough knowledge about the services they are providing and also that DIE had lack of staff as a result sometimes the counters are empty and they have to wait longer to get the service.

PART 3: EFFECTIVENESS OF THE DEPOSIT SCHEME

- 3.1 Clause 7 of the Work Visa Regulation states that the employer should pay a deposit (the deposit amount includes one way economy class ticket of the respective country plus an estimated rate for food, transportation, etc) within 48 hours of entering the country. According to the Work Visa Regulation the deposit would be used for the purpose of deporting the expatriate worker. When the expatriate worker leaves the country, the employer can claim for a refund.
- 3.2 During the past five years there were rapid changes in the maintenance and recording of deposits. The records of the deposits had been kept and maintained in different databases and in different entities which made the scheme to be inefficient. Figure 10 shows the value of deposits held by each database as at 31 December 2013.

Figure 10: Total value of Deposit in the database as at 31 December 2013

Period	Entity responsible for collection	Database used	Total Deposits held as at 31 December 2013 (MVR)
Prior to 2009	MHRYS	Labour Database	33,545,692
2009 to 20 th June 2011	DIE	Work Visa Database	348,895,636
20 th June 2011 to March 2012	MIRA	Dash board	Information not available
April 2012 to date	DIE	Xpat Online System	199,431,230

- 3.3 This was one of the key areas examined in the audit. Deposits received from employers are a future liability of the government and it is the government's responsibility to maintain the deposit received in an efficient and effective manner. We examined the main activities needed to ensure this objective, as follows:

- Deposit was recorded and maintained in an efficient and effective manner.
- Deposits were handled as per the rules and regulations.
- Deposit funds were used only for the intended purpose.

Failure to maintain the records of the deposits

- 3.4 Prior to 2009 deposits were collected and the records were kept by the MHRYS. From 2009 till 20 June 2011 the task was transferred to MIRA; and in April 2012 the task was transferred back to the DIE.

In our audit we observed that the rapid changes in the process of collecting and maintaining the deposits had resulted in the information relating to deposits not being kept in an appropriate manner.

Further, as different entities used different systems to maintain the records and as these records have not been integrated to the current Xpat online system, the total amount of deposits collected by the government is not known. Further, the responsible entities entrusted with this task at different periods are not able to provide the account balances as they had not maintained the records in an appropriate manner and did not perform reconciliations on a timely manner.

Deposit taken contradicted to the Work Visa Regulation

3.5 The Work Visa Regulation (2010/R-7) states how the DIE should collect deposits from the employers. In our audit we observed that some of the deposits collected contradicted the regulations.

These include the following:

- a) Clause 7(e) of the regulation allows exemption to government institutions on having to pay deposits for expatriate workers. But we observed that the DIE has collected deposits from government institutions.
- b) Clause 7 (f) states that if there are any changes brought to the deposit rate and due to the change if there is an increase in the rate, the DIE should communicate this change to the employer and collect the balance due from the employer. However we observed that the DIE had not collected the increased amounts of deposits from the employers. This would result in the government having to bear additional costs incurred in the deportation of the expatriate workers if need arises.

Significant variances between the estimated and actual deposits banked

3.6 In our audit we observed significant differences in the estimated and actual deposits banked. From the Xpat online system the NCIT generated a report of the deposits collected by the DIE for the year 2012 and 2013. This was compared with the records of deposits banked through the Public Account System (PAS). The comparison showed a difference of 19m in excess in the PAS for the month of November to December in 2012, while in the year 2013 a difference of 2m was recorded short on the PAS.

3.7 The DIE had not given an explanation for these differences. These differences may have passed undetected as the DIE had not performed reconciliation of the records in the Xpat online system to the PAS and to the reports that they prepare. Due to the differences the accuracy of the data cannot be ensured, nor can we confirm that all funds received have been deposited to the Public Bank Account.



