

CENTRAL SECRETARIAT
MANUAL
OF
OFFICE PROCEDURE

FOURTEENTH EDITION

MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS AND PUBLIC
GRIEVANCES

MAY 2015

(website: www.darpg.nic.in)

IMPORTANT WEBSITES

1. President Secretariat : www.rashtrapatisachivalaya.gov.in
2. Prime Minister's Office : www.pmindia.gov.in
3. Cabinet Secretariat : www.cabsec.nic.in
4. Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances : www.darpg.nic.in
5. Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions : www.persmin.nic.in
6. Ministry of Finance : www.finmin.nic.in
7. Ministry of Home Affairs : www.mha.nic.in
8. National Informatics Centre : www.nic.in
9. National Archives of India : www.nai.nic.in

डॉ० जितेन्द्र सिंह

राज्य मंत्री (स्वतंत्र प्रभार)
उत्तर पूर्वी क्षेत्र विकास मंत्रालय,
राज्य मंत्री, प्रधान मंत्री कार्यालय,
कार्मिक, लोक शिकायत एवं पेंशन मंत्रालय,
परमाणु ऊर्जा विभाग तथा अंतरिक्ष विभाग,
भारत सरकार



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MESSAGE

I am immensely pleased to note that the Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances is bringing out the 14th Edition of the Central Secretariat Manual of Office Procedure (CSMOP). One of the important agenda of the Government is "Minimum Government & Maximum Governance". The revised edition of the CSMOP has been prepared with that endeavour in mind. The provisions of the revised CSMOP instills a greater sense of responsiveness, accountability, transparency and public service excellence in the current system of governance and also fulfill the need for further simplifying the government procedures and processes.

I am sure that the Manual would be of help to all who serve in the Central Secretariat to increase their efficiency & effectiveness and remove a lot of red tape, for which we are charged. I am sure that the Manual will form the backbone of process management in our offices and make office work speedier and rewarding for all the stakeholders.

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FOREWORD

The Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances (DAR&PG) in the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions, as nodal Government agency, is charged with the responsibility of prescribing procedures for secretariat work. The existing Central Secretariat Manual of Office Procedure (CSMOP) is bulky and as such often remains unread. The DAR&PG has reviewed the 13th Edition of the CSMOP, which was brought in October, 2010 and revised it in consultation with all the Central Ministries/Departments.

The revised 14th Edition of CSMOP, which is being brought out by DAR&PG has done away with a number of entries which existed earlier and now can be easily obtained from the websites of various Ministries/Departments. We have also done away with a number formats of the Appendixes and have left it to the discretion of the Ministries/Departments to adopt the same catering to their requirements.

The overall aim is to increase productivity in work and make the administration more responsive. Efforts have been made to maintain concordance between organizational goals, procedures of work and functionaries entrusted with the responsibility of discharging them.

For those who are working in the Government and for future entrants, the Manual will be an invaluable source of training, guidance and reference.



(ALOK RAWAT)

Secretary
Department of Administrative Reforms
& Public Grievances
Ministry of Personnel,
Public Grievances & Pensions,
Government of India

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CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION

The efficiency of an organization depends largely on evolution of adequate processes and procedures and the ability of its employees to follow them. Accordingly, the efficiency of persons handling secretarial work in a government organization can be judged by their ability to dispose of matters – mostly receipts, cases etc. with speed and quality, following the procedures prescribed for the purpose. The ultimate object of all Government business is to meet the citizens' needs and further their welfare. At the same time, those who are accountable for fair conduct of business have to ensure that public funds are managed with utmost care and prudence. It is, therefore, necessary, in each case, to keep appropriate record not only of what has been done but also of why it was so done.

The procedures prescribed in the Central Secretariat Manual of Office Procedure (CSMOP), attempt to balance the conflicting considerations of speed, quality, transparency and propriety. In a dynamic context, this balance cannot be rigidly or permanently fixed. Every rule and step in the procedure must serve a definite purpose.

The First Edition of the CSMOP was published in March, 1955 and since then it has been updated from time to time to take care of the changing scenario. The 13th Edition of the CSMOP came in the month of September, 2010. This edition of the CSMOP is quite voluminous and hence it does not receive the required attention of Government Employees to read it. The edition of the CSMOP which is being brought is the 14th in the series. A number of entries which existed in the earlier CSMOPs and are also available in different documents & manuals specific to the subject have been removed. The new CSMOP has been prepared with a view to remove redundancy, duplication and also doing away with a number material which can easily be taken from the various Government websites.

It is expected that the revised 14th Edition of CSMOP, which has a lesser number of pages in comparison to the earlier CSMOPs will receive greater attention by the Government officials and the work will be performed in a systematic and faster manner.

CHAPTER II

DEFINITIONS

Definitions – The Definitions of some of the terms used in the Manual are:-

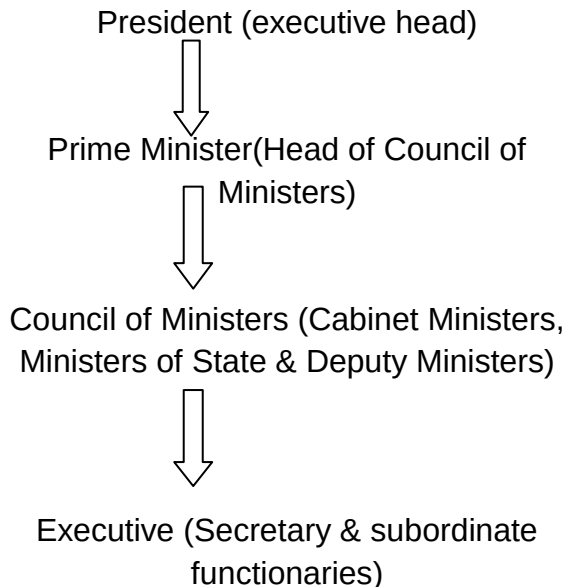
- (1) 'Appendix to correspondence/file':
Detailed/lengthy enclosures to a communication/file.
- (2) 'Branch' – the Unit of a Division and may comprise a couple of Sections/Units/Cells.
- (3) 'Branch Officer' for a section – the officer who is directly above the section in the line of control of execution of work.
- (4) 'Case' – a current file or a receipt together with other related papers, if any.
- (5) 'Central receipt and issue section' - A unit within a department consisting of the central registry and the central issue section.
- (6) 'Classified dak' – dak bearing a security grading – confidential, secret etc..
- (7) 'Correspondence portion' – the portion of file containing 'receipts' and 'office copies of the communications issued from the file include self-contained inter-departmental notes but excluding those recorded on the notes portion of the file itself.
- (8) 'Current file' – A file on which action is not yet complete.
- (9) 'Dak' – All communication received/issued by an office/department.
- (10) 'Dealing hand' – Any functionary entrusted with initial examination.
- (11) 'Department' – Any of the Ministries, Departments, Secretariats and Offices mentioned in the First schedule to the Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules, 1961, as amended from time to time.
- (12) 'Departmental instructions' – Instructions issued by a department to supplement or vary the provisions of the Manual of Office Procedure.
- (13) 'Departmental Record Officer (DRO)' – Officer nominated under the Public Records Act 1993.
- (14) 'Desk'- A unit within a department with a specific task assigned to it.
- (15) 'Desk functionary' – A functionary assigned with a defined sub-function or activity in the charge of desk.

