

**Minutes of the 8<sup>th</sup> Empowered Committee Meeting held on 22/08/2025  
at 11:30 AM in the chamber of Special Secretary, LSGD, Annexe-1,  
Government Secretariat, Thiruvananthapuram.**

The meeting started at 11:30 am under the chairmanship of the Special Secretary, LSGD. The following Members were present.

1. Smt.Anupama T V IAS, Special Secretary, LSGD
2. Shri.Geromic George IAS, Principal Director, LSGD
3. Dr.Divya S Iyer IAS, Project Director, KSWMP
4. Dr Harikumar K IAS, Deputy Project Director
5. Shri.Omanakkuttan.N, Deputy Secretary, Finance Department
6. Shri.Shaji T.S, Under Secretary, Planning Department
7. Smt. Neethulal B, Director (Operations), Suchitwa Mission

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| <b>Agenda 1</b> | <b>Action Taken Report of 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Empowered Committee Meetings</b> |
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The Action Taken Reports of 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Empowered Committees were discussed in detail and the Committee noted the status of progress of actions.

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| <b>Agenda 2</b> | <b>Training &amp; Capacity Building activities completed by KSWMP</b> |
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The details of the training and capacity building activities completed by KSWMP from April 2023 to July 2025 including the expenditure incurred was presented before the Committee

**Decision Taken:**

The committee noted the details of the Training & Capacity Building activities completed by KSWMP and the expenditure incurred.

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| <b>Agenda 3</b> | <b>Reporting the status of procurements as on FY 2025 – 2026</b> |
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The status of all procurements under Components 1, 2, and 3 of the Project, including detailed cost break-ups, contract completion tenures, amendments made to each contract, and details of terminated contracts as on FY 2025–2026, was presented before the Committee.

**Decision Taken:**

The Committee noted the status of procurements and contracts executed under the project during FY 2025–26, amounting to a total awarded contract value of Rs 365.07 Crores (awarded contracts), with ongoing contracts worth Rs 16.21 Crores and upcoming procurements estimated at Rs 363.10 Crores. The Committee also observed that 13 contracts have been completed during the reporting period with a total value of Rs 9.73 Crores (payment released: Rs 6.48 Crores) and 4 contracts have been terminated, having a total value of Rs 5.501 Crores (Admissible payment released: Rs 1.42 Crores).

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| <b>Agenda 4</b> | <b>Ongoing/Upcoming Procurements</b> |
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The status of ongoing and upcoming procurements was briefed to the Committee. The Committee was also apprised of the selection process and the expected timelines for onboarding agencies for Communication and GIS services. Regarding the upcoming tenders for Bio-CNG at Changanassery and SLF at Ambalamedu, the Committee reviewed the proposed approach and the preparation of the Bio-CNG tender. For the SLF, the Committee underscored the importance of ensuring continuity of the Feasibility Study Consultant during the tendering and onboarding of the SLF contractor, while also noting the delay in finalising the land purchase from KINFRA.

**Decision Taken:**

The Committee noted the status of ongoing procurements under Components 1 and 3 and authorised the Project Director, KSWMP, to complete the bid process and execute contracts with the selected agencies. The preparatory progress on upcoming procurements was also noted, with initiation to be contingent upon obtaining statutory clearances and approvals. The Committee further decided that the Design & Tendering Consultant may be awarded once confirmation is received from the Government on finalising the land purchase from KINFRA.

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| <b>Agenda 05</b> | <b>Reporting consultancy payment status in the FY 2024-25 and 2025-26 as on date</b> |
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The details of consultancy services engaged under KSWMP during the FY 2024-25 and 2025-26 has been discussed in detail and also the payments released to those consultancy services.

**Decision taken**

The Committee noted the payments released so far.

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| <b>Agenda 06</b> | <b>Implementation of Performance Incentive - Representation of KSWMP Staff to Special Secretary, LSGD (WM) and Project Director dated.24.02.2025.</b> |
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The 6th Empowered Committee Meeting held on 04-10-2024 approved the HR Policy for KSWMP which provides a “ *Performance incentive @ 3% per annum to the Staff with retrospective effect for existing staff as per eligibility.* ” But KSWMP provided an incentive of 3% only to those employees whose contracts were renewed after the date of the EC held on 04/10/2024.

The staff of KSWMP submitted a representation to the Special Secretary , LSGD (WM) and Project Director , KSWMP to provide an incentive of 3% from the 1st renewal. They also pointed out that in the present scheme an employee who had completed only one year and an employee who had completed 4 years will get the same remuneration and the years of experience is not remunerated.

The committee considered the status of implementation, need for retaining the experienced resources and the concerns raised by the contract staff. However, the Special Secretary pointed out that as the contracts executed between the employees and KSWMP has no mention about any incentive and hence incentive cannot be sanctioned retrospectively. The committee noted the disparity in remuneration where the experience is not considered.