Deposit Funds were used for purposes other than intended

3.8 According to the clause 7 of the regulation, the main purpose of collecting deposits is to fund the deportation of the expatriate workers who violate the rules laid down in the Regulation. However Deposit funds were used for purposes other than those stated in the Work Visa Regulation (No:2010/R-7)

- a) Clause number 19 (a) (4) of Regulation No: 2011/R-22 (Foreign Employment Regulation) state that the employer has the discretion to bury the deceased employee in the absence of such a clause in the employment contract. This clause does not restrict the family of the deceased worker from taking back the body if they wish to do so, and any such costs has to be borne by the family, as per Clause 19 (a) (5) of the said regulation. In contradiction to this, the DIE had used the deposit funds to send the body of a deceased worker back to the country which costs around MVR 50,000. This cost had neither been recovered from the employer nor the family. As a consequence of using the funds from a liability account, ultimately the costs will have to borne by the government.
- b) As per clause 7 (h) of Work Visa Regulation (No:2010/R-7), deposits are to be refunded back to employers in the event of the employee departing, a change of employer or the death of the employee. However, the DIE decided not to release the deposits of workers who have left the country under the Voluntarily Departure Programme conducted by the DIE. There isn't any documentary evidence that DIE holds such a right to detain another's trust fund. It is further noted that under the voluntary programme the expatriates returned to their country on their own expense.
- c) While the deposits were kept by both the MHRYS and the DIE, and the data on these are not integrated, we observed that there have been instances where the deposits were used to deport expatriates from the DIE while this was initially collected by the MHRYS. This arrangement was approved in July 2012 by Ministry of Finance and Treasury (MOFT), on the condition that the DIE should be reimbursed from the original fund. However, we observed that the DIE had not sent the details of reports of expatriates' tickets to MOFT as mentioned in the letter (on the seventh day of each month). The reports were sent after compiling the tickets purchased within two to three months. Apart from sending the reports of expatriate tickets, the DIE had not taken any action to get the funds reimbursed.
- d) Furthermore, we observed that the Xpat online system is not able to update the status of the deposits used to fund the deportation of expatriate workers. As a result, there is the possibility of refunding deposits that had already been used for deportation of the expatriate workers

which is against clause 7(i) of Work Visa Regulation (No: 2010/R-7). The clause states that deposit should be refunded to the employer upon request, only if all outstanding visa fees and fines or other payments due to the DIE have been made and in case where employer has made arrangements for departure of the expatriate worker. It further states that deposit would not be refunded in a case where deposit money has been used by the DIE for departure of the expatriate worker.

Deposit rates not publicised as per the Work Visa Regulation

3.9 The deposit rates are set in the schedule of deposits in the Work Visa Regulation which requires that the deposit rates to be revised and publicised twice a year. The most recent revision of the deposit rate was on 4th August 2011 and is published on the website of the DIE. Further, appendix of the regulation does not contain the deposit rate for the five countries mentioned in Figure 11. We observed that five expatriate workers from these countries have entered to the Maldives during the year 2013. As the rate due for these countries is not published, we were unable to verify whether the deposit rate taken was correct.

Figure 11: Deposit Rates

Country	No. of expatriates
Oman	1
British Indian Ocean Territory	1
Honduras	1
Papua New Guinea	1
Eritrea	1
Total	5

PART 4: HOW EFFECTIVE IS THE MONITORING BY THE DIE IN THE LEVEL OF FOREIGN EMPLOYMENT.

- 4.1 Under the Immigration Act and the Work Visa Regulation, the DIE has the power to take action against the expatriate workers and employers who violate the Immigration Act, Work Visa Regulation and any other rules or regulation of the country.
- 4.2 The DIE had conducted several programmes in recent years to repatriate and re-integrate illegal expatriates in the Maldives. One of the mega programme conducted in 2013 was the Voluntary Departure Programme. The programme was held from 23rd December 2013 until the end of 31 March 2014. A number of 5,132 expatriates registered in the programme.
- 4.3 In terms of our criteria for examination (paragraph 1.12), this was a key area to ensure that the objective of minimizing the number of illegal expatriate workers has been achieved. We examined the main activities needed to ensure this objective, as follows:
- the efficiency and effectiveness of investigations conducted to identify and monitor illegal expatriates in the Maldives;
 - enforcement measures when illegal expatriates have been identified;
 - the voluntary repatriation program conducted by the DIE;
 - The DIE's handling of complaints from employers - which may concern any aspect of the expatriate worker control system.