- (16) 'Diarist – a functionary within a section charged with the responsibility inter-alia of maintaining the Section diary.
- (17) 'Diary number' – The serial number assigned to a receipt in the Section diary/personal staff of officers followed by code letters identifying the Section Diary ('H' for section diary for Hindi receipt and 'O' for section diary for other receipts)/officers' designation, the year and the abbreviated symbol of the section e.g., 205-H/2010-O&M or 123-O/DS(O&M)/2010.
- (18) 'Division' – A unit of a wing within a Department. A division may comprise of branches/Sections.
- (19) 'Docketing' – Making of entries in the notes portion of a file about the serial number assigned to each item of correspondence (whether receipt or issue) for its identification.
- (20) 'File' – a collection of papers on a specific subject, assigned a number and consisting of one or more of the following parts:
- (a) Notes; (b) Correspondence; (c) Appendices to Notes/ correspondence.
- (21) 'Fresh Receipt (FR)' – Any subsequent receipt on a case which brings in additional information.
- (22) 'Information and Facilitation Counter (IFC)' – A Facilitation counter, to provide information/assistance to the citizens/clients about the programmes, schemes, status of cases, applications, etc.
- (23) 'Issue' – A communication issued in a case.
- (24) 'Messenger Book' – A record of particulars of despatch of non-postal communications and their receipt by the addressees.
- (25) 'Minute' – a note recorded by the President, the Vice-President, the Prime Minister or a Minister.
- (26) 'Night Duty Clerk' – A functionary on duty outside office hours who performs the functions of the central receipt and issue section during such hours.
- (27) 'Note' - The remarks recorded on a case to facilitate its examination and decision.
- (28) 'Paper Under Consideration (PUC)' – A receipt pertaining to a case, the consideration of which is the subject matter of the case.

CHAPTER III

STRUCTURE OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

1. **Government:** The structure of the Government is as under.



2. **Allocation/Transaction of government business**

The Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules, 1961 hereinafter referred to as AOB Rules (as amended from time to time) allocates the business of government amongst its various Ministries/Departments. The Government of India (Transaction of Business) Rules, 1961 and hereinafter referred to as TOB Rules (as amended from time to time) seeks to define the authority, responsibility and obligations of each Ministry/Department, Cabinet & its Committees and the Prime Minister of India (Rule 12 of TOB). The AOB and TOB rules are available on the website of Cabinet Secretariat www.cabsec.nic.in.

3. **Ministry/Department** – A Ministry/Department is responsible for formulation of policies of the Government in relation to the subjects allocated to it under AOB rules and also for the execution, monitoring and review of those policies.

(i) **Attached Offices** provide detailed executive directions required in the implementation of the policies, as laid down from time to time by the Ministry/Department to which they are attached. They also serve as a repository of information and also advise the department on various aspects of matter dealt with

by them (e.g. Central Public Works Department, Central Water Commission, Central Electricity Authority, Directorate General of Foreign Trade, Directorate General of Factory Advice & Labour Institutes etc.).

(ii) **Subordinate Offices** generally function as field establishments or as agencies responsible for the detailed execution of the policies of the government. They function under the direction of an attached office, or where the volume of executive direction involved is not considerable, directly under a department. In the later case, they assist the Departments concerned in handling executive & technical matters in their respective fields of specialization (e.g. service centre of CPWD, CGHS dispensary, Directorate General of Mines & Safety etc.)

4. **Constitutional Bodies** – such bodies as are established under the provisions of the Constitution of India (e.g. Union Public Service Commission, Election Commission, Comptroller and Auditor General of India, National Commission for Woman etc.).

5. **Statutory Bodies** – such bodies as are established under a statute or an Act of Parliament (e.g. Central Vigilance Commission, Central Information Commission, Central Board of Film Certification, National Commission for Backward Class etc.).

6. **Autonomous Bodies** – such bodies as are established by the Government to discharge the activities which are related to governmental functions. Such bodies are given autonomy to discharge their functions in accordance with the Memorandum of Associations (e.g. Indian Military Academy, National Institute of Fashion Technology, Indian Institute of Technology, Central Silk Board etc.).

7. **Public Sector Undertakings** – Public Sector Undertakings have been set up by Government in the form of companies or corporations in which the majority shares are held by the President of India or his nominees and are managed by Board of Directors, which includes officials and non-officials (BHEL, NTPC, ONGC etc.). Some of them may have also been formed as a result of takeover, nationalization etc. of erstwhile private companies (Indo Burma Petroleum, Balmer Lawrie & Company Limited, Burn Standards Company Limited, Braithwaite & Company Limited etc.)

8. Functions at various levels

(a) **Secretary** – A Secretary to the Government of India is the administrative head of the Ministry or Department, who is the principal adviser to the Minister on all matters of policy and the administration within the Ministry/Department.

(b) **Special Secretary/Additional Secretary/Joint Secretary** - One or more wings may be established with Special Secretary/Additional Secretary/Joint Secretary, in-charge of each wing under the charge of Secretary.

(c) **Director/Deputy Secretary** – Director/Deputy secretary holds the charge of a Secretariat Division and is responsible for the disposal of Government business dealt within the Division under the charge.

(d) **Under Secretary** – An Under Secretary is in-charge of the Branch in the Ministry/Department consisting of one or more Sections.

(e) **Section Officer** - A Section Officer is the in-charge of a Section who has to ensure efficient and expeditious disposal of work, recording and weeding out, indexing and digitization. For this, they shall take all necessary steps including (i) distribution of work among the staff as evenly as possible; (ii) training, helping and advising the staff; (iii) management and co-ordination of work; (iv) ensuring maintenance of order and discipline in the section; (v) maintenance of a list of residential addresses of the Staff (vi) submit receipts which should be seen by Branch Officer/Higher officer at dak stage; (vii) dispose of routine cases*, issue reminders, obtain or supply factual non-classified information; (viii) take intermediate routine action; (ix) keep a track of all judicial/quasi-judicial matters where the issues being dealt with by the section are involved; (x) record, where necessary, a note setting out his own comments or suggestions before submitting the case to higher appropriate officer.

*‘Routine cases’ will be decided by Departmental instructions.

(f) **Desk Officer** – A Section Officer may be designated as Desk Officer, who is to function as per powers delegated by the Ministries/Departments like signing financial sanctions, affirming affidavits in court etc.

(g) **Dealing Hands** – Assistants and Upper Division Clerks are two different types of Dealing Hands(DH), who are responsible for:-

(i) Opening, maintenance and custody of files; (ii) put up the file to Section Officer mentioning precedents/facts, rule position, pointing out any mistake, incorrect statements of facts ; (iii) go through the receipts and ensure that the receipts, with urgency grading, are dealt with first; (iv) move the receipt to a file; (v) if a file exists for this receipt, add the receipt to the existing file; (vi) in case a file does not exist, a file will be opened; (vi) DH will add the data/metadata required for creating a new file. A number will be given by the dealing hand to the new file and in the case of e-file number will be assigned automatically by the system on the creation of e-file; (vii) reproduce remarks on the notes portion of the file, if any, made by an officer on the receipt. (viii) DH will have to give a serial number and page number to all the letters received and issued.

In an electronic environment, the system will automatically assign a new serial number to the receipt, which will be visible on the top centre of all the pages of the receipt. The system will also automatically assign a new page number to each page of the receipt, which will be visible on top right hand corner of the page; (ix) link related file, if any. In an electronic environment, with the help of knowledge management, and collaboration/interaction tools in the system, search and link other e-files or documents, if any, referred to in the receipt, or having a bearing on the issues raised therein; (x) identify and examine the issues involved in the case and record a note; (xi) submit the case to the appropriate higher officer; and (xii) in an electronic environment metadata may be used for such purposes.

(h) **Personal Staff Members of Officers (PSMs) – Staff Officer/Senior Principal Private Secretary/Private Secretary/ Personal Assistant/Stenographer.**

(i) Taking dictation in shorthand and its transcription and assisting in drafting and issue of all correspondences as may be directed by the officer; (ii) managing of appointments/engagements; (iii) attending to the telephone calls and receiving visitors; (iv) maintaining the papers required to be retained by

the officer; (v) destroying by shredding/burning the stenographic record of the confidential and secret letters; and (vi) assisting the officer in such a manner as she/he may direct.

