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சனாதிபதி அலுவலகம்
PRESIDENTIAL SECRETARIAT



Circular No: PS/SB/Circular/2/2025
February 18, 2025

Secretaries to Ministries
Chief Secretaries of Provinces
District Secretaries

Establishment of Internal Affairs Units in Government Institutions

This circular is issued amending Circular No. PS/ACD/01/2019 dated 04.07.2019 by Secretary to the President.

1.0 Establishment of Internal Affairs Unit (IAU)

The vital need to create a public service in Sri Lanka that is free from bribery and corruption while safeguarding the integrity of public officials has received the foremost attention of the Government. The introduction of strong anti-corruption measures in the public sector is consistent with Sri Lanka's obligations under Article 156 of the Constitution to implement the UN Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) and international conventions relating to corruption prevention to which Sri Lanka is a party, as well as fulfilling the objectives of the Anti-Corruption Act No. 9 of 2023, the National Anti-Corruption Action Plan (2025-2029) to be launched shortly, and the various policy initiatives of the Government. Accordingly, as a key initiative in the process of curbing corruption in Sri Lanka's public sector, it has been decided to establish Internal Affairs Units (IAUs) in all government institutions to foster a culture of transparency, accountability and integrity throughout the public sector and thereby effectively deliver government services to all citizens.

This circular sets out instructions and guidelines for the creation of IAUs in government institutions, its objectives and operational mode, and measures for monitoring and reporting.

2.0 Key Objectives of the Internal Affairs Unit (IAU)

The IAU in each institution is expected to achieve the following objectives:

- i. Prevent corruption in the institution and cultivate a culture of integrity.
- ii. Ensure transparency and accountability in all activities of the institution and ensure public access to information regarding institutional practices and decisions.
- iii. Promote ethical governance within the institution.
- iv. Develop a secure and accessible system to encourage reporting misconduct, protect whistleblowers and maintain confidentiality.
- v. Support legal enforcement through collaboration with law enforcement agencies and the Commission to Investigate Allegations of Bribery or Corruption (CIABOC).

3.0 IAU Establishment, Structure and Staffing

- 3.1 IAU's are required to be established in all institutions of the government as specialized units. **As an initial step, these IAU's shall be established in all Cabinet Ministries, Provincial Chief Secretaries' Offices, District Secretariats and the specific Departments listed as Annex 1.**
- 3.2 In the event of resource limitations in institutions, these Units may be staffed with existing staff with the IAU duties integrated into their regular responsibilities, whilst fully ensuring that they function with optimal effectiveness.
- 3.3 The IAU shall be headed by a senior official of the institution deemed to be a person with high level of integrity without a criminal record or a history of financial misconduct. Other staff of the IAU shall be the Integrity Officer, a total of 5-15 members drawn from key divisions and units to represent diverse functional areas within the institution, and a supporting staff. Where deemed beneficial or necessary, external experts may be appointed.
- 3.4 The Head of the Institution shall be responsible for appointing the appropriate staff for the IAU. Accordingly, the composition of the IAU is as follows:
- A senior staff officer as Head of the Unit
 - Integrity Officer of the Institution
 - A total of 5-15 members representing divisions/units of the institution based on the number of divisions and the total staff number within the institution.
 - A supporting staff
- 3.5 In the event of a vacancy occurring in the IAU due to a transfer, retirement, reassignment of duties or any other reason, the Head of the Institution is required to take steps to assign new officers to ensure that the functions of the Unit continue without hindrance. The Head of the Institution shall also ensure that the IAU receives necessary administrative and other support to carry out its work.

4.0 Responsibilities and functions of the Internal Affairs Unit (IAU)

- 4.1 The IAU is tasked with the following specific responsibilities and functions to ensure proactive, clear and focused anti-corruption efforts, addressing key aspects of institutional integrity.
- i. Examine current procedures and circulars to identify systemic bottlenecks within the institution and simplify them to enhance operational efficiency.
 - ii. Conduct Corruption Risk Assessments (CRAs) to identify areas in the institution vulnerable to corruption and unethical conduct and take targeted preventive measures.
 - iii. Develop and implement an Institutional Integrity Action Plan outlining specific anti-corruption objectives and strategies tailored to the institution's needs.
 - iv. Ensure full compliance with national anti-corruption goals by aligning institutional policies and practices with the National Anti-Corruption Action Plan.