Investigations were not conducted by the DIE

- 4.4 In 2008, the DIE established a separate unit (Expatriate Monitoring and Repatriation Unit) to identify and monitor illegal expatriates in the Maldives. The mandate of the Unit includes the following:
- Conducting investigations to identify illegal expatriates,
 - Monitoring the illegal expatriates by coordinating with other relevant authorities till departure,
 - Communicating and coordinating with other relevant authorities regarding expatriate workers,
 - Analysing statistics and sharing it with other relevant entities,
 - Identifying and preparing report on the reasons why expatriates become illegal.

- 4.5 Having established a separate unit for investigations and monitoring, documentary evidence could not be provided by the DIE on the investigations conducted to identify illegal expatriate workers prior to 2014. It is noted that there were 15 investigations conducted by DIE during the year 2014.
- 4.6 Furthermore, we observed that an estimated budget for investigating and monitoring were not prepared and included in the annual budget. We were informed by the staff of the DIE that frequent investigations were not conducted as the DIE did not have adequate resources (vehicles and staff) to conduct the investigations. Further, the staff informed that they had to use their own motorcycles to conduct investigations and in some situations this has laid staff in to risk. In our audit we were unable to verify how many investigations was planned and cancelled due to lack of resources as the Department have not maintained any documents relating to investigations.

Case Study 2

From a sample of five companies employing expatriate workers, it was observed that:

Company B – which provided cleaning services to many organisations including government institutions – employed expatriates workers in the company. The Xpat Online system has no records of work permits or quotas issued to this company. We further observed that photos of some expatriate workers of this company were posted in the detention centre as wanted for having escaped the detention centre. The DIE was unable to provide information on whether they have performed any investigation on the company or have taken any action against the employer.

Lack of Enforcement measure

- 4.7 Maldives Police Service arrest expatriates workers who violate the Immigration Act, Work Visa Regulation (R-7/2010) or any other rules or regulation of Maldives in their investigations. Following the arrest the expatriate workers are released to the DIE to take action. It is noted that the DIE has taken action against some of the expatriate workers, but not taken appropriate action against the employers of these workers.

Case Study 3

On 11 April 2011, Expatriate X was arrested by the Maldives Police Services on an act of theft. He was prosecuted by the court for theft and working illegally in the Maldives. As he was working illegally in the Maldives, Maldives Police Services passed him to Department of Immigration and Emigration (DIE) to take the relevant action. The documents in the DIE state that the action taken was to deport him for one year. But from the PISCES System and Xpat online system there is no record that he left the country during this period. And from the data in Xpat system it shows that he has renewed his work permit card from 18 May 2011 to 31 May 2012, and he had become a legal expatriate from an illegal expatriate.

- 4.8 During 2008 and 2009, there was concern that the number of illegal expatriate workers were increasing rapidly. Therefore, along with Maldives Police Service, the DIE set up an investigation unit specially for investigating issues related to illegal expatriate workers. This unit consisted of two officers from Maldives Police Service and one officer from the DIE. The investigations conducted revealed that many local investments have been registered in Ministry of Economic Development (MED) using forged Identity card of individuals who were not aware of a company being set up under his/her name. These companies were used to bring in a large number of expatriate workers to the country during 2010 and 2011. This case had been filed in Maldives Police Service and sent to the Prosecutor General's Office. Further investigations by Maldives Police Service revealed some serious issues related to Quota Approval.

Case Study 4

At the Initial stage, **Company X** and **Company Y** were registered in Ministry of Economic Development (MED) using a forged Identity Card of **Mr. M.S**, but MED failed to detect this as no verification was carried out during the registration process. Quotas were issued to these companies by the MHRYS based on fake documents. Therefore, Maldives Police Service (MPS) concluded that MHRYS must be held accountable for failed internal controls in approving and issuing quotas. This conclusion was based on the following findings.