(i) **Lower Division Clerk (wherever it exists)/Multitasking Staff (MTS).**

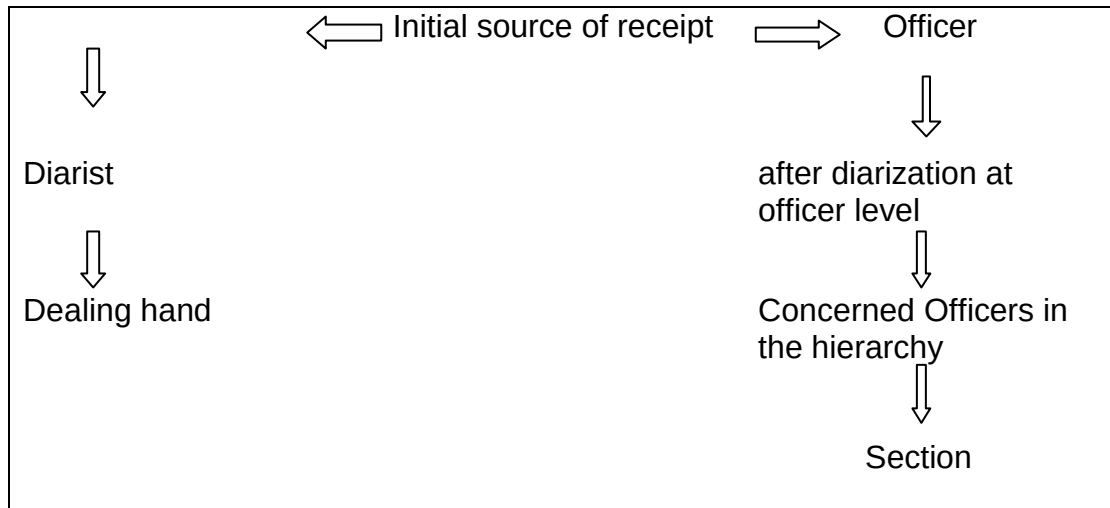
(i) Registration of dak; (ii) maintenance of Section Diary and File Movement Register; (iii) typing, comparing, photocopying, faxing, e-mailing etc.; (iv) performing the task of a dealing hand; and (v) any other official task assigned.

Note : Duties of untrained Multi Tasking Staff (MTS) have been provided at Annexure-II of the Department of Personnel & Training's O.M. No.AB-14017/6/2009-Estt (RR) Dated 30th April, 2010 at website (www.persmin.nic.in)

CHAPTER IV

MANAGEMENT OF DAK

Movement of inward receipts



9. RECEIPT OF DAK-

- (i)
 - (a) During office hours, the entire dak of the department including that addressed to Ministers/Officers by name will be received in the Central Registry(CR) or Information Facilitation Counter(IFC). Where, however, immediate/important dak addressed to Ministers/Officers by name is sent through special messenger directly, it will be received by them or their personal staff.
 - (b) In case, an officer is on leave or on training/tour or having retired or left the office after completion of his tenure, the incumbent or the personal staff concerned or the link officer or the officer just below the officer concerned, dealing with the subject will receive the immediate/important references, except confidential letters for which link officer arrangement will be utilized. In case none of the above mentioned officers are in position, the CR will receive such letters.
- (ii) Outside the office hours, dak will be received by the addressee himself at his residence if marked 'Immediate' and addressed by name. In all other cases, dak will

be received, outside office hours by:-

- (a) the night duty clerk of the Department concerned; or
- (b) where no such arrangements exist, by the officer designated by the Department concerned to receive such dak.
- (iii) E-mails received in the Department will be downloaded centrally by the Department and forward the same to the officer concerned. E-mails addressed to Ministers/Officers will be downloaded by them or their personal staff.

10. **Acknowledgement of dak** – the receipt of dak, in person, will be acknowledged by the recipient signing his name in full and in ink with date and designation. In e-office acknowledgement will be self generated.

11. **Registration of dak –**

- (i) All covers, except those addressed to Ministers/Officers by name or those bearing a security grading, will be opened by the Central Registry (CR)/Information Facilitation Centre (IFC).
- (ii) All opened dak as well as the covers of unopened, classified dak, will be date-stamped in a format suitable to the Ministry/Department concerned with details including name of the Ministry/Department, Date of Receipt, C.R./I.F.C. Number, Section Diary Number.
- (iii) The physical dak (including the fax messages) would be received by various functionaries (e.g. C.R. Unit or the personal staff of the officer concerned). It shall be the responsibility of the functionary who first receives the physical dak, to diarize it (in case the enclosures are missing, the concerned official shall take action telephonically or in writing or electronically to obtain the enclosures from the sender, preferably in the electronic form). Where voluminous books, papers, etc. are sent as an Annexure, the sender may be requested to send a soft copy.

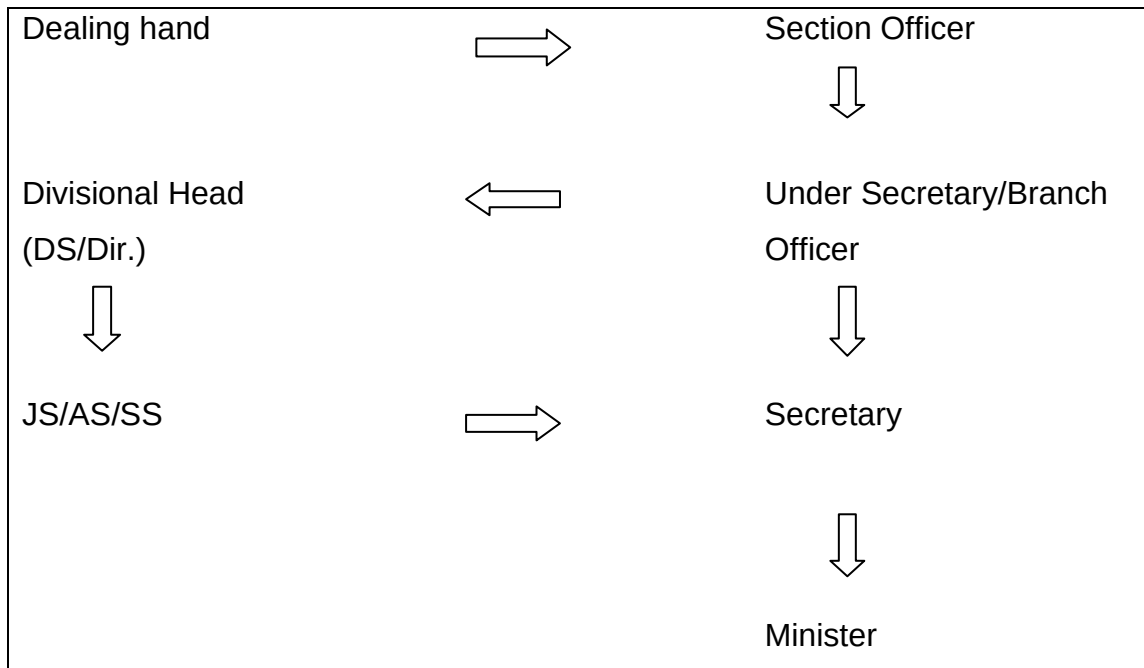
12. **Distribution of dak-**

The receipts may be forwarded to the officer/section concerned. In case of ambiguity, the correspondence may be forwarded as per the instructions of the appropriate authority.

CHAPTER V

FILE MANAGEMENT

Movement of files



13. **Standard Process Sheets** - For dealing with cases of repetitive nature e.g. leave sanction, GPF Advances, HBA etc., standard process sheets may be devised by the respective Ministries/Departments. No notes need be recorded in such cases.

14. **Level of disposal and channel of submission -**

(i) Each Ministry/Department shall lay down a detailed scheme of delegation at all levels so that the decision making takes place at the most appropriate level. This shall be updated from time to time and placed in public domain.

(ii) The number of levels through which a file passes for a decision shall not exceed four.

(iii) Wherever level jumping is done in respect of any category of cases, each such case on its return, will pass through all the levels jumped over, who in suitable cases could resubmit the cases for reconsideration.

(iv) In case of urgent matters, the decisions may be conveyed directly to the officer concerned for implementation, who after doing the same, shall bring it to the notice of the levels of officers, that have been jumped in the hierarchy.

15. Guidelines for noting -

(i) All notes shall be concise and to the point. Additional material, if any, may be placed in the appendix. Black or Blue ink shall be used by all categories of staff and officers. In case of hand written noting, only black or blue ink shall be used.

