

# **ANNUAL REPORT - 2017**

## **TO THE RIGHT TO INFORMATION COMMISSION**



***Parliament of Sri Lanka***

ANNUAL REPORT TO THE RIGHT TO INFORMATION COMMISSION

YEAR ENDING 31<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER - 2017

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**1. Details of Public Authority:**

**1.1. Name:**

Parliament of Sri Lanka

**1.2. Address:**

Sri Jayewardenepura – Kotte

**1.3. Web-link:**

www.parliament.lk

**1.4. Name of line Ministry/ Provincial Ministry**

(if the Public Authority is not a Ministry or a Provincial Ministry)

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**2. Briefly describe the mandate and the nature of services offered by the Public Authority.**

In terms of the provisions of the 1978 Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, main functions of the Parliament are to make laws (Article 75), to represent public (Article 62) and to control public Finance (Article 148). Apart from that, the Parliament plays an oversight role on the executive through the Parliamentary Committee system.

In order to assist the said main functions, the Parliament Secretariat as established by Article 65 headed by the Secretary General of Parliament plays an important role in administration and legislation process.

**3. Name and contact details of the Information Officer and the Designated Officer.**

Information Officer	Mrs. KA Rohanadeera – 0112777230 – informationofficer@parliament.lk Mr. Tikiri K Jayathilaka- 0112777562 – informationofficer@parliament.lk
Designated Officer	Mr. Neil Iddawala – 0112777229 – appealofficer@parliament.lk

**4. Compliance Review:- The Parliament is excluded from filling this section.**

Please provide details (§7, §8 and §9 of the Act read together with the Rules and Regulations of the Commission)	
1	Provide details of how records are maintained, catalogued and indexed?
	-
2	Provide details of records maintained in electronic format?
	-
3	Provide details of how the following information is made known to the citizens. <sup>1</sup>
	Information on powers, duties, and functions of officers and employees of the Public Authority and the procedures followed in decision making.
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	Norms set for the discharge of the functions, performance of the duties and exercise of the powers of officers and employees of the Public Authority
	Rules regulations, instructions, manuals and other categories of records used by the officers and employees of the Public Authority in the discharge of their functions, performance of their duties, and exercise of their powers.
	-
	Details of facilities available to the citizens for obtaining information under the Right to Information Act.
	-
	Details of budgets allocated indicating the particular of plans, proposed expenditure and reports on disbursements made.
	-
4	Is information made available in all three languages? –
5	If the Public Authority is a Ministry, how many urgent and other projects' details were made known during the year? Not relevant
	Foreign Funded Projects (3 months prior to commencement)
	-
	Locally funded Projects (3 months prior to commencement)
	-
	Foreign funded urgent projects (7 days prior to commencement)
	-
	Local funded urgent projects (7 days prior to commencement)
	-

**5. Details of information requests during the year:**

		Number
1	Number of information requests for the year	118
2	Number of requests for which information has been provided fully	54
3	Number of requests for which information has been provided partially	09
4	Number of information requests refused or denied in terms of Section 5 of the Act	19
5	Number of information requests denied, other than for reasons contained in Section 5 of the Act (e.g. non availability of information)	26
6	What is the average time (number of working days) taken to respond to an information request?	10
7	How many information requests were received by post?	54
8	How many information requests were received by e-mail?	36
9	How many information requests were received by any other means other than by post or e-mail	28

**6. Type of information requests**

With regard to what type of information were the highest and second highest numbers of information requests were received.	
Highest	– Legislative functions of Parliament.
2 <sup>nd</sup> Highest	– Information of Members of Parliament.
How many information requests were received in respect of the following categories	
<u>Category</u>	<u>No</u>
Procurement related	01
Establishment matters	11
Political victimization	-
Financial (including budgets and projects)	16
Environment	-
Policy	60
Others (Details of the Parliamentarians etc.)	30

**7. Requester Profile**

	<b>Number of requests</b>	<b>% of the total</b>
Number of information requests by individual citizens	106	89.8
Number of information requests by institutions	12	10.2
Specify the number requests from each of the following provinces		
Central Province	7	5.9
Eastern Province	7	5.9
North-Central Province	2	1.7
Northern Province	2	1.7
North-Western Province	9	7.6
Sabaragamuwa Province	4	3.4
Southern-Province	11	9.3
Uva Province	0	0
Western Province	76	64.5

**8. Were any sanctions/disciplinary action imposed on any person for refusing to provide information? (Please provide details)**

No.
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**9. Appeals and Commission Directions**

	<b>Number</b>
<b>APPEALS TO THE DESIGNATED OFFICER</b>	
Number of appeal made to the Designated Officer	18
Number of times the information was provided at the direction of the Designated Officer	01
<b>APPEALS TO THE RIGHT TO INFORMATION COMMISSION</b>	
Total No. of appeals, of which the Public Authority has notice of, lodged with the Commission against refusal to communicate information	0
Total number of times the Commission ordered/directed that information be provided (No of successful appeals in favor of the appellant)	0