- v. Conduct regular compliance reviews to assess the institution's compliance with national and international anti-corruption laws, including the Anti-Corruption Act No. 9 of 2023, and identify areas for improvement.
- vi. Ensure compliance with Asset Declaration requirements for all public officials and employees, and manage conflicts of interest in accordance with CIABOC regulations and the Anti-Corruption Act No. 9 of 2023.
- vii. Establish a secure system to receive and manage complaints related to corruption and unethical conduct in the institution; ensure that all such complaints are promptly addressed by relevant officials or units; and provide regular feedback to the parties involved, ensuring transparency and accountability. If necessary, refer relevant facts, findings or information to the CIABOC for investigation under the Anti-Corruption Act.
- viii. Develop and publish a Citizen's Charter outlining services provided by the institution.
- ix. Establish and enforce policies that promote ethical governance, including a standardized code of conduct to be adhered to by public officials.
- x. Implement measures, including training and awareness creation, to motivate employees to commit to anti-corruption principles.
- xi. Act as the institutional focal point for the National Anti-Corruption Integrity Assessment, ensuring that the institution participates in and aligns with the integrity assessment processes, as guided by CIABOC and the national anti-corruption framework.
- xii. Maintain liaison with the CIABOC to receive ongoing guidance and support in executing the Unit's duties.
- xiii. Produce periodic and annual reports summarizing the IAU's activities, progress in anti-corruption initiatives, challenges faced, and recommendations for further actions.
- xiv. Collaborate with private sector stakeholders to plan and implement integrity development programs.

5.0 Training for IAU Staff

- 5.1 In order to ensure that the IAU operates effectively and fulfills its objectives, training of its staff is essential to equip them with the required knowledge and skills to stay up-to-date with evolving anti-corruption strategies, legal frameworks and technological solutions. Accordingly, the IAU staff is required to undergo regular or periodic training provided by the Government from time to time in the form of workshops or seminars, guest lectures, on-line courses, TOT programmes etc.

6.0 Reporting and Monitoring

6.1 Meetings of the IAU at institutional level

- 6.1.1 The IAU is required to convene a meeting once every month at the unit level, and a meeting chaired by the Head of the Institution on a quarterly basis.
- 6.1.2 The IAU will record minutes of all such meetings, maintain records for transparency, and ensure proper follow-up on decisions made.

6.2 Periodic Meetings at CIABOC

- 6.2.1 Coordination meetings will be held between the IAU and the CIABOC and relevant bodies at least once every three months. These meetings will address progress, data sharing, and collaborative efforts in combating corruption.

6.3 Digital Reporting Platform for Monitoring IAU Progress

- 6.3.1 A comprehensive digital platform will be introduced in due course to track and report on the progress of IAU activities. This platform will allow real-time tracking of complaints, inquiries and the status of anti-corruption initiatives. It will also provide data analytics tools for monitoring trends in corrupt practices across the public sector.

7.0 Initial Steps in the Implementation Process

- 7.1 The establishment of IAUs within public institutions is a vital step in upholding ethical governance and advancing Sri Lanka's anti-corruption efforts across the public sector. The Presidential Secretariat and the CIABOC will coordinate the implementation of this initiative.
- 7.2 A sensitization programme on the operation of the IAUs is scheduled to be held shortly for the Heads of IAUs in the institutions stated at 3.1 above. For this purpose, you are kindly instructed to submit the names of the relevant officers to this Office by **February 24, 2025** via **sas4.secure@presidentsoffice.lk**
- 7.3 For further guidance and assistance regarding the establishment and functioning of IAUs, please contact:
- Presidential Secretariat: Ms Chandima Wickramasinghe, Additional Secretary to the President. 0773466871 / 0112354436
 - CIABOC: Ms Subashini Siriwardena, Deputy Director General, 0777709377

Sgd/ **Dr N S Kumanayake**
Secretary to the President

CC: **Secretary to the Prime Minister** – *f.n.a pls*
Secretary to the Cabinet of Ministers - *f.n.a pls*
Director General, Commission to Investigate Allegations of Bribery or Corruption - *f.n.a pls*