(ii) The dealing hand shall append full signature, name and date on the left below the note. An officer shall append full signature on the right hand side of the note with name, designation and date. In an electronic environment digital signature will be appended at each level.

(iii) While preparing/submitting Notes for the Cabinet/Cabinet Committees/Groups of Ministers & Committee of Secretaries, constitution/reconstitution of High-level Commissions/Committees, the format prescribed in Cabinet Secretariat website (www.cabsec.nic.in) (as amended from time to time) may be followed.

16. Modification of notes or orders -

(i) Senior officers should not require any modification in, or replacement of, the notes recorded by their juniors once they have been submitted to them. Instead, the higher officers should record their own notes giving their views on the subject, where necessary correcting or modifying the facts given in earlier notes.

(ii) Pasting over a note or a portion of it to conceal, shall not be done. Where a note recorded in the first instance requires any modification on account of additional facts or any error having come to notice, a subsequent note may be recorded, keeping the earlier note intact.

(iii) Where a final decision already communicated to a party is found later on to have been given on a mistaken ground or incorrect facts or wrong interpretation of rules due to misunderstanding, such withdrawal may have also legal implications. In all such cases, in addition to consulting the Ministry of Law, wherever necessary,

such a withdrawal should be permitted only after the approval of an officer higher than the one, who took the original decision, has been obtained and reasons for the reversal or modification of the earlier decision have been duly recorded on the file.

17. Noting on files received from other departments -

(i) If the reference seeks the opinion, ruling or concurrence of the receiving Department and requires detailed examination, such examination may be done separately through routine notes on a separate file (which will be created by the receiving Department). Only the final result will be recorded on the file by the officer concerned.

(ii) The receiving Department shall open subject-wise file each year in which such routine notes will be kept. The inter-departmental note recorded on the file of the originating department will bear the subject file number to facilitate retrieval for future reference and storage in electronic environment.

(iii) Where the reference requires information of a factual nature or other action based on a clear precedent or practice, the dealing hand in the receiving department may note on the received file straightway.

(iv) Where a note is recorded by an officer after obtaining the orders of a higher officer, the fact that the views expressed therein have the approval of the latter should be specifically mentioned, in the note to be recorded on the file of the originating Department.

18. Aids to processing -

Each section shall keep in the knowledge management system of the Department the following records/electronic records for important subjects dealt with by it:

- (a) precedent book;
- (b) standard process sheets; and
- (c) transcripts of important discussions and minutes.
- (d) copies of Acts, rules, orders and instructions concerning the subjects dealt with each Department shall be maintained both in physical form

as well as on the website.;

(e) Guard file.

19. Oral discussions -

(i) All points emerging from discussions (including telephonic discussions) between two or more officers of the same Department or from discussions between officers of different Departments, and the conclusions reached shall be recorded precisely on the relevant file at the earliest, by the officer authorizing action.

(ii) All discussions/instructions/decisions which the officer recording them considers to be important enough for the purpose, should be got confirmed by all those who have participated in or are responsible for them.

20. Oral instructions by higher officers -

(i) Where an officer is giving direction (including telephonic direction) for taking action in any case in respect of matters on which the officer or subordinate has powers to decide, the subordinate shall ordinarily do so in writing. If, however, the circumstances of the case are such that there is no time for giving the instructions in writing, they should follow it up by a written confirmation at the earliest.

(ii) When an officer is acting under instructions of an official superior, he shall obtain the directions in writing wherever practical before carrying out the instructions. Where it is not possible to do so, he shall obtain written confirmation of the directions, as soon thereafter as possible. If the officer giving the instructions is not the immediate official superior but is one higher to the latter in the hierarchy, the officer shall bring such instructions to the notice of the immediate superior at the earliest, and thereafter the latter will obtain the written confirmation of the directions from the senior officer who gave the instructions.

21. Oral orders on behalf of or from Minister:-

(i) Whenever a member of the personal staff of a Minister communicates to any officer an oral order on behalf of the Minister, it shall be confirmed by her/him in writing, immediately thereafter.

(ii) If any officer receives oral instructions from the Minister or from her/his

personal staff and the orders are in accordance with the norms, rules, regulations or procedures they should be brought to the notice of the Secretary (or the head of the department where the officer concerned is working in or under a non-secretariat organization).

(iii) In all cases of oral/orders which are not in accordance with the norms, rules, regulations or procedures, clear orders from the Secretary (or the head of the department in case she/he is working in or under a non-secretariat organization) should be sought about the line of action to be taken, stating clearly that the oral instructions are not in accordance with the rules, regulations, norms or procedures.

(iv) In rare and urgent cases when the Minister is on tour/is unwell and the approval has to be taken urgently on telephone, the decision of the Minister shall be conveyed by the Private Secretary. In such cases, confirmation of Minister shall be obtained, subsequently at the earliest.

22. Confirmation of oral instructions -

(i) If an officer seeks confirmation of oral instructions given by his superior, the latter should confirm it in writing whenever such confirmation is sought.

(ii) Receipt of communications from junior officers seeking confirmation of oral instructions shall be acknowledged by the senior officers or their personal staff, or the personal staff of the Minister, as the case may be.

23. Filing of papers -

(i) Papers required to be filed will be punched neatly on the left hand top corner and tagged onto the appropriate part of the file viz. notes, correspondence, appendix to notes and appendix to correspondence, in chronological order, from right to left.

(ii) Both 'notes portion' and 'correspondence portion' will be placed in a single file cover.

(a) Left end of tag in the note portion will be tagged on to the left side of the file cover and right end of the tag will remain as such i.e. untagged.

- (b) In the case of correspondence portion, right side of the tag will be tagged onto the right side of the same file cover and left side of the tag will remain as such i.e. untagged.
- (iii) Reference to previous communications should invariably indicated in the fresh receipt, if there is a mention about it.
- (iv) (a) If the file is not bulky, appendix to notes and appendix to correspondence may be kept along with the respective note portion or the correspondence portion of the main file if these are considered as integral and important part.
- (b) If the file is bulky, separate file covers may be used for keeping appendix to notes and appendix to correspondence.
- (v) When the 'notes' plus the 'correspondence' portion of the file become bulky (say exceeds 150-200 pages), it will be marked 'Volume I'. Further papers on the subject will be added to the new volume of the same file, which will be marked 'Volume II', and so on. In Volume II and subsequent volumes of the same file, page numbering in notes portion and correspondence portion will be made in continuity of the last page number in note portion/correspondence portion of the earlier volume.
- (vi) On top of the first page of the note portion in each volume of the file, file number, name of the Ministry/Department, name of branch/section subject of the file and classification of file will be mentioned. A similar procedure will be followed on file cover also.

24. Arrangement of papers in a case.—

The papers in a case will be arranged in the following order from top downwards:

- (i) reference books;
- (ii) notes portion of the current file ending with the note for consideration;
- (iii) running summary of facts;
- (iv) draft for approval, if any;
- (v) correspondence portion of the current file ending with the latest receipt or issue, as the case may be;

- (vi) appendix to notes and correspondence;
- (vii) standing guard file, standing note or reference folder, if any;
- (viii) other papers, if any, referred to e.g., extracts of notes or correspondence from other files, copies of orders, resolutions, gazettes, arranged in chronological order, the latest being placed on the top;
- (ix) recorded files, if any, arranged in chronological order, the latest being placed on the top; and
- (x) routine notes and papers arranged in chronological order and placed in a separate cover.

