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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. The purpose of Financial Regulations

These Financial Regulations are a part of the overall control framework within which St Helena Government operates. Rather than a barrier to action they should be viewed as providing the framework within which you can act, setting out best practice throughout the Government and ensuring a high quality of financial information enabling better decision-making and in turn, improved service delivery and greater client and customer satisfaction.

1.2. The status of Financial Regulations

These Financial Regulations provide the framework for managing the Governments financial affairs. They apply to every officer of the Government and anyone acting on its behalf.

The financial control framework can be seen as a hierarchy as set out below:

Constitution of St Helena	Approved by UK Privy Council
Public Finance Ordinance	Approved by Legislative Council
Financial Regulations	Approved by the Governor
Procurement Regulations	Approved by the Governor
Financial Procedures	Approved by the Financial Secretary
Procurement Procedures	Approved by the Financial Secretary
Schemes of Delegation	Approved by Accounting Officers

The Financial Secretary is responsible for maintaining a continuous review of the Financial Regulations and for the submission of any additions or changes necessary to the Governor for approval. The Financial Secretary is also responsible for reporting to the Governor any apparent defect that comes to his/her notice concerning any appropriate financial related matter.

Each Accounting Officer is responsible for the observance of the Financial Regulations within his or her service area and for ensuring staff within that service area comply with the regulations. It is their responsibility for ensuring that financial controls in their areas of responsibility are operating effectively and that staff are fully aware of the Financial Regulations. Corporate Finance will provide training on changes to the regulations but it is the responsibility of the Accounting Officer to ensure that staff have the required training to understand the regulations and that they fully comply with them. Non-compliance must be reported to the Financial Secretary immediately, the Financial Secretary will then decide on the course of action to take, which could include disciplinary action or other formal sanctions.

Internal Audit is responsible for monitoring the financial control framework.

The Audit Committee oversees the performance of the St Helena Government internal audit function.

The Financial Regulations have been written with the intention of delegating responsibility to the Accounting Officer or other responsible officers, wherever appropriate. In accordance

with the Public Finance Ordinance Part III, these regulations set out the framework of responsibilities within which that delegation takes place. The responsibility for the creation and maintenance of the framework rests with the Financial Secretary.

1.3. Further assistance and feedback

Corporate Finance is ready and willing to provide assistance in all areas relating to financial management, corporate procurement and financial control. In particular, you must seek advice if you are intending to create a new financial procedure, amend an existing one or make changes to financial processes.

The Financial Secretary welcomes feedback on the operation of Financial Regulations and Financial Procedures to ensure they remain relevant and effective. The Corporate Finance should be contacted if you have comments on the application or operation of a particular regulation or procedure.

2. DEFINITIONS

“Accounting Officer” means the officer designated by title in the Annual Estimates or on a warrant as the Accounting Officer for any Head or item of expenditure or as the responsible officer for the collection of any Head of revenue or appointed by the Financial Secretary.

“Accrual” means an amount owed but not yet invoiced.

“Appropriation” means an appropriation of public money by an Appropriation Ordinance or by a Supplementary Ordinance.

“Appropriation Ordinance” means any Ordinance to apply sums out of either the Consolidated Fund for any Financial Year, and includes a Supplementary Appropriation Ordinance.

“Capital Asset” means a tangible fixed asset with a value greater than or equal to £5,000.

“Chief Auditor” means the person appointed under section 110 of the Constitution and includes any person who may be acting in such office.

“Code of Management” mean the Regulations made by the Governor under section 96 of the Constitution relating to public officers and the transaction of public business.

“Consolidated Fund” means the funds established under section 98 of the Constitution.

“Estimates” means the estimates including supplementary estimates prepared under section 100 and 105 of the Constitution.

“Financial Regulations” mean the Regulations made by the Financial Secretary, with the approval of the Governor, for regulating the financial affairs of the St Helena Government.

“Financial Secretary” means the person appointed as Financial Secretary of the St Helena Government and includes any person who may from time to time be acting in such post.

“Financial Year” means the period from the first day of April in any year to the thirty first day of March in the following year.

“Government” means the Government of St Helena.

“Liability” means an amount owing which can be determined with substantial accuracy.

“Procurement Regulations” means the Procurement Regulations as approved by the Governor

“Public Moneys” means all money received by Government from any source and includes:

- a) all public revenues of St Helena;
- b) any Trust Fund money, Special Fund money or other money held, whether temporarily or otherwise, by any public officer in his official capacity either alone or jointly with any other person;
- c) grant-in-Aid, European Funding and Special Fund Receipts, from whatever source; and

d) any money borrowed or otherwise raised by Government.

“Public Officer” means any person in the employment of the Government of St Helena.

“Stock” means movable property that is the property of; or in the possession of; or under the control of Government.

“Special Funds” means any Fund established in accordance with section 4.1.

“Service Area” means the part of the public service where an Accounting Officer is responsible for.

“Warrant” means an instrument for the authorisation to incur expenditure against public funds.

“Written Authority” means letter (electronic or scanned) or email.

3. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1. Responsibilities of the Financial Secretary

The Financial Secretary shall be responsible for the overall management and control of Government's finances and shall:

- a) ensure that proper and adequate systems exist for bringing to account all transactions of Government, for all recurrent and capital items including all revenues, expenditures and transfers of stocks and capital assets;
- b) ensure that all payments comply with the provisions of The Public Finance Ordinance (PFO) and these Regulations (FR);
- c) ensure that all Government revenues are collected promptly and effectively;
- d) ensure so far as is practicable, that adequate provision is made for the collection, receipt, safe custody, issue and payment of public money, assets, stocks, stamps, investments, securities, cash and all other assets and property belonging to or entrusted to Government;
- e) issue, subject to the approval of the Governor, Financial Regulations consistent with the Public Finance Ordinance and generally accepted accounting practice, for the effective internal Financial Management of Government's affairs;
- f) submit annual statement of accounts in accordance with section 3.4;
- g) review and updating of the Procurement Regulations and ensuring compliance ;
- h) ensure that adequate control is maintained over the incurring of liabilities against Government; and
- i) report to the Governor any apparent defect which comes to their notice concerning any appropriate financial related matter.

None of the responsibilities contained above shall indemnify or limit the responsibilities of Accounting Officers or other Public Officers from their responsibilities under section 3.2 and 3.3.

3.2. Responsibilities of Accounting Officers

An Accounting Officer will be nominated for Head of Expenditure every financial year as part of The Annual Estimates process or by the Financial Secretary.

The Accounting Officer nominated shall be responsible for:

- a) obeying and ensuring that all employees in the service area obey, all regulations made and all directions or instructions that may from time to time be issued by the Financial Secretary in respect of any financial matter;
- b) ensuring proper control over expenditures and ensuring that outputs and deliverables are achieved in the most economic and effective manner, also ensuring that expenditures do not exceed the appropriations made in accordance with section 101 or 105 of the Constitution;
- c) ensuring all revenues are collected promptly and effectively;
- d) ensure proper management of assets to ensure their optimal use;
- e) manage liabilities, ensuring that no liability is incurred, where the provision in the appropriation is insufficient;

- f) submitting the annual service area budgeted estimates, as required and in a format determined by the Financial Secretary;
- g) submitting returns of achieved outputs in accordance with the requirements of the Financial Secretary;
- h) providing any other financial information, as the Financial Secretary may require on a regular or ad-hoc basis;
- i) ensuring full compliance with Procurement Regulations;
- j) notifying the Financial Secretary as soon as possible, should it become apparent that revenues are likely to fall short or that an overspending will incur and that the proposed Service Area cannot deliver within the financial appropriations;
- k) notifying the Financial Secretary Audit immediately of any deficiency in any financial system; and
- l) notifying the Financial Secretary and Head of Internal Audit immediately of any loss or theft of public money, assets, stocks, stamps or any other property of Government.

3.3. Pecuniary Responsibilities of Public Officers

All public officers shall be personally responsible for the due performance of their financial duties and for the proper collection and custody of all public money, assets, stocks, stamps, investments, securities, negotiable instruments, and any other property belonging to Government or entrusted to Government, received by or entrusted to them.