### **Decision Taken**

The Committee authorised PD, KSWMP to submit a proposal to Government seeking permission to sanction the performance incentive with effect from the date of first renewal of contract to the staff who are continuing in contract employment with KSWMP for more than one year for the purpose of rectifying the anomalies and rewarding the years of experience in the project and retaining them for effective implementation of the project.

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| <b>Agenda 07</b> | <b>Retaining the services of Additional SWM Engineer-5 nos at the SPMU</b> |
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Government vide G.O.(Rt)No.1937/2023/LSGD dated 03.10.2023 have accorded sanction for appointing 5 additional SWM Engineers at the SPMU, Thiruvananthapuram for a period of one year considering the staff shortage in handling the activities especially in component 3 of the Project which is the development of regional SWM facilities. Project Director also informed that the activities with regard to the aforementioned components are in full swing and the services of these SWM Engineers are felt essential for the smooth implementation of the Project. Therefore requested permission for the continuance of SWM Engineers at the SPMU for the remaining Project period. The Committee noted the submission of PD regarding the shortage of manpower at SPMU in managing the activities related to projects across 93 ULBs and regional facilities handling the activities especially in component 3 of the Project.

**Decision Taken:**

1. The Committee have ratified the continuance of additional SWM Engineer- 5 nos working in SPMU as per G.O.(Rt)No.1937/2023/LSGD dated 03.10.2023
2. Authorised Project Director, KSWMP to retain the post of additional SWM Engineer-5 nos as such in the State Project Management Unit of KSWMP for the Project period
3. Authorised PD, KSWMP to appoint fresh candidates in case of attrition/ renew the term of contract for one year each of the incumbents working in these posts subject to their performance.

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| <b>Agenda 08</b> | <b>Retrospective implementation of Travelling Allowance to employees</b> |
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For the past three years, the staff have been meeting such expenses out of their own pocket, even though the travel was exclusively for project-related purposes. The Empowered Committee (EC), in its meeting held on 04.10.2024 resolved to extend TA/DA benefits with retrospective effect to existing staff, based on the HR Policy approved by the Committee. Accordingly, staff of the SPMU, DPMUs, and PIUs have submitted TA claims for the period from 01.04.2022.

PD, KSWMP had submitted that the total disbursement of TA claims of all the contract staff of KSWMP from April 2022 to September 2024 comes to around Rs.38 lakhs

The Deputy Secretary, Finance Department opined that it would be desirable if a monthly ceiling could be fixed for keeping financial propriety. The Project Director, KSWMP pointed out that imposing a monthly ceiling on TA will not be desirable as project demands are extensive as the Project is to spend a considerable amount for its sub projects within a short span of time and hence the Project staff need to perform several field visits within a month. PD, KSWMP assured the EC that the travel will be restricted to only necessary site visits and project activities and the claims shall be strictly verified.

The Special Secretary noted that the logic of ceiling is applicable for government employees in administrative posts who are not expected to travel regularly. But in case of project staff on contract, it won't be right to keep a ceiling on travel allowance when the Project demands the staff to travel extensively and incur the expenditure beyond the ceiling from the consolidated pay they receive that too fixed in 2020 and never revised.

**Decision Taken:**

1.  
The Committee accepted the proposal of PD KSWMP for releasing the Travel Allowance of official travel of the contract staff undertaken from 2021 till the date of 6th EC after due scrutiny.
2.  
Hereafter the official travel of SPMU & PIU staff shall be restricted to necessary site visits and project activities with the approval of PD or the officer authorised by the PD.
3.  
The TA claims shall be strictly verified and recommended by the competent officer authorised by the PD.

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| <b>Agenda 9</b> | <b>Creation of a post of Chief Technical Officer Cum Program Manager in the State Project Management Unit (SPMU) of KSWMP in deputation by officers not below the rank of Superintending Engineer</b> |
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The Committee observed the shortage of technical staff in handling high investment projects like SLF and dumpsite remediation given the work load especially while following the extensive processes and documentation required as per the PIM and WB guidelines. PD, pointed out that a senior technical hand is needed to lead and guide the Experts in the technical review, implementation and monitoring including co-ordination with other agencies, hiring of various contractors and consultants, managing their deliverables, assessing the bills raised and the payments etc.

The Deputy PD informed that at present there is a vacant post named Assistant Director (SWM) and suggested that the said post may be redesignated as Chief Technical Officer cum Program Manager and appoint a suitable candidate on deputation basis.

**Decision Taken:**

1.  
The Committee have permitted Project Director, KSWMP to rename the nomenclature / designation of the vacant post of additional AD (SWM) to Chief Technical Officer cum Program Manager
- 2.

Ascertain the roles and responsibilities of the post and to appoint a suitable candidate who have experience with similar high value projects on deputation basis subject to NOC from the Department concerned.

3.

The process shall be completed at the earliest and the matter shall be placed in the next Empowered Committee for ratification.

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| <b>Agenda 10</b> | <b>Purchase of land at Panappuzha Village in Payyannur Taluk of Kannur District for establishment of regional SWM facility under KSWMP.</b> |
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The committee noted the progress in the activities related to the purchase of the land for regional SWM facilities at Panappuzha village in Payyannur Taluk of Kannur District.