25. **Referencing -**

- (i) Every page in each part of the file (viz. Notes, correspondence, appendix to notes and appendix to correspondence) will be consecutively numbered in separate series on the top right hand corner. In an electronic environment the number of page and Serial number of Receipts/Issue will be generated automatically. The docketing will also take place immediately below the note which has culminated in issuance of fair signed communication(s) in question.
- (ii) The drafts of letters issued having crucial policy, financial and vigilance implications, where the drafts have been changed by Senior Officers in the process of movement of files upwards, barring grammatical corrections should also form a part of the correspondence portion, which shall be numbered ad seriatim.
- (iii) The document under consideration on a file shall be flagged 'PUC' and the latest fresh receipt noted upon, as 'FR'. If there is more than one 'FR' they shall be flagged separately as 'FRI', 'FRII' and so on.
- (iv) to facilitate the identification of reference to documents contained in other files after the removal of linked file(s), the number of the file referred to will be quoted invariably in the note. Similarly, the number and date of orders, notifications and the resolutions, and, in the case of acts, rules and regulations, their brief title together with the number of the relevant section, rule paragraph or clause, referred to shall be quoted in the notes.

26. Linking of files -

If the issues raised in two or more current files are inter-connected, the relevant files shall be linked. After completion of action, the linked files be de-linked after taking relevant extracts.

27. Use of urgency grading -

- (i) The urgency grading advised are 'Immediate', 'Priority' and 'Top Priority'.
- (ii) The label 'Immediate' will be used only in cases requiring prompt attention. Amongst the rest, the 'Priority' label will be used for cases which merit disposal in precedence to others of ordinary nature. 'Top Priority' will be applied in extremely urgent cases.
- (iii) Lok Sabha/Rajya Sabha labels shall be used for appropriate cases which merit disposal in precedence to others of ordinary nature. The file covers of the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha Questions, Motions etc. are to be in red colour and green colour respectively, in order to facilitate their identification for urgent dealing.

CHAPTER VI

FORMS AND PROCEDURE OF COMMUNICATION

28. Forms of communication -

The different forms of communication, its content and format generally used by a Department are reproduced below:-

(i) Letter -

Content	Format
Used for corresponding with State Governments, various constitutional bodies, heads of attached and subordinate offices, public enterprises, statutory authorities, public bodies and members of the public generally. A letter begins with the salutation "Sir/Madam" as may be appropriate. Note: In case of correspondence with Foreign Government, instructions issued by the Ministry of External Affairs from time to time are to be followed.	No.... Government of India (Bharat Sarkar) Department of..... (.....Vibhag) New Delhi, the.....(Date) To Subject: Sir/Madam, With reference to your letter No.....dated..... on the subject cited above, I am directed..... Yours faithfully, @Sd/ (A.B.C.) Under Secretary to the Govt. of India Tele.No..... Telefax.No/e-mail (Endorsement) No..... Copy forwarded for information/necessary action to: (1) (2) (A.B.C.) Under Secretary to the Govt. of India

(ii) **Demi-official letter -**

Content	Format
Generally used in correspondence between Government officers for inviting their personal attention on the issue. Since demi-official letter is written in the first person in a personal and friendly tone, it should be addressed by an officer in a Ministry/ Department who is ordinarily not more than one or two levels below the officer to whom such communication is addressed. Communications to non-officials can also take the form of a demi-official letter. The colour code and use of National Emblem on D.O. letter will be as per the instructions issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs from time to time	XYZ Deputy Secretary Tele.No. D.O.No..... GOVERNMENT OF INDIA (Bharat Sarkar) Department of..... (.....Vibhag) New Delhi, the20.. My dear/Dear Shri..... We propose to draw up a model scheme for..... A copy of the outline prepared in this connection is enclosed. I shall be grateful if you would let me have your comments as soon as possible. I may add that we intend circulating the draft scheme formally to all departments in the due course for their comments. With regards Yours sincerely, (XYZ) A.B.C. Deputy Secretary Ministry of Department of New Delhi.....

(iii) **Office Memorandum -**

Content	Format
Generally used for corresponding with other Departments or in calling for information from or conveying information to its employees. It may also be used in corresponding with attached and subordinate offices. It is written in the third person and bears no salutation or supersession except the name and designation of the officer signing it	No.... Government of India (Bharat Sarkar) Department of..... (.....Vibhag) New Delhi, the.....(Date) OFFICE MEMORANDUM Subject: The undersigned is directed to refer to this/their Department O.M. No.....dated..... 2. Doubts have been expressed whether the provisions ofalso apply to..... It is hereby clarified that (A.B.C.) Under Secretary to the Govt. of India Tele.No/e-mail To The Department of (.....Vibhag) (Shri/Smt.....) Sardar Patel Bhavan Parliament Street New Delhi-110001.

(iv) **Inter-departmental note (earlier referred to as U.O. Note i.e. before 7th edition of CSMOP) -**

Content	Format
(a) Generally employed for obtaining the advice, views, concurrence or comments of other Departments on a proposal or in seeking clarification of the existing rules, instructions etc. It may also be used by a Department when consulting it's attached and subordinate offices and vice versa. (b) The inter-Departmental note may either be recorded on a file or e-file (where two departments have connectivity) referred to another Department or may take the form of an independent self-contained note.	Government of India (Bharat Sarkar) Department of..... (.....Vibhag) Subject: 1. The present rules regulating the issue of identity cards provide inter alia that..... 2. A question has now arisen whether..... 3. 4. 5. This department will be grateful for the advice of the Department of Legal affairs on the issue raised in para 4 above. (X.Y.Z.) Deputy Secretary Tele.No/e-mail Department of Legal Affairs (Vidhi Karya ibhag), Shri.....) Shastri Bhavan, New Delhi Department ofI-D No.....Dated.....

(v) **Office Order –**

Content	Format
Normally used for issuing instructions meant for internal administration, e.g., grant of regular leave, distribution of work among officers and sections, appointments and transfers etc.	No.... Government of India (Bharat Sarkar) Department of..... (.....Vibhag) New Delhi, the.....20.. OFFICE ORDER(No. /2014) Shri X.Y.Z., a permanent Section officer in this department, is granted earned leave fordays from.....towith permission to prefix..... and suffix..... both public holidays, to the leave. 2. It is certified that Shri XYZ is likely, on the expiry of this leave, to return to duty at the station from which proceeded on leave. (A.B.C.) Under Secretary to the Govt. of India Tele.No/e-mail Copy to: 1. Office order file 2. Cashier 3. Section concerned 4. Shri XYZ Section Officer.

(vi) **Order -**

Content	Format
Generally used for issuing certain types of financial sanctions and for communicating government orders in disciplinary cases, etc., to the officials concerned	No.... Government of India (Bharat Sarkar) Department of..... (.....Vibhag) New Delhi, the.....20.. ORDER Sanction of the President is accorded under rule 10 of the Delegation of Financial Powers Rules, to write off irrecoverable loss of Rs.5000 (Rupees Five Thousand only) being the value of the following articles belonging to this department. (1) X X X X X (2) X X X X X (A.B.C.) Under Secretary to the Govt. of India Tele.No/e-mail Copy forwarded to: 1. The A.G.C.R., New Delhi. 2. Internal Finance Section 3. Cash Section

(vii) **Notification -**

Content	Format
Mostly used in notifying promulgation of statutory rules and orders, appointments and promotions of gazetted officers etc. through publications in the Gazette of India. Note: The classification of categories of notification/extra-ordinary notification shall be as per the instructions issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs' from time to time.	[To be published in the Gazette of India, Part I, Section 2) Government of India (Bharat Sarkar) Department of..... (.....Vibhag) New Delhi, the.....20.. NOTIFICATION No..... Shri XYZ., Under Secretary in the Department ofis appointed to officiate as Deputy Secretary in that Department vice Shri transferred to the Department of (A.B.C.) Joint Secretary Tele.No/e-mail The Manager, Government of India Press, (Bharat Sarkar Press) FARIDABAD Copy forwarded for information to: (1) (2) (3)

