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Government of India
Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions
Department of Personnel & Training

Subject: - Implementation of Recommendations of Task Force for
Strengthening compliance with Provision for Suo motu /
Proactive Disclosures under Section 4 of the RTI Act, 2005.

Reference Cabinet Secretariat's I.D.No.501/2/13/2011-CA.V,
dated the 17th January, 2012 on the above-mentioned subject.

2. As desired by the Cabinet Secretariat comments on the Report of Task Force were again requested for. 22 Ministries/Departments have forwarded their comments / suggestions. Comments received have been incorporated in the Note for CoS and guidelines have been framed. The Note for Committee of Secretaries is enclosed.

3. Twenty copies (Copy Nos.1 to 20) of the revised Note for CoS having 128 pages are forwarded herewith for necessary action.

Anuradha S. Chagti

(Anuradha S.Chagti)

Director

Tele:23093074

Cabinet Secretariat (Shri R.Anand, Director), Rashtrapati Bhavan, New
Delhi

DOPT I.D.No.F.1/6/2011-IR, dated the 10th July,2012.



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F.No.1/6/2011-IR
Government of India
Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions
(Department of Personnel & Training)

New Delhi,
Dated 10th July, 2012

NOTE FOR THE COMMITTEE OF SECRETARIES

Subject: Implementation of Recommendations of Task Force for Strengthening Compliance with Provisions for Suo Motu/Proactive Disclosures under Section 4 of the RTI Act, 2005.

* * *

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The proposal is to seek approval of Committee of Secretaries (COS) on the guidelines framed on the recommendations of a Task Force set up by this Department, for strengthening compliance with provisions for suo motu (or proactive) disclosures as given in Section 4 of the RTI Act, 2005.

2.0 Background

2.1 Section 4(1)(b) of the RTI Act lays down the information which should be disclosed by Public Authorities on a suo motu or proactive basis. Section 4(2) and Section 4(3) prescribe the method of dissemination of this information. The purpose of suo motu disclosures under Section 4 is to place large amount of information in public domain on a proactive basis to make functioning of the Public Authorities more transparent and also to reduce the need for filing individual RTI applications.

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2.2 Since the promulgation of the Act, large amount of information relating to functioning of public bodies is being put in public domain primarily through web based disclosures. However, it is noted that the quality and quantity of disclosures is still not up to the mark and in relation to certain clauses of Section 4(1)(b) and 4(1)(c), sufficient disclosures are not being made due to lack of clear guidelines. Also, there is little monitoring of compliance with the provisions of Section 4 which has been highlighted by Chief Information Commissioner also, in his various judgments.

2.3 This issue has engaged the attention of the government. It is felt that the weak implementation of Section 4 of the Act is partly due to the fact that certain provisions of this Section have not been fully detailed and, that there is need to set up a compliance mechanism to ensure that requirements of Section 4 are fully met.

2.4 In order to address the above, this Department constituted a Task Force in May 2011, which included representatives of civil society organizations active in the field of Right to Information as well. A copy of the Order setting up the Task Force and its Terms of Reference is enclosed at **Annexure-I**.

3.0 Recommendations of the Task Force

3.1 The Task Force submitted its Report on 30.08.2011. It has addressed various items of Terms of Reference and given detailed recommendations. A copy of the Report of the Task Force is at **Annexure-II**.

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3.2 The Task Force has given recommendations on

- a) prescribing additional items for suo-motu disclosure under Section 4(1)(b)(xvii);
- b) guidelines for facilitating disclosure at different levels of Government including templates for disclosure;
- c) general recommendations about disclosure at various levels;
- d) guidelines for digital publication of proactive disclosures;
- e) guidelines for making disclosure more effective;
- f) steps to be taken in matters relating to threat to RTI Activists;
- g) guidelines for consultation with public in relation to formulation of policies and implementation thereof; and
- h) compliance with provisions of suo-motu disclosure under the RTI Act.

3.3 The recommendations of the Task Force have been processed in the Department. The recommendations of the Task Force are by and large sound and feasible to implement. However recommendations at para 3.2 (f) and (g) on steps to be taken in matters relating to threat to RTI Activists and guidelines for consultation with public in relation to formulation of policies and implementation thereof, which do not deal with proactive disclosure. It is therefore, proposed that these two recommendations should be dealt with separately, later.

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4.0 Comments of Ministries/Departments

4.1 The comments of seven concerned Ministries/Departments were sought on the report of the Task Force on 13th September, 2011, 30th September, 2011 and 10th October, 2011. On the directions of Cabinet Secretariat, the comments of all Ministries/ departments in Government of India were sought on 24th November, 2011 and 24th January, 2012. Comments have been received from 24 Ministries/ departments and are placed at **Annexure- III**.

5.0 Detailed Guidelines on suo-motu disclosure

5.1 Guidelines for implementation on the recommendations of the Task Force have been framed keeping in view the comments of the Ministries received. The comment received from Department of Space, Department of Expenditure, Department of Economic Affairs, Department of Atomic Energy have been suitably incorporated in the guidelines. The concerns of Department of Space and Atomic Energy and Ministry of Home Affairs on disclosure of posting and transfers of personnel manning posts of strategic importance has been suitably addressed in the guidelines by providing exemptions. The objections of Ministry of Home Affairs on non-disclosure of CAG/PAC paras and discretionary/ non discretionary grants have not been accepted. However disclosure of public procurement and CAG/PAC paras which may affect the security, sovereignty, economic, and scientific concerns

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of the country have been exempted from disclosure. Other Ministries/ Departments have concurred / offered no comments on the report.

5.2 Detailed guidelines have been framed on the Task Force recommendations that deal with suo-motu or proactive disclosure. While the guidelines are mandatory for the Central Government Ministries and Departments, they are illustrative in nature for State Governments. Guidelines so framed are placed at **Annexure IV**.

5.3 Guidelines have been framed on:

- i. Prescribing additional items under Section 4(1)(b)(xvii)
- ii. Guidelines for Digital Publication
- iii. Detailing of Section 4(1)(b)(iii), 4(1)(b)(iv), 4(1)(b)(ix) and 4(1)(b)(xiv)
- iv. Compliance mechanism with provisions of Suo Motu disclosure.
- v. Guidelines for State Governments for facilitating disclosure at different levels of government

5.4 The key details of the guidelines are discussed in subsequent paragraphs.

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5.4.1 Prescribing additional items for suo motu disclosure under Section 4(1)(b)(xvii)

5.4.1.1 Section 4(1)(b)(xvii) lays down that government may prescribe any additional item which should also be included for suo motu disclosure.

Detailed guidelines have been laid down for disclosing

- i. Information relating to procurement;
- ii. Information relating to public-private partnerships;
- iii. Transfer policy for different grades/cadres of employees;
- iv. Details of posts which have been classified as sensitive posts as per directions of the Central Vigilance Commission;
- v. RTI queries and appeals received by the public authorities and responses thereto;
- vi. Details of CAG paras framed and the response thereto;
- vii. Citizens Charters;
- viii. All discretionary/non-discretionary grants/allocations; and
- ix. Details of official tours of PM, Ministers and officers.

5.4.2 Guidelines for Digital Publication of proactive disclosures under Section 4

5.4.2.1 Guidelines lay down the benchmarks to ensure that websites' disclosures are user-friendly and accessible to general public.

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5.4.3 Guidelines for certain clauses of Section 4(1)(b) to make disclosures more effective

5.4.3.1 The Task Force has fleshed out detailed guidelines for four clauses of Section 4(1)(b) namely, clause 4(1)(b)(iii) regarding the procedure followed in the decision making process including channels of supervision and accountability ; clause 4(1)(b)(iv) the norms set by it for the discharge of its functions; clause 4(1)(b)(xi) the budget, plans, proposed expenditure and disbursements; and clause 4(1)(b)(xiv) on information held by the public authorities in electronic form.

5.4.4 Compliance with provisions of suo motu disclosure.

5.4.4.1 In order to monitor and enforce compliance with suo motu disclosure provisions both the public authorities and Information Commissions should share the responsibility. At the level of public authority responsibility should be given at senior levels for ensuring that information is proactively disclosed and regularly updated as per the provisions of the Act. The compliance mechanism framed in the guidelines includes preparation of a Proactive disclosure scheme by each Department/Ministry on an annual basis and its submission to the Central Information Commission; Compliance with the scheme to be reported in the annual reports of the Ministry/Department; Appointment of a senior officer not below the rank of a Joint Secretary and not below rank of Additional HOD in case of attached offices for ensuring compliance with the provisions relating to proactive

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disclosures; and sample audits of compliance of proactive disclosure scheme of Ministries/Departments by Information Commissions and mandatory third party audit of proactive disclosure by the public authority and report their compliance in Departmental RFD

5.4.5 Guidelines for State Governments for facilitating disclosure at different levels of government – suggested templates for key areas

5.4.5.1 The scheme of Section 4 applies uniformly to all public authorities even though they may be constituted at different levels. Different level of detailing is required at different levels of administration. The State Governments are requested to follow the guidelines on suo-motu or proactive disclosure for Central government described in Section 5.4.1, 5.4.2, 5.4.3 and 5.4.4. In addition, templates for disclosure at different levels of government have been prepared in four areas namely Public Distribution System; Panchayats; MGNREGA; and Primary and Secondary Schools.

5.4.5.2 It has also been recommended that disclosures should also be done locally in a form and manner that is easily accessible to the public; public authorities should use documents which are given to beneficiaries in relation to these schemes for disclosing salient features of the schemes; and at the Panchayat level, RTI proactive disclosure files may be maintained for perusal by information seekers. The State Governments are requested to use the templates for disclosure at various levels. On similar lines, State

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Governments should develop templates for suo-motu disclosure in other sectors.

6.0 Guidelines and the modalities for Implementation

6.1 The guidelines once approved by the Competent Authority, shall be implemented by public authorities of Central Government.

7.0 Approval Sought

7.1 Committee of Secretaries is requested to consider the above proposal to approve the guidelines for implementation of the suo-motu disclosure under the RTI Act, 2005 at **Annexure IV**.

8.0 Secretary (P) has seen and approved the note for consideration of the Committee of Secretaries.

Manoj Joshi

(Manoj Joshi)
Joint Secretary to Government of India
Phone: 23093668

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Annexure I

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New Delhi, 6th May, 2011**OFFICE MEMORADUM**

Subject: Constitution of Task Force for effect implementation of Section 4 of the RTI Act, 2005

It has been decided to set up a Task Force consisting of following members to review the provisions regarding suo motu disclosure given in Section 4 of the RTI Act, 2005 and to recommend measures for its better implementation and enforcement:

- | | |
|--|------------------|
| (1) JS (AT&A), Department of Personnel and Training | Chairperson |
| (2) One representative of M/o. Information Technology not below the rank of DS/Director to be nominated by Secretary (IT). | Member |
| (3) One representative of D/o. AR&PG not below the rank of DS/Director to be nominated by Secretary (AR&PG). | Member |
| (4) One representative of M/o. Law not below the rank of DS/Director to be nominated by Secretary (Law). | Member |
| (5) to (7) Secretaries of Governments' of Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar dealing with implementation of RTI Act in their State | Member |
| (8) to (11) Five representatives of non-government organizations working in the field of RTI, one each from: | |
| (a) NCPRI, New Delhi | |
| (b) IT for Change, Bangalore | |
| (c) Mahiti Adhikar Gujarat Pahal (MAGP), Gujarat | |
| (d) 'JOSH', New Delhi | |
| (e) Satark Nagrik Sangathan (SNS), New Delhi | Member |
| (12) Shri K.G.Verma, Director (RTI), DOPT | Member-Secretary |

2. The terms of reference of the Task Force will be as under:

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- (a) To examine the provisions of Section 4(1)(b) to recommend guidelines for disclosures to be made at various levels of administration;
- (b) To recommend other items which may be included for suo motu disclosure, as provided in Section 4(1)(b)(xvii);
- (c) To explore the possibility of prescribing simple templates for disclosing specific category of information in order to facilitate disclosure;
- (d) To recommend mediums through which such disclosure is to be made at various levels which would include disclosure through electronic means also;
- (e) To recommend guidelines for complying with the provisions under Section 4(1)(b)(vii) and Section 4(1)(c) and Section 4(1)(d);
- (f) To give recommendations as to how compliance with the provision of Section 4(1)(b), (c)(d) and Sections 4(2) to 4(4) may be better enforced.
- (g) To recommend measures for protection of persons seeking information under the RTI Act
- (h) Any other issue incidental to the above.

5. This Task Force may have consultations with other Ministries, State Governments, CIC and SICS and also with other NGOs for finalizing its report. The methodology for working of the task force will be laid down by the task force itself.

4. The Task Force will finalize its recommendation by 31st July 2011 and submit it to the Department for consideration.

(Anuradha S. Chagti)
 Deputy Secretary
 Phone: 23093074

To :

1. Secretary, M/o Information Technology, Govt. of India, New Delhi
2. Secretary, D/o Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances, Govt. of India, New Delhi
3. Secretary, Ministry of Law, Govt. of India, New Delhi
4. Principal Secretary, Administrative Reforms, Govt. of Uttar Pradesh
5. Special Chief Secretary to Govt. (COORDN&GPM&AR), Govt. of Andhra Pradesh,
6. Principal Secretary, General Administration Department, Govt. of Bihar
7. Head of Organisation, NCPRI, New Delhi
8. Head of Organisation, IT for Change, Bangalore
9. Head of Organisation, Mahiti Adhikar Gujarat Pahel (MAGP), Gujarat
10. Head of Organisation, JOSH, New Delhi
11. Head of Organisation, Satark Nagrik Sangathan (SNS), New Delhi

} With a request to
 nominate a Senior
 person so that
 participation may
 be meaningful

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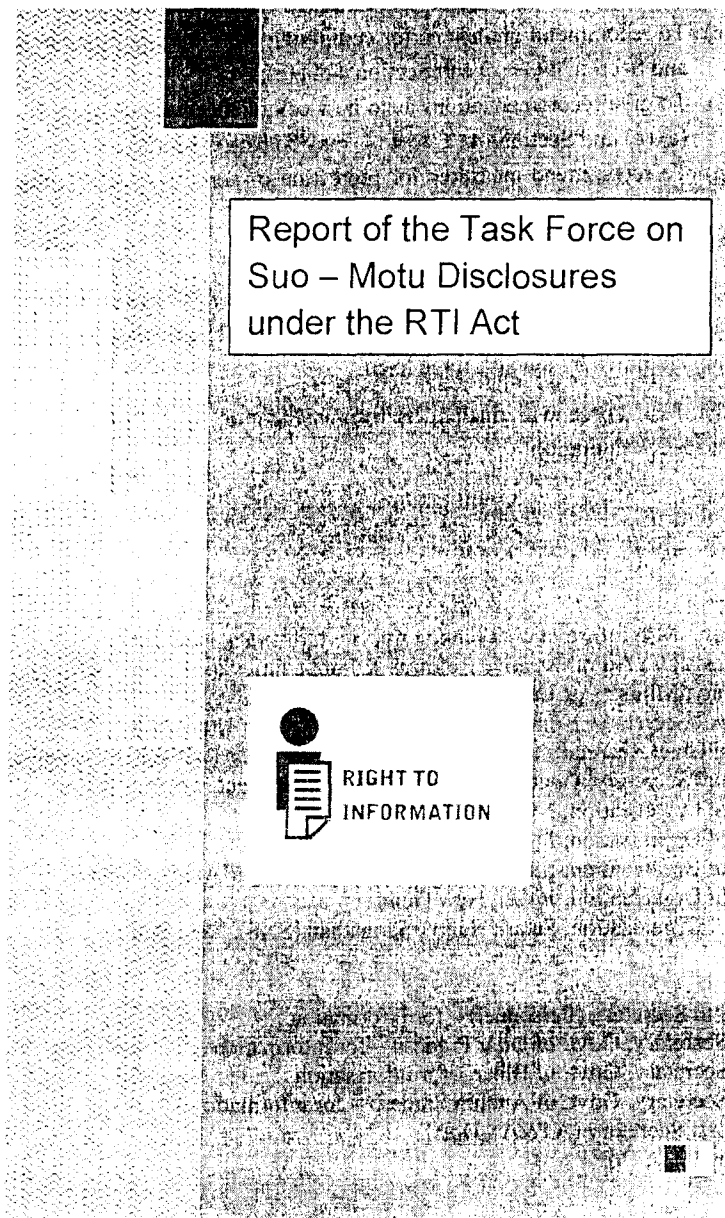
1. Sr.PPS to Secretary (Personnel) – for information
2. Chief Secretary, Govt. of Uttar Pradesh – for information
3. Chief Secretary, Govt. of Bihar – for information
4. Chief Secretary, Govt. of Andhra Pradesh – for information
5. PS to Joint Secretary (AT&A), DoPT
6. Director (RTI), DoPT

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Annexure II



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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Section 4 of the RTI Act mandates that Public Authorities would proactively or in suo motu manner disclose information under various headings listed in Section 4(1)(b) to the public and regularly update this information. The purpose is to encourage large amount of information to be kept in public domain on a suo motu basis which will not only make functioning of the public authorities more transparent but would also reduce or lessen the need for filing individual RTI applications for seeking such information.

