



**Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related  
Offences Commission (ICPC)**

**SYSTEM STUDY REPORT**

**OF  
DIRECTORATE OF ROAD TRAFFIC SERVICES (DRTS)  
MABUSHI, ABUJA**

**BY  
INDEPENDENT CORRUPT PRACTICES AND OTHER RELATED  
OFFENCES COMMISSION (ICPC)**

**OCTOBER, 2014**

# **REPORT OF THE SYSTEM STUDY AND REVIEW OF THE DIRECTORATE OF ROAD TRANSPORT SERVICE (DRTS), ABUJA**

## **EXECUTIVE REPORT**

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The establishment of the Directorate of Motor Vehicle Administration in the Federal States of the country and the FCT was a product of the 1980 International Treaty on the Harmonization of Highways legislations in the ECOWAS Sub – region signed by the authority of Heads of States. The Treaty entailed the setting up of appropriate machinery in member states to be responsible among other thing for the: Registration of vehicles, Issuance of driver’s license, organizing of technical Inspection of vehicles and compilation of statistics on movement of goods and passengers by roads.

Consequently, the FCT Directorate of Road Traffic Services otherwise referred to as Vehicle Inspection Office (VIO), was created in 1981 as a unit under the Engineering Department of the FCDA and charged with the statutory function of ensuring safety of lives and property on public roads and highways through the enforcement of the Road Traffic Regulations. It was also saddled with the responsibility for the generation of substantial revenue for the government through motor vehicle related taxation.

In furtherance of its mandate, the Directorate of Road Traffic Services was upgraded from the status of a Unit to a Directorate in 2001 to cope with the challenges of road traffic control and management in the Federal Capital Territory and also in compliance with the Federal Government directives to upgrade all State Road Traffic outfits to Directorates. The directive was communicated vide a letter reference MFCT/ADMINS.116 of 4<sup>th</sup> October 2001.

However, in spite of its successes in the 33 years since its establishment, the Directorate has attracted much public criticism in terms of service delivery and a perception of unethical practices being rife amongst its staff. There have also been allegations of sharp practices in the operations of the Directorate.

It was in the quest to examine some of these allegations that border on corrupt practices in contravention of the ICPC Act 2000, that the Commission deemed it necessary to conduct a system study and review of the VIO, Abuja in order to ascertain the corruption-prone areas in the course of the discharge of their duties and help improve the state of affairs in the Directorate and find ways to eliminate existing corruption loopholes in the Organization.

The study involved visits to the Directorate's headquarters at Mabushi, and two of its zonal commands at Asokoro and Area I of the Federal Capital Territory. The study was conducted in three weeks (i.e. from 12<sup>th</sup> December to 5<sup>th</sup> January 2014).

The study examined laws, rules, policies, organization structure and operational guidelines of the Directorate and the team further administered structured questionnaires.

## **2.0 HIGHLIGHTS OF IDENTIFIED PROBLEMS/OBSERVATIONS**

- The Directorate establishment Act is obsolete and requires a review.
- The Directorate lacks a Board to supervise its operations.
- The Directorate lacks a strategic focus that is documented to aid the delivery of its mandate.
- The Directorate lacks manuals that define how staff should operate in key functional areas.

- The administrative structure existing in the FCT VIO office does not allow the organization to attain its objectives as most duties that were expected to be performed by the admin department (e.g. training) is handled by the Research and logistics Unit.
- The Vehicle Inspection Office based on its mandate and its enormous responsibilities operates as a Directorate under the Transport Secretariat of the Federal Capital Territory Administration. This subjects it to the bureaucratic bottleneck of the Secretariat and hinders it from being effective in enforcement responsibilities.
- The Directorate has no financial autonomy as its budget is controlled by FCDA. The Transport Secretariat which oversees its operations has overall control over issues as mundane staff training.
- That the Vehicle Inspection Office is an enforcement agency based on its enormous responsibilities derived from circular Ref MFCT/ADMIN/116 of 4<sup>th</sup> Oct. 2001 as well as powers to implement the provisions of the Road Traffic Act 1948 and the Federal Capital Territory Road Transport Regulations 2005. An agency with such enormous powers ought to be autonomous, having its board, control over its budget, staff training and sundry matters.
- That the Directorate does not have a procurement Unit in line with the procurement Act 2007.
- In the Finance department, the Advance Section, Expenditure Control Section, Checking Section and Cash Pay Unit do not appear to be in existence. This is in contravention of the provisions of the Finance Requirement.
- The organization does not have ACTU in place, there is also no mechanism for effective corruption reportage/whistle-blowing. The absence of the Anti-

Corruption and Transparency Monitoring Unit in the Directorate is in breach of the circular from the Office of the Head of Civil Service of the Federation Ref. **OHCSF/MSO/192/94 of 2<sup>nd</sup> October, 2001**. The circular directed Ministries, Departments and Agencies to set up Anti -Corruption and Transparency Monitoring Unit.