(viii) **Resolution –**

Content	Format
This form of communication is used for making public announcement of decisions of government in important matters of policy in e.g. the policy of industrial licensing, appointment of committees or commissions of enquiry. Resolutions are also published in the Gazette of India.	<i>[To be published in the Gazette of India, Part I, Section 1)</i> Government of India (Bharat Sarkar) Department of..... (.....Vibhag) New Delhi, the.....20.. RESOLUTION <i>The Government of India have had under consideration the question of further improving the efficiency of the departments and services concerned with the collection of revenue. As a first step in that direction the President has been pleased, under the powers vested in him under Article of the Constitution of India, to decide that a Class Central Service to be known as 'India Revenue Service' should be constituted with effect from</i> (A.B.C.) Secretary to the Government of India Tele.No/e-mail ORDER <i>ORDERED that a copy of the resolution be communicated to.....</i> <i>ORDERED that a the resolution be published in the Gazette of India for general information</i> (A.B.C.) Secretary to the Government of India Tele.No/e-mail <i>The Manager, Government of India Press, (Bharat Sarkar Press) FARIDABAD.</i>

(ix) **Press communiqué/note -**

Content	Format
This form is used when it is proposed to give wide publicity to a decision of government. A press communiqué is more formal in character than a press note and is expected to be reproduced intact by the press. A press note, on the other hand, is intended to serve as a hand-out to the press which may edit, compress or enlarge it, as deemed fit.	Not to be published or broadcast before a.m./p.m on.....day, the 20.. PRESS COMMUNIQUE/NOTE In response to public demand, the Government of India have appointed a Commission to go into the problem of and make suitable recommendations to the Government. 2. The Commission will consist of Shri as Chairperson and the following as members; (i) (ii) (iii) 3. In making its recommendations, the Commission is expected to give consideration to the following matters: (a) (b) (c) 4. The Commission is expected to submit its report to the Government by Department of (.....Vibhag) New Delhi, the.....20... No..... Forwarded to the Principal Information Officer, Press Information Bureau, Government of India, new Delhi, for issuing the communiqué and giving it wide publicity. (A.B.C.) Joint Secretary Tele.No/e-mail

(x) **Endorsement -**

Content	Format
This form is used when a receipt has to be returned in original to the sender, or the receipt in original or its copy is sent to another Department or office, for information or action. It is also used when a copy of a communication is proposed to be forwarded to parties other than the one to which it is addressed. Normally this form will not be used in communicating copies to state governments. The appropriate form for such communication should be a letter.	No.... Government of India (Bharat Sarkar) Department of..... (.....Vibhag) New Delhi, the.....2014 A copy each of the papers mentioned below is forwarded for information and necessary action. (A.B.C.) Under Secretary to the Govt. of India Tele.No/e-mail List of papers forwarded. 1. 2. To

(xi) **Minutes** - A record of discussions is prepared immediately after the meeting and circulated to the other Ministries/Departments concerned, giving date/time/venue of the meeting held, who chaired the meeting and list of participants, setting out the conclusions reached and indicating the Ministry(s)/Department(s) responsible for taking further action on each conclusion. In case it is perceived by a participant of the meeting, that the minutes recorded are not as per the understanding/perception of the participant, the same may be immediately referred in writing to the authority which has issued the minutes.

Modes of Communications shall be decided depending on the nature and urgency of message to be conveyed.

29. **Correspondence with attached and subordinate offices -**

Senior Officers/Head of a subordinate/ attached office under an administrative Ministry/Department shall correspond in respect of matters involving intervention/ approval of another Ministry/ Department in a form of a note/e-mail/ e-file to their concerned Ministry/Department. In case of seeking clarifications relating to

rules/guidelines from Departments like Department of Expenditure, Department of Personnel, Ministry of Health etc. the Attached/Subordinate offices can communicate directly without the intervention of their parent Ministry/Department.

30. **Single File System -**

(i) This shall apply to matters which have to be referred by the Non Secretariat Office (NSO) to the Department for seeking a sanction/order, i.e. a decision not within its own delegated powers.

(ii) This shall not apply to matters which in a hybrid environment i.e. where either the Department or the NSO is still operating in paper mode (non-electronic). In such cases, the procedure detailed in para (iii) to (vii) below will be followed. In cases where both the Department and NSO are electronically connected, the workflow given below will be followed:

(a) The SFS file need not bear an I.D. No. or other formal method of sending, but will be sent as though it is from one officer to another in the same organization.

(b) The SFS file shall be completed in all respects, so as to enable the Department to take a decision expeditiously; hence the NSO will ensure that:

(i) every point for decision/order is clearly brought out;

(ii) all relevant connected papers are placed on the file/e-files, properly arranged and referred to;

(iii) draft orders/sanctions are put up, where they are required to be approved by the department for issue; and

(iv) the availability of funds, etc., is certified where additional expenditure is involved in the proposal.

(iii) The officer last dealing with the SFS case in the NSO shall mark it to the appropriate officer in the Department, by name; policy files will, however, be

referred to the department at appropriate levels to be determined by the Department and the NSO concerned, through a general order.

(iv) All SFS files shall invariably be routed through the central registry of the department concerned.

(v) As a rule, all noting in the Department will be on the NSO file. However, where sensitive or delicate matters in the sphere of personnel, policy issues and finance are involved; the recording of notes in 'duplicate' e-files may be permitted by issuing general or special orders by the Department. This will be done at a particular stage of the SFS case or at or above a particular level, with the final decision thereafter being suitably recorded on the SFS e-file.

(vi) As a convention, the secretariat noting on a SFS file shall start on a new page and the noting done sequentially-save in matters of the nature referred to in (v) above.

(vii) Action to implement the government decision in SFS case shall be initiated in and by the NSO on the return of the file. Orders so issued should specifically state that these have received the concurrence of Government in the Department concerned. Copies of every sanction/order so issued by the NSO will be endorsed without fail to all the officers concerned in the Department.

31. **References to the Attorney-General of India** - References to the Attorney-General shall be made by the Ministry of Law and Justice.

32. **References to Constitutional/Statutory Authorities** - References to constitutional and statutory authorities such as Election Commission of India/ Union Public Service Commission etc. shall normally be made in the letter form addressed to Principal Secretary/Secretary of the Commission.

33. **References to the Comptroller and Auditor General of India** - References to the Comptroller and Auditor General of India for his views or advice shall be made only by or through the Ministry of Finance. In matters of day-to-day administration, Ministries/departments may, however, at their discretion, correspond directly with the Comptroller and Auditor General of India.

34. Correspondence with Union Territory Administrations - All communications of a routine nature which clearly relate to the business of a particular Department, shall ordinarily be addressed to the Secretary in the appropriate Department. Other important communications may be addressed to the Chief Secretary or the Administrator as the case may be.

35. Correspondence with State Governments -

(i) Communications on the subjects which clearly relate to the business of a particular Department shall normally be addressed to the Secretary of that Department. Other communications including those of special nature or importance warranting attention at higher levels may be addressed to the Chief Secretary. Demi-official letters may also be sent to officers of State Governments. In case of demi-official communication is to the Chief Secretary of a State, this level shall not be below the level of Joint Secretary.

(ii) Communications other than those of a purely routine nature e.g., acknowledgements shall not ordinarily be addressed to State Governments except with the prior approval and under the signature of the branch officer. Purely routine communications may, however, be signed by a Section Officer.

36. Correspondence with the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha Secretariats -

Communications meant for the Lok Sabha Secretariat or the Rajya Sabha Secretariat and requiring urgent or high level attention shall be addressed to the Secretaries concerned and not to the Speaker or the Chairman directly.

37. Correspondence with Members of Parliament and VIPs -

(i) Communications received from Members of Parliament and VIPs should be attended to promptly.

(ii) Where a communication is addressed to a Minister, it shall, as far as possible, be replied to by the Minister himself. In other cases, a reply should normally be signed by an officer of the rank of Secretary only.

(iii) Where, however, a communication is addressed to the head of an attached or

subordinate office, Public Sector Undertakings, Financial Institutions (including nationalized banks) Division/Branch In charge in a Ministry/Department /Organisation, shall be replied to by the addressee himself. In routine matters, he may send an appropriate reply on his own. In policy matters, however, the officer should have prior consultation with higher authorities before sending a reply. It should, however, be ensured that the minimum level at which such replies are sent to Members of Parliament and VIPs is that of Under Secretary and that also in letter form only.

(iv) Normally information sought by a Member/VIP should be supplied unless it is of such a nature that it would have been denied to him even if asked for on the floor of the Houses of Parliament.