1.2 Since the promulgation of the Act in 2005, large amount of information relating to functioning of the government is being put in public domain. However, still the quality and quantity of proactive disclosures are not up to the desired level. Central as well as State Information Commissions have also highlighted this issue.

1.3 The issue has engaged the attention of the Government of India also and it was felt that the weak implementation of the Section 4 of the RTI Act is partly due to the fact that certain provisions of this Section have not been fully detailed and, in case of certain other provisions there is need for laying down detailed guidelines. It was also felt that there is need to further review Section 4(1)(b) to examine if any more items need to be prescribed for proactive disclosure as laid down in Section 4(1)(b)(xvii). Further, it was felt that there is need to set up a compliance mechanism to ensure that requirements of Section 4 disclosures are fully met.

Constitution of the Task Force

1.4 In view of the above, a Task Force was set up by Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT), Government of India, in May 2011, which also included representatives of civil society organizations active in the field of Right to Information, with following terms of reference:

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- (a) To examine the provisions of Section 4(l)(b) and to recommend guidelines for disclosures to be made at various levels of administration;
- (b) To recommend other items which may be included for suo motu disclosure, as provided in Section 4(l)(b)(xvii);
- (c) To explore the possibility of prescribing simple templates for disclosing specific category of information in order to facilitate disclosure;
- (d) To recommend mediums through which such disclosure is to be made at various levels, which would include disclosure through electronic means also;
- (e) To recommend guidelines for complying with the provisions under Section 4(l)(b)(vii) and Section 4(l)(c) and Section 4(1)(d);
- (f) To give recommendations as to how compliance with the provision of Section 4 (1) (b), (c) (d) and Sections 4 (2) to 4 (4) may be better enforced;
- (g) To recommend measures for protection of persons seeking information under the RTI Act;
- (h) Any other issue incidental to the above.

1.5 Government Order setting up of the Task Force is at **Annexure 1.1**. The names of members of the task force are at **Annexure 1.2**.

Meetings of the Task Force

1.6 The first meeting of the Task Force was held on 25th May 2011, where detailed discussions were held regarding the purpose of the constitution of

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Task Force and also the issues that need to be addressed. The minutes of the meeting are enclosed as **Annexure 1.3**. Members agreed that there was need for clarifying certain provisions of Section 4(1)(b) and also for laying down detailed guidelines in respect of certain specific provisions. It was also agreed that it may not be possible for Public Authorities at different levels of administration to display the same information. Rather, it would be useful to detail what information would be disclosed at different levels of administration so that provisions of the Act can be better complied with. For example, in the case of Public Distribution System the disclosures at the state, district and up to the fair price shop are likely to be different and this needs to be spelt out.

1.7 After detailed discussions, it was felt that on many of the issues wider consultations may be required to ensure that Task Force is better informed and also that good practices being adopted in various regions of the country may also be incorporated in its recommendations. Accordingly, it was decided to form five sub-groups to deliberate on specific themes pertaining to the terms of reference. Each of these sub-groups was expected to consult with informed persons in the relevant area and to prepare a set of recommendations which were to be discussed by the larger group. This is detailed in the minutes of the meeting referred to above.

1.8 The sub-groups met separately to deliberate on the issues. Later, a national consultation was organized in Delhi where civil society members from various fields were also invited to deliberate on the specific themes allocated to each sub-group. A Report on the deliberations made in the workshop and recommendations of various sub-groups is enclosed at **Annexure 1.4**.

Recommendations of the Task Force

1.9 The Task Force met on 19.08.2011 to deliberate and to finalize its recommendations. The Report of the national consultation was discussed during the workshop and after detailed discussions, recommendations of the Task Force were finalized. Detailed recommendations on various terms that were referred are contained in subsequent chapters. However, following apply to all recommendations:

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- (a) The Task Force recommends that proactive disclosures should be done in local language so that it remains accessible to public. It should be presented in a form that is easily understood and if technical words are used they should be carefully explained. As provided in 4(1)(b), disclosures should be made in as many mediums as feasible and disclosures should be kept up to date.
- (b) The Task Force recognizes that while large number of recommendations can be taken up for implementation immediately, there are many recommendations whose implementation may require setting up of infrastructure, etc. These have been included in the report as aspirational recommendations with the hope that government will take early steps to set up the requisite infrastructure so that these recommendations may also become a reality, may be over an extended timeframe. *Such recommendations have been italicized.*
- (c) The Task Force takes note of the fact that as per the scheme of the Act state governments are not accountable to central government for implementation of the RTI Act. As such, although many of the recommendations need to be implemented at the state government level, they can only be circulated to state governments as recommendations rather than enforceable directions.
- (d) The Task Force has given detailed policy recommendations on various items included in the Terms of Reference. However, in order to ensure that these recommendations are implemented effectively, DOPT would need to elaborate on many of these recommendations in the form of clear cut guidelines keeping the general policy recommendation in view.

1.10 Recommendations on different issues covered by the Terms of Reference are given in subsequent chapters.

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Chapter 2

Prescribing additional items for suo motu disclosure under Section 4(1)(b)(xvii)

2.1 Section 4(1)(b)(xvii) lays down that government may prescribe any additional item which should also be included for suo motu disclosure. So far, no additional items have been prescribed by central government. The Task Force reviewed the list of items and recommends that following items should be included for disclosure under the Suo motu Disclosure Scheme of Section 4(1)(b) by framing of suitable rules in this regard. State Governments would be urged to frame similar rules for their public authorities.

All procurement related information

2.1.1 All information relating to procurement made by public authorities beginning with the publication of notice/tender and up to the stage of final purchase order detailing the name of the supplier of goods/services being procured and the rate at which such procurement is to be done should be disclosed. Government may fix different limits of procurements for different levels of public authority for which this disclosure is to be made.

Public Private Partnerships

2.1.2 If Public services are proposed to be provided through a Public Private Partnership (PPP), all information relating to the PPPs must be disclosed in the public domain. This may include details of the special purpose vehicle, if any set up, concession agreements, operation and maintenance manuals and other documents generated as part of the implementation of the PPP project. Further, information about fees, tolls, or other kinds of revenue that may be collected under authorization from the Government may also be proactively disclosed. All payments made under the PPP project may also be disclosed in a periodic manner along with the purpose of making such payment.

Transfer Policy and Transfer Orders

2.1.3 Transfer policy for different grades/cadres of employees serving in public authority should be proactively disclosed. All transfer orders may be publicized through the website or in any other manner listed in Section 4(4) of the Act. Where a transfer is effected without adhering to the norms laid down in the transfer policy or cases where an employee has not been transferred even

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though he/she has completed maximum tenure specified for that position this information should also be disclosed.

Sensitive Posts

2.1.4 The Central Vigilance Commission had issued a circular in 1999 requiring all ministries, departments and public sector undertakings under the Government of India to identify sensitive posts where public dealing exists and there is potential for corruption. However, the sensitive posts themselves have not been advertised in the public domain. Public Authorities should proactively disclose posts identified as sensitive and details of the officers/officials occupying those posts including the date since when they are holding the posts.

RTI Queries

2.1.5 All public authorities should proactively disclose RTI queries and appeals received and their responses, on the websites maintained by public authorities.

CAG & PAC paras

2.1.6 Public authorities should proactively disclose the CAG paras framed in regard to their Ministry/Department and the response of the Ministry/Department to those paragraphs. In addition, a tabular statement should be given regarding pendency of CAG paras.

Citizens Charter

2.1.7 Citizens Charter prepared by the Ministry/Department should be proactively disclosed and six monthly report on the performance against the benchmarks set in Citizens Charter should also be displayed on the website of public authorities.

Discretionary and Non-discretionary grants

2.1.8 All discretionary/non-discretionary grants/allocations to state governments/NGOs/Other to institutions by Ministry/Department should be placed on the website of the Ministry/Department concerned.

2.2 Department of Personnel & Training, which is responsible for implementation of RTI Act in Government of India, may prepare suitable format/templates for disclosure of the above information.

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Chapter 3

Guidelines for facilitating disclosure at different levels of government – Suggested templates for key areas

3.1 The scheme of Section 4 applies uniformly to all public authorities even though they may be constituted at different levels. It is felt that at different levels of administration different level of detailing is required and if that could be facilitated by development of suitable templates it would not only improve the quality of disclosures but would also facilitate more transparency in governance. For example, in the case of Public Distribution System (PDS) disclosures at the level of Fair Price Shops (FPS) should go down to the level of ration card holder, while at the level of district/state, agencies dealing with the disclosures would need to be more broad-based. Keeping this in view the group identified four areas for development of templates.

- (a) Public Distribution System;
- (b) Panchayats;
- (c) MGNREGA; and
- (d) Primary and Secondary Schools.

These four areas have been selected on the ground that they constitute some of the most significant services being provided at the ground level. However, Task Force recommends that similar templates need to be worked out for other important areas such as health services, services relating to social benefits, etc.

Templates for Information Disclosure

3.2 The templates of information disclosure at various levels of service delivery in relation to the above four areas are enclosed at the end of the Report as a separate section. The general principles which should be adopted for disclosure at various levels, as recommended by the Task Force are given below:

Use of Information boards/wallis

3.2.1 Section 4(4) of the RTI Act states that information should be disseminated taking into consideration 'the most effective method of communication in that local area and the information should be easily

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accessible'. Given the limited reach and accessibility of the internet in India, information disclosures, as far as practically possible, must also be done locally in a form and manner that is easily accessible to people. It is recommended that at village / block level relevant information should be painted on walls and provided on boards in the local language at prominent public places.

Information disclosure through any document/proof of delivery that is available to beneficiaries

3.2.2 Any document relating to a scheme/program of the department that is held by a citizen (eg. ration card, school books etc.) should be used as a mode of disclosure. Information in the local language can be printed on such documents. Stickers can be used to update/change the information, if required.

RTI Proactive Disclosure File

3.2.3 Panchayat is the first public authority or unit which has an interface with citizens. In their case many of the information can be painted on the walls. However, all the information that is painted on the walls should also be kept ready for perusal in a "RTI Proactive Disclosure File". This file should also contain details of all the moneys received and all the guidelines which are sent to Panchayats by various government authorities for implementation of schemes.

Use of SMS telephony

3.2.4 The vast proliferation of mobile phones across India, including in villages, makes it one of the best forms of reaching out information to people. Mobile phones can be used to communicate information and to provide a mechanism for citizens to seek specific information through SMS. Many services now have the provision wherein a citizen may SMS a query to a number and get detailed and real-time information in response. People should be able to track applications/complaints through SMS. Beneficiaries should be able to track their entitlements via SMS. Disseminating information through SMS is also a cost-effective medium. Several states use this medium in an extremely innovative manner. For example- in Chhatisgarh, all the ration cardholders of an area are sent an SMS when the truck carrying their entitlements is dispatched from the godown. The use of SMS for proactive disclosure may be replicated by public authorities all over India.

Call centres - IVR - Information helpline

3.2.5 State-Level toll free helpline which should provide information to people on all major public services may be set up. Information on all aspects of the

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schemes/programs of major departments should be provided through this line and people should be able to track their entitlements/applications in real-time through the helpline. The helpline could also be used for registering grievances of citizens.

Information Centers at the block level

3.2.6 Information and facilitation centers should be set up at the Block level to proactively provide information to citizens about the schemes and programs of the government. These centers should also assist citizens track their applications and entitlements and register grievances. There is a provision for such centers under MGNREGA and the proposed National Food Security Act. Block level facilitation centres have already been set up in several states, for example, Common Service Centres and Rajiv Gandhi Sewa Kendra and these could be used for dissemination of information.

Records for inspection by community

3.2.7 All Schools and local bodies which have maximum interface with citizens may make available records for inspection by community wherever possible. For example, in Delhi all records and documents related to budget expenditure up to date details of scholarships and incentives awarded and other relevant registers in schools are made available for inspection for public on the last working day of the month.

'Good' and 'Innovative' practices adopted by State Governments

3.3 State governments may adopt innovative practices to disseminate information at local level. Some of these practices are listed below:

- Read out all information about benefits of schemes, budgets, expenditure, MGNREGA works, payments etc in the Gramsabha. Example - Yakubbbhai Kothariya works as a Gram Panchayat Secretary and a PIO in Gujarat. Even before the RTI Act was in place, Yakubbbhai was fond of using folk lyrics as a medium of disseminating information. In his Gram Sabha, he talks about various scheme by connecting it with incidents in the village and sings a folk song marking the specific characteristics of a scheme. His Gram Sabhas are frequented by large numbers of residents on a regular basis.
- Disseminate information about schemes and programmes by setting up a desk whilst organizing the 'Village Mela (fair)' or any Folk Fair that is

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conducted in the region. This can also be done in collaboration with village youth mandal, or SHG or any Community bases organization.

- Organization of "Information Mela (fair)" at the village school on important days like Independence Day, Republic Day". This works very effectively in the villages, and people feel connected with village school.
- Community radio can become another media of dissemination of info. This proves very effective.
- In Panchmahal district, Gujarat, during the RTI campaign for pro-active disclosures it was observed that the multi-media vehicle used for dissemination of information was widely accepted. The pamphlets, guidelines of various schemes, including forms were disseminated by "**RTI on Wheels**" a multimedia vehicle. The films and case stories of use of information for achieving transparency in governance were screened.
- In Goa, it's a regular practice that details of the gramsabha are reported in local newspapers.
- Other media like street plays, puppet shows can also be used for information dissemination.
- If there are any specific programmes or schemes meant specifically for the region or village then in such cases, pro-active disclosure should be prepared in the form of charts giving details of such schemes/programme.

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(Department of Personnel & Training)**Chapter 4****Guidelines for Digital Publication of proactive disclosures under Section 4**

4.1 Internet has become a powerful medium for quick, easy and widespread dissemination of information. It will assume even more importance in the future as more and more documents are generated in digital format. Although, Section 4 correctly lays down that information should be provided through many mediums depending upon the level of public authority and the recipient of information (for example, in case of Panchayat wall painting may be more effective means of dissemination of information), the Task Force recognizes that more and more proactive disclosure would gradually be made through Internet. As such, there is need for more clear guidelines for web-based publication of information for information disclosure.

4.2 The Task Force is aware that Department of Information Technology has been working on setting of technical standards for government websites. It is also aware that Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances is also working on guidelines for websites of government departments. These guidelines would prescribe the manner in which websites need to be designed and how information should be disclosed. Task Force recommends that while adhering to the standards of government guidelines as laid down by Department of Information Technology and Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances the following principles should also be kept in view to ensure that websites' disclosures are complete, easily accessible, technology and platform neutral and in a form which conveys the desired information in an effective and user-friendly manner.

- (a) The website should have a simple public interface and should not require any registration/login to access it or to access the MIS.
- (b) The website should have universal access i.e., it should be accessible to all, irrespective of technology, platforms, devices or disabilities of any kind.
- (c) It should be the endeavor of all public authorities that all entitlements to citizens and all transactions between the citizen and government are gradually made available through computer based interface. It was noted that 'Electronic Service Delivery Bill' under

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formulation in Government of India would provide the necessary impetus.