- MHRYS failed to detect forged signatures in the identity card copy that has been altered using a correction pen.
- MHRYS failed to detect forged stamps of Councils and fake signatures of the heads of Councils used in the documents related to quota applications.
- MHRYS failed to detect that the site addresses given in the quota forms does not exist.
- MHRYS extended quotas in the absence of quota extension forms.
- MHRYS approved quotas for business categories that have not been registered in Ministry of Economic Development.
- Companies that did not collect quota approval letters from the Ministry had the same Quota Approval letters and these letters were used to process quotas and bring in expatriate workers. Therefore the way these companies' received Quota Approval letters were found questionable.

Although the above mentioned issues were evident in documents related to quota applications, MHRYS approved maximum quota for Company X and Company Y. As a result of this internal control failure, the people involved in Company X and Company Y started setting up more and more local investments by engaging others in the business too. The sole purpose of these companies appeared to be obtaining the maximum number of quotas for each company. Sometimes the company name was changed to give the impression that it was a new company so that they can receive the maximum number of quotas. Eventually a huge network of these companies was formed and was alleged to be involved in selling quotas and making huge profits out of it. As a result, the number of illegal workers grew rapidly having a major impact on the economy.

Appendix 2 shows a flow chart of 28 companies alleged to be formed to get the maximum quotas by the same people or people who are connected to Company X and Company Y. The flow chart in Appendix 2 is drawn based on the case chart used by MPS.

4.9 The DIE deported most of the expatriates arrested, who violated Immigration Act, work visa regulation (R-7/2010) or any other rules or regulation of the Maldives. However in our examinations we identified that some of the expatriates who have been deported have re-entered the country more than once. This occurred because prior to 2014, the DIE had not taken biometric data (eg: fingerprints) of the expatriates who worked in the Maldives and they have re-entered using false identifications. Even with the introduction of the current system (PISCES) in which biometric data can be recorded, the DIE is not sure that deported expatriates will not enter to Maldives as some times the system is unavailable.

Unavailability and unreliability of border control system

4.10 The PISCES system is used to verify fingerprints and to record the arrivals and departure of foreign expatriate workers. This system was implemented in 2013. Although the system was implemented to strengthen the control in the border system, the DIE informs that the system has not been efficient and effective in recording and detecting illegal expatriates who enter the country. The following issues are observed with regard to the PISCES system:

- Editing Role is not given to any level of the DIE staff. Hence, if incorrect information is entered to the system it cannot be deleted or edited.
- Duplicate entries are recorded in the system. For instance, if the situation arises where a problem occurs in a flight and passengers have to be moved to another flight the records of the passengers will be recorded twice in the system, these records need to be re-entered by DIE staff as offload passengers but as this entry is not made by the staff, duplicate entries are made within the system.
- Records such as departure, arrival and biometric data of expatriates are required by both the Xpat online system (system used to maintain the records of the expatriates) and PISCES system (border control system). However, as these two systems are not integrated, the DIE staffs have to enter records and perform checks from both systems which affect the efficiency of the staff.
- Reliability of the records entered to the system is questionable and maybe incomplete. The DIE staff informed that all the information might not be recorded in the system as there are situations where the system is down/unavailable and that information cannot be recorded backdated in the system.
- PISCES records the biometric data of the expatriate workers who arrive and depart the country. The DIE use the system to control the illegal entrants to the country but this task could not be performed in an effective manner as the system is not available all the time,

and if an illegal entrant (eg, expatriate deported) enters the country in a time where the system is down, he/she will not be detected.

- 4.11 The information recorded in the PISCES system always cannot be relied on, as duplicate and incorrect information are recorded, arrivals and departures are not recorded in an effective manner and entries during system down time are not maintained. As a result there is a hindrance in achieving DIE's objective of minimizing illegal immigration.