All public officers shall be responsible for ensuring that any payment they cause to be made has sufficient appropriated funds and is properly authorised and vouched in accordance with these Financial Regulations, the Procurement Regulations and any other Financial Procedures.

All public officers shall obey these Financial Regulations and any other instruction or order issued by the Financial Secretary relating to any financial matter.

3.4. Responsibilities for annual statement of accounts

Each statement of accounts prepared in accordance with section 109(1)(a) of the Constitution shall be in a format as the Financial Secretary may from time to time determine, but shall, subject to subsection b), be prepared in a manner consistent with the International Public Sector Accounting Standards issued (and as from time to time amended) by the International Federation of Accountants, and shall contain:

- a) statements showing each Head of Expenditure paid out of and each category of revenue accruing to the Consolidated Fund for the financial year;
- b) operating statements showing the expenditures and revenues of Special Fund activities for the financial year; and
- c) a schedule detailing the operations of the Trust Funds held and managed by Government.

If it appears to the Financial Secretary that it is inappropriate, in the circumstances of St Helena, to follow the International Public Sector Accounting Standards in respect of any aspect of the statement of accounts, he/she may proceed in a manner which he/she considers

is appropriate, but shall record in the relevant statement the departure from the said standards and the reason therefore.

4. PUBLIC FUNDS

4.1. The Funds

The Public Funds of St Helena are the Consolidated Fund and such other Special funds as shall from time to time be established under the Public Finance Ordinance or by any other ordinance.

4.2. Purpose of the Funds

The purpose of the Consolidated Fund is to provide funding for the day to day operations of Government.

The purpose of the Special Funds is set out in the order establishing them.

4.3. Regulations for Managing Funds

The Financial Secretary may, subject to the approval of the Governor, issue Financial Regulations relating to the proper and effective management of public money. These regulations shall not be inconsistent with the Public Finance Ordinance, but shall be based on generally accepted accounting practice.

The purpose of each Special Fund shall be prescribed by the Order establishing such Fund, and such Order may contain provisions as to the management of the fund, including the procedures for authorising payments from the Fund. Subject to any such provisions, Special Funds shall be managed in accordance with these Financial Regulations.

An order establishing each Special Fund may be amended from time to time by the Governor.

The Governor may, by warrant under his hand, order that any money in a Special Fund which is surplus to that required to meet the liabilities of such fund, shall be transferred to the Consolidated Fund.

4.4. Winding up of Special Funds

The Governor may order that any Special Fund shall be closed and wound up; and thereupon after all liabilities of such fund have been paid, the fund shall be closed accordingly and the balance standing to the credit of the fund shall be paid into and become part of the Consolidated Fund.

4.5. Money Paid into and forming the Funds

All revenues or other money raised, borrowed, received or accrued by or for the purposes of the Government (not being revenues or other money payable into another fund in accordance with provisions in the Public Finance Ordinance or any other Ordinance) shall be paid into and form the Consolidated Fund.

Any money received in accordance with section 17.1, neither being money held on deposit or on trust, shall not be paid into nor form part of the Consolidated Fund.

Money paid in the Special Funds shall consist of:

- a) such money received on terms or conditions that such money may only be used for purposes specified by the donor thereof, but shall not include Grant in Aid money which form part of the Consolidated Fund;
- b) such money for the day to day operations of the trading activities; and
- c) such money as may be raised by way of loan.

There shall be paid into a Special Fund:

- a) all revenue exclusively relating to or derived from the subject matter of such Fund; and
- b) any money appropriated for that purpose by an Appropriation Ordinance.

4.6. Investment of Public Funds

The Financial Secretary may authorise the investment of money standing to the credit of Public Funds:

- a) through Crown Agents Investment Management Ltd; or
- b) with a bank; or
- c) in any investment authorised by law for the investment of trust funds.

Investments made under this subsection shall form part of that Fund from which the investment was made.

Any interest or dividend received or accrued from an investment under this subsection shall form part of the Consolidated Fund.

The Financial Secretary shall approve the Treasury Management Strategy which will detail the method and type of investments through Crown Agents.

4.7. Advances

For the purpose of section 112 of the Constitution, the Financial Secretary may, make disbursements of money forming part of the Consolidated Fund or of other public money, for the purpose of making advances:

- a) on behalf of and recoverable from, other Governments, Administrations and Statutory Bodies; or
- b) to public officers, for such purposes and on such terms and conditions as may be prescribed in the Code of Management or in Financial Regulations; or
- c) to or on behalf of public bodies, institutions or individuals where such advances are, in opinion of the Financial Secretary, in the Public interest; or
- d) for such other purposes and on such terms and conditions as the Governor, with the approval of Legislative Council, may determine.

The total of the sums issued and disbursed for the purposes of making advances shall not exceed in aggregate at any time, after deducting repayments, an amount of two million pounds or such other sum as the Financial Secretary, with the approval of the Governor, may from time to time determine.

Such advances shall be exempt from the provisions of section 112(5) and (6) of the Constitution.

4.8. Working Capital

Current and capital revenue and current and capital expenditure shall be recognised on an accruals basis and accordingly working capital employed in the normal operating cycle of the activities related to any Public Fund shall form part of that Fund.

4.9. Composition of the Consolidated Fund

The Consolidated Fund shall comprise the following eight Reserves.

4.9.1. General Reserve

This is the primary government fund in which all revenues are received and from which all expenditures are funded save for those separately provided in law.

4.9.2. Capital Reserve

This reserve captures the initial recognition of Property, Plant and Equipment. Funds will be transferred to the Capital Reserve to reflect expenditure on assets and an amount equivalent to depreciation will be charged to the reserve over the useful life of assets.

4.9.3. Revaluation Reserve

The Revaluation Reserve contains the gains arising from increases in the value of Property, Plant and Equipment. The Reserve contains only revaluation gains accumulated since 31 March 2016, following the end of the transitional provision of IPSAS 17 Property, Plant & Equipment.

The balance is reduced when assets with accumulated gains are:

- Revalued downwards or impaired and the gains are lost;
- Used in the provision of services and the gains are consumed through depreciation; or
- Disposed of and the gains are realised.

4.9.4. Pension Reserve

This reserve represents the balance arising from the liability on the Defined Benefit Pension Scheme.

4.9.5. Investments in Subsidiaries Reserve

This reserve captures the initial recognition of investments in subsidiaries. Funds are transferred to this reserve to reflect the investment of funds in a subsidiary organisation, those funds therefore not being available for the provision of services.

When returns on investments are realised, either through sale of shares or distribution of profits, funds are transferred back to the General Reserve.

4.9.6. Aid Funded Infrastructure Reserve

This reserve captures aid funded infrastructure assets acquired through non-exchange transactions, which are shown within Assets under Construction and Prepayments. Following completion of the assets, an amount equivalent to depreciation will be charged to the reserve over the useful life of the assets.

4.9.7. Donated Asset Reserve

This reserve captures the assets donated to the government. The fund balance is adjusted each year for new donated assets received and to reflect the change in value of those assets.

4.9.8. Litigation Reserve

This reserve captures the balance of the unresolved litigation claims currently under review. This balance will change each year as cases are settled and payments are made, or provisions are released. New claims and the associated provision will be held in this reserve as necessary.

4.10. Payments/Withdrawals from the Consolidated Fund

No money shall be withdrawn from the Consolidated Fund except upon the authority in accordance with an Appropriation Ordinance, Special Warrant (as authority to withdraw from the Consolidated Fund does not have to be from an ordinance) or under any other Ordinance.

On enactment of an Appropriation Ordinance, the Financial Secretary will inform Accounting Officers of the amounts appropriated for use in their Service Area.

The following payments may be made from the Consolidated Fund with no further appropriation:

- a) repayments of amounts paid to Government found to have been made in error;
- b) repayments of overpayments made to Government found to have been made in error;
- c) repayment of deposits, pursuant to section 18.2;
- d) a refund, rebate or drawback made in accordance with an Ordinance; and
- e) pension payments, benefits payments and any other statutory payments.