**10. Information Management and storage of records.**

<p><b>10.1. Please provide details of the information management and storage system?</b></p>
<p>Parliament has implemented several Information Management Systems under its e-Parliament strategic initiative including Administrative and Legislative processes. As at today, over 34 applications are being used in Parliament.</p>
<p><b>10.2. Was the system updated during the year? If yes, please provide details</b></p>
<p>Yes, Parliament continuously updates the system to meet the current requirements in terms of user requirement, management and technical perspectives.</p>
<p><b>10.3. Provide details of the way in which records are stored? (e.g. record room, electronic data bank with/without documentary back-up, on site/off site</b></p>
<p>Each &amp; every office has its own record management system for smooth functioning of the Secretariat and the Record Keeper takes custody of all files and other documents periodically discharged from various divisions. Apart from that, Digital Records are stored on database servers locally and off-site.</p>
<p><b>10.4. Are the records in storage referenced, indexed and stored in an easily retrievable manner?</b></p>
<p>Yes. All the records are indexed and easily searchable.</p>
<p><b>10.5. Provide details of improvements or changes were carried out during the year to the indexing and referencing system referred to above</b></p>
<p>Parliament automated its two key legislative processes, namely, Committee on Public Accounts and Committee on Public Enterprises in 2017.</p>
<p><b>10.6. On average how much time is required to search and produce a record that is in storage?</b></p>
<p>Intranet/Parliament website/Parliament Mobile APP are providing online search which can be done within few seconds. Hard copies of the document can be found within 5 minutes.</p>
<p><b>10.7. In case of physical storage, are the records stored on-site, off-site or both?</b></p>
<p>The records are stored both on-site &amp; off-site.</p>
<p><b>10.8. Have you provided for maintaining of existing records (up to 4<sup>th</sup> August 2016) for 10 years and new records (after 5<sup>th</sup> August 2016) for 12 years?</b></p>
<p>Yes. There is a continuous procedure to maintain e-content. In addition to that, the Record Keeper takes custody of all files and other documents periodically discharged from various divisions in Parliament Secretariat in keeping with the guidelines and practices. The records available in the Record Room are disposed from time to time according to the relevant regulations.</p>

<b>10.9. Have you made budgetary provision for information storage and management?</b>
Yes; however, the required provisions are yet to receive.
<b>10.10. If records are not digitally maintained, please indicate what steps have been taken during the year or proposed to be taken to migrate records to a digital format?</b>
It has been proposed to implement Document Management Information System and Document Archival System for records which are not maintained digitally.
<b>10.11. If information is stored digitally, is it done by the Public Authority or an external entity?</b>
It is done by the Public Authority (The Information Systems and Management Department of Parliament)
<b>10.12. Are digitally stored data/records accessible via the internet?</b>
Yes
<b>10.13. If yes, is network security updated at least once a month?</b>
Yes , Network security is updated continuously

**11. What suggestions do you have to remove constraints and improve the practices relating to the maintenance, management and destruction of records?**

As stipulated in the Section 7 of the Right to Information Act, No. 12 of 2016 all the records are preserved and maintained and majority of those records are also digitally maintained. With the expansions of the work of the secretariat, the major difficulty faced is with the lack of the storage space for information material either as hardcopies or on electronic devices. Therefore it is timely, if best practices on maintaining, managing and destructing those materials also considering their contents could be introduced.

**12. What facilities are available to the citizens for obtaining information? Please give details, including any improvements carried out during the year**

- ❖ As per the Act, a Designated Officer and two information officers have been appointed and a special unit has also been established to facilitate for RTI requests received by the Parliament Secretariat. Dedicated e-mails were also made available beside the telephone numbers of the relevant officials which are also published on the Parliament web site.
- ❖ All information pertaining to the procedure for making a request for information have been made available on the Parliament website including the details of requisite fees.

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- ❖ If a person wishes to make a request which relates to the life and personal liberty of a citizen, can coordinate with the responsible officer in the RTI unit established in Parliament for this purpose of whom the contact details are also available on the Parliament web site.
- ❖ Parliament web site is a key tool of providing both administrative and legislative information to the public in a more proactive way which was upgraded to provide more information and is now periodically updated. The web site has trilingual accessibility enabling information available to the entire citizen of the country. Information available on the website is easily accessible with minimal number of clicks and information formats supported for majority.

**13. How much fees were collected by the Public Authority during the year through information requests?**

Rs. 11,816.00

**14. What suggestions do you have for improving the effectiveness of the regime of transparency?**

**Improvements within your Public Authority**

It is useful if more awareness could be raised among all the staff members by changing their perception positively about the importance of the right to information process to enable more productive information is provided to the requester. At the same time, it is required to provide more training opportunities for the officials directly dealing with handling RTI requests, on the accepted procedures followed by similar other institutions and countries. Apart from the context of handing requests, training requires to provide to all the officials as to how records should be maintained to facilitate the RTI process, which eventually will improve the effectiveness of the day to day work.

**Improvements in general**

More awareness programmes can be conducted at Divisional Secretariat level to enhance the knowledge of people on the Right to Information Act, especially in remote areas. Apart from the facts noted above, maintaining an informative and up-to-date web site is of immense importance for the public authorities that enables the general public to easily access information at any time saving public money and time.



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15. Any other information you wish to provide or comments you wish to make?

In order ascertain that the information is requested by a citizen of Sri Lanka, it is suggested that the relevant forms be updated to obtain the NIC number or relevant identification information of the requestor.

Signature

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Name

: Neil Iddawala

Designation

: Acting Secretary General of Parliament.

Date

: March 28, 2018