- (d) Websites should contain detailed information from the point of origin to the point of delivery of entitlements/services provided by the public authorities to citizens.
- (e) The effort should be made to ensure that all orders of the public authority are issued only after such orders have been uploaded on the website. Such a system exists in Andhra Pradesh and can be adopted in other governments easily.
- (f) Website should have good search engine and documents uploaded should have key words assigned to them so that independent searches of the database are possible.
- (g) Website should contain all the relevant acts, rules forms and other documents which are normally accessed by citizens.
- (h) Websites should have detailed directory of key contacts, details of officials of the public authority.
- (i) Websites should not use too many technical words and, if used, they should be properly explained.
- (j) Website should be multi-lingual to remain accessible to ordinary public.
- (k) It is obligatory under Section 4(1)(b)(xiv) of the RTI Act for every public authority to proactively disclose 'details in respect of the information, available to or held by it, reduced in an electronic form'. In such a listing required under this section, it should also be required to indicate which digitally held information is made available publicly over the internet and which not.
- (l) As departments reorganize their systems and processes to enable themselves for electronic service delivery, it is recommended that during process reengineering the requirement of bringing due transparency as provided in the RTI Act are given due consideration at the design stage itself.

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- (m) To maintain reliability of information and its real time updation, information generation in a digital work flow should be 'locked' to key work outputs, like a muster roll and salary slip (NREGA in Andhra Pradesh) or formalization of a government order (Andhra Pradesh). Such an approach will lead to automation of proactive disclosure.
- (n) Proper digital proactive disclosure is contingent upon appropriate digital record keeping. Section 4(1)(a) of the RTI Act makes a clear recommendation for digitizing and extensive networking of government records. This issue is also connected to the issue of informational aspects of e-governance based process re-engineering. New government-wide as well as department-specific electronic record keeping norms and schemes should be developed, and a study group can be set up for this purpose. Citizen's right to information should be a key design principle for these new electronic record keeping schemes.
- (o) All information and documents should have appropriate meta-data which ensures easy discovery of information. It would also enable organisation and presentation of information along many different parameters as required (for instance, data could be arranged village-wise).
- (p) Information must be presented from a user's perspective, which may require re-arranging it, simplifying it etc. However, original documents in original formats should continue to be made available because these are needed for community monitoring of government's functioning.
- (q) Information should be easily searchable and discoverable, and therefore not just in a scanned document form. In order to search scanned documents, optical character recognition techniques are available and these should be incorporated as far as possible. Information/ documents should be time-stamped with proper versioning. Earlier versions should be archived and be publicly accessibility.

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- (r) Information should be uploaded using only open standards like ODF, PDF/A, JPG, OGG etc, so that it is neutral to the technology platform of the user. Since, the accessed information is the user's right to access and she cannot be forced to use certain technology platforms rather than others. The Department of Information Technology has come up with a policy on 'Open Standards in e-governance' which should be meticulously followed. All standard web accessibility guidelines, especially relating to visual disabilities should be followed.
- (s) Department of Science & Technology is working on a 'Data Sharing and Accessibility Policy' which is based on the principle that all publicly funded information should be readily available. Once such policy is approved this should be strictly adhered to.
- (t) Information and data should be presented in open data formats whereby it can be pulled by different Application Protocol Interfaces to be used in different fashions more appropriate to specific contexts and needs. Information/ data can, for instance, be presented in powerful visual ways using visualisation techniques. Such visual representation of information/ data can give insights that may remain largely hidden in a textual or tabular presentation of data. In some contexts, pictures and audio/videos recordings etc may be more useful. There have been moves in some part of the country to video record gram sabha meetings. A picture of a NREGA worksite, for instance, may tell much more than words can. All such different media and forms should be used for proactive disclosure.
- (u) In the long run, government may consider setting up one website where proactive disclosures of all public authorities are available at one place. Such experiments are already on in some other countries such as USA and this would facilitate public access to government information.
- (v) Government may consider utilizing large infrastructure which is being created as common service centers to provide information to public through these CSCs. Task Force also recommends that practices being adopted in Mexico and Kenya in this regard, may also be considered.

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Chapter 5

Guidelines for certain clauses of Section 4(1)(b) to make disclosures more effective

5.1 At the outset it must be emphasized that various sub-clauses of Section 4(1)(b) must be treated as elements of an integrated disclosure scheme. For example the functions and responsibilities of a public authority cannot be understood in isolation from the powers and functions of its employees, the norms that inform its decision making processes and the rules, instructions and manuals that are used in the discharge of its functions. Description of one element presupposes the existence of another. So every public authority must endeavour to integrate the information mentioned in these sub-clauses while preparing voluntary disclosure materials.

5.2 Considering that disclosures in regard to certain clauses have been relatively weak, the Task Force has fleshed out detailed guidelines for four clauses as given below:

4(1)(b)(iii)

'the procedure followed in the decision making process, including channels of supervision and accountability';

4(1)(b)(iv)

'the norms set by it for the discharge of its functions';

4(1)(b)(xiv)

'the budget allocated to each of its agency indicating the particulars of all plans, proposed expenditures and reports on disbursements made';

4(1)(b)(xi)

'details in respect of information, available to or held by it, reduced in an electronic form'

The Task Force has deliberated on each of these sub-clauses and detailed guidelines in regard to sub-clauses are given subsequently.

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5.3 As per Section 4(1)(b)(iii) public authorities are required to proactively disclose "the procedure followed in the decision-making processes including channels of supervision and accountability". All government departments have specific duties and responsibilities under the respective Allocation of Business Rules (AOB) issued by the appropriate Government. The constitutional provisions and statutes each department is required to implement are clearly laid down in the AOB. The manner of disposal of matters assigned to each Department/Ministry is described in the Transaction of Business Rules (TOB). Additionally, every department will have a specific set of schemes and development programmes which they are required to implement directly or through their subordinate offices or other designated agencies. These documents contain the specific operations that every public authority is required to undertake in the course of implementing the programme or scheme. Every operation mandated under the AOB read with the TOB can be linked to a specific decision-making chain. All government officers have to follow laid down office procedure manual or the other rules which gives details of how representations, petitions and applications from citizens must be dealt with. Templates, formats, and basic steps of decision-making are briefly explained in such manuals. These descriptions constitute the elements of decision-making processes in general.

5.4 Additionally, in the routine work of governance, government functionaries are required to make decisions in a discretionary manner but broad guiding principles are laid down in some rule or the other. For example, the General Financial Rules lay down procedures for a variety of operations relating to government finances. How sanction must be accorded for incurring expenditure; how losses to government must be reported; how responsibility for losses may be fixed on any government servant; how budgets, demand for grants are prepared and submitted; how public works must be sanctioned and executed; how commodities and services may be procured by a public authority; are all explained in these manuals which is updated from time to time. The challenge is to present a simplified version of the decision-making procedure that is of interest to a common member of the citizenry.

5.5 In view of the above, the Task Force recommends following guidelines for detailing the decision making processes:

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- (a) To start with every public authority may specifically identify the major outputs/ tangible results/ services/ goods that it is responsible for providing to the public or to whosoever is the client of the public authority.
- (b) The decision-making chain may be identified in the form of a flow chart explaining the rank/grade of the public functionaries involved in the decision-making process clarifying the specific stages in the decision-making hierarchy.
- (c) The powers of each officer including powers of supervision over subordinates involved in the chain of decision-making must also be spelt out next to the flow chart or in a simple bullet-pointed format in a text-box. The exceptional circumstances when such standards decision-making processes may be overridden and by whom should also be explained clearly. Where decentralization of decision-making has occurred in order to grant greater autonomy to public authorities such procedures must also be clearly explained.
- (d) This design of representation may then be extended to cover all statutory and discretionary operations that are part of the public authority's mandate under the AOB read with the TOB.
- (e) In the event of a public authority altering an existing decision-making process or adopting an entirely new process, such changes must be explained in simple language in order to enable people to easily understand the changes made.

Guidelines for Section 4(1)(b)(iv)

5.5 As per Section 4(1)(b)(iv) public authorities are required to proactively disclose "the norms set by it for the discharge of its functions". Primarily, the intention of this clause is that every public authority should proactively disclose the standards by which its performance should be judged. The Task Force noted that these are standards against which accountability in the decision making process may be demanded. Norms can be qualitative and quantitative in nature. They could be temporal also, for example, time limits may be specified for taking specific actions. They could be statutory norms which are to be followed while taking certain actions or performing certain duties by public authorities. In order to ensure compliance with this clause, public authorities would need to

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develop norms for major functions that are being performed, if they do not already exist.

5.6 In this context, the Task Force noted that Citizen Charters, which are mandatory, to be prepared for each central Ministry/Department/authority, are good examples of vehicles created for laying down norms of performance for major functions and for monitoring achievements against those standards. Keeping these in view, the Task Force recommends that:

(a) Wherever norms have been specified for the discharge of its functions by any statute or government orders they should be proactively disclosed, particularly linking them with the decision making processes as detailed earlier.

(b) All public authorities should publish their Citizens Charters and proactively disclose the following:

- Defining the services and goods that the particular public authority/office provides directly (or indirectly through any other agency/contractor).
- Detailing and describing the processes by which the public can access and/or receive the goods and services that they are entitled to, from the public authority/office along with the forms, if any prescribed, for use by both the applicant and the service providing agency. Links to such forms (online), wherever available, should be given.
- Describing the conditions, criteria and priorities under which a person becomes eligible for the goods and services, and consequently the categories of people who are entitled to receive the goods and services.
- Defining the quantitative and tangible parameters, (weight, size, frequency etc,) and timelines, that are applicable to the goods and services that are accessible to the public.
- Defining the qualitative and quantitative outcomes that each public authority/office plans to achieve through the goods and services that it was obligated to provide.

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- Laying down individual responsibility for providing the goods and services (who is responsible for delivery/implementation and who is responsible for supervision).

5.7 Public authorities should annually publish their performance against the norms guaranteed under the Citizens Charter and should also undertake periodic revision of Charters to include additional items or to reframe the existing norms for improved service delivery.

Guidelines for Section 4(1)(b)(xi)

5.8 As per Section 4(1)(b)(xi) public authorities are required to proactively disclose "the budget allocated to each of its agency indicating the particulars of all plans, proposed expenditures and reports on disbursements made".

- (a) The Task Force recommends that keeping in view of the technical nature of the government budgets it is essential that Ministries/Departments prepare simplified versions of their budgets which can be understood easily by general public and keep them also in public domain. More detailed guidelines in this regard may need to be prepared in consultation with Department of Expenditure and also some civil society organizations which regularly publish simplified versions of government budgets for general public. Presentation of budgets and their periodic monitoring reports may also be presented in a more user-friendly manner through graphs and tables, etc.
- (b) Outcome budget being prepared by Ministries/Departments of Government of India should be prominently displayed and be used as a basis to identify physical targets planned during the budgetary period and the actual achievement vis-à-vis those targets. In this regard, Task Force also recommends that the monthly programme implementation calendar method of reporting being followed in Karnataka may serve as a useful model.
- (c) The budget released to various agencies and subsidiaries should be put on the website on a monthly basis and budgets of subsidiary authorities may be made accessible through links from the website of the Ministry/Department. If a subsidiary does not have a website then the budgets and expenditure reports of such subsidiary authority may be uploaded on the website of the principal public authority.

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- (d) Efforts should be made that raw data relating to approved budgets, expenditure incurred, etc., is made available in easily downloadable, machine readable manner using open standards such as XML.
- (e) Wherever required by law or executive instruction, sector specific allocations and achievements of every department or public authority (where feasible) must be highlighted. For example, gender, children, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and religious minorities must receive special focus in all budgetary allocations and developmental target setting. The sector-wise breakup of these targets and actual outcomes must be given in simplified form to enable the vulnerable segments of society to understand the budgets of public authorities better.

Guidelines for Section 4(1)(b)(xiv)

5.9 As per Section 4(1)(b)(xiv) public authorities are required to proactively disclose details of the kinds of information that they themselves hold or information that is available to them, which is reduced in an electronic form. On the one hand, this clause serves as a means of proactively disclosing the progress made in computerizing information under Section 4(1(a) of the RTI Act in a periodic manner. On the other, it provides people with clarity about the kinds of electronic information that, although not held by the public authority, is available to them.

5.10 The Task Force recommends that keeping in view the varied levels of computerization of records and documents in public authorities, data about records that have been digitized may be proactively disclosed on the respective websites, excluding those records /files /information that is exempted under Section 8. The data about digitized record may include the name of the record and any categorization or indexing used; the subject matter and any other information that is required to be compiled in relation to a file as prescribed by Manual of Office Procedure (and to be prescribed by MOP for electronic records that is under finalization by DARPG), the division/ section/ unit/ office where the record is normally held; the person, with designation, responsible for maintaining the record; and the life span of the record, as prescribed in the relevant record retention schedule.

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Chapter 6

Steps to be taken in matters relating to threat to RTI activists

6.1 The Task Force discussed the issue relating to threat of RTI activists and felt that this is a serious matter which would require more detailed discussions especially with law enforcement agencies. However, Task Force members felt that pending such detailed deliberations following may be taken up for immediate action:

- (a) Parliamentary Standing Committee, while discussing 'Whistle Blowers Bill' has also given certain guidance in regard to threat to RTI users. These may be adequately addressed while redrafting the Bill.
- (b) National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has a policy to take action in matters relating to human rights defenders. The Task Force is of the view that RTI activists are also covered under the definition of a human rights defender and NHRC may be impressed upon to recognize them as such. This recognition would go a long way in helping the police to take complaints from the victims or an attack on a RTI activist as a result. The NHRC should also be requested to take action on complaints of attacks on RTI users and to seek report from the concerned police about the progress of the investigation in relation to such attacks and to give suitable directions to ensure the safety of the life and property of activists under threat.
- (c) The Task Force is of the view that if an RTI user or activist is being threatened or attacked to prevent him from accessing information under the Act, then it becomes a complaint case under Section 18 of the RTI Act and Information Commissions may take cognizance of such complaints and may conduct necessary enquiries, etc., as provided in the Act. They should also ensure that information seeking of which caused such attacks or threats is expeditiously publicized.
- (d) State Information Commission of Gujarat has taken some proactive steps whereby directions are issued to police authorities and district collectors immediately (upon receiving complaints under section 18 of RTI Act, along with details of the threats/attacks/pressures and copy of intimation of the same to nearest police station) for providing necessary

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protection to an RTI activist under threat and also for conducting enquiries. In case an RTI applicant is attacked, the complaints filed by applicants closest relation or civil society organization or mandal are also taken into consideration for immediate actions. Other states may also be encouraged to adopt similar practice.

- (e) The Task Force also recommends that the forums of civil societies active in the field of Right to Information in various states may also be activated to take up serious cases of threat and attacks on RTI activists before state authorities and State Information Commissions. This would bring in necessary pressure on the law enforcement agencies to take prompt action in such matters.

6.2 Although Task Force has deliberated on the issues relating to threat to RTI activists and has given recommendations in this regard, it is of the view that this issue needs more detailed discussions, particularly with law enforcing agencies, in order to work out more specific action plan for tackling this problem.

Chapter 7

Guidelines for consultation with public in relation to the formulation of policies and implementation thereof

7.1 Section 4(1)(b)(vii) requires that public authorities should publish the particulars of any arrangement that exists for consultation with or representation by the members of the public in relation to the formulation of its policy or implementation thereof. In addition, Section 4(c) requires that public authorities should publish all relevant facts while formulating important policies or announcing decisions which affect people.

7.2 The Task Force noted that so far public authorities have not complied with this provision. The Task Force further noted that each public authority cannot have a different policy on such important issue as policy for consultations has to be laid down by the respective government, which should then be adhered to by various Ministries/Departments/Attached Offices. Therefore, a policy and a framework for consultation need to be formulated to ensure standardization and institutionalization.

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7.3 The Task Force recognizes that it may not be very easy to frame exhaustive guidelines with actionable specificity for all public authorities across all kinds and types of policy decisions. Task Force, however, recommends that any policy consultation process must be based on three main principles:

- (a) **Transparency:** The Right to Information Act provides a statutory mandate for transparency of all information held by the State subject to limited and predefined exclusions. The policy consultative process must operate within the framework of the RTI Act, while providing institutionalized platforms for citizen participation.
- (b) **Inclusiveness:** The ideal of democracy mandates processes of universal inclusion either directly or through representation. The policy consultative process must balance both inclusiveness and practicality for meaningful citizen participation.
- (c) **Equity:** Special efforts must be made to solicit and incorporate views of those groups/persons directly affected by decisions.