(v) In case, a reference from an ex-Member of Parliament is addressed to a Minister or Secretary, reply to such reference may be sent by a Joint Secretary level officer after obtaining approval of the Secretary of the Ministry/Department. In case the reference is addressed to a lower level officer, reply to such reference could be sent by the officer on his own in non-policy cases and after obtaining approval of the higher authorities in policy cases,. However, the minimum level at which reply could be sent should be that of an Under Secretary and that too in a polite letter form only.

(vi) Each communication received from a Member of Parliament/VIP, shall be acknowledged within 15 days, followed by a reply within the next 15 days of acknowledgement sent.

(vii) Appropriate record shall be maintained in respect of communications received from Members of Parliament and VIPs and monitored by all concerned. A similar procedure may also be followed for judicial/quasi-judicial matters.

38. Correspondence with Ministers of State Governments –

The procedure laid down in the above paragraph (No.37) shall also be followed in dealing with communications received from the Ministers of State Governments.

39. Correspondence with Foreign Governments and International Organizations –

Correspondence with Foreign Governments and their Missions in India, Heads of Indian Diplomatic Missions and posts abroad and United Nations and its specialized agencies shall normally be through the Ministry of External Affairs. Exceptions to this may be made only as per the instructions issued by the Ministry of External Affairs in this regard from time to time.

40. Target date for replies - In all important matters in which State Governments, Departments of the Central Government, or other offices, public bodies or individuals are consulted, time limit for replies may ordinarily be specified. On expiry of the specified date, orders of the appropriate authority may be obtained on whether the offices, whose replies have not been received, may be allowed an extension of time or whether the matter may be processed on the basis of the information available, without waiting for their replies.

CHAPTER VII

DRAFTING OF COMMUNICATION

41. Procedure for drafting -

Draft is not required to be prepared in straight-forward cases or those for which standard forms of communication exist.

42. General instructions for drafting –

(i) A draft shall be clear and concise.

(ii) The number and date of the last communication in the series, and if this is not from the addressee, his last communication on the subject, shall always be referred to. Where it is necessary to refer to more than one communication or a series of communications, this shall be done on the margin of the draft. When two or more communications are to issue from the same file on the same date, a separate serial number may be inserted before the numeral identifying the year to avoid confusion in reference, e.g., A-11011/5(I)/2001-Est., A-11011/5(II)/2001-Est.

(iii) The name, designation, telephone number, fax number and e-mail (wherever applicable) of the officer signing the communication shall be indicated in the communication.

43. Authentication of Government Orders (Ministry of Home Affairs) –

(i) All orders and other instruments made and executed in the name of the President shall be expressed to be made in his name and signed by an officer having regular or ex-officio secretariat status of and above the rank of Under Secretary, or other specifically authorized to authenticate such orders under the Authentication (Orders and Other Instruments) Rules, 2002 (as amended from time to time).

(ii) Where the power to issue orders, notifications, etc., is conferred by a statute of the Government of India, such orders and notifications will be expressed to be made in the name of the Government of India.

44. **Addressing communications to officers by name** - Normally no communication, other than that of a classified nature or a demi-official letter, shall be addressed or marked to an officer by name, unless it is intended that the matter raised therein shall receive his personal attention either because of its special nature, urgency or importance, or because some ground has already been covered by personal discussions with him and he would be in a better position to deal with it.

CHAPTER VIII

FILE NUMBERING SYSTEM

45. **File Numbering System:** Normally, no files should be opened for dealing with receipts of routine nature. The following two file numbering systems may be used:-

I. Functional file numbering system –

(i) The range and dimensions of the subjects falling under the scope of business allocated to a department are analyzed in the following sequence:

- (a) main functions of the department;
- (b) activities in each of these functions;
- (c) aspects or operations involved in each of these activities; and
- (d) factors to be taken into consideration relating to each of these aspects or Operations.

(ii) The scope of business of a department is analyzed under four hierarchical divisions, and the following four standard lists of headings are prepared:

- (a) functional heads which may be called basic heads;
- (b) activity heads which may be called 'primary heads' as related to each functional head;
- (c) aspect or operation heads which may be called 'secondary heads' as related to activity heads; and
- (d) factor heads which may be called 'tertiary heads' as related to operation heads.

(iii) Based on the above list of heads', a functional file index for various substantive subjects dealt with by a department together with an identifying file numbering system is then developed.

(iv) For opening files on subjects which are common to all Ministries/Departments (e.g. matters relating to establishment, finance, budget, accounts, office

supplies and services, and other house-keeping jobs, Hindi, Vigilance, Parliament, Questions, etc.) the common standardized functional file index/file-numbering system, as contained in the booklet 'Record Retention Schedule' in respect of records common to all Ministries/Department issued by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances in 2012 (uploaded on the website (www.darpg.gov.in), as amended from time to time, shall be followed.

II. Subject classification based file numbering system—

- (i) Each Section/Desk will maintain approved lists (to be reviewed every year) of:
 - (a) standard heads i.e. main subjects headings concerning it.
 - (b) standard sub-heads i.e. aspects of the main subject headings.
- (ii) The standard heads will bear consecutive serial numbers. No such numbers, however, will be allocated to standard sub-heads.
- (iii) The dealing hand will ascertain the standard to which the paper under consideration relates .and then propose a suitable title subject to review by the Senior Officers.
- (iv) As far as possible, there should be a separate file for each distinct aspect of the subject.
- (v) If the issue raised in the fresh receipt or in the note on a current file goes beyond the original scope, a new file may be opened to deal with it by placing photocopies of relevant extracts.
- (vi) The first three elements in the file number will be separated from one another by a slant stroke and the last two by a dash. Thus, the files opened in say, Scientific Research Section during 2009 under the standard head bearing serial number '3' will be numbered consecutively as 3/1/2008-SR, 3/1/2009-SR etc. and so on, where 'SR' represents the section.

III. Part File –

- (i) If the main file on a subject is not likely to be available for some time and it is necessary to process a fresh receipt or a note without waiting for its return, a part file may be opened to deal with it. Where two or more part files are opened, each will be identified by a distinct number, e.g. part file I, part file II or part file 'A', part file 'B' and so on. Once the main file returns the part files will be merged with it, after removing duplicate papers, if any.

- (ii) In a computerized environment appropriate entry will be made in the computer, so that easy tracking is facilitated for the purpose of merging of the part file with the main file.

IV. Unique e-file number: In a computer environment, a unique e-file number will also be generated automatically as and when a new e-file is opened. The e-files which are entered in the system will be automatically traceable on any of the following parameters:

- (i) no. of the file.
- (ii) date of opening of the file.
- (iii) as many catch words as possible from out of the subject on the file.
- (iv) any other parameter(s) at the discretion of the Department concerned.

46. Transfer, reconstruction and numbering of files - Whenever work is transferred from one department/section to another, the former shall transfer all the related records including file both current and closed to the latter. In case of transfer of files from one Department to the other a list will be prepared and approval of the Head of the Department taken. The department/section taking over the records will not divide, reclassify or renumber the closed files transferred to it. In the case of current files, the endeavour should be to close them at the earliest possible stage and open new files/e-files according to the Department's/Section's own scheme for dealing with the matter further.

A paper based file will be reconstructed if it is misplaced. The copies of the various correspondences will be obtained from the corresponding department and papers will be arranged in chronological orders and a new duplicate file prepared. A self-contained note will be prepared based on the correspondences.

47. Movement of files –

Movement of files shall be entered in the file movement register in the format to be decided by the Department concerned through departmental instructions. This may also be done through the electronic based File Tracking System.

CHAPTER IX

RECORDS MANAGEMENT

48. **Activities involved in records management -**

Records management covers the activities concerning mainly recording, retention, retrieval and disposal by transferring records to National Archives of India (NAI). Each Department is expected to issue Departmental instructions to regulate and review of records.