4.11. Public debt charges

All debt charges for which the Government of St Helena is liable shall be a charge on the Consolidated Fund.

For the purposes of this section, debt charges include:

- a) interest;
- b) the repayment or amortisation of debt; and
- c) costs and charges and expenses incidental to the management of the debt.

5. STATUTORY FINANCIAL REPORTING

5.1. Financial Reporting Framework

The Financial Reporting Framework adopted by the St Helena Government is the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) accrual basis of accounting published by the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC) and shall include any subsequent amendments or revisions or developments that are published from time to time.

5.2. Preparation of the Financial Statements

Annual Financial Statements for the St Helena Government shall be prepared and submitted to the Chief Auditor in accordance with section 109 of the Constitution of St Helena within four months from the end of the financial year.

An assessment of going concern shall be made at the start of the process of preparation of the Financial Statements to determine whether the St Helena Government is a going concern and whether the Financial Statements shall be prepared on the going concern basis. A going concern assessment should be made at regular intervals during the preparation process to determine whether this assumption continues to be applicable.

An Annual Governance Statement for the financial year shall be prepared and authorised by the Chief Secretary for incorporation within the Annual Financial Statements.

5.3. Basis of Preparation

The Annual Financial Statements shall comply with the requirements of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards unless otherwise determined by the Financial Secretary under section 10(2) of the Public Finance Ordinance 2010.

The Annual Financial Statements shall be prepared for the St Helena Government as a separate entity within the St Helena Government Group in accordance with IPSAS 34 *Separate Financial Statements*.

The financial results of private or public limited companies in which the St Helena Government has a controlling interest shall be accounted for within the separate entity Financial Statements of the St Helena Government using the equity method at cost.

The Annual Financial Statements shall be prepared on the historical cost basis with the exception of those specific assets and liabilities where IPSAS requires assets or liabilities to be accounted for at fair value.

The Annual Financial Statements shall be prepared in Saint Helena Pounds and amounts disclosed shall be rounded to the nearest one thousand.

Accounting policies shall be developed in accordance with IPSAS. The accounting policies shall be approved by the Financial Secretary prior to the preparation of the Annual Financial Statements.

The Annual Financial Statements shall clearly state where a change has been made in accounting policies, the effective date of such change and shall describe the change and the effects on the main Statements within the Annual Financial Statements.

5.4. Year End Process

Corporate Finance shall issue two months before the end of the financial year, *Year-end Instructions*. The *Year-end Instructions* shall set out the year-end timetable and procedures that must be followed across St Helena Government.

The Year-end Instructions will cover as a minimum the treatment of accruals, prepayments, customer accounts, supplier invoices, stocks, journals, fixed assets and impairment.

Accounting Officers shall ensure that the deadlines for submission within the year-end timetable be adhered to within their areas of responsibility.

5.5. Finalisation of the Annual Financial Statements

Executive Council is deemed to be “those charged with governance” with responsibility for overseeing the strategic direction of the St Helena Government and the obligations related to the financial accountability of the St Helena Government including overseeing the financial reporting process.

Executive Council, in consideration of the advice and explanation of the Financial Secretary, shall determine whether material misstatements reported by the Chief Auditor shall be corrected before authorising the Financial Secretary to approve the Annual Financial Statements.

The Financial Secretary shall approve the Annual Financial Statements on the advice of Executive Council.

6. EXPENDITURE AUTHORITIES

6.1. Annual Estimates

The Financial Secretary shall cause to be prepared and laid before the Legislative Council, before the beginning of each financial year the Annual Estimates of the revenues and expenditure of Government for that year.

Subject to subsection (a), if the Legislative Council is dissolved less than three months before the commencement of any financial year, the Annual Estimates for that year shall be laid before the Council as soon as is practicable after the commencement of that year.

6.2. The format of the Annual Estimates

The Annual Estimates shall be in such form as the Financial Secretary may from time to time determine, but shall include:

- a) detailed statements by a Service Area, of estimated revenues accruing to and estimated expenditures chargeable against the Consolidated Fund for the coming financial year; and
- b) an Accounting Officer responsible for each Head of Expenditure.

6.3. Appropriation Bill

The Heads of Expenditure contained in the Annual Estimates (other than expenditure otherwise authorised by any Ordinance) shall be included in a Bill, to be known as an Appropriation Bill, which shall be introduced into Legislative Council to provide for and to authorise the issue from the funds of the sums necessary to meet the expenditure, and to appropriate those sums to the purposes specified in the Bill.

6.4. Authorisation of expenditure in advance of Appropriation

If the Appropriation Ordinance in respect of any financial year has not come into operation by the beginning of that year, the Legislative Council may empower the Financial Secretary by means of a resolution, authorising the withdrawal of money from the Consolidated Fund and any other fund established by or under an Ordinance for a specific purpose in order to meet expenditure necessary to carry on the services or projects of the Government until:

- a) the expiration of four months from the beginning of that financial year;
- b) the coming into force of the Appropriation Ordinance for that financial year; and
- c) whichever is the earlier.

Any amounts authorised to be withdrawn under this subsection shall be set off against the amounts provided in the Appropriation Ordinance in respect of that expenditure.

Any amounts authorised to be withdrawn from the Consolidated Fund under this subsection shall be restricted to one third of the aggregate of the sums provided for in the Appropriation Ordinance and any Supplementary Appropriation Ordinance of the previous financial year.

By reason of the dissolution of the Legislative Council or because of circumstances certified by the Governor, acting with the approval of a Secretary of State, to be exceptional and beyond his or her control, no Appropriation Ordinance for a financial year has come into force before the expiration of four months from the beginning of that financial year:

- a) the period of four months from the beginning of that financial year referred to under this subsection shall be extended until one month after the Council meets after the expiry of that period; and
- b) the fraction of one third referred to under this subsection shall be increased to the proportion of the financial year by the extended period referred to in paragraph (a) above.

6.5. Special Warrant

The Governor, acting on the recommendation of the Financial Secretary and after consulting the Executive Council, if satisfied that there is an urgent and unforeseen need for expenditure for which no other provisions exists, may issue a Special Warrant authorising the Financial Secretary to make payments to meet the expenditure out of Consolidated Fund, up to the amount specified in the warrant, and such warrant shall constitute an appropriation of that amount.

A notification of every Special Warrant shall be laid before the Legislative Council by the Financial Secretary on the first sitting day not less than 10 days after the date of its issue.

6.6. Supplementary Estimates

If in the course of any financial year it is found that the amount appropriated for any purpose is insufficient or that a need has arisen for expenditure for a purpose for which no amount has been appropriated, a Supplementary Estimate showing the sums required shall be laid before the Legislative Council by the Financial Secretary.

6.7. Supplementary Appropriation Bill

Where in respect of any financial year any Supplementary Estimates have been laid before Legislative Council in accordance with 5.6 and approved by resolution of that Council, a Supplementary Appropriation Bill shall be introduced into the Legislative Council to provide for the issue from the Consolidated Fund of the sums necessary to meet that expenditure and the appropriation of those sums for the purpose specified in the Bill.

6.8. Virement Warrants

If, on an application from an Accounting Officer, the Financial Secretary is of the opinion that the exigencies of the public service render it necessary or expedient to:

- a) increase the sum assigned to any purpose within a Head of Expenditure shown in the Estimates for any financial year; or
- b) make provision for a new purpose within the ambit of the Head of Expenditure for any financial year; and
- c) savings can be foreseen on any other purpose within the same Head, he/she may issue a Virement Warrant transferring the necessary amount from the appropriation

to the purpose in which savings can be foreseen to the purpose for which additional or new provision is necessary or expedient, provided that the total sum appropriated to any Head by an Appropriation Ordinance in not thereby exceeded.

In subsection a), ‘purpose’ means ‘output for appropriation’ or other sub-division of a Head in the Annual Estimates, but does not included a sub-division of a sub-division.