7.4 The Task Force deliberated on the kind of policies which must be open for public consultation and debate. In this context, it was emphasized that the purpose of public consultation is not only to solicit views of the affected parties but also to tap professional expertise in various fields which resides outside government systems. In today's world, knowledge is developing very fast and many a times non-government bodies may have more up-to-date knowledge about various sectors which need to be tapped to ensure that policies are better informed by the best practices across the world.

7.5 The Task Force deliberated on the kind of policies where consultation should be mandated. It noted that under the general definition of policy many minor decisions would also be included and it would not be wise to burden the system with consultation on each and every such issue. After detailed discussions it was recommended that:

- (a) Public consultation should definitely be held wherever any Bill is proposed to be introduced or rules/regulations are proposed to be framed for an existing or proposed Bill. The Task Force noted that there could be some Bills where such consultation cannot be mandated because of statutory or historical reason such as introduction of Finance Bill, etc., or on matters relating to national security, etc., which are

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exempted under Section 8 of the RTI Act. Consultation would not be necessary in such cases.

- (b) Public consultation should also definitely be held when major policy decisions which directly affect public at large are proposed to be taken such as national policies on health, education, social welfare, natural resources, etc.
- (c) It is expected that consultations will normally be held through web-based processes. However, Ministries may adopt other means such as publication in newspapers, etc., to seek participation.
- (d) It would be useful for Ministries/Departments to prepare databases of organizations which have specific knowledge and interests in the fields that Ministry/Department works in so that such knowledgeable resource persons are definitely tapped during the consultation process. Similarly, civil society organizations which are active in the respective fields should also be included in the database for the purposes of consultation.
- (e) Ministries/Departments should prepare a consultation document which should be posted on the website. These documents should:
- Explain who will use the responses and for what purpose?
 - Explicitly state to who to respond to direct queries to, giving a name, address, telephone number and email address.
 - Clearly state the deadline for responses, any alternative ways of contributing and the language(s) in which responses are preferred.
 - Make it clear that responses, including the names and addresses of respondents, may be made public unless confidentiality is specifically requested.
 - State the date when and the web address where the summary of responses will be published.
 - Include relevant documents on the subject along with the online questionnaire or survey. Not only does this lead to a more informed consultation exercise, but it also ensures that stakeholders have a better understanding of the issues.

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- Provide a well-written executive summary that covers the main points so that consultees can decide whether the consultation is relevant to them or not.
 - Provide material on previous consultation(s) on the same topic, if any.
 - Avoid jargon and only use technical terms where absolutely necessary. Explain complicated concepts as clearly as possible and, where there are technical terms, provide a glossary.
 - Ask focused questions, and be clear about the specific points on which views are sought. Encourage respondents to provide evidence, where appropriate, to support their responses. Make it clear, if there are particular areas, where their input would be especially valuable. Responses are likely to be more useful and focused if the respondents know where to concentrate their efforts.
- (f) As regards timeframe for consultation, it may vary from consultation to consultation depending on the complexity of the issue and nature of consultation. However, it is expected that minimum time of consultation should be at least six weeks which may extend up to twelve weeks.
- (g) It is not necessary that all comments/ suggestion is to be individually responded to. The Task Force recommends that once responses are received on the consultation document, they should be analyzed and a short summary emphasizing the main points should be posted on the website at the end of the process. It may be highlighted that what is important is not only the number of respondents who express a particular view but the quality of the response and evidence in support of that response. Ministries/Departments may solicit more detailed views from individuals/organizations who have offered very substantive and useful comments to further seek clarifications, if any, required.
- (h) The results of consultation should be presented to the competent authority while submitting the proposal for approval after making changes or amendments, if any, based on consultations.

7.6 The Task Force took note of the fact that sub-group on transparency and accountability of NAC is also indicated in drafting recommendations regarding

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consultations during the pre-legislative process. As such, the guidelines which may be issued based on the Task Force recommendations, may be suitably amended whenever recommendations of the NAC are available and accepted by the government.

Chapter 8

Compliance with provisions of suo motu (Proactive Disclosure) under the RTI Act.

8.1 The Task Force agreed that although there has been improvement in proactive disclosures since the promulgation of RTI Act, much more needs to be done - both in quality and quantity of disclosures. One important issue is ensuring compliance with the provisions of suo motu disclosure as provided in the Act. This issue has been discussed several times both within government and at the level of Information Commissions but an acceptable mechanism for ensuring compliance is yet to emerge.

8.2 The Task Force is of the view that both the public authorities and Information Commissions should share the responsibility to monitor and enforce compliance with suo motu disclosure provisions. At the level of public authority responsibility should be given at senior levels for ensuring that information is proactively disclosed and regularly updated as per the provisions of the Act. Information Commissions would need to develop mechanisms to monitor whether action is being taken as per the provisions of the Act and, if weaknesses are found, they are already authorized to issue directions to public authorities under Section 25(5) of the Act. Keeping the above in view, the Task Force makes following recommendations for improving compliance with the provisions of the RTI Act regarding proactive disclosures.

Proactive Disclosure Scheme

8.2.1 Each Ministry/Department of government should prepare a proactive disclosure scheme for their Ministry/Department which should also include the proactive disclosures to be made by attached and subordinate offices of that Ministry/Department. This is necessitated as many of the clauses of Section 4(1)(b) would need to be specifically detailed for a specific Ministry/Department and their offices. For example, under Section 4(1)(b)(iii) the procedure followed in the decision making process needs to be detailed. Elsewhere in this Report recommendations have been made as to which

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decisions should be covered for proactive disclosures. This would be different for different Ministry and should be carefully detailed in the scheme specific to that Ministry. Similarly, how the budgets of the Ministry/Department are to be put up in the user-friendly manner as recommended elsewhere in this report would be different for different Ministries/ Departments. The norms set by public authority for discharge of its functions would also be specifically detailed for each public authority/Ministry/Department. It is in this context that need for a Ministry/Department specific proactive disclosure scheme which conforms to the provisions of RTI Act, is felt and it is in this context that this recommendation is being made.

Task Force is aware that this recommendation would need to be fleshed out in more detail and may be once recommendation is accepted, DOPT would need to prepare a sample scheme which may then be circulated to all the Ministries/Departments to emulate.

It is recommended that this scheme would be prepared by all Ministries/Departments first time and filed to the Central Information Commission by 31st March 2012. Subsequently, while preparing the annual compliance report Ministry/Department would be expected to review the scheme itself on an annual basis and make appropriate changes. That may become necessary with time. This proactive disclosure scheme would become the bench mark for evaluating compliance with the requirements of the Act. It is also expected that Information Commissions would be authorized to review the scheme and to comment on its completeness. In case there are gaps it would send appropriate recommendations to Ministry/Department for revisions which would need to be complied with as per the provisions of the Act.

Nodal Officer

8.2.2 Each Central Ministry/Department would appoint a senior officer not below the rank of a Joint Secretary and not below rank of Additional HOD in case of attached offices for ensuring compliance with the proactive disclosure scheme. Officers of similar seniority should be appointed in State Government. Nodal Officer would work under the supervision of the Secretary of the Ministry/Department or the HOD of the attached office as the case may be. Nodal Officers of Ministry/Department and HOD separately would also ensure that the formations below the Ministry/Department/Attached Office also disclose the information as per the proactive disclosure scheme. The Task Force recommends that once the above recommendation is accepted capacity building

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programmes for the nodal officers be organized by DOPT to sensitize them with the provision of the Act and also to facilitate their working.

Annual Report to CIC

8.2.3 All Ministries/Departments/Attached Offices would submit an annual report to CIC within three months of the close of the year detailing compliance made with the approved proactive disclosure scheme and also list out any changes in the scheme which are deemed to be appropriate.

Annual Reports to Parliament/Legislatures

8.2.4 Government has recently issued directions to all Ministries/Departments to include a chapter on RTI Act in their Annual Reports submitted to the Parliament. Details about compliance with proactive disclosure scheme should mandatorily be included in the relevant chapter in Annual Report of Ministry/Department.

Inclusion in RFDs

8.2.5 Task Force noted that DOPT have requested Performance Management Division to include compliance with suo motu disclosures provisions of RTI Act as one of the mandatory actions in the Results Framework Documents (RFD) for the Department. The Task Force endorses this suggestion of the Department and requests government that this may be enforced at the earliest.

Audits by Information Commissions

8.2.6 At a later date, Information Commissions may strengthen their infrastructure and undertakes sample audits of compliance with proactive disclosure scheme results of which should be included in the Annual Report of Information Commissions submitted to the respective legislative body.

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ANNEXURE III

Comments of the Ministries/Departments received on the
Report of the Task Force on Suo-Motu Disclosures under the
RTI Act, 2005

Sl. No	Ministry /Department	Comments	Comments by DoPT
1.	Ministry of Commerce & Industry	Department of Commerce agrees with the Report of the Task Force on Suo Motu Disclosures under the RTI Act, 2005.	
2.	Ministry of Heavy Industry & Public Enterprises	Department has no comments to offer.	
3.	Ministry of Health & Family Welfare	The Report of the Task Force appears to be comprehensive enough to help implement the provision of the RTI Act, 2005 more effectively.	
4.	Ministry of Earth Sciences	Ministry has nothing to add to the report.	
5.	Ministry of Agriculture (Deptt. of Animal Husbandry, Dairying & Fisheries)	Department agrees with the recommendations of the Task Force.	
6.	Department of Space	Department is of the view that the transfer policy is purely a service matter no connected with any public authority, and	Incorporated in the guidelines by providing exception in cases of transfers

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Sl. No	Ministry /Department	Comments	Comments by DoPT
		therefore, the same need not be brought under the purview of the RTI Act.	made keeping in view sovereignty, integrity, security, strategic scientific or economic interests of the state.
7.	Ministry of Communications & IT (Department of Telecommunications)	Department has no comments to offer.	
8.	Ministry of Environment & Forests	No comments to offer. However, DOPT may prepare suitable common format /templates for proactive disclosures.	Common templates may not be possible since all Ministries/ Departments deal with different subjects
9.	Department of Expenditure	Department has no comments to offer, in particular. However, instructions issued by DOPT from time to time are being followed and any instruction/circulars issued by respective Branches are posted on the website of that Department's suo-motu. As far as procurement related information is concerned a Central Public Procurement Portal has already been set up	Disclosure of procurement related information on the Central public procurement portal have been incorporated in the guidelines

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Sl. No	Ministry /Department	Comments	Comments by DoPT
		for all Ministries to post their tender and award related detail	
10.	Department of Economic Affairs	<p>Department suggested to reformulate the para 2.1.2 i.e. 'Public Private Partnership' –</p> <p>If Public services are proposed to be provided through a Public Private Partnership (PPP), all information relating to the PPPs must be disclosed in the public domain <u>by the public authority entering into the PPP contract/concession agreement</u>. This may include details of the special purpose vehicle, if any set up, concession agreements, operation and maintenance manuals and other documents generated as part of the implementation of the PPP project. <u>The documents under the ambit of the exemption from disclosure of information under section 8(i)(d) and 8(1)(i) of the RTI Act, 2005 will not be disclosed, without the concurrence of the concessionaire/third party viz. financing details, details about</u></p>	The comments offered by the Department have been incorporated in the guidelines

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Sl. No	Ministry /Department	Comments	Comments by DoPT
		<u>personnel & activities of the SPV which affect trade secrets/competitive advantage of the concessionaire.</u> Further, information about fees, toll, or other kinds of revenue that may be collected under authorization from the Government may also be proactively disclosed <u>by the public authority. Information in respect of outputs and outcomes, process of selection of private sector party can be sought from the public authority.</u> All payment made by the authority in respect of the PPP project may also be disclosed in on periodic manner along with the purpose of making payment.	
11.	Ministry of Textiles	No comments	
12.	Ministry of Mines	No comments	
13.	Department of Chemicals & Fertilizers	The Department has no objection to the recommendation made by the Task Force, in general, and extends its full support to it.	
14.	Department of Pension &	No specific comments to offer.	

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Sl. No	Ministry /Department	Comments	Comments by DoPT
	Pensioners' Welfare		
15.	Department of Atomic Energy	The Department handles inter-alia matters of sensitive and strategic nature. For this purpose procurement of various stores and equipments are also made. Disclosure of procurement of this nature will be against the interest of the Government. Though these procurements are subject to C&AG audit, but the audit reports are dealt with due sensitivity by the office of the C&AG. Therefore, special consideration while creating any general provisions for proactive disclosure/uploading of such issues on website is desirable.	The suggestion has been incorporated in the guidelines by providing exception in cases of transfers, procurement and CAG para which would adversely affect the sovereignty, integrity, security, strategic scientific or economic interests of the state.
16.	Department of Revenue	No comments/suggestions to offer	
17.	Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs	No comments	
18.	Ministry of Urban Development	The Department is in agreement of the recommendations of the Task Force.	
19.	Department of Information	(a) As per the recommendation, use of	

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Sl. No	Ministry /Department	Comments	Comments by DoPT
	Technology	<p>SMS telephony, Call Centers, IVRS, information Centers are included in recommendations which are dependent on provision of necessary infrastructure and hence are not time bound. Further Common Services Centers have been proposed to be included as centers for dissemination of information.</p> <p>(b) Chapter 4 relates to guidelines for Digital Publication of Proactive Disclosure. These guidelines relate to setting up of technical standards for Government website by the DIT.</p> <p>The DIT agrees with these recommendations of the DOPT.</p>	
20.	D/o Administrative Reforms	The Department is in the agreement with the recommendations of the Task	

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Sl. No	Ministry /Department	Comments	Comments by DoPT
		Force and has no further suggestions to offer in the matter.	
21.	Ministry of Home Affairs	All the items as recommended for inclusion in the list of claims for voluntary disclosures under Section 4(1)(b)(xvi) except for the following items:	
		Transfer Policy and Orders relating to transfers: The transfer policy and transfer orders made in that regard are as per exigencies of work perceived from time to time and are part of internal administration. All transfers cannot be by operation of some hard and fast norms and therefore, does not seem practical to put in place a hard and fast mechanism for putting such information on website.	This suggestion has been incorporated in the guidelines by providing exception in cases of transfers made keeping in view sovereignty, integrity, security, strategic scientific or economic interests of the state.
		CAG/PAC Paras: CAG/PAC paras intermediate processes in resolution of issue coming up in Audit. These are in yet to be resolved by the respective Ministries/Departments. Putting up such paras in public domain will present a very one	This suggestion has not been agreed to as CAG/PAC Paras are prepared after consultations with the Ministries/ Departments. Status of replies to these

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Sl. No	Ministry /Department	Comments	Comments by DoPT
		sided view.	paras form a part of the mandatory indicators under the RFD. However information regarding CAG paras which deal with issues of security, sovereignty, economic or scientific interests of the state or issues covered under Section 8 have been exempted.
		Discretionary/Non-discretionary Grants: Putting up all grant related information in public domain will be difficult as this is a continuous process and not a one time affair. Keeping this information up to date will be a huge drain on human resources.	Grants sanctioned do not have to be updated on a daily basis, rather these can be updated at intervals. Further Suo-motu disclosure mandated that all information relating to subsidies, concessions, loans etc be proactively shared. Since all plan funds are

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			sanctioned through the CSPMS there should be no difficulty in doing this. This is further essential to bring about transparency in the functioning of the Government.
		Disclosure of informaion by State Governments: All the recommendations deal with disclosure of information by State Government and local bodies under State Governments: Although the recommendations are in right earnest, they will require creation of substantial infrastructure by the respective State Governments/local bodies. While issuing guidelines, this, therefore, may be kept in mind.	The templates prepared for the Stae Government are only illustrative in nature
		Guidelines on websites: Although the Task Force has made detailed guidelines relating to creation of website by various public authorities, these cannot be followed	Comprehensive guidelines have been issued by Department of Information Technology already

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Sl. No	Ministry /Department	Comments	Comments by DoPT
		uniformly and comprehensively by all PAs. While issuing guidelines in this regard DOPT may make these as guiding principles for creation of websites instead of comprehensive instructions.	which are being followed by all Ministries/ departments.
		Decision making process: The recommendation may be accepted, but again as a set of guiding principles for ensuring effective disclosure under the respective sections and not as instructions to be followed uniformly by all PAs because Ministries/ Departments of the Government of India are more concerned with policy making, regulation facilitation and less with direct delivery of public services. Therefore, precise identification of tangible outputs, services, goods- defining the decision making process is not possible in all cases. The recommendations of the Task Force, therefore, may be accepted keeping in mind for functioning of Ministries/Departments.	The guidelines lay down the basic principles for proactive disclosure. Ministries which deal with policies, regulations etc. also have a decision making process. This suggestion of MHA is not acceptable