Data relating to Voluntary Repatriation was not maintained in a systematic manner

- 4.12 The Voluntary Departure Programme was conducted from 23 December 2013 until the end of 31 March 2014. The aim of the programme was to reduce the number of illegal expatriate workers in the country. Expatriate workers who registered and left the country under this programme were given the concession of returning to the country as legal expatriate workers two months after their departure.
- 4.13 According to the voluntary departure registration list, 5,132 workers were registered in the programme. The DIE could not confirm whether the registered in the program had left the country as they do not check whether they have left. We tested a sample of 20 expatriate workers who registered in the program to check if the workers have left the country and observed that departure records did not exist in the PISCES system for two of the expatriate workers (10% of the sample). Furthermore, as the DIE had not maintained the data in an appropriate manner, we were unable to verify the number of illegal expatriate workers who left the country under the programme and who stayed back after registering in the programme. Further, the DIE did not maintain the records of the expatriates who returned after two months, hence we were unable to determine the number of expatriates who have returned back.
- 4.14 Some of the expatriates who registered in the programme were unable to provide a valid travel document to leave the country. Hence, the relevant Embassy provided a temporary travelling document based on the information the expatriates provide. We observed that some information of the expatriate workers did not match with the information existing in the Xpat online system. Hence, the records in the Xpat online system may not be updated accordingly when these expatriate workers have left the country.

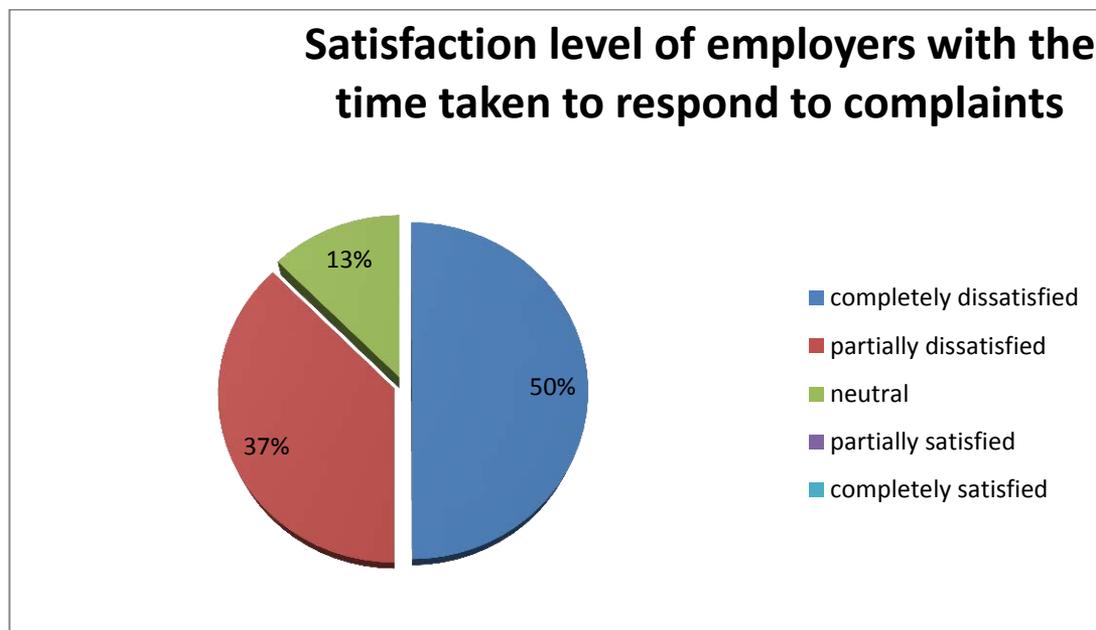
Complaints were not handled by the DIE in an efficient manner

- 4.15 Complaints filed relating to expatriate workers and their employers are handled by the DIE and Labour Relation Authority. The DIE handles complaints relating to work permits, change of

expatriate workers to other employers, etc. Labour Relation Authority deals with complaints such as salary and job issues etc.