All Virement Warrants must be submitted electronically to the Financial Secretary.

6.9. Withdrawal Warrant

The Governor, acting on the recommendation of the Financial Secretary and after consulting the Executive Council, if satisfied that financial exigencies so require, may issue a Withdrawal Warrant authorising the limitation or suspension of appropriated expenditure, to the extent specified in the warrant.

Notification of every Withdrawal Warrant shall be laid before the Legislative Council by the Financial Secretary on the first sitting day not less than 10 days after the date of its issue.

6.10. Lapse of warrants and appropriations

The authority conveyed by the issue of any Warrant or the enactment of an Appropriation Ordinance shall lapse on the last day of the Financial Year to which it relates, unless otherwise provided by Ordinance.

7. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

7.1. Accounting for Performance

Accounting Officers are not only accountable for the resources their Service Area consume, but are also accountable for the outputs and deliverables of their Service Area. It is their responsibility to provide information regarding performance, providing explanation where necessary of any variance from the planned deliverables contained in their Annual Plans, Key Performance Indicators and monthly reports as defined by the Financial Secretary.

It is also the responsibility of Accounting Officers to ensure that any information required by the Financial Secretary is submitted by the deadlines given.

7.2. Centralised Accounting

The main accounts for Government will be operated by Corporate Finance. However, it is the responsibility of each Accounting Officer to cause any necessary reconciliation to be carried out, and all necessary corrective action to be taken, to ensure the correctness of the accounts of their Service Area.

Whilst Corporate Finance shall endeavour to provide information to the Service Area, it is the responsibility of the Accounting Officers to ensure they have all the information they require, for properly managing the financial affairs of their Service Area.

7.3. Managing Revenues

Accounting Officers are responsible for ensuring the prompt assessment, collection and bringing to account of all revenues in their Service Area. Within the ambit of prompt collection, they must ensure that debts owed to Government are not allowed to extend beyond agreed limits and timeframes as set out in Section 7.

Officers shall be similarly responsible for the prompt assessment, collection and bringing to account for all revenues under their control. All revenue must be banked within 5 working days of receiving.

It is the responsibility of officers to notify the Financial Secretary immediately, through their Accounting Officers, if it appears that revenue under their control seem likely to be in short fall for the year, so that Government may reassess its spending priorities.

8. DEBTORS MANAGEMENT

It is the Government's overall aim to provide effective and efficient services. The means of recouping the cost of delivering some of these services are met by fees and charges that should be set annually in line with the Government's Charging Policy. Corporate Finance will be responsible for ensuring the prompt collection of any and all outstanding revenue (including any elapsed Bonds, loans or other financial instruments) and the Accounting Officers are responsible for bringing to account all revenues in their Service Areas.

8.1. Debtor Collection Framework

The following framework is set to ensure that all income due to the Government is collected as quickly as possible and for the recovery of outstanding debts, all debts over 44 days old will be referred to the Attorney General's Chambers to pursue a claim to recover these charges through the Court.

- a) Where possible Accounting Officers should arrange for the collection at the point of delivery to be the preferred method of collection, especially if the amount is small (under £20).
- b) Accounting Officers will raise invoices directly onto the SHG Accounting system either on the day of the service or when the goods are provided, or on the following working day.
- c) Statements will be posted at the month end reflecting the total invoices for that particular month.
- d) Payment terms for these invoices will be within 30 days from the end of the month when the invoices were raised.
- e) If the account was not settled within 30 days, letters will be sent with the next statement run by Corporate Finance. It will reflect the amount that is now in 30 days in arrears. Until this point, any debt will be the responsibility of the Accounting Officer.
- f) This letter will inform the client that they have 14 days to clear all arrears otherwise the amount due will be passed onto the Legal Section for collection through the court.
- g) If the amount is not cleared within that 14 day period, then a letter will be sent to inform that the outstanding amount has been passed to the Legal Section for court action. The outstanding amount will be referred by Corporate Finance to the Attorney General's Chambers to pursue a claim to recover these charges through the Court.
- h) If the Debtor is in the employment of Government, then the amount that remains outstanding after the initial 30 days may be deducted from the next salary payment to them. The amount deducted will be reasonable taking into account the amount, salary and any personal circumstances. This includes any overpayment in error made by Government.

8.2. Interest on Debt

In certain cases the Financial Secretary may apply a rate of interest to any outstanding debt after 30 days, this will be at the discretion of the Financial Secretary and will be fully documented on a case per case base. If interest is to be charged then this will be done on a daily basis at 1% above the current Bank of St Helena base rate.

8.3. Bonds

Bonds issued by Directorates will in the first instance be managed by those Directors, but once a bond elapses i.e. it becomes payable, then the management of that debt is the sole responsibility of Corporate Finance and will be managed in the same way as any other debt. The Directorate will be required to inform Finance of the outstanding Bond which will then be managed by Corporate Finance.

All individual bonds, loans or other financial instrument must have the specific approval of the Financial Secretary. Further, only the Financial Secretary can write off any debt, Accounting Officers or any other officer within Government do not have the powers to do so under any circumstances.

9. PURCHASE ORDERS FOR WORK, GOODS AND SERVICES

These procedures are designed to ensure that Government obtains value for money from their purchasing arrangements. These procedures should be read in conjunction with the Procurement Regulations.

9.1. Purchase Orders

Purchase orders are used in two different scenarios:

- a) To create a contract and commit Government to expenditure under the terms and conditions of the purchase order (or any other terms that have been agreed). Purchase orders created under this scenario must follow the Procurement Regulations when the Total Value exceeds £5,000; or
- b) To call off a requirement from a pre existing contract and commit Government to the expenditure on the Purchase order under the terms and conditions of the pre existing contract.

It is therefore vital that those officers involved in the ordering process fully understand the type of purchase order they are creating in order to protect the Government's interests and that the ability to sign or authorise purchase orders is strictly controlled. This applies to electronically transmitted orders as well as those in paper form.

A purchase order, with a unique reference number and in the form and format instructed by the Financial Secretary, shall be issued for all work, goods or services to be supplied to Government, except for:

- a) Utilities;
- b) Rent;
- c) Items paid for out of petty cash; and
- d) Orders with a value below [£50]

Each Accounting Officer shall be responsible for all purchase orders issued from his/her Service Area ensuring that the purchase is necessary and appropriate, expenditure is correctly coded and there is sufficient budget available to fund the purchase taking account of commitments already entered into against the budget.

A list of Public Officers together with specimen signatures authorised to sign purchase orders on behalf of the Government shall be prepared annually and personally certified by each Accounting Officer using the form provided by Corporate Finance, who shall also authorise any amendments to the list. The list will be retained in the individual service area for audit purposes and a copy sent to Corporate Finance. Any changes in the authorisation list must result in an updated form.

Each Accounting Officer shall control the use of a standard official purchase orders within his/her Service Area. The form and design of order shall be agreed with the Financial Secretary.

Order shall be signed by an authorised employee in his/her own name. Orders shall be authorised by an employee approved for the purpose by the Accounting Officer concerned

in such a way that the employee can be uniquely identified (e.g. signed order or email submission).

Orders for work, goods and services shall conform to the Government's Procurement Regulations and any other arrangements with respect to central purchasing and the standardisation of supplies and materials.

Where it is necessary to place a telephone; internet or verbal orders these must be confirmed immediately on an official order and clearly endorsed as confirmatory. Orders are not required for small purchases (under £50) or for petty cash payments.

All orders, before being authorised will be evidenced by the person placing the order that sufficient funds are available in the appropriate budget sub-head. Official orders must not be raised for any personal or private purchases, nor must personal or private use be made of SHG contracts.

Should an advance payment, pre-payment or stage payments be required before SHG takes delivery of the goods, or risk transfers to SHG (as defined by the INCOTERMS), the written authority of the Financial Secretary should be obtained prior to any agreement being made to do so for any payment over £5,000.