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		<p>Policy on public consultation: Although there is an existing practice and mechanism for consultations with public and formulation of complaint rules/laws etc. there is a need to go further than to seek the comments from members of public in such matters. The expertise available with the individuals/organizations may be utilised. But there is a need for defining the extent of such consultations and also the areas where such consultation are to be mandatorily resorted to</p>	<p>This recommendation will be taken up later.</p>
		<p>Model scheme: Now that the use of IT is increasing there is a need for uniform and consistent policy on proactive disclosure through websites by Ministries/Departments. Formulation of model scheme and identification of common parameters will set the ball rolling for such proactive disclosure by Ministries/Departments.</p>	<p>The guidelines lay down the basic parameters on which proactive disclosure is to be made. Individual Ministries/Departments may disclose as per the guidelines.</p>

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Sl. No	Ministry /Department	Comments	Comments by DoPT
22	Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment	<p>RTI Queries: The suggestion/ recommendation of the Task Force at Section 2.1.5 appears to be unnecessary and will not enrich the information content of the website of the Public Authority and hence, public will not benefit from such information which may be relevant only for the specific purpose of those seeking it. Therefore, this recommendation needs to be moderated the extent that PAs may be advised to list only important, informative queries and appeals on its website. This will prevent the website of the PA from being clogged with irrelevant information.</p>	<p>The suggestion has been accepted. Only queries dealing with generic issues may be uploaded which may help avoid duplicate requests for information. Guidelines lay down that replies to queries which are of a personal nature need not be disclosed.</p>
		<p>Templates for state governments: The recommendation of the Task Force in Section 3.2.1 is for implementation by the State Governments/Local bodies. Although the task force has qualified its suggestion by saying 'as far as practicably possible', it still remains difficult</p>	<p>The templates are only illustrative for the State Government departments.</p>

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Sl. No	Ministry /Department	Comments	Comments by DoPT
		to implement and monitor at Central Government level. Therefore, professionally accepted norms and methods for dissemination of information may be used as per specific need of the public authority for a specific purpose or campaign	

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Annexure IV

Guidelines for Central Ministries/ Departments

1.0 Prescribing Additional items for suo motu disclosure under Section 4(1)(b)(xvii)

Section 4(1)(b)(xvii) lays down that government may prescribe any additional item which should also be included for *suo motu* disclosure. The following items should be disclosed under the *Suo motu* disclosure Scheme of Section 4(1)(b):

1.1 Information related to Procurement

1.1.1 Information relating to procurement over Rs. 10.00 lakhs made by Public Authorities relating to the publication of notice/tender enquiries, corrigenda thereon, and details of bid awards detailing the name of the supplier of goods/services being procured and the rate and total amount at which such procurement is to be done should be disclosed. All information disclosable as per Ministry of Finance, Department of Expenditure's O.M. No 10/1/2011-PPC dated 30th November, 2011 on Mandatory Publication of Tender Enquiries on the Central Public Procurement Portal and O.M. No. 10/3/2012- PPC dated 30th March, 2012 on Implementation of comprehensive end-to-end e-procurement should be disclosed under Section 4(1)(b)(xvii). At present the limit is fixed at Rs. 10.00 lakhs which may change subsequently. In case of procurements made through DGS&D Rate Contracts or through Kendriya Bhandar/ NCCF, only award details need to be published. However information about procurement which would fall within the purview of Section 8 of the RTI Act would be exempt.

1.2 Public Private Partnerships

1.2.1 If Public services are proposed to be provided through a Public Private Partnership (PPP), all information relating to the PPPs must be disclosed in the

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public domain by the Public Authority entering into the PPP contract/concession agreement. This may include details of the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV), if any set up, detailed project reports, concession agreements, operation and maintenance manuals and other documents generated as part of the implementation of the PPP project. The documents under the ambit of the exemption from disclosure of information under section 8(1)(d) and 8(1)(j) of the RTI Act will not be disclosed *suo-motu*. Further, information about fees, tolls, or other kinds of revenue that may be collected under authorization from the Government, information in respect of outputs and outcomes, process of selection of the private sector party may also be proactively disclosed. All payments made under the PPP project may also be disclosed in a periodic manner along with the purpose of making such payment.

1.3 Transfer Policy and Transfer Orders

1.3.1 Transfer policy for different grades/cadres of employees serving in Public Authority should be proactively disclosed. All transfer orders should be publicized through the website or in any other manner listed in Section 4(4) of the Act. These guidelines will not be applicable in cases of transfers made keeping in view sovereignty, integrity, security, strategic, scientific or economic interests of the State and the information covered under Section 8. These instructions would not apply to security and intelligence organizations under the second schedule of the RTI Act.

1.4 Sensitive Posts

1.4.1 The Central Vigilance Commission had vide circular no. 98/VGL/60 dated 15th April, 1999, and 2nd November, 2001 directed that a list of sensitive posts in various Departments/ Organisations should be identified by the Chief Vigilance Officer of the Department/ Organisation. The circular further directed that CVOs in consultation with the Chief Executives would ensure that officials posted on sensitive posts are rotated every two/three years to avoid developing

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vested interest. Public Authorities shall proactively disclose posts identified as sensitive and details of the officers/officials occupying those posts including the date since when they are holding the posts. (CVC- letter 98/VGL/60 Dated the 15th April 1999 and No.004/VGL/90 dated the 1st May, 2008)

1.5 RTI Queries

1.5.1 All Public Authorities shall proactively disclose RTI queries and appeals received and their responses, on the websites maintained by Public Authorities with search facility based on key words. Attempt should be made to upload RTI applications and their replies which are of a generic nature and not repetitive applications. RTI applications and appeals received and their responses relating to the personnel information of an individual may not be disclosed as they do not serve any public interest.

1.6 CAG & PAC paras

1.6.1 Public Authorities shall proactively disclose the CAG paras framed in regard to their Ministry/Department and the response of the Ministry/Department to those paragraphs. In addition, a tabular statement should be given regarding pendency of CAG paras. However CAG paras dealing with information about on issues of sovereignty, integrity, security, strategic, scientific or economic interests of the State and the information covered under Section 8 would be exempt would be exempt.

1.7 Citizens Charter

1.7.1 Citizens Charter prepared by the Ministry/Department, a part of the Result framework Document of the department/organization should be proactively disclosed and six monthly report on the performance against the benchmarks set in Citizens Charter should also be displayed on the website of public authorities.

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1.8 Discretionary and Non-discretionary grants

1.8.1 All discretionary /non-discretionary grants/ allocations to state governments/ NGOs/Other institutions by Ministry/Department should be placed on the website of the Ministry/Department concerned. Annual Accounts of all legal entities who are provided grants by Public Authorities should be made available through publication, directly or indirectly on the Public Authority's website.

1.9 Foreign Tours of PM/Ministers

1.9.1 A large number of RTI queries are being filed on official tours undertaken by Ministers or officials of various Government Ministries/Departments. Information regarding the nature, place and period of foreign and domestic tours of Prime Minister are already disclosed on the PMO's website.

1.9.2 As per DoPT's OM No. 1/8/2012-IR dated _____, 2012 Public Authorities shall proactively disclose the details of official tours undertaken by Minister(s) and officials since 1st January, 2012. The disclosures may be updated once every quarter starting from 1st July, 2012. Public authorities shall disclose information about all official foreign tours undertaken by the Minister(s) and officials; and information about official domestic tours undertaken by Minister(s) and officers of the rank of Joint Secretaries to the Government of India and above and Heads of Departments.

1.9.3. Information to be disclosed proactively should contain nature of the official tour, places visited, the period, number of people included in the official delegation and total cost of such travel undertaken. Exemptions under Section 8 of the RTI Act, 2005 may be taken in view while disclosing the information. These instructions would not apply to security and intelligence organisations under the second schedule of the RTI Act, 2005 and CVOs of public authorities.

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2.0 Guidelines for Digital Publication of proactive disclosures under Section 4

2.1 Section 4 lays down that information should be provided through many mediums depending upon the level of public authority and the recipient of information (for example, in case of Panchayat wall painting may be more effective means of dissemination of information), more and more proactive disclosure would gradually be made through Internet. There is need for more clear guidelines for web-based publication of information for information disclosure.

2.2 The Department of Information Technology has been working on setting of technical standards for government websites and the Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances has published guidelines for websites of Government Departments. These guidelines prescribe the manner in which websites need to be designed and how information should be disclosed. While adhering to the standards of government guidelines as laid down by Department of Information Technology and Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances the following principles additionally should also be kept in view to ensure that websites' disclosures are complete, easily accessible, technology and platform neutral and in a form which conveys the desired information in an effective and user-friendly manner.

- a) It should be the endeavor of all public authorities that all entitlements to citizens and all transactions between the citizen and government are gradually made available through computer based interface. The 'Electronic Service Delivery Bill' under formulation in Government of India would provide the necessary impetus.

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- b) Websites should contain detailed information from the point of origin to the point of delivery of entitlements/services provided by the Public Authorities to citizens.
- c) Orders of the public authority should be issued only after such orders have been uploaded on the website. Such a system exists in Andhra Pradesh and could be adopted in other governments easily.
- d) Website should contain all the relevant Acts, Rules, forms and other documents which are normally accessed by citizens.
- e) Websites should have detailed directory of key contacts, details of officials of the Public Authority.
- f) It is obligatory under Section 4(1)(b)(xiv) of the RTI Act for every Public Authority to proactively disclose 'details in respect of the information, available to or held by it, reduced in an electronic form'. In such a listing required under this section, indicate which digitally held information is made available publicly over the internet and which not.
- g) As departments reorganize their systems and processes to enable themselves for electronic service delivery, it is recommended that during process reengineering the requirement of bringing due transparency as provided in the RTI Act are given due consideration at the design stage itself.
- h) To maintain reliability of information and its real time updation, information generation in a digital work flow should be 'locked' to key work outputs, like a muster roll and salary slip (NREGA in Andhra Pradesh) or formalization of a government order (Andhra Pradesh). Such an approach will lead to automation of proactive disclosure.

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- i) Information must be presented from a user's perspective, which may require re-arranging it, simplifying it etc. However, original documents in original formats should continue to be made available because these are needed for community monitoring of government's functioning.
- j) The 'National Data Sharing and Accessibility Policy' by the Department of Science and Technology is based on the principle that all publicly funded information should be readily available and works on the principle of open and restricted access to data. The policy has been notified in March, 2012 and the schedule should be strictly adhered to.
- k) Information and data should be presented in open data formats whereby it can be pulled by different Application Protocol Interfaces to be used in different fashions more appropriate to specific contexts and needs. Information/ data can, for instance, be presented in powerful visual ways using visualisation techniques. Such visual representation of information/ data can give insights that may remain largely hidden in a textual or tabular presentation of data. In some contexts, pictures and audio/videos recordings etc may be more useful. There have been moves in some part of the country to video record Gram Sabha meetings. A picture of a NREGA worksite, for instance, may tell much more than words can. All such different media and forms should be used for proactive disclosure.

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3.0 Guidelines for certain clauses of Section 4(1)(b) to make disclosures more effective

3.1 The various sub-clauses of Section 4(1)(b) must be treated as elements of an integrated disclosure scheme. For example, the functions and responsibilities of a public authority cannot be understood in isolation from the powers and functions of its employees, the norms that inform its decision making processes and the rules, instructions and manuals that are used in the discharge of its functions. Description of one element presupposes the existence of another. So every public authority must endeavour to integrate the information mentioned in these sub-clauses while preparing voluntary disclosure materials.

3.2 Considering that disclosures in regard to certain clauses have been relatively weak, detailed guidelines for four clauses are given below:

3.3 Guidelines for section 4(1)(b)(iii) - "the procedure followed in the decision-making processes including channels of supervision and accountability".

3.3.1 All government departments have specific duties and responsibilities under the respective Allocation of Business Rules (AOB) issued by the appropriate Government. The constitutional provisions and statutes each department is required to implement are clearly laid down in the AOB. The manner of disposal of matters assigned to each Department/Ministry is described in the Transaction of Business Rules (TOB). Additionally, every department would have a specific set of schemes and development programmes which they are required to implement directly or through their subordinate offices or other designated agencies. These documents contain the specific operations that every Public Authority is required to undertake in the course of implementing the programme or scheme. Every operation mandated under the

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AOB read with the TOB would be linked to a specific decision-making chain. All government officers have to follow laid down office procedure manual or the other rules which gives details of how representations, petitions and applications from citizens must be dealt with. Templates, formats, and basic steps of decision-making are briefly explained in such manuals. These descriptions constitute the elements of decision-making processes in general.

3.3.2 Additionally, in the routine work of governance, government functionaries are required to make decisions in a discretionary manner but broad guiding principles are laid down in some rule or the other. For example, the General Financial Rules lay down procedures for a variety of operations relating to government finances. How sanction must be accorded for incurring expenditure; how losses to government must be reported; how responsibility for losses may be fixed on any government servant; how budgets, demand for grants are prepared and submitted; how public works must be sanctioned and executed; how commodities and services may be procured by a public authority; are all explained in these manuals which are updated from time to time. The challenge is to present a simplified version of the decision-making procedure that is of interest to a common citizen.

3.3.3 In view of the above, the following guidelines for detailing the decision making processes are as follows:

- (a) Every public authority may specifically identify the major outputs/ tangible results/ services/ goods that it is responsible for providing to the public or to whosoever is the client of the public authority.
- (b) The decision-making chain may be identified in the form of a flow chart explaining the rank/grade of the public functionaries involved in the decision-making process clarifying the specific stages in the decision-making hierarchy.

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- (c) The powers of each officer including powers of supervision over subordinates involved in the chain of decision-making must also be spelt out next to the flow chart or in a simple bullet-pointed format in a text-box. The exceptional circumstances when such standards decision-making processes may be overridden and by whom should also be explained clearly. Where decentralization of decision-making has occurred in order to grant greater autonomy to public authorities, such procedures must also be clearly explained.
- (d) This design of representation may then be extended to cover all statutory and discretionary operations that are part of the public authority's mandate under the AOB read with the TOB.
- (e) In the event of a public authority altering an existing decision-making process or adopting an entirely new process, such changes must be explained in simple language in order to enable people to easily understand the changes made.

3.4 Guidelines for Section 4(1)(b)(iv) - "the norms set by it for the discharge of its functions".

3.4.1 Primarily, the intention of this clause is that every public authority should proactively disclose the standards by which its performance should be judged. Norms may be qualitative or quantitative in nature, or temporal or statutory norms. In order to ensure compliance with this clause, public authorities would need to develop norms for major functions that are being performed, if they do not already exist.

3.4.2 Citizen Charters, which are mandatory, for each central Ministry/Department/Authority, are good examples of vehicles created for laying down norms of performance for major functions and for monitoring achievements against those standards.

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3.4.3 Wherever norms have been specified for the discharge of its functions by any statute or government orders, they should be proactively disclosed, particularly linking them with the decision making processes as detailed earlier. All Public Authorities should proactively disclose the following:

- a) Defining the services and goods that the particular public authority/office provides directly (or indirectly through any other agency/contractor).
- b) Detailing and describing the processes by which the public can access and/or receive the goods and services that they are entitled to, from the public authority/office along with the forms, if any prescribed, for use by both the applicant and the service providing agency. Links to such forms (online), wherever available, should be given.
- c) Describing the conditions, criteria and priorities under which a person becomes eligible for the goods and services, and consequently the categories of people who are entitled to receive the goods and services.
- d) Defining the quantitative and tangible parameters, (weight, size, frequency etc,) and timelines, that are applicable to the goods and services that are accessible to the public.
- e) Defining the qualitative and quantitative outcomes that each public authority/office plans to achieve through the goods and services that it was obligated to provide.
- f) Laying down individual responsibility for providing the goods and services (who is responsible for delivery/implementation and who is responsible for supervision).

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3.5 Guidelines for Section 4(1)(b)(xi)- "the budget allocated to each of its agency indicating the particulars of all plans, proposed expenditures and reports on disbursements made".