**Decision:**

1.

The Committee authorised Project Director to undertake all actions as required by Government from time to time for the purchase of the land for the development of regional SWM facilities and to incur the expenditure towards the purchase at the rate approved by the Government.

2.

Special Secretary directed to co-ordinate with the District Collector and expedite the DLPC and take up the matter with the SLPC to purchase the land such that ULBs in the respective clusters will become eligible for fresh investments in SWM under KSWMP .

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| <b>Agenda 11</b> | <b>Procurement of Consultants for Feasibility Study, Surveys, Investigations and ESIA for Alternate SLF Site and Engagement of Project Management &amp; Construction Supervision Consultant for Regional SWM Infrastructure Investments under Component 3 of KSWMP</b> |
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The Committee briefly noted the background on the earlier studies at Ambalamedu and the need for initiating fresh procurement of consultants for undertaking Feasibility Study, ESIA, Project Management and Construction Supervision for the sites under consideration as and when the site is purchased.

Head Regional Facilities informed the Committee that the World Bank is of the stand that the time for identification of land for SLF has already been over and fresh proposals may not be considered under project funding as the same could not be materialised during the project period. He also brought to the notice of the committee

that, the World Bank team has suggested that the expenditure on FA & ESIA on any fresh site to be acquired by GoK for the purpose of developing regional SWM may have to be met from the state share and cannot be borne by the loan funds.

**Decision taken:**

1.

The Committee agreed to the proposal and accorded approval for initiating procurement of the required consultants in line with World Bank procurement guidelines, and authorized the Project Director, KSWMP to finalize and execute contracts with the selected agencies upon completion of the prescribed procurement process.

2.

The Special Secretary noted the point raised by the Head (Regional facilities) regarding the objection of the World Bank in funding of studies and development of SLF at the sites being identified and are at advanced stages of procurement and proposed to take up the matter with the World Bank at Government level.

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| <b><i>Agenda 12</i></b> | <b>Request from PMC to reconsideration of the decision of the EC to forfeit the consultancy payment</b> |
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The Committee was apprised of the background regarding the Empowered Committee's earlier decision (4th EC meeting, Additional Agenda Item 3) to forfeit consultancy payments to M/s KPMG Advisory Services Pvt. Ltd. for the period January 2022–May 2023 (Rs 2,08,38,555/-) and June 2023–December 2023 (Rs 98,33,068/-), based on persistent lapses and gross non-performance.

The Committee noted that KPMG had submitted representations requesting reconsideration of the forfeited amounts. It was recalled that the Government had already examined such representations and rejected the request. The Committee observed that KPMG has not presented any new justification or evidence that could alter the basis of the earlier decision. It was reiterated that the forfeiture was based on cumulative lapses and deficiencies observed during the period from December 2021 (contract effectiveness) to February 2024, as on the date of the 4th Empowered Committee, and not on deliverables submitted post January 2024. For the period cited by the PMC (since January 2024), periodic MPRs were already conducted and admissible payments released based on performance assessments. Accordingly, the grounds for forfeiture remain valid.

The Committee also observed that the Project had lost considerable time due to the inefficient project management of PMC, which adversely affected the timely delivery of project milestones. In addition, the PMC failed to provide effective technical assistance at both the ULB level and for regional subproject implementation, which was a key part of its contractual scope. Consequently, due to PMC's poor

performance, the Project had to incur additional expenditure by engaging replacements and making alternate arrangements for critical functions falling within the PMC's original scope but left undelivered.

**Decision:**

The Committee rejected the request for reconsideration submitted by PMC and decided to uphold the earlier decision recorded in the 4th EC. The Committee further directed that KSWMP shall formally communicate the Committee's response to KPMG.

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| <b><i>Agenda 13</i></b> | <b>Sanction of Leave without Allowance</b> |
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The Committee was informed that several requests are being received for sanctioning Leave Without Allowance from contract employees who may need to take urgent leave for personal emergencies, health issues, or other unforeseen circumstances. However sanctioning Leave Without Allowance is not admissible as per HR Policy of this Project and the staff requesting Leave Without Allowance often resign from service and hence such attrition causes loss of skilled human resource and necessitates new recruitment and training which is a time consuming process and is adversely affecting project timelines and disbursement

The Committee observed that the Project is losing efficient and well trained staff due to non-sanctioning of Leave Without Allowance even in genuine or emergency situations.

**Decision taken**

1. The Committee authorised Project Director, KSWMP to sanction Leave Without Allowance to the staff working on contract employment with KSWMP based on the need, requirement, urgency and genuineness on a case to case basis, when no other leave is admissible subject to a maximum of 30 days, provided their remaining contract period is more than 30 days.
2. Government holidays including Sundays, Second Saturdays will be permitted to prefix or suffix to the leave without allowances.

The meeting ended at 01:00 pm.

ANUPAMA T V I A S  
SPECIAL SECRETARY