10. PAYMENTS – INVOICES AND ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

These regulations seek to provide a consistent framework throughout the service areas, for the payment of invoices for goods and services received and the certification of invoices. Financial procedures must be established to ensure separation of duties. Therefore, different members of staff must undertake different parts of a sequence of operations in order to ensure that no one individual authorises an entire series of transactions (orders, goods receipt and payments).

10.1. Invoices

Each Accounting Officer shall make arrangements for the examination, verification and certification of invoices.

The Accounting Officer must ensure the following details are on the Invoice Voucher:

- a) the unique purchase order number issued at the time the order was placed;
- b) the invoice date;
- c) a unique (to the supplier) invoice number;
- d) name and address of the supplier;
- e) who is being invoiced within SHG;
- f) the suppliers bank account details;
- g) details of what has been supplied; and
- h) the total invoice value.

The following information will not be required if the details are held centrally by Corporate Finance.

- a) Suppliers bank account details

10.2. Authorisation of Invoices

If the Accounting Officer, or a person authorised by the Accounting Officer, is content that the details on the invoice are correct and payment should be made they should write, in ink use a receipt grid stamp), on the invoice the following details

- a) the charge head and sub-head;
- b) brief description of when payment needs to be made;
- c) reference to the numbers and dates of deposit vouchers (in cases of refund);
- d) reference to special authorities (in cases of advances or any unusual payments); and
- e) certify, by means of a signature, and date the invoice against the words “Please pay” or similar; and
- f) signatures must be in ink, and facsimile name stamps and signature stamps may not be used.

The use of a receipt grid stamp with these details is acceptable.

Any Officer who signs the invoice, thereby certifying the accuracy of the invoice(s), shall be satisfied that:

- a) the goods have been received, examined and approved as to quality and quantity, or services rendered or work done satisfactorily;
- b) conformity with the order or contract;
- c) the computations and castings are arithmetically correct;
- d) the person named on the invoice is entitled to receive payment; and
- e) the expenditure is covered by the appropriate charge head and sub head.

The employee who certifies the invoice as correct shall not be the same person who authorised/certified the initial order, the receipt of goods or the completion of the work.

All original invoices, that have been certified, together with any other supporting documents relevant to the transaction should be supplied to the Accounts Payable Section on the same day of receipt or the next working day.

It is the duty of Corporate Finance to return to the originators, any invoice that has been authorised by someone other than those authorised to do so, or does not conform to all of the requirements as outlined in section 9.2 of these regulations

10.3. General

Each Accounting Officer shall arrange annually, to be forwarded to Corporate Finance the names and specimen signatures of those employees in their Service Area authorised to certify invoices. The monetary limit of delegated authority must also be stated. The invoices which are sent to the Corporate Finance for central processing will be validated against these records.

Where an invoice is for part of an order the order number shall be entered on the invoice and the copy of the relevant order shall accompany the final invoice unless otherwise agreed with Corporate Finance.

Where an Accounting Officer wishes to send an invoice voucher to Corporate Finance on a “copy invoice” he/she must ensure that:

- a) there is no previous record of the invoice having been entered onto the Accounting system; and
- b) should the original invoice appear at a later date, internal controls exist to ensure that the invoice will not be passed again for payment.

Each Accounting Officer shall, as soon as possible after the end of the financial year and in any case not later than a date to be determined by the Financial Secretary in each year, ensure all outstanding invoices of expenditure be sent to Corporate Finance.

Invoices shall not be made out by employees of the Government, nor shall an employee of the government add any additional items or amend in any way an invoice rendered by a supplier. If amendments are required then the supplier should be asked to cancel the original invoice by means of a credit note and issue a new invoice (with a new invoice number) containing the correct information.

Small cash payments under £50 may be paid out of the petty cash account (See section 15).

10.4. Payments entered in the Cash Book

All payments, in settlement of an Invoice Voucher, will be processed by Corporate Finance. The details must be entered into an electronic cashbook on a daily basis within the central accounting system.

10.5. Payment of invoices

Payment of invoices shall be made in accordance with the credit terms agreed with the supplier.

Invoices shall not be paid in advance of the credit terms agreed with the supplier unless it is financially advantageous for SHG to do.

10.6. Refund of Deposits

Vouchers refunding deposits must be classified in the same manner as the receipt voucher on which the deposit was made. The payment voucher should contain a reference to the number and date of the original receipt voucher.

Any refund over £5,000 must have the approval of the Financial Secretary.

11. PAYROLL

Payroll payments may be allocated to a payroll suspense account, provided that the account is reconciled and cleared on a regular basis, and no transaction may remain un-cleared on the control account for a period longer than one month.

Accounting Officers must ensure compliance, within their Service Area, with the Payroll Procedures issued by Corporate Finance.

All payments to staff must be made through the Payroll system.

Payment of salaries will be made directly into the employee's local bank account before the end of each month as determined by Financial Secretary, this will be the preference and all new employees will be requested to provide local bank account details to enable payment via the local bank.

Payslips (printed or electronic) will be distributed to staff as soon as practicable to do so.

12. INCOME

It is essential that proper arrangements are made to secure all income due.

All new fees and charges, systems of income collection and all records of money due to the Government shall be approved by the Financial Secretary before implementation. An assumption of full cost recovery for such fees should always be applied.

No acknowledgement for money received on behalf of the Government shall be given by any employee except in a format agreed with the Financial Secretary.

Cash receipting machines, cash registers or receipt producing equipment shall only be used in accordance with agreed procedures.

All sums received by Service Areas shall be paid in full to the Customer Service Centre and a receipt obtained within seven days. The maximum amount of cash a Service Area is allowed to hold at any given time from revenue collection is £5,000. Holdings of cash from revenue collections over £5,000 must be authorised by Corporate Finance.

Any employee who receives money on behalf of a Service Area shall keep an accurate and chronological account of all receipts. This information should be held electronically. The details recorded must include at least the item code, receipt number; date; payee and amount received.

Except where otherwise provided (such as sale of Postal Orders, stamps or other document bearing a face value), any employee must furnish the payer with a receipt, as agreed with the Financial Secretary for any 'cash' payment.

Money received shall not be used to cash personal or any other cheques at any time.

13. ABANDONMENT OF CLAIMS AND WRITE OFF

13.1. Waiver of Debts

The Governor may, subject to obtaining prior approval from the Secretary of State for amounts exceeding £50,000, authorise the Financial Secretary to waive Government's right to payment of any debt payable to Government. The Governor has delegated to the Financial Secretary the authority to waive any individual debt which includes the loss of public money, stocks, assets or other property belonging to Government or provided for the public service up to the value of £50,000.

13.2. Write off of Public Moneys or assets

The Governor may, subject to obtaining prior approval from the Secretary of State for amounts exceeding £50,000, authorise the Financial Secretary to write off a loss of public money, stocks, assets or other property belonging to Government or provided for the public service. Reference should also be made to the Procurement Regulations, paragraph 41 – *Assets for Disposal*.

Notwithstanding subsections 12.1 and 12.2 (a), in every instance, every effort must be made to ensure that full recovery is made.

The Chief Auditor shall be notified of any write offs over £5,000.

13.3. Assets for Disposal

Assets identified for disposal should be disposed off in accordance with the provisions of Regulation 41 of the Procurement Regulations.

13.4. Gifts of Government property

The Financial Secretary may authorise the gift of serviceable Government assets, stock or property, no longer required for Government purposes, to institutions or organisations established in St Helena, solely or principally for educational, scientific, cultural or charitable purposes, provided that, if the value of such assets, stocks or property exceeds £10,000, the prior approval of the Governor in Council shall be required.

14. POWER TO SURCHARGE

14.1. Right to Surcharge

If it appears to the Financial Secretary that, by reason of neglect of duty, carelessness or fault of any person who is (or was at the time of such neglect, carelessness or fault) a public officer, such officer:

- a) has failed to collect any money owing to the Government, for the collection of which such officer is or was responsible; or
- b) is or was responsible for any improper payment of public money (including payments in excess of appropriation) or for the payment of any money which were not duly vouched; or
- c) is or was responsible for a deficiency in or for the loss or destruction of or damage to any public money, assets, securities, stamps, stocks or other Government property; or
- d) is or was responsible for any loss of or damage to the property of any other person resulting in government's liability to pay damages or compensation, the Financial Secretary may after due investigation, call upon such officer to show cause why he/she should not be surcharged the amount or value of the losses incurred.