3.6 It is recommended that:

- (a) Keeping in view of the technical nature of the government budgets, it is essential that Ministries/Departments prepare simplified versions of their budgets which can be understood easily by general public and keep them also in public domain. Presentation of budgets and their periodic monitoring reports may also be presented in a more user-friendly manner through graphs and tables, etc.
- (b) Outcome budget being prepared by Ministries/Departments of Government of India should be prominently displayed and be used as a basis to identify physical targets planned during the budgetary period and the actual achievement vis-à-vis those targets. A monthly programme implementation calendar method of reporting being followed in Karnataka is a useful model.
- (c) Funds released to various autonomous organizations/ statutory organizations/ attached offices/ Public Sector Enterprises/ Societies/ NGOs/ Corporations etc. should be put on the website on a quarterly basis and budgets of such authorities may be made accessible through links from the website of the Ministry/Department. If a subsidiary does not have a website then the budgets and expenditure reports of such subsidiary authority may be uploaded on the website of the principal Public Authority.
- (d) Wherever required by law or executive instruction, sector specific allocations and achievements of every department or public authority

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(where feasible) must be highlighted. For example, budget allocation and target focusing on gender, children, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and religious minorities should be specially highlighted. The sector-wise breakup of these targets and actual outcomes must be given in simplified form to enable the vulnerable segments of society to understand the budgets of public authorities better.

3.6 Guidelines for Section 4(1)(b)(xiv) - details of the kinds of information that they themselves hold or information that is available to them, which is reduced in an electronic form.

3.6.1 On the one hand, this clause serves as a means of proactively disclosing the progress made in computerizing information under Section 4(1)(a) of the RTI Act in a periodic manner. On the other, it provides people with clarity about the kinds of electronic information that, although not held by the public authority, is available to them, for example the stocks of ration available with individual fair price shop may not be available with the District Civil Supplies office, but may be available at a subordinate formation.

3.6.2 Keeping in view the varied levels of computerization of records and documents in public authorities, data about records that have been digitized may be proactively disclosed on the respective websites, excluding those records /files /information that are exempted under Section 8. The data about digitized record may include the name of the record and any categorization or indexing used; the subject matter and any other information that is required to be compiled in relation to a file as prescribed by Manual of Office Procedure (and to be prescribed by MOP for electronic records that is under finalization by DARPG), the division/ section/ unit/ office where the record is normally held; the person, with designation, responsible for maintaining the record; and the life span of the record, as prescribed in the relevant record retention schedule.

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(Department of Personnel & Training)**4.0 Compliance with provisions of suo motu (Proactive Disclosure) under the RTI Act.**

4.1 In order to monitor and enforce compliance with suo motu disclosure provisions both the public authorities and Information Commissions should share the responsibility. At the level of public authority responsibility should be given at senior levels for ensuring that information is proactively disclosed and regularly updated as per the provisions of the Act. Information Commissions would need to develop mechanisms to monitor whether action is being taken as per the provisions of the Act and, if weaknesses are found, they are already authorized to issue recommendations to public authorities under Section 25(5) of the Act. The following guidelines are for improving compliance with the provisions of the RTI Act regarding proactive disclosures.

4.2.1 Proactive Disclosure Scheme

4.2.1 Each Ministry/Department of Government should prepare a proactive disclosure scheme for their Ministry/Department which should also include the proactive disclosures to be made by attached and subordinate offices of that Ministry/Department. This is necessitated as many of the clauses of Section 4(1)(b) would need to be specifically detailed for a specific Ministry/Department and their offices. For example, under Section 4(1)(b)(iii) the procedure followed in the decision making process needs to be detailed and it needs to be decided as to which decisions should be covered for proactive disclosures for this purpose. This would be different for different Ministry and should be carefully detailed in the scheme specific to that Ministry. Similarly, how the budgets of the Ministry/Department are to be put up in the user-friendly manner as recommended elsewhere in these guidelines would be different for different Ministries/ Departments. The norms set by public authority for discharge of its functions would also be specifically detailed for each public authority/Ministry/Department. It is in this context that need for a

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Ministry/Department specific proactive disclosure scheme which conforms to the provisions of RTI Act is felt.

4.2.2 The following steps should be taken by each Ministry/Public Authority under the Proactive Disclosure Scheme.

- a) Each Ministry/ Public Authority, within a period of 6 months from the date of issue of these guidelines, should prepare a list of items they would be disclosing under PDS along with the time period over which this exercise would be carried out. Each Ministry/ Public Authority should list out the items they would disclose under the scheme within one year, within two years and in three years time. Such detailed planning is essential as a lot of information may need to be piloted and digitized for disclosure.
- b) The above scheme for disclosure should be sent to the Central Information Commission and should also be included in the Public Authority's RFD and disclosed on the web-site.
- c) Each Ministry/ Public Authority should get its Proactive Disclosure Scheme audited by third party every year. The audit should cover compliance with the Proactive Disclosure Scheme as well as adequacy of the items included in the scheme. The audit should examine whether there are any other type of information which is feasible within the sources to be proactively disclosed. Such audit should be done annually and should be communicated to the Central Information Commission annually.
- d) Central Information Commission should carry out sample audit and of few of the Ministries/ Public Authority with regard to adequacy of items included and their schedule for Proactive Disclosure Scheme as well as compliance of the Ministry/ Public Authority with the scheme. The Central Information Commission, for other Ministries/ Public Authority

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should examine the third-party audit reports for each Ministries/organization and offer their advice/recommendation on compliance with the Proactive Disclosure Scheme to the concerned Ministries/organization.

- e) Preparation of Proactive Disclosure Scheme, its audit by third party, its communication to the Central Information Commission and the detailed and quality of disclosure should be included as RFD target.
- f) Proactive Disclosure Scheme would require collating a large quantum of information and digitizing it. Therefore, Ministries/organization for this purpose, may engage consultants or outsource such an additional efforts to expeditiously comply with the Proactive Disclosure Scheme and for this purpose utilize the plans/non-plan funds of that department.
- g) For carrying out third part audit through outside consultants also Ministries/ Public Authority should utilize their plans/non-plans

4.3 Nodal Officer

4.3.1 Each Central Ministry/Department would appoint a senior officer not below the rank of a Joint Secretary and not below rank of Additional HOD in case of attached offices for ensuring compliance with the proactive disclosure scheme. Nodal Officer would work under the supervision of the Secretary of the Ministry/Department or the HOD of the attached office as the case may be. Nodal Officers of Ministry/Department and HOD separately would also ensure that the formations below the Ministry/Department/Attached Office also disclose the information as per the proactive disclosure scheme.

4.3 Annual Report to CIC

4.4.1 All Ministries/Departments/Attached Offices would submit an annual report to CIC within three months of the close of the year detailing compliance made with the suo-motu scheme and also list out any changes in the scheme which are deemed to be appropriate.

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4.4 Annual Reports to Parliament/Legislatures

4.5.1 Government has issued directions to all Ministries/Departments to include a chapter on RTI Act in their Annual Reports submitted to the Parliament. Details about compliance with proactive disclosure scheme should mandatorily be included in the relevant chapter in Annual Report of Ministry/Department.

4.5 Inclusion in RFDs

4.5.1 Proactive disclosure has been included in the RFDs as a mandatory indicator. This may be strictly adhered to.

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Guidelines for State Governments

1.0 The guidelines prescribed for the Central government Ministries/ departments are illustrative for State governments and they may adopt the same with suitable modifications.

1.1 The Task Force had also deliberated on facilitating disclosure at different levels of government and suggested templates in four areas. The State Governments are requested to use these templates for *suo-motu* disclosure at various levels. State Governments may prepare templates in more areas based on their experience. The guidelines for facilitating disclosure at district and lower levels in State Governments and suggested templates for key areas are placed below:

2.0 Guidelines for State Governments for facilitating disclosure at district and lower levels of government through suggestive templates for key areas

2.1 The scheme of Section 4 applies uniformly to all public authorities even though they may be constituted at different levels. It is felt that at different levels of administration different level of detailing is required and if that could be facilitated by development of suitable templates it would not only improve the quality of disclosures but would also facilitate more transparency in governance. For example, in the case of Public Distribution System (PDS) disclosures at the level of Fair Price Shops (FPS) should go down to the level of ration card holder, while at the level of district/state, agencies dealing with the disclosures would need to be more broad-based. Keeping this in view four areas were identified for development of templates.

- (a) *Public Distribution System;*
- (b) Panchayats;
- (c) MGNREGA; and

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(d) Primary and Secondary Schools.

These four areas have been selected on the ground that they constitute some of the most significant services being provided at the ground level. However, it is recommended that similar templates need to be worked out for other important areas such as health services, services relating to social benefits, etc.

2.2 Templates for Information Disclosure

The templates of information disclosure at various levels of service delivery in relation to the above four areas are **enclosed** at the end of the guidelines. The general principles which should be adopted for disclosure at various levels are given below:

2.3 Use of Information boards/walls

Section 4(4) of the RTI Act states that information should be disseminated taking into consideration 'the most effective method of communication in that local area and the information should be easily accessible'. Given the limited reach and accessibility of the internet in India, information disclosures, as far as practically possible, must also be done locally in a form and manner that is easily accessible to people. It is recommended that at village / block level relevant information should be painted on walls and provided on boards in the local language at prominent public places.

2.4 Information disclosure through any document/proof of delivery that is available to beneficiaries

Any document relating to a scheme/program of the department that is held by a citizen (eg. ration card, school books etc.) should be used as a mode of disclosure. Information in the local language can be printed on such documents. Stickers can be used to update/change the information, if required.

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2.5 RTI Proactive Disclosure File

Panchayat is the first public authority or unit which has an interface with citizens. In their case many of the information can be painted on the walls. However, all the information that is painted on the walls should also be kept ready for perusal in a "RTI Proactive Disclosure File". This file should also contain details of all the moneys received and all the guidelines which are sent to Panchayats by various government authorities for implementation of schemes.

2.6 'Good' and 'Innovative' practices adopted by State Governments

2.6.1 State governments may adopt innovative practices to disseminate information at local level. Some of these practices are listed below:

- Read out all information about benefits of schemes, budgets, expenditure, MGNREGA works, payments etc in the Gramsabha. Example - Yakubbbhai Kothariya works as a Gram Panchayat Secretary and a PIO in Gujarat. Even before the RTI Act was in place, Yakubbbhai was fond of using folk lyrics as a medium of disseminating information. In his Gram Sabha, he talks about various scheme by connecting it with incidents in the village and sings a folk song marking the specific characteristics of a scheme. His Gram Sabhas are frequented by large numbers of residents on a regular basis.
- Disseminate information about schemes and programmes by setting up a desk whilst organizing the 'Village Mela (fair)' or any Folk Fair that is conducted in the region. This can also be done in collaboration with village youth mandal, or SHG or any Community bases organization.
- Organization of "Information Mela (fair)" at the village school on important days like Independence Day, Republic Day". This works very effectively in the villages, and people feel connected with village school.

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- Community radio can become another media of dissemination of info. This proves very effective.
- In Panchmahal district, Gujarat, during the RTI campaign for pro-active disclosures it was observed that the multi-media vehicle used for dissemination of information was widely accepted. The pamphlets, guidelines of various schemes, including forms were disseminated by "**RTI on Wheels**" a multimedia vehicle. The films and case stories of use of information for achieving transparency in governance were screened.
- In Goa, it's a regular practice that details of the gram sabha are reported in local newspapers.
- Other media like street plays, puppet shows can also be used for information dissemination.
- If there are any specific programmes or schemes meant specifically for the region or village then in such cases, pro-active disclosure should be prepared in the form of charts giving details of such schemes/programme.

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Enclosure

Templates for disclosures at the level of Fair Price Shops

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1. **Static Information** to be painted at the FPS in the local language

Template 1.1: Entitlement, scale of issue and retail issue price of essential commodities for all types of ration cards

Ration	APL		BPL		Antodyaya		Annapurnna	
	Price	Quantity	Price	Quantity	Price	Quantity	Price	Quantity
Wheat								
Flour								
Rice								
Edible oil								
Sugar								
Kerosene								
Maize, Bazra/ millet								
other/salt								

Sample of all commodities to be displayed at the FPS

Template 1.2: Information about the FPS

1. Names of Villages/ Mohallas/ Areas covered by the FPS: -----	
1	Name of license holder
	License number (display copy of license) Date of issue
	Name of shop keeper Phone no
2	Time of shop opening-----
	Time of shop closing-----
	Days the shop remains open in a week
3	List of records held by the FPS- Stock register, sale register, list of cardholders attached to the shop, etc.

Template 1.3: Information about the grievance redress mechanism

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Complaints Register

Ration cardholders can register their complaints in the complaints register available in the Fair Price Shop. Cardholders can demand inspection of the complaints register.

State-level toll free INFORMATION and GRIEVANCE REDRESS HELPLINE (details later in the section 'Proposed new measures')

e.g. 1800-111-222-333

Name, designation and contact of the grievance redress authority

Complaints regarding the functioning of the Public Distribution System can be made to:

- Helpline number:
- At the Block level:
- At the District level
- At the State level
- Vigilance committees at all levels
- Other relevant authority

Template 1.4: Public audit of records of the FPS (details later in the section "Proposed new measures")

Records of FPS available for public audit

(based on the Delhi model)

- All records of the FPS are available for inspection to cardholders on demand
- On the last Saturday of every month, all the records of the FPS will be available for audit by the people at the FPS between 2 to 5 pm
- On the first Saturday of every alternate month, all records of the FPS will be available for audit by people at the Circle/block/panchayat level office from 2 to 5 pm

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Template 1.5: Information about the RTI Act

Right to Information Act 2005

Under the RTI Act, citizens have the right to access information from the Department of Food and Civil Supplies.

- Applications for seeking information have to be submitted in writing with the prescribed fee, to Public Information Officer (PIO) or Assistant Public Information Officer (APIO).
- RTI application fee is Rs. ____ and photocopy charges for providing copies of records is Rs. ____ per page.
- No fee for citizens below the poverty line
- Information will be provided within 30 days

Name, designation and contact details of relevant officials under the RTI Act

Public Information Officer (PIO)	Name of officer	Designation of officer	Office address & Room no.	Mobile phone no.
Assistant Public Information				

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2. Dynamic information at the FPS to be painted / available on blackboards and made available in a file for inspection on demand in local language

Template 2.1: Stock Position (prev. month)

REQUIREMENT, STOCK AND DISTRIBUTION FOR THE MONTH -----												
Ration	APL				BPL				AAY			
	Requir ed	Balan ce of prev mont h	Stock provid ed in this month	Distribu ted in this month	Requir ed	Balan ce of prev mont h	Stock provid ed in this month	Distribu ted in this month	Requir ed	Balan ce of prev mont h	Stock provid ed in this month	Distribu ted in this month
Wheat												
Flour												
Rice												
Edible oil												
Sugar												
Kerose ne												
Board verified by On												

Template 2.2: Vigilance Committee FPS-level

FPS-level Ration Vigilance Committee

The last meeting of the Vigilance Committee was held on

The next meeting of the Vigilance Committee will be held on ...

Minutes of the committee meetings are available for inspection at

Members of the ration vigilance committee

Name	Designation	Phone number & address
	Chairperson	

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Number of Ration Cards (as on.....)		
	Number of cards	Total number of members
APL		
BPL		
AAY		
Annapurna		
Applications pending		
Total		

Template 2.3: List of ration cardholders

- The list of all cards (attached to the shop) must be displayed at the FPS. The print out of the list could be stuck on the wall and a register be maintained which should be available for inspection on demand.

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II. Disclosures at the block/ panchayat* level office (*or other appropriate authority for areas under the sixth schedule of the Constitution and for urban areas)

Template 1: Entitlement, scale of issue and retail issue price of essential commodities for all types of ration cards

Ration	APL		BPL		Antodyaya		Annapurnna	
	Price	Quantity	Price	Quantity	Price	Quantity	Price	Quantity
Wheat								
Flour								
Rice								
Edible oil								
Sugar								
Kerosene								
Maize, Bajra/ millet								
other/salt								
Sample of all commodities to be displayed at the FPS								

Template 2: Monthly stock position of each FPS

REQUIREMENT, STOCK AND DISTRIBUTION FOR THE MONTH -----												
FPS Name & Number: Address:												
Ration	APL				BPL				AAY			
	Required	Balance of prev month	Stock provided in this month	Distributed in this month	Required	Balance of prev month	Stock provided in this month	Distributed in this month	Required	Balance of prev month	Stock provided in this month	Distributed in this month
Wheat												
Flour												
Rice												
Sugar												
Kerosene												

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Template 3: Name, designation & duties of officials

S. No.	Name	Designation	Duties
1		Food Supplies Officer	-
2		Inspector	-
3			-
4			-
5			-

Template 4: Grievance redress mechanisms

Complaints Register

Ration cardholders can register their complaints in the complaints register available in the Fair Price Shop. Cardholders can demand inspection of the complaints register.