#### **FINANCE & ACCOUNT**

- The Overhead Treasury Cash book is not properly maintained as it did not provide the essential features of a cash book. For example, there were no columns for Bank Mandate Numbers, Voucher Numbers.
- There was no evidence that the consolidated Account of the Directorate otherwise called Transcripts was being sent to the **OAGF on monthly basis in line with section 808, 809 & 812 of the Financial Regulations**.
- Re-imburements for advances were done at intervals (monthly) without proper retirement of previous cash advances. In cases where retirements were done; some important documents such as cash receipts or honour certificates were not attached to the documents. This is an act contrary to section 1010 of the Financial Regulations.
- There was no evidence of compliance with 2011 submission of the Directorate's audited Financial Statement as provided by section 13 of the Auditor-General Act, 2008 which requires MDAs to submit their audited Financial Statement to the OAGF not later than 30<sup>th</sup> June of the succeeding year.
- The Directorate did not appear to keep adequate books of Account, basic accounting books such as general ledger, subsidiary ledgers and fixed asset ledgers.
- The Directorate did not appear to have officer in charge of its vote control who ensures adequate monitoring of the expenditure profile of the

organization in line with the provisions Section 402 of the Financial Regulations.

- It was also discovered that most of the vouchers were not pre-audited as contained in the Government Financial Regulations chapter 20 (adherence to procedure on award/payment of contract as well the **Financial Circular F15775 of June 2001 and Financial Circular No. TRY/A4 & B4/2002 on award of contract.**
- Advances were sometimes raised in the names of officers to procure goods and services which did not contain the breakdown of items and the cost implications. An act contrary to Section 6 (3) the Financial Regulations.
- It was observed that cash advances/imp rest were given to officers to procure goods and services when the initial advances granted them were not retired; an act contrary to the financial regulations.
- The team discovered that the Directorate was granting cash advances far above N200, 000 to officers for the procurement of goods and services. **An act contrary to Federal Treasury Circular TRY/A2 & B2/2010 and OAGF/CAD/026V of 12 May**
- There were alteration and hand written corrections on some of the payment vouchers contrary to section 604 of the Financial Regulations.
- It was discovered that the filing system was lax which made it difficult to trace the genesis of a project from the documents submitted to the team.
- The team also made personal observation of the process of obtaining drivers' particulars and discovered that the processes were short circuited by the involvement of officers of the Directorate as well as touts who collude with desk officers. **An act contrary to section 19 ICPC Act 2000 – using one's office or position to confer undue advantage on oneself, relation or associate.**

- The team further observed the undue interference of the Directorate's officers/touts in the procurement of drivers' license without the applicants presence may lead to under age/physically challenged persons acquiring the drivers' documents thereby constituting great risk to the safety of citizens on our road.
- It was also a key finding that the processes and procedures for certifying the Road worthiness of vehicles are complex and simply unwieldy. Apart from the fact that some of them cannot be defined such as "smooth" or "worn – out" tyres, many of them depend on the discretion of the officers leaving room for subjectivity.
- Similarly, deciding on what percentage of the perimeters that must be satisfied to warrant issuance or refusal of Roadworthiness certificate becomes difficult and make enforcement problematic.
- It was observed that some of the vehicles confiscated and kept at the Directorate's auto pond were not registered at the gate. In addition, the 'Off the Road', offences/sticker sheets detailing offences of the drivers that ought to be pasted on vehicles confiscated were not pasted on the vehicles.
- In the **Correction Unit**, and also in some other Units, the team also observed that some persons who were not officers of the Directorates were brought in by staff to assist in reducing the pressure of work on them. Unfortunately, these persons were collecting money for rendering services to the applicants.
- That there was no evidence shown that the Directorate laid emphasis on the importance of the Code of conduct Bureau's asset declaration form to staff.
- That personal responsibility is not regarded as an important management principle in the Directorate.
- That the Directorate does not have Ethics Policy that clearly spells out staff conduct on issue of gifts and sundry issues.

- That the Directorate did not have any internal mechanism of checking the assets of its staff at entry and exit points.

### **3.0 RECOMMENDATION**

The team having studied the system, processes and procedures of the Directorate discovered some fundamental flaws that if allowed to continue to operate could compromise the very essence of the Directorate, and therefore wish to recommend the following integrity actions as follows:

- That the Minister of the Federal Capital Territory should initiate a bill for the review of the Directorate. The Act should take care of the constitution of the membership of the board as well as its tenure.
- That the Minister be advised to upgrade the Directorate to a full – fledged agency where the head controls vote in order to address its enormous operational challenges.
- The Directorate should determine a medium term strategic focus that is documented to aid the delivery of its mandate. .
- The Directorate should establish an advance Unit in the Finance department responsible for the preparation of advance ledger and registers as well as preparing retirement of advances in line with chapter 4 of the Financial Regulations.
- The Directorate should create an Expenditure Control Section which is responsible for among other tasks to monitor and ensure that that votes on subheads are judiciously utilize for the purpose they were meant for. (Section 4 of the Financial Regulations).