If, within such reasonable time as the Financial Secretary may allow, an officer, who has been called upon in terms of subsection a), has not furnished a satisfactory explanation, the Financial Secretary may surcharge that officer in such amount as the Financial Secretary may determine, except that:

- a) in determining the amount to be surcharged the Financial Secretary shall take due account of the ability of the public officer to pay the surcharge without undue financial hardship;
- b) the amount surcharged shall not exceed the losses incurred in respect of subsection 13.1; and
- c) the amount surcharged shall not exceed 25% of the gross annual salary, pension or other emolument of that officer.

14.2. Notice of Surcharge

The Financial Secretary shall notify the public officer concerned, the Accounting Officer to which the officer is attached, Human Resources and the Chief Secretary of any surcharge imposed under section 13.1.

14.3. Appeal of surcharge

Any person who is aggrieved by a decision to surcharge made against him/her under section 13.1 may, within 30 days from the date on which the notification of surcharge was received by him, appeal to the Supreme Court against such decision.

Any such appeal shall be commenced by the person aggrieved giving notice in writing to the Financial Secretary of his/her intention to appeal to the Supreme Court against the decision.

On receipt of such notice the Financial Secretary shall prepare and send to the Supreme Court and to the appellant a brief statement on the question in issue.

On the hearing of the appeal, the appellant and the Financial Secretary may, subject to any rules of court, appear and be heard in person or by a legal practitioner, recognised agent or advocate duly appointed to act on his behalf.

The Supreme Court may make such order on the appeal as the circumstances may require, and every such order shall be given effect to by the Financial Secretary.

The costs of the appeal shall be in the discretion of the Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court may make rules of court for regulation appeals to the Court under the provisions of this section and for fees to be paid in respect thereof.

Notwithstanding the provisions of section 13.5 any surcharge made by the Financial Secretary shall not be recoverable until such time as the time for lodging an appeal has expired or until the determination of such appeal, whichever is the later.

14.4. Withdrawal of surcharge

The Financial Secretary may at any time withdraw any surcharge imposed, in which event he/she shall cause notification of such withdrawal to be given in writing, to the public officer concerned, the Accounting Officer to which the officer is attached, Human Resources and the Chief Secretary.

14.5. Recovery of surcharge

The Financial Secretary may cause any surcharge to be recovered by instalments by deduction from salary, wages, pension or other emoluments of the officer concerned.

The surcharge may be recovered over a period not exceeding 12 months from the date of the surcharge being served.

The amount of every surcharge shall be a debt due to the Government from the public officer concerned recoverable by civil proceedings.

15. REMITTANCES, MONETARY INSTRUMENT AND CURRENCY CONTROL

15.1. Maximum Cash Holding

Cash holding is subject to the following maximum balances, unless otherwise authorised by the Financial Secretary.

Cash

Financial Secretary's Safe	£1,000,000
Customer Service Centre Safes	£250,000

15.2. Regulating Specie and Notes

A Currency Officer, under the direction of the Financial Secretary, shall regulate the importation of specie and notes, so as to ensure that the cash balance does not largely exceed local financial requirements. He/she may also, subject to the approval of the Financial Secretary, arrange for a remittance of specie and notes to supplement the Government's cash balances should it be deemed appropriate.

15.3. Remittance of St Helena Currency

Whenever a remittance of specie or notes is received or about to be despatched a Currency Officer must ensure that the remittance is properly checked by two officers from Corporate Services.

When a remittance is received, the boxes and seals must be carefully inspected and any defective box or boxes that appear to have been tampered with must be investigated and reported to the Financial Secretary.

When a remittance is about to be despatched, the two Corporate Finance officers must witness the packing of the specie and/or notes and must see that the boxes or packets are securely fastened and that they are sealed with the Government seal. As soon as the packets are sealed, they must be secured in the Financial Secretary's safe or the Corporate Finance strong room pending shipment.

15.4. Foreign Currency and Travellers Cheques

Foreign currency (notes only) and travellers' cheques may be received, subject to the approval of the Financial Secretary. It is every public officer's responsibility to ensure that any monetary instrument received by him/her in a foreign currency is transacted at the proper prevailing exchange rate, advice must be sort from Corporate Finance on the rate of exchange.

15.5. Remittance of Cheques and other monetary instruments

All monetary instruments received, including cheques, travellers' cheques and foreign currency must be sent to the Crown Agents Bank, London or a Bank as may be designated by Corporate Finance at the earliest practical opportunity. Verification of insurance cover must be made before sending.

15.6. Electronic Transfers

Remittances to and from overseas destinations may be made by electronic transfer, via Crown Agents Bank or a bank approved by the Financial Secretary to effect the overseas payments for Government.

15.7. Acceptance of Cheques

The Financial Secretary may accept cheques where it is deemed not prejudicial to the Government. Cheques drawn by officers may be accepted subject to any limits that the Financial Secretary may stipulate from time to time. All cheques must be crossed and drawn in favour of the St Helena Government. Post dated cheques must not be accepted.

15.8. Bills of Exchange and Promissory Notes

Bills of Exchange and Promissory Notes may not be accepted without the specific approval of the Financial Secretary.

15.9. Credit Cards

Only officers approved by the Financial Secretary can hold a Credit Card, The use of such card will be for official SHG purchases only and the outstanding balance of the card must be cleared on a monthly basis to ensure no credit charges are incurred. Credit Cards with bonus point schemes, cashback or other cashable benefits are not allowed.

15.10. Documentation

Where there is a physical transfer or remittance of cash or cash equivalents the responsible officer shall ensure that formal receipt is obtained from the shipping agent or courier before custody is handed over for transportation.

16. PETTY CASH

Advances of varying amount may be made to an individual in a Service Area in order that relatively small incidental payments (under £50) may be made quickly, this should not cover regular ongoing payments. There are two types of cash advance:

- a) Special Imprest Account, which must be accounted for separately and in full in each case; and
- b) Standing Petty Cash Account, this may be replenished from time to time upon the submission of paid vouchers to Corporate Finance for reimbursement.

The Financial Secretary may authorise the issue of Petty Cash from the Consolidated Fund to public officers, for any purpose for which money have been appropriated there from. For the purposes of this section a Member of the Legislative Council is a public officer.

The initial application for Petty Cash should be made to the Financial Secretary, explaining the necessity for such account. The amount and duration of any such account should be kept to a practicable minimum.

The payment voucher in respect of an account must clearly state the name and official designation of the payee. The Petty Cash holder must sign for the payment voucher for the receipt of the cash.

As part of the Annual Accounts process and year end closing, each Petty Cash Holder must inform Corporate Finance of the balance held, this should be in an electronic format.

In accordance with the provisions for receipts and payments of public money contained elsewhere in these Regulations, all receipts and payments in respect of Petty Cash accounts must be properly accounted for and proper cash books and vouchers records must be maintained, these should be in electronic format.

A Cash account shall be the personal responsibility of the Petty Cash holder, who may be required by the Financial Secretary to make good any shortage in the account. Only the Financial Secretary after investigation can authorise this.

Whenever a public officer leaves the employment or service of the government or otherwise ceases to be entitled to hold a Petty Cash Account, the unexpended balance should be paid in with zero balance and closed. The Petty Cash Account should not automatically be signed over to a new post holder. The new Petty Cash Account holder should be assigned a new Petty Cash Account and the petty cash issued. If the account is no longer required the balance must be paid into the Consolidated Fund.

The accounts of all Petty Cash holders may be subject to inspection and verification of the cash balances by the Financial Secretary, or the Accounting Officer to which the Petty Cash holder is attached at any time.