State-level toll free INFORMATION and GRIEVANCE REDRESS HELPLINE (details later
in the section 'Proposed new measures')

e.g. 1800-111-222-333

Name, designation and contact of the grievance redress authority

Complaints regarding the functioning of the Public Distribution System can be made to:

- Helpline number:
- At the Block level:
- At the District level
- At the State level
- Vigilance committees at all levels
- Other relevant authority

Template 5: Status of complaints filed

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Status of Complaints filed (to be maintained in a register shown on demand/ print outs pinned on a notice board)					
S. No.	Name of complainant & complaint	Date of filing complaint	Name & designation of officer who received the complaint	Current status of grievance	Name and number of FPS/KOD against whom complaint was filed

Complaints received in the last six months (Painted)			
S. No.	Name and number of FPS/KOD against whom complaints were filed	Total number of complaints filed	Action taken against FPS/KOD
1			
2			

6. Public audit of records of the FPS (details later in the section “Proposed new measures”)

<u>Records of FPS available for audit</u> (Based on Delhi model)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All records of the FPS are available for inspection to cardholders on demand • On the last Saturday of every month, all the records of the FPS will be available for audit by the people at the FPS between 2 to 5 pm • On the first Saturday of every alternate month, all records of the FPS will be available for audit by people at the Circle/block/panchayat level office between 2 to 5 pm 	

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Template 7: Vigilance Committee at Block/ Panchayat- level

Block/Panchayat-level Ration Vigilance Committee

The last meeting of the Vigilance Committee was held on
The next meeting of the Vigilance Committee will be held on ...
Minutes of the committee meetings are available for inspection at

Members of the vigilance committee

Name	Designation	Phone number & address
	Chairperson	

Template 8: List of ration cardholders

Number of Ration Cards (as on.....)		
	Number of cards	Total number of members
APL		
BPL		
AAY		
Annapurna		
Applications pending		
Total		

- The list of all cards (attached to the shop) must be displayed securely, in an accessible place at the Block/Panchayat- level office. The print out of the list could be stuck on the wall and a register be maintained which should be available for inspection on demand.
- The list should be painted in the village

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Template 9: Procedure for applying for a new APL, BPL and AAY ration card/other services and the time-frame for disposal

Procedure for applying for a new APL, BPL and AAY ration card/other services and the time-frame for disposal				
Type of Card	Eligibility	Documents required	Fee, if any	Time-frame for disposal
APL Card				
BPL Card/ AAY Card				
Modification to card				

All application should be given a unique number and people should be able to track the status of their application on the website of the department. Reasons for rejection of any application must be recorded online and should be communicated to the applicant.

Template 10: Boards displaying all relevant orders

- Board should display relevant orders by:
 - Food Department
 - Supreme Court
- Orders pertaining to closure/transfer of FPS, policy changes etc.

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Template 11: Information about the RTI Act

Right to Information Act 2005

Under the RTI Act, citizens have the right to access information from the Department of Food and Civil Supplies.

- Applications for seeking information have to be submitted in writing with prescribed fee, to Public Information Officer (PIO) or Assistant Public Information Officer (APIO).
- RTI application fee is Rs. ____ & photocopy charges for providing copies of records is Rs. ____ per page.
- No fee for citizens below the poverty line
- Information will be provided within 30 days
- If information is not provided within the stipulated time-frame, first appeal can be to the First Appellate Authority in the Department, and the Second appeal can be filed to the Information Commission
- If information is not provided in time, a penalty of Rs. 250 per day, subject to a maximum on Rs 25000 can be levied on the PIO by the Information Commission.
- **Under Section 4 of the Act, the department is required to proactively provide information to citizens. The Section 4 publication is available in the office of the PIO in room no. ____ and can be inspected any time during office hours for free.**

Name, designation and contact details of relevant officials under the RTI Act				
Public Information Officer (PIO) Assistant Public Information	Name of officer	Designation of officer	Office address & Room no.	Mobile phone no.

Template 12: Board displaying list of documents available for inspection

All documents of this office can be inspected by citizens and photocopies can be taken at actual cost

Name of document	Officer responsible for maintaining the document	Time for inspection

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III. Disclosures at the District level

Template 1: Information to be kept in a file, available for inspection on demand

- List of card-holders (FPS-wise and Block-wise)
- Monthly stock position of all FPS in the district
- Minutes of meetings/reports of FPS-level, block-level and district-level vigilance committees
- Status of complaints filed

Template 2: Board displaying list of documents available for inspection

All documents of this office can be inspected by citizens and photocopies can be taken at actual cost

Name of document	Officer responsible for maintaining the document	Time for inspection

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Ration	APL		BPL		Antodyaya		Annapurnna	
	Price	Quantity	Price	Quantity	Price	Quantity	Price	Quantity
Wheat								
Flour								
Rice								
Edible oil								
Sugar								
Kerosene								
Maize, Bajra/ millet								
Sample of all commodities to be displayed at the FPS								

Template 4: Grievance redress mechanisms**Complaints Register**

Ration cardholders can register their complaints in the complaints register available in the Fair Price Shop. Cardholders can demand inspection of the complaints register.

State-level toll free INFORMATION and GRIEVANCE REDRESS HELPLINE (details later in the section 'Proposed new measures')

e.g. 1800-111-222-333

Name, designation and contact of the grievance redress authority

Complaints regarding the functioning of the Public Distribution System can be made to:

- Helpline number:
- At the Block level:
- At the District level
- At the State level
- Vigilance committees at all levels
- Other relevant authority

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Template 5: Name, designation & duties of officials

S. No.	Name	Designation	Duties
1		Additional Commissioner	
2		Assistant Commissioner	
3		Food Supplies Officer	
4		Inspector	
5			

Template 6: Public audit of records of the FPS

Records of FPS available for audit

(details later in the section "Proposed new measures")

- All records of the FPS are available for inspection to cardholders on demand at the FPS
- On the last Saturday of every month, all the records of the FPS will be available for audit by the people at the FPS between 2 to 5 pm
- On the first Saturday of every alternate month, all records of the FPS will be available for audit by people at the Circle/block/panchayat level office between 2 to 5 pm

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Template 7: Vigilance Committee District- level

District-level Ration Vigilance Committee

The last meeting of the Vigilance Committee was held on
 The next meeting of the Vigilance Committee will be held on ...
 Minutes of the committee meetings are available for inspection at

Members of the vigilance committee

Name	Designation	Phone number & address
	Chairperson	

Template 8: List of ration cardholders

Number of Ration Cards (as on.....)		
	Number of cards	Total number of members
APL		
BPL		
AAY		
Annapurna		
Applications pending		
Total		

- The list of all cards (attached to the shop) must be displayed at the Block/Panchayat- level office and at the FPS. The print out of the list could be stuck on the wall and a register be maintained which should be available for inspection on demand.
- The list should be painted in the village

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**Template 9: Procedure for applying for new card/other services and time-frame
for disposal of applications**

**Procedure for applying for a new APL, BPL and AAY ration card/other services and the
time-frame for disposal**

Type of Card	Eligibility	Documents required	Fee, if any	Time-frame for disposal
APL Card				
BPL Card/ AAY Card				
Modification to card				

All application should be given a unique number and people should be able to track the status of their application on the website of the department. Reasons for rejection of any application must be recorded online and should be communicated to the applicant.

Template 10: Boards displaying all relevant orders

- Board should display relevant orders by:
 - Food Department
 - Supreme Court
- Orders pertaining to closure/transfer of FPS, policy changes etc.

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Template 11: Information about the RTI Act

Right to Information Act 2005

Under the RTI Act, citizens have the right to access information from the Department of Food and Civil Supplies.

- Applications for seeking information have to be submitted in writing with prescribed fee, to Public Information Officer (PIO) or Assistant Public Information Officer (APIO).

- RTI application fee is Rs. _____ and photocopy charges for providing copies of records is Rs. _____ per page.

- No fee for citizens below the poverty line

- Information will be provided within 30 days

- If information is not provided within the stipulated time-frame, the first appeal can be to the First Appellate Authority in the Department, and the Second appeal can be filed to the Information Commission

- If information is not provided in time, a penalty of Rs. 250 per day, subject to a maximum on Rs. 25000 can be levied on the PIO by the Information Commission.

- **Under Section 4 of the Act, the department is required to proactively provide information to citizens. The Section 4 publication is available in the office of the PIO in room no. _____ and can be inspected any time during office hours for free.**

Name, designation and contact details of relevant officials under the RTI Act

Public Information Officer (PIO)	Name of officer	Designation of officer	Office address & Room no.	Mobile phone no.
Assistant Public Information Officer (APIO)				

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**Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions
(Department of Personnel & Training)****IV. Disclosures at the State-level through the Department website**

Note: The MIS used by Chhatisgarh and Tamil Nadu are extremely comprehensive and provide real-time information on the functioning of the PDS. While the Chhatisgarh website has free public access to the MIS (www.cg.nic.in/citizen), the Tamil Nadu MIS is only for internal use and is not accessible by the public. All the content listed out in this section is already being recorded in real-time in Chhatisgarh/Tamil Nadu. Other states can emulate the model of these 2 states.

1. Contents of website related to distribution of grain (to be updated in real-time, as far as possible)

- List of all FPS/KODs (Block-wise & District-wise)
- Entitlement, scale of issue and retail issue price of essential commodities for all types of ration cards
- Types of ration cards
- Procedure for applying for new card/other services and time-frame for disposal of applications
- List of card-holders (FPS-wise, Village-wise, Block-wise & District-wise)
- Actual disbursement made on each card (will require shop-level information to be entered into the MIS)
- Monthly stock position of all FPS
- Grievance redress mechanisms for PDS (including details of how and where to lodge a complaint using each of the mechanisms)
- Minutes of meetings/reports of FPS-level, block-level, district-level and state-level vigilance committees
- Information about the RTI Act and section 4 disclosures of the department
- Information about the mechanism for public audit of records of FPS
- Name, designation & duties of all officials of the Department
- Status of complaints filed
- Status of applications submitted
- Status of RTI applications filed
- Status of public audit reports
- ALL orders issued by the department and any other relevant orders which affect the PDS. The department should have a mechanism whereby orders can only be generated through the website and automatically uploaded in the relevant section of the website. Several states, including Andhra Pradesh, follow this mechanism wherein, the order number can only be procured if the order is generated online and is displayed on the website.
- Monthly food grains bulletin (must provide information upto block-level)

All this information should be provided in a searchable format. The website should not require any password/login to access/view this information. The MIS of the Department should be completely visible to people accessing the site.

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2. Contents of website related to procurement of grain (to be updated in real-time, as far as possible)

- MSP & Bonus for all commodities
- Names of farmers (village-wise, block-wise, district-wise)
- Quantity procured and amount paid to each farmer
- Norms for fair average quality
- List of mills (along with capacity of each mill)
- Quantity of grain given and received from each mill

Information on procurement should also be displayed at the procurement centre-level and the block-level offices and at all other offices/sites involved in procurement of grain.

V. Disclosures at the Central Level (through the website)

- All relevant content related to procurement including details of agencies involved
- All relevant content related to transportation including details of agencies involved
- All relevant content related to distribution and linking to state level MIS
- Real-time information on grain movement
- All orders issued by the ministry, Supreme Court etc. which affect the functioning of the PDS
- Monthly food grains bulletin (with information upto block-level)

VI. Information from other sources (organisations involved in procurement, transportation etc.)

All relevant information related to the PDS must be displayed on the website of the relevant organization and should be linked to the Ministry/Food Department website. Eg- Railways which is involved in transportation of food grains, should display real-time information on movement of grains on its website.

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Templates for disclosures for Panchayat

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Recommended templates for disclosure of information under Section 4 of the RTI Act for Panchayat

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

Designation	Name	Phone No
Name and Address of Sarpanch (Village Head)		
Name and Address of Chairman of Social Justice Committee of village		
Name and address of Panchayat Secretary (Talati)		
Revenue Secretary/Patwari		
Assistant secretary		
Name and address of Panchayat's Peon		
Name and address of operator of village water works		
Gramsevak (Dev)		
Gram Seval (Agriculture)		
Any Other		

2. Details about PIO and Appellate Authorities under RTI act 2005 (Should be displayed on outside wall of the Panchayat)

Heads	Name	Designation	Phone Number	Address
PIO				
First Appellate Authority				
Second Appellate Authority				

Kindly bring to the notice of PIO if any information disclosed on the walls is misleading or wrong, or not updated. Citizen may also file complaint under section 18 of RTI ac to State information commission.

RIGHT TO INFORMATION ACT 2005

- ❖ Citizen has right to take photocopy, right to inspect the work and records, held by any public authority.
- ❖ Approach Public information Officer for information.

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- ❖ Application for information need to be submitted to public information officer with application fee ----- which can be paid by: -----
- ❖ If you need assistance in writing application, PIO is suppose to help you as per provisions of the act.
- ❖ PIO is suppose to furnish you information within 30 days. If information is not held by Panchayt, PIO may transfer your application to respective public authority.
- ❖ Any information provided after prescribed time limit will be given free of any charge.
- ❖ Citizen need not give application or application fee or wait for 30 days for inspecting any information that is disclosed on the walls.
- ❖ Citizen may also file direct complaint under section 18 of RTI act, in case she/he not getting info or getting misleading info.
- ❖ Citizen may file first appeal before applet authority.

3. Details of information about village population:

Type			
	Female	Male	total
Total population			
SC			
ST			
Voters			
Type of family			
Total family			
BPL Card holder			
Antyoday card holders			

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4. Details about Village Population (to be kept in File)

Type	population		
	Female	Male	Total/persons
Total Population of village (0 to 6 years children)			
Schedule Caste			
Schedule Tribe			
SEBC			
Minorities			
Others			
Total Voters			
Schedule Caste			
Schedule tribe			
SEBC			
Minorities			
Others			
Handicapped			
Farmers (Land holders)			
Schedule caste Farmers (Land holders)			
ST Farmers (Land holders) (Tribal)/Adivasi			
OBC Farmers (Land holders)			
MINORITY Farmers (Land holders)			
Type of Families			
Total families	Numbers		
BPL FAMILIES			
APL Families			
Antodiyaya families			
Ann-purnna families			
Families having Toilets at their house			
Families not having toilets at their house			
Families having electricity connection			
Families not having electricity connection			
Families having agriculture land			
Landless families			
Marginal farmers			
Families having Tap connection in their house			
Families dwelling Kucha houses			
Families having pucca houses			
Grazing land		Hecters	
Fallow Land		Hecters	
Wasteland		Hecters	
Village Revenue land			
Others			

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5.Information about animals in village (file)

Species/type	Numbers
COW	
Ox	
Buffaloes	
Goat	
Sheep	
Camel	
hen /poultry	

6. Panchayat employees' duties (functions) and authorities (information with Patwari/village secretary) (file) , Gamsevak,

Talati(Patwari)	
Panchayat secretary	
Gram Sevak	
Peon/s	
Water work operator	
Others	
Do the above mentioned employees stay /reside in the village	

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Gram Sabha Details: table 4

- ❖ Minimum Gram Sabha held during the year:
- ❖ Date of last Gramsabha :
- ❖ Date of next Gramsabha :
- ❖ The officials from block level to be present:

The proceedings of the Gramsabha and resolutions can be inspected from Panchayat free of any charge. The copy of which can be obtained upon paying photocopy charges.

Details of meeting held at Panchayat

Sr. No	Type of Meeting	Time span between two meetings	Where	participants	Who will chair?	Agenda
1	Ward Sabha (meeting)		Ward	10% of the voters (ward) required to be present	Ward panch	Work to be taken up at ward level & Schemes
	Gramsabha		Panchayat level	10% of the voters (from panchayat) required to be present.	Sarpanch	Work to be taken up at Panchayat level & Schemes
	Panchayat corum or Gram sachivalay		Panchayat	Ward panch and Panchayat employee	Sarpanch	Implementation of schemes, status, progress report, complaints etc.