49. **Stage/procedure of recording** - Files shall be recorded after action on the issues considered thereon has been completed. Recording of such files shall be governed by the provisions in the Record Retention Schedule (RRS) and that of NAI issued from time to time. Extract from the file, copies of important decisions, documents, etc. as are considered useful for future reference and add them to the standing guard file/standing note/precedent book/reference folder etc.;

50. **Categorization of physical records -**

Files may be recorded under any one of the categories prescribed by NAI.

51. **Precedent Book** - Every section shall update its precedent book for keeping note of important rulings and decisions having a precedent value for ready reference.

52. **Record Retention Schedule -**

To ensure that files etc. are neither prematurely destroyed, nor kept for periods longer than necessary, every Ministry/Department will:

- (a) in respect of records connected with accounts, observe the instructions contained in Appendix 13 to the General Financial rules as available in the website of the Ministry of Finance, Department of Expenditure (www.finmin.nic.in);
- (b) in respect of records, relating to establishment, personnel and housekeeping matters common to all departments, follow the 'Record Retention Schedule' in respect of Records Common to All Ministries/Departments', which is available on Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances' website

www.darpg.nic.in, as amended from time to time.

- (c) in respect of records connected with its substantive functions, issue a departmental retention schedule prescribing the periods for which files dealing with specified subjects shall be preserved, in consultation with the NAI.

53. Records maintained by officers and their personal staff -

Each Department may issue Departmental instructions to regulate the review and weeding out/deleting of paper records maintained by officers and their personal staff. In this regard procedure laid down in CSMOP shall be followed.

54. Requisitioning of records –

(a) No recorded file shall be sent from the Sections, Departmental Record Room or Archival records except under a requisition in form prescribed under Public Records Act, 1993.

(b) Requisitions of files belonging to other Departments and are in the custody of the NAI, will have to be endorsed by that Department concerned, before they are sent by the Archives. Records, bearing security classification, are not transferred to the Archives, as per section 10 of the Public Records Act, 1993.

CHAPTER X

SECURITY OF OFFICIAL INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTS

55. Communication of official information -

Every Government Servant shall, in performance of his duties in good faith, communicate to a member of public or any organization full and accurate information, which can be disclosed under the Right to Information Act, 2005. (Nothing stated above shall be construed as permitting communication of classified information in an unauthorized manner or for improper gains to a Government Servant or others).

56. Treatment of classified papers -

(i) The provisions contained in this manual apply primarily to unclassified papers. In handling classified papers, the official concerned will exercise special care and follow the provisions under the Departmental Security Instructions' issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs. Since according to these instructions classified papers (other than confidential) are expected to be handled either by officers themselves or in sections designated as 'secret' or 'top secret', it is essential that in sections not so designated :

- (a) a separate set of registers and other records (e.g., dak register, section diary, file register, file movement register, precedent book, index slips, various arrears and disposal statements and electronic storage devices) are maintained by Section Officer herself/himself; and
- (b) the recording of such files and their review is also undertaken by him personally, keeping in view the provisions under the Departmental Security Instructions.

(ii) Every classified file shall be reviewed once in five years for declassification. A declassified file considered fit for permanent preservation will be transferred to the National Archives.

57. Handling of classified papers –

For the purpose of attending meetings/discussions outside office, an officer not below the level of Section Officer / Desk Officer may carry confidential papers /files or an officer not below the level of Under Secretary may carry Secret papers/files, only under special circumstances with the written authorization of Joint Secretary level officer. The authorization will be produced by the officer on demand. Besides, provisions contained in the Manual of Departmental Security Instructions issued by Ministry of Home Affairs shall be followed in this regard.

58. Communication of information to the press –

(i) Official information to the press and other news media, i.e. radio and television, shall normally be communicated through the Press Information Bureau.

(ii) Only Ministers, Secretaries and other officers specifically authorized in this behalf may give information or be accessible to the representatives of the press. Any other official, if approached by a representative of the press, will direct them to the Press Information Bureau or the officer authorized or shall seek the permission of the Secretary of the department before meeting the press.

(iii) Detailed procedure in respect of matters mentioned in this para, as laid down by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, shall be followed.

59. Use of restrictive classification for printed reports etc. –

(i) The restrictive classification 'For official use only' will not be assigned to any printed report, pamphlet or compilation, unless it contains information disclosure of which would not be in the public interest. In doubtful cases, the test that may be usefully applied is whether the publication, whose circulation is proposed to restrict to official use only, is such that the Minister would be justified in refusing to lay it before the Parliament.

(ii) No official publication (including in electronic form) shall be marked 'For official use only' except with the prior approval of the branch officer, who shall obtain the orders of the Secretary or Minister in cases of doubt.

CHAPTER XI

CHECKS ON DELAYS

60. Timely Disposal of receipts and monitoring of Parliamentary Assurances, Parliament Questions, Applications under RTI Act, MP/VIP References, CAT/Court Cases, etc. -

Time Limits will be fixed for disposal of as many types of cases as possible handled in the Department through departmental instructions. As a general rule, no official shall keep a case pending for more than 7 working days unless higher limits have been prescribed for specific types of cases through departmental instructions. In case of a case remaining with an official for more than the stipulated time limit, an explanation for keeping it pending shall be recorded on the note portion by him. The system of exception reporting will be introduced to monitor the disposal of receipts.

For timely disposal and monitoring of Parliament Assurances, Parliament Questions, Applications under RTI Act, MP/VIP References, Judicial/quasi-judicial, etc. each department shall maintain separate records of such cases.

E-Governance methods, suiting to the requirements, should also be adopted for monitoring and tracking of government work.

CHAPTER XII

MISCELLANEOUS

61. Departmental instructions –

This manual lays down the essential procedures for efficient paperwork management, i.e. processing, handling and control of official papers, in the Central Secretariat. To provide for sufficient flexibility, the manual suggests the issue of departmental instructions which could supplement or vary, within broad limits, the prescribed procedures to suit special conditions and requirements.

62. Maintenance/transfer of records in the personal offices of Ministers -

Maintenance of records in the personal offices of Ministers –

- (a) The personal offices of Ministers shall maintain necessary records such as diary, dispatch and file movement registers.

The above records will be in addition to files and folders for papers of secret nature connected with the Cabinet meetings, etc. and for such subjects as considered necessary.

- (b) When a file or paper is given to the Minister for seeking orders or for any other purpose, informally, the PS to Minister will be informed. PS to Minister will on receipt of these particulars, will satisfy that such a file has been received by the Minister and watch its further movement. The file will be returned to the officer concerned as soon as the matter has received the attention of the Minister and the file has been disposed of.

63. Maintenance of Websites

All Central Government Ministries/Departments/Offices/PSUs should have a Website containing updated data/information in compliance with the Guidelines of Government of India Websites (GIGW) available on the websites of Department of Electronics & Information Technology (www.deity.nic.in) and of the Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances (www.darpg.nic.in). A nodal officer should be appointed for the purpose and the Website updated regularly.

64. **Citizen's/Client's Charter-**

Citizen's/Client's Charter are required to be maintained by all the Ministries/Departments/Offices of the Government of India and the State/Union Territory Governments also and prominently display it on the Website, on a Notice Board of the Information Facilitation Centre. Citizen's Charter is a document which represents a systematic effort to focus on the commitments of the Organization towards its Citizens in respect of the Standards of services, information, choice & consultation, non-discrimination & accessibility, redress courtesy and value for money. It is also said as a tool for facilitating delivery of services to citizens with specified standards, quality and time frame etc. with commitments of the organization towards its clients.

A good Citizen's Charter should have the following components:-

- (i) Vision and Mission Statement of the Organization.
- (ii) Details of the Business transacted by the Organization.
- (iii) Details of 'Citizens' or 'Clients'
- (iv) Statement of service including standards, quality, time frame etc. provided to each Citizen/Client group separately and how/where to get the services.
- (v) Details of Grievance Redress Mechanism and how to access it.
- (vi) Expectations from the 'Citizens' or 'Clients'.
- (vii) Additional commitments such as compensation in the event of failure of service delivery.

The format for preparing Citizen Charter is available on the SEVOTTAM Manual of the Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances (www.darpg.in).