17. ADVANCES

17.1. Limitation of Advances

In accordance with the powers conferred under section 7(2) of the Public Finance Ordinance, 2010, the total of the sums issued and disbursed for the purposes of making advances shall not exceed in aggregate at any one time, after deducting repayments, an amount of £2,000,000.

An Advance shall not be granted for a value greater than £500,000 nor shall the aggregate exposure for one entity be greater than £500,000 at any point in time.

An Advance shall not be granted for more than 24 months.

17.2. Types of Advances

Subject to the limitation set out above, the Financial Secretary may make disbursements of money forming part of the Consolidated Fund or of other public money for the purposes of making advances:

- a) on behalf of and recoverable from, other Governments, administrations and Statutory Bodies; or
- b) to public officers, for such purposes and on such terms and conditions as may be prescribed in these Financial Regulations; or
- c) to, or on behalf of public bodies, institutions or individuals where such advances are, in the opinion of the Financial Secretary, in the public interest; or
- d) for such other purposes and on such terms and conditions as the Governor, with the approval of Legislative Council, may determine.

17.3. Purposes of Personal Advances

Personal advances to employees may only be made in accordance with the provision in these Regulations, and any such advance will only be granted for the following purposes:

- a) Salary/wage in respect of leave to be spent outside St Helena;
- b) passage fares when leave is taken outside St Helena for employee, partner/spouse and dependants;
- c) assistance with an approved scholarship or training course up to £5,000;
- d) entrance fees for approved examinations;
- e) passage fares for a spouse/partner and dependents accompanying the employee on a course;

- f) passage fares and related costs to enable an employee, spouse/partner and dependents to be accompanied when travelling for medical treatment;
- g) related costs to enable an employee when travelling for medical treatment; and
- h) any other purposes approved by the Financial Secretary.

17.4. Conditions applicable to all Personal Advances

No advance account or any type of loan may be opened without the authority of the Financial Secretary. Any advance issued in accordance with subsection 16.3 shall be subject to the terms and conditions, below. Interest will be charged at the rate of 1% above the current Bank of St Helena Secured Lending Rate, this will not include salary advances.

17.5. Salary/Wage Advances in respect of leave to be taken outside St Helena

Leave salary/wage shall be debited in the first instance to advances. Each month the salary amount shall be debited to the appropriate salary account and the corresponding credits shall be made to reduce the balance outstanding on the advance account.

17.6. Advances for Passages

The amount advanced to an employee will be limited to £5,000 in respect of passages for leave spent abroad, or that agreed by the Financial Secretary. The advance must be repaid within 2 years immediately following receipt of the advance. Monthly deductions will be made from the employee's salary/wage.

17.7. Advances for approved training

The first instalment of any such advance will either be repaid in the month following the receipt of the advance, or in the case of employee taking unpaid leave overseas to take a course, the month following the officer's return to St Helena. The advance must be repaid within 2 years immediately following receipt of the advance. Monthly deductions will be made from the employee's salary/wage.

17.8. Advances for approved examinations

All staff are eligible for advances in respect of approved examinations.

Arrangements for advances in respect of approved examinations shall be made via the respective Accounting Officer, when the candidate registers for the examinations.

17.9. Repayment of Unforeseen advances

Unless otherwise provided in these subsections, unforeseen personal advances are repayable by equal instalments over a period not exceeding 2 years. The first instalment of any such repayment will normally be made by deduction from salary in the month following that in which the advance was made.

17.10. Responsibility of Accounting Officer

Accounting Officer are responsible for ensuring that all officers in the Service Area, in receipt of personal advances, comply with all the terms and conditions under which the advances were made, particularly in respect to repayment. This does not relieve the responsibility or limit the powers of the Financial Secretary to take any steps, he/she deems appropriate, to recover any outstanding amount of an advance.

Advances made to employees on behalf of third parties (e.g. overseas conferences part funded by organisation) are to be repaid in full. If for any reason the full reimbursement is not received the shortfall will have to be recovered from the relevant Service Area budget.

18. DEPOSITS

Any money, not being money raised or received for the purposes of the Government, which may be deposited with the Financial Secretary or with any public officer, (such money being hereinafter referred to as “deposits”) shall not form part of the Consolidated Fund.

18.1. Investment of Deposits

The Financial Secretary may authorise the investment of deposits in like manner as is authorised by section 6 (1) of the Public Finance Ordinance in respect of Public Funds.

18.2. Unclaimed Deposits

Any deposit which remains unclaimed for a period of six years shall be paid into and form part of the Consolidation Fund; provided that if the person entitled thereto shall subsequently prove to the satisfaction of the Financial Secretary his or her claim to any such deposit, the Financial Secretary shall thereupon refund the said deposit to such person. Such refund may be paid out of the Consolidated Fund without further warrant or appropriation other than stated in the Public Finance Ordinance.

18.3. Administration of Deposits

Subject to the provisions of the Public Finance Ordinance, the Financial Secretary is authorised to administer, and (in appropriate cases) to refund any deposit to the person entitled thereto.

19. ASSETS

19.1. Assets Register

It is important that the Government's physical assets are protected against loss or theft and those they are controlled in such a way as to minimise the risk of loss. In addition to making proper arrangements to safeguard physical assets on the Government's premises, it is necessary to maintain a complete and accurate record of the assets held. These regulations set out what is required in relation to the maintenance, control and inspection of assets and disposal of surplus or damaged items. To enable St Helena Government to have some form of valuation of its Fixed Assets and to enable effective and efficient capital expenditure budget planning for replacement requirements a central asset register will be maintained by Corporate Finance. Fixed assets shall be categorised as follows:

- a) land;
- b) buildings;
- c) infrastructure;
- d) plant and machinery;
- e) motor vehicles;
- f) equipment including computers;
- g) furniture and Fittings; and
- h) IT Networks.

19.2. Capital Assets

It is the responsibility of Accounting Officers to ensure that all assets in their charge are properly managed and controlled. A Central Asset Register will be maintained for all assets in excess of the value of £5,000 by Corporate Finance. Accounting Officers must inform Corporate Finance within one month of purchase of any new acquisition of over £5,000 or the disposal of any asset on the Central Asset Register.

Each Accounting Officer shall arrange for all assets on the Central Asset Register to be checked for actual existence on an annual basis, this should be carried out in the last quarter of the financial year. The register needs to be authorised by the Accounting Officer and another responsible officer and sent electronically to Corporate Finance each year in March.

When classifying capital asset values, it is allowable for assets to be grouped together and capitalised as a group, this could result in the value of goods being over £5,000; for example the fitting out and replacement of an IT suite could be deemed to be classed as one asset "IT Suite" and all items within that suite being deemed to be one asset. Accounting Officers must seek advice from Corporate Finance on capitalisation of assets.

19.3. Inventory

All other assets under £5,000 but more than £100 in value, shall be deemed to be inventory and a recorded kept by the appropriate Accounting Officer. Inventory items recorded by Service Areas should be restricted to all items costing £100 or more. The information recorded should include description, purchase cost, serial number, make, and date purchased.

20. STOCKS

20.1. Stocks

The Accounting Officer shall be responsible for the care and custody of the stocks in his/her Service Area. Appropriate arrangements should be made for stock checking, security and record keeping commensurate with the value and attractiveness of the stock items.

20.2. Consumables

Consumables are items that are in the process of being consumed and should not be treated as stock, for example office supplies such as paper, pens, file folders, post-it notes, toner or ink cartridges or cleaning goods such as bleach, cleaning fluids etc. No detailed records of these items are required.

20.3. Accounting Systems

The Accounting Officer shall ensure that proper systems are in place and maintained to:

- a) ensure that all stock movements (goods received and goods issued) and stock holdings are properly accounted for by both quantity and value;
- b) ensure this is sufficient segregation of duties;
- c) charge Service Areas for issues made;
- d) provide a means of checking and verification;
- e) adequately control and manage payments to suppliers for goods received in good condition, and for making claims for short deliveries of goods received in unsatisfactory condition;
- f) provide information regarding existing and optimal stock levels;
- g) provide pricing information upon which future procurement decisions can be based; and
- h) provide information regarding liabilities incurred with suppliers for outstanding orders and indents.

