

Memorandum for Cabinet by the Hon. Minister of Works
and Housing

Drivers with Trucks/Vans

The replacement of horse-drawn by mechanized transport was decided upon in a Cabinet meeting on 23rd November, 1948.

2. On the 5th January, 1949, this Department issued Memo 2940 in which all cartmen were given the option of:-

(a) either acquiring a 4 ton truck and remaining in Government employment as drivers of their own truck;

(b) or agreeing to remain in Government employment as Labourers; (their gratuities to be assessed as if they continued to work as cartmen);

(c) or retiring from the Government Service.

3. Cartmen opting under (a) were informed that preference would in all cases be given to trucks of the tipping type.

4. In April, 1949, ex-cartmen from the Public Works Department, Medical and Health Department and Water and Electricity Department, as well as outsiders, were employed as drivers with trucks/vans. The rates for trucks and vans were fixed at £1. 15s. 0d. and £1. 0s. 0d. per day respectively and were inclusive of the wages of driver, bonus, cost of petrol and oil, and all other maintenance expenses necessary to keep the vehicles in good working condition.

5. Since then these employees have had their wages increased several times, to be exact in 1953, 1959, 1964 and 1965 but the basic composition of their emoluments has always remained the same viz, that included in the wages they receive are those items listed in para 4 above.

6. Moreover as from 1st October, 1959, in accordance with Sec. Circular 53/59, drivers with vans only had their then daily wage of 23/8 (20/4 plus 3/4 bonus) reduced to 21/8 per day while being thenceforth supplied with all fuel and oil required for the vehicle during working hours.

7. The composite wage has raised certain difficulties which have so far defied total solution, namely (a) payment for holidays, sick and vacation leave and (b) grant of gratuities on completion of service.

8. A partial solution was found to the first point, when it was decided in 1961 that drivers with trucks/vans should be paid for public holidays, sick and vacation leave, at the minimum rate (i.e. of a labourer) as this would have to be paid anyway.

9. Action for the partial payment of gratuities based on the minimum wage could only be taken in the case of those drivers with trucks/vans who had been originally cartmen; this was done on the strength of the ruling given in terms of Treas. Circular 49/49 in File Treas. 1828/52, and on the strength of a Cabinet decision dated 23rd November, 1948. However all efforts to secure Government approval that drivers with trucks/vans who had not been employed as cartmen should be similarly treated, proved fruitless.

10. It is submitted that an interim decision should be solicited on this point in the first instance, enabling employees who have already been superannuated at least to receive something on account in respect of the gratuities due to them.

11. As regards a final decision it may not be amiss to point out that as far back as 1951, this Department had suggested that drivers with trucks/vans should be paid a driver's wage and bonus plus an allowance to cover the running, maintenance and replacement of their vehicles. It is considered that this suggestion should, in spite of the lapse of time, be pursued.

12. Drivers with trucks and vans now receive a composite wage of 40/4 and 30/- per day respectively. All of them have been in the service for a considerable number of years and had they been Motor Transport Drivers, they would have obtained the maximum of their grade (Group IV). This Department has all along contended that these employees are doing work equal to that of M.T. Drivers and should be paid accordingly.

13. It is therefore suggested that out of the respective composite wages of 40/4 per day and 30/- per day being paid to drivers with trucks and vans, 26/7½ per day which represents the maximum of a Motor Transport Driver (Group IV) and inclusive of the 8% increase should be considered as being the wages proper of these employees. In order to avoid the inevitable claims for classification in a wage group which would follow any attempt to place drivers with trucks/vans on an incremental wage scale, it is considered that this ever-diminishing class of employees (to which recruitment ended in 1957) should be paid a fixed wage.

14. If approval is given for the sum of 26/7½ per day out of the composite wages of 40/4 and 30/- per day to be considered as being the wage of these drivers with trucks/vans, it will then be possible to effect payment for holidays, sick and vacation leave in full and to compute gratuities on the driver's wage alone.

15. The estimated expenditure involved in giving these employees the difference in pay between the wage of a labourer and of a driver with effect from 1st November, 1961, is set out below:-

Vacation Leave and Sick Leave	£ 285
Public Holidays and Optional Holidays	£2,110
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	£2,395

16. To recapitulate it is submitted that Government approval be sought for the following arrangements:-

(a) Drivers with trucks and vans to be paid a wage proper of 26/7½ per day out of their present respective composite wages of 40/4 per day and 30/- per day;

(b) Computation of gratuities to be made on the driver's wage alone;

(c) Payment in respect of public holidays and absences on sick, bereavement and vacation leave to be calculated on the driver's wage alone - arrears being payable only on the difference in wage-rates as set out at para 16 above and with effect from 1st November, 1961;

(d) Drivers with vans only to continue to be supplied with fuel and oil required by their vehicles during working hours;

(e) No change in the ownership of the vehicle to be allowed without prior Ministerial approval.

21st January, 1966.

M.H.191/63