- That a procurement Unit be established in line with the Procurement Act 2007.
- **The Anti- Corruption Unit should be constituted in the DRTS in line with the Circular from the Office of Head of Civil Service of the Federation OHCSF/MSO/192/94 of 2001.** It should equally design a mechanism for effective corruption reportage/whistle blowing for the Directorate.
- On its Systems and Processes; the Directorate should be advised to keep Revenue Treasury Cash Book and Overhead Treasury Cash book in such a manner as prescribed by section **802 and 804the Financial Regulations.**
- That reimbursement of imp rest and cash advances should be granted to officers based on retirement of previous cash advances/ imp rest granted to officers to execute works. In addition, any officer who does not retire its cash advances him/her after three months; the money unretired should be deducted from the officer's salary.
- The Directorate should always comply with call circular in preparing its annual budget as well as ensuring that allocation and expenditure on the subhead and vote book should be based on the annual budget.
- The Directorate should be advised to keep adequate books of Account, basic accounting books such as general ledger, subsidiary ledgers and fixed asset ledgers, while a Committee headed by Accountant be set up to list all the fixed asset of the Directorate in a register.
- The Directorate be advised to ensure that cash of N200,000 and above should be granted to officers to execute works and services in line with the circular from the Office of the Accountant General of the Federation OAGF/CAD/026/2010 and that any expenditure above N200,000 should be made through contract award.

- That in cases where the DRTS is to use the services of a third party to project its activities; the payment voucher should be raised in the name of the organization rather than the name of the schedule officer.
- That contract on Overhead should follow due process of being advertised on the Directorate's notice board, rather than inviting contractors to bid contracts jobs. In addition, officers in charge of Procurement and approval of contracts should be advised to declare their interest on Procurement matters as well as financial disclosure of their assets.
- The process of allowing staff/touts to procure vehicle particulars for applicants should stop forthwith. The Directorate should review its processes to be in line with international best practices, Applicants should be allowed to go through the various stages of acquiring vehicle particulars with a view to ensuring that those who eventually acquired it at the end of the day have been duly tested, fit and worthy of been licensed to drive.
- **The Road worthiness Template and the Vehicle Inspection Sheet** need to be review in order to make it less complex and cumbersome and where discretion is use in assessing the Road Worthiness of a vehicle, especially in complex areas which are not defined by the template, such rules applied should be documented to serve as guide for others to follow.
- DRTS should build its own plate for the production of number plates to ease the process.
- The security at the Auto Pond gate should provide and maintain a register containing particulars of vehicles/Machines confiscated and released, the date of confiscation and released of the vehicle from the park, place of confiscation for the purpose of accountability and transparency, In addition, any vehicle that exceeds 2 months in the pond should be disposed of in line with **Part 1, Section 23(d) CAP 548 of the Road Traffic Act.**

- Vehicle confiscated and kept in the Directorate’s Park should always bear ‘**OFF THE ROAD**’ sticker pasted on the dashboard. The vehicle should also bear documents that state the nature of the offence(s) committed by the driver. The release of the vehicle should be effected upon payment of the stipulated fine with receipts issued accordingly. In addition, the Internal Auditor should also certify the transactions before the release of the vehicle.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The study of the processes and procedures of the Directorate of Road Traffic Services within the period under review, revealed a fundamental system failure. The assessment revealed the DRTS attained a non-compliant compliance level of approximately 35.4% on the performance scale. This portends that the corruption vulnerability requires urgent attention by the ICPC and FCT to make the Directorate functional.

#### **STATUS REPORT ON THE LEVEL OF IMPLEMENTATION OF FINDINGS BY DIRECTORATE OF ROAD TRAFFIC SERVICES**

- The Directorate is currently developing a legal framework which would be forwarded to the FCT Administration for onward presentation to the National Assembly.
- Re-structuring and repositioning of the Directorate in line with FCTA approved guideline and Organogram is on-going.
- The observed flaw in the procurement process has been addressed with the posting of a procurement desk officer to the Directorate
- The Directorate now maintain Revenue Cash book with all essential features of a Cash-book in accordance with the Financial Regulations.

- Re-imbusement and retirement of cash Advances by staff is properly carried out now as prescribed by the extant regulations
- An Expenditure Control vote book and an officer assigned with the responsibility of keeping the vote-book have been created.
- It has put in place Checking, Advances and Other Charges Unit in the Finance and Accounts Section.
- Concerted efforts are in place to ensure vouchers are pre- audited in line with the Financial Regulations before payments are effected
- Staff are now satisfied with the job as officers who were successful in the last promotion examinations for year 2013, 2014, and 2015 have been promoted.
- There are on-going efforts to carry out general posting of staff.