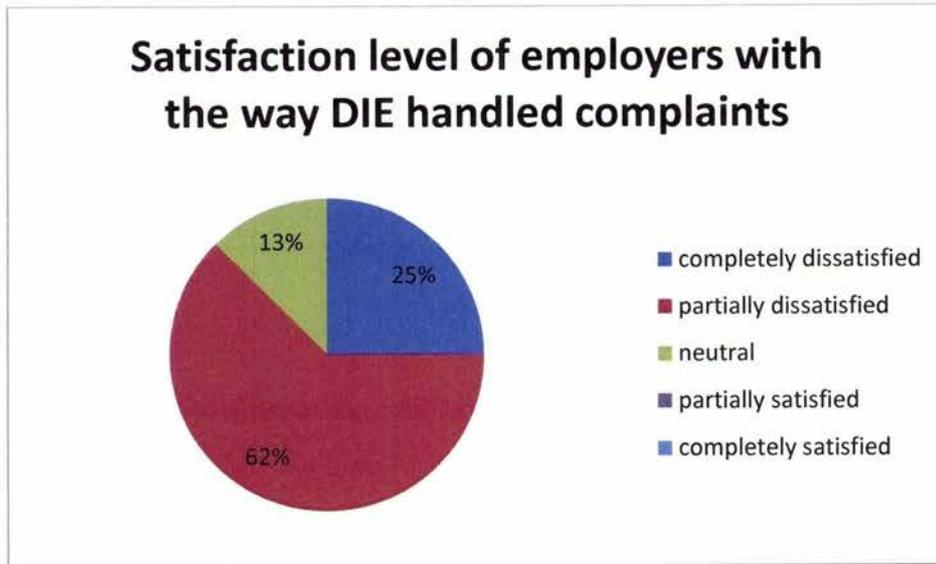
- 4.16 We observed that the DIE did not maintain records of complaints received in a systematic manner. They did not maintain records of all the complaints received, the date attended to the complaint or the action they have taken relating to the complaint. In our audit, a sample of 10 was tested from the complaint letters, out of which 6 (60%) of the complaints were not attended by DIE as at (30th September 2014) and all of these complaints were filed more than a year ago. Moreover, as the Department have not maintained the records in a systematic manner, for the audit they were unable to provide the complaints prior to 2013.
- 4.17 The DIE does not maintain records of complains that they receive from employers relating to the efficiency of the service provided. The staff of the DIE informed us that complaints are dealt with verbally. Hence, there are no written records to measure the DIE’s efficiency in attending to complaints. We conducted a survey to determine the satisfaction level of employers with the time taken by the DIE to respond to the complaints filed. To conduct the survey employers (companies and individuals) who gets service from the DIE, were selected on a random basis. The total number of survey forms sent out was 26, while the survey forms were filled by 10 employers.
- 4.18 The result of the survey in Figure 12 shows that 50% of the employers are completely dissatisfied with the time taken to respond, 37% of the employers are partially dissatisfied with the time taken to respond and 13% of the employers are neutral.

Figure 12: Satisfaction level of employers with the time taken to respond to complaints



4.19 The result of the survey in Figure 13 shows that 25% of the employers were completely dissatisfied with the way the DIE handled the complaint, 62% were partially dissatisfied with the way DIE handled the complaint and 13% of the employers were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the way DIE handled the complaints.

Figure 13: Figure satisfaction level with the way DIE handled complaints



11 May 2015

Hassan Ziyath
Auditor General

Appendix 1: Methodology

Method	Activity
File and document review	We reviewed key documents from 2009 to 2013 on the process and basis for decision made in issuing quota and work permits and monitoring and enforcing the expatriate workers. Documents examined were drawn from the Department of Immigration and Emigration, Maldives Police Service and Labour Relation Authority.
Interviews with key staff	Interviewed the key staff from the Department Immigration and Emigration, the Maldives Police Services and the Labour Relation Authority
Comparison with international practice	We reviewed relevant reports by other Supreme Audit Institutions, including the report on the Reforming the UK Border and Immigration (2014) from the UK National Audit Office and Preventing Illegal Entry into Canada (2013) from the Report of the Auditor General of Canada.
Conducted Survey	Survey was conducted to identify the Satisfaction level of the employers who gets the service from the DIE. The survey was focused on the time taken to issue quota, work permits, the time taken to attend complains and the quality of service provided by the DIE staff.

