

# annual report 2018



International  
Labour  
Office

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## Committee on Accountability

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In 2018 the Committee completed its review of one case that had been referred in 2017. In addition, five new cases were referred to the Committee on Accountability by the Treasurer and Financial Comptroller (TR/CF) pursuant to Article 13.30 of the Financial Rules.

**Case No.1:** The Committee concluded its examination of a case of alleged fraud against the ILO Short Term Staff Compensation Scheme by an External Collaborator and ILO Staff Member. The Committee considered a detailed investigation report prepared by the Office of Internal Audit and Oversight (IAO) and the comments of both the External Collaborator and ILO official provided to the Committee in respect of the report findings. The Committee noted that there was clear evidence and admission that the ILO official had submitted a payment order in respect of an invoice submitted for services under an external collaboration contract that had not been delivered, and that the funds had been received by the external collaborator. The services contracted for had not been performed during the contractual period due to incapacity to work but were performed at a later date. The Committee found that the ILO official had clearly failed to follow ILO rules and procedures with the consequence that funds were disbursed in respect of services that had not been rendered thus creating financial risk and potential loss to the Office. The actions of the External Collaborator in submitting the invoice for unperformed services and in receiving the payment cast doubt on their integrity but there was not sufficient evidence to support an allegation of fraud or attempted fraud against the ILO Short Term Staff Compensation Scheme. The Committee recommended that due consideration be given to the advisability or otherwise of offering further contracts to the external collaborator and that if any contracts were to be offered that greater attention should be paid to the verification of work done. The ILO official and their hierarchy should be informed of the need to ensure that all financial rules and procedures are followed and that consideration be given to an appropriate disciplinary sanction\*.

**Case No.2:** The Committee examined a case of alleged fraud and misconduct by an ILO official with regard to claims for dependency benefit and education grant in respect of a minor child using a forged birth certificate. The Committee noted that the investigation had not substantiated whether or not the official had acted with intent to defraud the Office and in the absence of any further comment from the official, the

Committee was unable to draw any further conclusion in that regard. The Committee upheld the findings of the IAO to the effect that there was clear evidence that the official had submitted forged documentation to the Office and had not exercised due care in ensuring the accuracy and veracity of the statements made in his claims. In light of the fact that the official's contract had come to an end and that no benefits had actually been paid in respect of the claims subject to the investigation, the Committee recommended that the matter be considered closed. The Committee also recommended that a note be placed in the appropriate place to indicate that the official should not be offered any future employment or other form of engagement by the Office without consultation with HRD.

**Case No.3:** The Committee examined a case of alleged fraud and misconduct by an official with regard to the submission of false transport receipts, the conduct of unauthorised outside activities during office hours and claims for excessive daily subsistence allowance (DSA). The Committee considered the investigation report prepared by IAO together with comments provided by the Official to the Committee in response to the IAO report. The allegations regarding DSA were found to be unsubstantiated by the IAO and the Committee found no evidence in the file to contradict this conclusion. The allegations regarding the submission of falsified transport receipts and the conduct of outside activities during office hours were substantiated during the investigation. The Committee found that the evidence contained in the investigation file substantiated these findings and that the comments provided by official offered some explanations and also confirmed that to some extent the actions confirmed as wrong-doing had been undertaken. The Committee also noted that the investigation report contained no evidence to the effect that the official had submitted false receipts with the intent of making a personal profit or that they had so profited. The Committee recommended that the Office should take measures to clarify and re-enforce the procedure pertaining to the use of petty-cash and claiming of incidental expenses. It also recommended that the official be clearly informed of the rules and procedures concerning outside activities and advised that the business concerned does not appear to be consistent with their status as an ILO official; and that the matter be referred for consideration of an appropriate level of disciplinary sanction\*.

**Case No.4:** The Committee examined a case of alleged fraud and misconduct by an ILO official with regard to a dishonest claim for dependency benefit on the basis that the official failed to inform the Office of a change in family status in a transparent and timely manner. The Committee considered the investigation report prepared by IAO together with comments provided by the official to the Committee in response to the investigation report. The Committee noted that the official did not contest that claims for dependency benefit had been submitted or that the declared family status had changed. It also noted the comments of the official regarding the alleged difficulties in respect of certain legal processes and the officials claim that they had been unaware of the consequent change in family status. The Committee considered that the investigation report contained clear information regarding the procedural steps and timeline pertaining to the change in the family status of the official and found it implausible that the official had been fully unaware for the entire period in respect of which benefit claims were made. The Committee stressed that the onus to provide accurate and up to date information pertaining to benefits and entitlements rests

entirely with the official concerned and that the failure to make truthful and timely declarations cannot be excused. On this basis the Committee concluded that the allegations subject to investigation were clearly substantiated; that the failure to accurately and diligently inform the Office in respect of changes in family status resulted in the payment of benefits to which the official was not entitled and consequent loss to the Office. The Committee considered that this constituted fraud and recommended that the matter be referred for consideration of the highest levels of disciplinary sanction\* and that steps be taken to recover the overpaid dependency benefits.

**Case No.5:** The Committee examined a case of alleged fraud and misconduct by an ILO official with regard to a dishonest claim for rental subsidy. The Committee considered a detailed report prepared by the IAO in respect of an investigation that took place following whistle-blower allegations together with comments provided by the official to the Committee in respect of the report. The Committee noted that the official had admitted during a second interview with IAO that he had ceased to be entitled to rental subsidy some three years previously and that, when subject to an entitlement audit in 2017, he had created and sent falsified emails to the Office in order to create the impression that his change in entitlement status had only occurred in that year. The Committee also took note of the fact that the official had repaid the full amount of the wrongly claimed rental subsidy. The Committee found that the allegations subject to investigation were clearly substantiated and that actions of the official in attempting to obscure the truth regarding the date of his change in entitlement status were deliberate and fraudulent. Consequently, the Committee recommended that the matter be referred for consideration of the highest levels of disciplinary sanction\*.

**Case No.6:** The Committee examined a case of alleged fraud and misconduct by an ILO official in respect of IT equipment that was found to be missing following delivery to the ILO Office premises. The Committee considered a detailed investigation report prepared by the IAO together with comments provided by the official to the Committee in respect of the investigation report. The Committee noted that the investigation had concluded that allegations to the effect that the official had knowingly participated in a theft of the missing equipment were unsubstantiated and agreed with this conclusion. The Committee further noted that allegations that the official concerned had acted negligently in signing a delivery receipt when the shipment was incomplete had been substantiated by the investigating officers. The Committee carefully reviewed the evidence in the file together with the comments and explanations provided by the official, and noted that a number of corrective measures had already been put in place at the duty station in respect of certain control weaknesses that had been highlighted by the theft. The Committee noted that in taking receipt of the goods the official concerned had been asked to act outside of their usual duties and without clear guidance. Furthermore the investigation file contained no indication of any dishonest act or intention on the part of the official and that the evidence supported his claim that he had sought to draw the damaged packaging to the attention of those responsible for accepting delivery. The Committee concluded that there was no evidence of any attempted fraud or misconduct and recommended that the matter be closed and the official and his managers be informed accordingly.

The members of the Committee for 2018 were Ms van Leur (Chairperson), Mr Chughtai (FINANCE), Ms Beaulieu (JUR) and Ms Pedersen (HRD) following the departure of Mr Villemonteix (HRD) in April 2018. Ms O'Neill (HRD) served as Secretary.

**Date:** May 2019



Alette van Leur  
Chairperson  
Committee on Accountability

\*Disciplinary sanctions are subject to separate procedures – the outcomes of disciplinary cases are published in an IGDS Information note each biennium.