20.4. Procurement of All Stock

All procurement of stock shall be undertaken in accordance with Procurement Regulations.

All goods received must be checked for quantity and quality, and the supplier immediately notified of any discrepancy.

20.5. Stock Control

Accounting Officers shall hold stocks only to the level determined for operational needs.

It is the responsibility of the Accounting Officer, to ensure that excessive stocks are not held. Stocks should be maintained at levels that will just furnish the requirements of Service Areas but no more. It is the responsibility of the Accounting Officer to ensure that the emergency/contingency items of stock are properly identified.

With the exception of some emergency/contingency items of spares (of which a minimum of one unit must be kept at all times), no item of stock should be held at levels exceeding six month's stock.

Every employee responsible for the receipt and issue of stocks shall keep such records of their transactions as the Financial Secretary may determine in order to maintain efficient control of the receipts and issues of such stocks. All such records shall be in a form approved by the Financial Secretary who may authorise that certain items may be excluded from the records.

The method of stocktaking shall be agreed with Corporate Finance. Where continuous stocktaking is applied, all stocks shall be checked at least once in each financial year and must be checked as part of the year-end process, on the 31st March or earlier to that date if agreed with Corporate Finance.

Stock sheets must be prepared at every stocktaking, showing actual stocks in hand, and balances shown in the stock accounts and any surpluses or deficiencies. All discrepancies must be investigated by the Accounting Officer and corrective action agreed with Corporate Finance before implementation.

Every issue of stock must be supported by a requisition note stating the quantity of goods required and signed by an authorised employee. Such requisition notes must be receipted by the person receiving the goods.

20.6. Handing over Stock

When a public officer hands over the charge of stock to another public officer (e.g. going on overseas leave), the latter shall verify the stock held against the records maintained and inform the Accounting Officer.

Where the number of items makes it impracticable to carry out a full check of all the items test checks shall be carried out. Such test checks shall encompass a reasonable percentage of items, and shall concentrate on the largest value items.

Any discrepancy found during the checking, shall be notified immediately to the Financial Secretary. All discrepancies must be investigated by the Accounting Officer and corrective action agreed with Corporate Finance before implementation.

20.7. Independent Check of Stock

The Financial Secretary will periodically make arrangements for independent reviews to provide assurance that Accounting Officers have implemented appropriate controls to

ensure the safeguarding of stock under their control and that stock-taking is being performed to ensure the record of balances held is accurate.

The frequency and scope of these reviews will be determined by the Financial Secretary, taking into due consideration the levels of risk involved.

21. SECURITY

The Government's investment in stocks, cash, and stamps requires that adequate and reasonable security arrangements are put in place by Accounting Officers to safeguard against potential risks of theft, fraud or irregularity. These regulations seek to ensure that sufficient measures are taken by the Accounting Officers to minimise these risks. The IT Policy under the Code of Management shall be followed with regards to IT and computer equipment.

21.1. Responsibility

Each Accounting Officer is responsible for the custody and control and for maintaining adequate and reasonable security at all times of all stocks, cash, and stamps, in his/her Service Area.

It is the responsibility of each Accounting Officer to ensure that all Service Area officers, are provided with proper safe custody facilities.

It is the responsibility of each Service Area officer to report any apparent inadequate security facility to the Accounting Officer without delay.

21.2. Cash and Stamps

Public money in a Government Office shall be kept under lock and key in the charge of nominated responsible persons at all times. The nominated person will be directly responsible for it and, except in the case of strong rooms with two locks, have sole access to it.

Cash in excess of £200 must be placed in a cash box, strongroom or safe.

If a cash box is used it must be placed in secured locked facility preferable a strongroom or safe overnight or whenever the person responsible is absent from the office for any purpose. On no account will the cash box be left unattended, or a strongroom or safe door left open.

21.3. Strong rooms and Safes

The following must be kept in a strongroom:

- a) the cash reserves of Corporate Finance; and
- b) the reserve stock of stamps and postal orders in the Post Office.

Corporate Finance strong room shall be secured by two locks, the key of one being held by the Corporate Support and the other by the Financial Secretary or an officer duly appointed. In the absence of one of these officers, including through illness or leave, the key or keys will be held by an officer(s) appointed by the Financial Secretary. On no occasions will both keys be held by the same officer.

The Post Office strongroom shall only be opened in the presence of two nominated officers one of which must be the Head of the Post Office or in their absence a designated Officer.

Strongrooms and safes in joint custody shall not be opened, except by the responsible officers both of whom must remain present during such time that the strongroom or safe is open. On no account shall any officer responsible for a strongroom or safe hand over the keys, except under the express instruction of the Financial Secretary.

For all cash holdings, there shall be an officer nominated by the Accounting Officer independent to the cash process to validate and countersign the cash holding at the end of each working day. The countersigning officer shall also be present when the cash is secured in the safe to validate the storage of the cash holding.

A register of all money, stamps, postal orders and other articles deposited or withdrawn shall be kept for each safe and strongroom belonging to Government. The register will be initialled by the officer responsible for the key(s) for each entry.

The Accounting Officer in charge of a strongroom and/or safe will, periodically (no less than once a year at the year end), verify the contents. The responsible officer and Accounting Officer shall sign a certificate of the verification, which will be kept in the strongroom or safe with an electronic copy being sent to Corporate Finance. Any discrepancy must be reported immediately to the Financial Secretary.

Spare keys of strong rooms and other safes will be enclosed in well secured packets with the key numbers and safes to which they belong stated on the outside. The seal of the packet should be signed by the responsible key holder and Accounting Officer. Spare keys will be kept in a safe held by the Chief Secretary or other officer nominated by him/her. A register of all keys will be kept in the safe in which the spare keys are deposited. The numbers of combination locks on strong-rooms or safes will be secured in a similar fashion. If the secured packet is opened due to loss of keys/combinations replacements will need to be secured and signed across the seal by the appropriate officers again.

22. RETENTION OF DOCUMENTS

22.1. The secure retention of all appropriate financial records is of paramount importance. Some are required to be kept because of a statutory requirement to do so. For most records the minimum period is 6 years plus the current financial year. The following applies to:

	Years
a) Ledgers, Cash Books and Journals	6
b) Purchase Orders, Invoices and payment vouchers	6
c) Receipt books	6
d) Special ledgers and records (e.g. housing loans)	20
e) Personnel and payroll records	6
f) Tax records	6
g) Contracts (years following expiry or termination)	6

22.2. The destruction of the above documents needs to be done as securely and efficiently as possible in order that no sensitive and important information is leaked. Records and documents which are not financially related will be held by the various Service Areas and their retention and destruction will be covered under their procedures.

23. ST HELENA AUDIT SERVICE AND INTERNAL AUDIT OFFICE

- 23.1.** The Chief Auditor is obliged by law to carry out the audit of the annual accounts of St Helena Government as well as various public bodies. The Audit Service also conducts Value for Money reviews on behalf of the Legislative Council examining the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of public spending. In addition the Internal Audit Office provides an internal audit service to Government, giving independent assurance and consultancy services on issues relating to risk management, control, governance and their effectiveness in assisting the achievement of Government's objectives.
- 23.2.** The Chief Auditor and his/her representatives as well as the Internal Audit Office and their representatives shall have authority to enter at any time on any premises or land used by the St Helena Government and to have access to all correspondence, documents, books or other records of any employee of the Government and appertaining in any way to the activities of the Government.
- 23.3.** The Chief Auditor and Internal Audit Office shall be entitled to require such explanation as he/she considers necessary to establish the correctness of any matter under examination. The Chief Auditor and Internal Audit Office shall have the authority to require any employee of the Government to produce cash, or other Government property under his/her control.
- 23.4.** Accounting Officers must report any reasonable suspicions of fraud or related negligence to the Financial Secretary and Head of Internal Audit immediately. In addition to this the policy on Fraud and Related Negligence contained in the Code of Management should be followed in such circumstances (Appendix 7.6 Policy on Fraud and Related Negligence).