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Details of other committees at village level:

Sr. No	Name of the committee	No of members	Meeting held	Date of last meeting	Next meeting
1	Social Justice Committee	5	Every 3 months		
2	Village Water Committee	12	Every 2 months		
3	Village Vigilance committee (MGNREGA)	7	Every 2 months		
4	Village Health committee	5	Every 2 months		
5	Vigilance committee for PDS	5	Every month		
6	School Management Committee				

The minutes of meetings are available in the Panchayat and can be inspected free of any charge. The copy can be obtained by paying photocopy charges.

Name of committee : Social Justice committee

Sr.	Name of Members	Designations	SC/ST/OBC/Others	Female/Male

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Name of committee : Vigilance committee for PDS

Sr.	Name of Members	Designations	SC/ST/OBC/Others	Female/Male

Name of committee : Village Health committee

Sr.	Name of Members	Designations	SC/ST/OBC/Others	Female/Male

Kindly prepare Information for every committee (file)

Social Justice committee	Village water and sanitation committee	Village welfare committee
Village water committee	Village Health committee	Village education committee
Monitoring committee MGNREGA As per panchayat ward	Village Ration shop monitoring committee	E-Gram Computer committee

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List of Records available for inspection free of charge at Panchayat Office. Copy can be obtained by paying photocopy charges.

1. Panchayati Act, Rules
2. MGNREGA Act, Guidelines, rules
3. Right to information Act and copy of rules
4. Copy of Land revenue act/code
5. Budget
6. Audit Report
7. Annual Administrative report of the panchayat (at least last five years)
8. Proceedings and resolutions of Gramsabha
9. Proceedings and resolutions of meetings held by various committees like 9mentioned above)
10. Report that are presented by government officials in the Gramsabha.
11. Revenue record (Register 6- A, - A etc)
12. Registers regarding MGNREGA
13. Voters list of the village
14. BPL List Card holders list
15. BPL Ration card holders List
16. Antyoday Family List.
17. Cash Book
18. Asset Register
19. Stock Register
20. Patta Register
21. Complaint Register

Details of Panchayat taxes (File)

Type of tax	Responsible person	Number
House tax		
Sanitation tax		
Light tax		
General water tax		
Profession tax		
Land revenue		
Sewerage tax		

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Divya Bati tax		
Fee: market fee		
Fee for use of well water for other purposes		
Fee for gutter cleaning		
Village choky fee		
Fee for animal keeping house		

Attach panchayat tax rules here

Panchayat Budget

Year	Revenue of Panchayat (income of panchayat)	Grants Received **	donation received	Total income	Private (Royalty, CSR, other income)	Total expenditure	Balance
2007-08							
2008-09							
2009-10							
2010-11							
2011-12							

***grants or assistance received from MPLAD/MLA, District Planning Board, development programm, 13th finance commission's grants and others

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Type of Water body	Number	Area	Capacity of storing water
River/Dam			
Talab			
Handpump		NA	
Private wells			
Public Wells			

Schemes run by Central Government Assistance:

Sr. no	Scheme	Who is entitled?	What is the benefit?	Where to apply	Documents required for applying	Time limit of decision	Who will take the decision	Where to file appeal
	Indira Awas							

Schemes run by State Government Assistance:

Sr. no	Scheme	Who is entitled?	What is the benefit?	Where to apply	Documents required for applying	Time limit of decision	Who will take the decision	Where to file appeal
	Indira Awas							

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Waiting list of Indira Awas Yojana:

Name	Remark

List of Beneficiaries of various schemes of last five years:

1. Housing Scheme
2. Pension Scheme (widow, old age, differently able)
3. Allotment of land patta
4. Bankable schemes

Name of the scheme:

Name of person benefited	Year of receiving benefit

Details of village development work

	type of work	number of works	Budget	incurred expenditure	status of work complete/ incomplete
1	Roads				
2	well recharge				
3	check dams				
4	Gutter				

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5	Sanitation				
6	Anganwadi				
7	School				
8	community center hall				
9	drinking water pipeline				
10	Others				

Details of work done: Road

From --- to ---	Year	Under which scheme	Estimated cost	Total cost	Date of completion of work

Details of work: Well recharging

Following functions are done by Panchayat.

1. Birth Registration
2. Death registration
3. Valuation of house or shop

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4. Entries of land entitlements in the register.

Other facilities available in village (file)

Facility	where it is located in village /taluka	Contact	phone number
Milk cooperative society			
Agriculture cooperative society			
Bank			
Post office			
Fire brigade house			
Veterinary clinic			
seeds distribution			
Women groups			
Children groups			
Disaster mitigation and management unit			

Regarding Police station

Address of police station or outpost		
Name of PI/PSI		Ph:
Name of Police Mitra		Ph:
Social defense officer name and address		Ph:

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Instructions:

1. All the above information should be on the except those table where is specifically mentioned for keeping it only in the file.
2. Copy of all GRs, circulars, GOs, OMs, policies, rules, guidelines received by Panchayat, or reports, budgets, list of proposed beneficiaries, submitted by Panchayat should be marked to RTI file (pro-active disclosure file). This will a copy of the citizen.

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Templates for disclosures for MGNREGA

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2. Job Card Board in Every village (on the wall and file)

(All the job card holders name to be displayed on this board, including those who have not applied for any work or not worked even for a day)

Name of the Job card holder	Job card Number	Year									
		2010-11		2011-12		2012-13		2013-14		2014-15	
		Days	Amount	Days	Amount	Days	Amount	Days	Amount	Days	Amount

Table showing details for development works as under

S r. N o	Name of the work	Code of the work	Sanctioned amount			Amount spent			Work commenced on	Work completed on	Status of work	
			Labour	Material	total	Labour	Material	total			complete	incomplete
1												
2												

Details of material used:

Sr . N o	Name of the work	Cement		Bolders		Pebbles		Sand		Bricks		Water			
		Qty	Rate	Qty	Rate	Qty	Rate	Qty	Rate	Qty	Rate	Qty	Rate	Qty	Rate

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Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions
(Department of Personnel & Training)**2. List of registers to be maintained at Panchayat level for MGNREGA**

List applications for registration	list of sanction works
Registration list	Payment register
List of job card issued to	Unemployment Allowance Register
Job Card Register	Employment Register
estimates of sanctioned work	Allotment of Work register
Muster roll received register	Muster roll issue register
Asset Register	Cash Book
Complaint register	

About Social Audit :

Name of Social audit team members	Date of Last meeting	Date of next meeting

3. Display board at work place

Name of work/description					
Sanction cost of work					
A-MATERIAL COST					
B-WAGES					
SKILLED					
UNSKILLED					
Date of work started					
expected date of work completion					
No of workers present	Physically challenged	Old age	pregnant	other	total

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**Templates for disclosures for
government schools**

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Recommended templates for disclosure of information under Section 4 of the RTI Act for Government Schools

Information to be displayed at the government schools:

Sample Board 1: Details of information for Grievance Redressal

Nature of Information	Authority for redressal	Name of redressal officer	Office Address and phone number	Time lines For redressal	Public Dealing Day and time	Appellate Authority and process of appeal
Issues Related to Availability/Appointment of Teachers						
Issues related to admission						
Issues related to school infrastructure						
Issues related to corporal punishment, discrimination, child rights						
Issues related to incentive schemes						
Issues related to MDM						
Issues related to Financial allocations to school						

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Sample Board 2: Teacher information:

Teachers' Information Month and Year

(update every month)

Sr.	Name of Teacher	Male/ Female	Date of Joining School	Class and Subject of Teacher	Salary	Number of days taught in the month	Number of days and nature of non-instructional work (including in service trainings)
Head Teacher							

Number of Sanctioned Posts _____

Number of Vacant Posts _____

Number of Teachers on Deputation _____

Please make available service conditions and transfer policy of all teachers in hard copy

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(Department of Personnel & Training)**Sample Board 3: Student Enrolment Information: (Hard Copy)**

This information to be compiled and kept available for each academic year

Categories	Class I		Class II		Class III		Class IV		Class V		Class VI		Class VII		Class VIII	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Children with Special Needs																
SC																
ST																
OBC																
Minorities																
Others																
Total																

Sample Board 4: Entitlement and Incentive Information:

	Nature of Incentive/ Entitlements	Eligibility criteria	Amount to be Disbursed	Number of students eligible for the same	Number of students who have received	When disbursed [specify date]	Dated Receipt given And by whom
1	Textbooks						
2	Uniform						
3	Scholarships						
4	Any other						

Information to be provided in details in hard copy -name of beneficiary , grade, name of guardian, address and contact details of beneficiary.

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Sample Board 5: Details of budgetary expenditure: (in Hard Copy)

Detail of budget received by the school

Name of Budget Head	Amount Received	Date of Receipt	Amount Spent	Period of Expenditure	Nature of expenditure
Teaching Learning Material (TLM)					
School Development Grant (SDG)					
Maintenance					
Additional Classrooms					
Major Repairs					
Computer Aided Learning					
Any other					
Total					

Sample Board 6: Information about School Management Committee (SMC)

Date of appointment/constitution of committee:

Sl. No.	Name of member	Designation	Male/female	Category	Name and Class of Child whose parent is a member

Date of Next Meeting of SMC _____ **(to be updated monthly)**

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Sample Board 7: Details of School Management Committee: (In Hard Copy)

Sl. No.	Date of Meeting	Number of members present	Name of Person holding meeting register
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			

Issue 8: Copy of the Three Year Long SDP, with annual sub-parts, Copy of the DISE Report Card

Sample Board 9: Details of Mid Day Meal (MDM):

Day	Menu to be Served	Menu Served
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday		

To be made available in hard copy: copy of order of State Government on MDM as per Supreme Court order, supply register of MDM- norm of supply/delivery to include amount and date of delivery on a monthly basis, actual date of delivery and actual amount received, and payment register/record on MDM-Name of cook, payment received-date and amount of the payment received by the cook.

Sample Board 10: Details of Inspection of School: (In Hard Copy)

Sl. No.	Name of Inspector	Date of Visit	Details of officer from who Inspection report can be accessed

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Sample Board 11: Issues Inspected by the School Inspector:

Sl. No.	Items	Inspectors Comments
1.	State of Infrastructure	
a.	Classrooms	
b.	Toilets	
c.	Drinking Water	
2.	Teachers	
a.	Attendance	
3.	Quality of Teaching	
a.	State of notebooks	
b.	State of learning abilities	
4.	Children Related	
a.	Attendance	
b.	Any other	

Date of last Inspection:

Name of officer from whom the Inspection Report can be accessed

Sample Board 12: Medical Facilities available:

Medical Facility	Name/ Contact person	Address and Phone Number
Visiting Doctor		
Nurse		
Primary Health Centre		
Ambulance		
Any other		

Please also mention where the first-aid box is available in the school premise _____

Sample Board 13: Schemes and Programmes Implemented in School: (Hard Copy) Including under innovation fund, PPP, others and principal components of the same.

Sample Board 14. Support system for Children with Special Needs: (Hard Copy)

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Sample Board 15: Public Notice on Right to Information Act:

Public Notice on Right to Information Act

Right to Information Act 2005

Under the RTI Act, citizens have the right to access information from the school and the Department of Education.

- Applications for seeking information have to be submitted in writing with prescribed fee, to Public Information Officer (PIO) or Assistant Public Information Officer (APIO).
- RTI application fee is Rs. ____ and photocopy charges for providing copies of records is Rs. ____ per page.
- No fee for citizens below the poverty line
- Information will be provided within 30 days
- In case information is incomplete or unsatisfactory, first appeal to be made to the First Appellate Authority

Name, designation and contact details of relevant officials under the RTI Act

Official in custody of information in hard copy in school	Name of officer	Designation of officer	Room no. and Public Dealing Time	Mobile phone no.

Public Information Officer (PIO)	Name of officer	Designation of officer	Room no.	Mobile phone no.

First Appellate Authority (FAA)	Name of officer	Designation of officer	Room no.	Mobile phone no.

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(Department of Personnel & Training)**

List of Information that needs to be made available at Zonal /District Office of Education Department

Sample Board 1: Roles and Responsibilities:

Nature of Information	Designation/Authority level responsible	Name of the official	Office Address and Phone No.	Public Dealing Day and time	Name and designation of the Redressal Officer	Timeliness for Redressal
Issues related to availability/appointment of teachers						
Issues related to admission						
Issues related to school infrastructure						
Issues related to mental and physical harassment, discrimination and child rights						
Issues related to incentive schemes						
Issues related to Mid Day Meal						
Issues related to Financial allocations to school						
Others						
OVERALL GREIVANCE REDRESSAL STATUS:						
Number of Complaints Received This Month: Number of Complaints Redressed: Total Number of Complaints Unresolved : Phone number of Child Helpline Phone number of RTE helpline if available						

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1. Organogram
2. Copy of the Citizen's Charter
3. School wise School Development Plans (SDPs)
4. Process document of compilation of School Development Plans (SDPs)
5. Copy of Aggregated SDP
6. District Plan under SSA- Details of the planning process undertaken, including time when it is done at each stage and names of people responsible.
7. District Report Card of DISE
8. All circulars/orders/notice/notifications issued to be displayed for the period of week, summary of orders, backlog/previous orders/circulars/notice/notifications can be obtained at particular time from particular person. The name, designation, and time of availability for public viewing to be clearly displayed on board.
9. Information of all projects running in District- including government schemes, schemes functioning under Innovation Fund and those under PPP mode. Details to be included are- department running scheme, nature of input provided/service provided under partnership, quantum of funds disbursed by government, name of private partners and contribution of private partner (if applicable).

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Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions
(Department of Personnel & Training)**10. District office to display/make available all information of each block-**

	Block 1	Block 2
Number of Schools Overall		
Elementary Schools		
Primary		
UP		
Elementary (Class 1-8)		
Total Schools having elementary sections		
Total Schools RTE compliant on teacher availability		
Total Schools RTE compliant on infrastructure		
Total Schools RTE compliant on all indicators		
Secondary		
Higher Secondary		
Pre- Primary Education		
ICDS Centres		
Preschools		
Schools with PS section		
Specified Category Schools		
Kendriya Vidyalaya		
Sainik Schools		
Narvodaya Schools		
SC Hostels		
Tribal Ashrams		
Residential Schools		
Residential Bridge Course		
Non-Residential Bridge Course		
Seasonal Hostels		
KGBVs		
Model Schools		
Special Schools for Children with disability (will also need to be broken into multi-disability special schools, and for the individual specific disability)		
Schools imparting special training within the existing school premises and ongoing processes		

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Private Schools		
Aided		
Total seats in the incoming school		
Total seats reserved for weaker /disadvantaged section (as per aid)		
Unaided		

School wise details in Hard Copy

11. Teachers Information:

		Total	Block 1	Block 2
	Total Number of Teachers			
	(Teachers by regular/parateachers/contract teachers/guest teachers)			
	Number of Resource Teachers for Children with Disability			
	Number of Subject teachers-Health and Physical Education			
	Number of Subject teachers-Art Education			
	Number of Subject teachers-Work Education			
	Residential Facilities and Special Training Related Information*			
	Residential Bridge Course			
	Non-Residential Bridge Course			
	Seasonal Hostels			
	Month (from-to) when Hostels run			
	Schools imparting special training within the existing school premises and ongoing processes			
	KGBVs			
	Tribal Hostels			
	SC Hostels			
	Mobile School or other means of imparting education to migrant population			

* Information about villages/schools where these are provided to made available on request.

12. Names of teachers receiving awards for meritorious work and name of awards

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13. Financial/ Budget related details

	Account Head	Allocation	Money Received	Date of Receipt	Date of Disbursal	Money Spent

This information will need to be contextualised based on State
Both aggregate budgetary information and for individual blocks and
panchayats and schools to be provided in Hard Copy

14. Child Population Details

			Total	Block 1	Block 2	Block 3	
6-14	Total Population	Total					
		Boys					
		Girls					
		Dalits					
		SC					
		ST					
		Minority					
		CWSN					
	Out of School	Total					
		Boys					
		Girls					
		Dalits					
		SC					
		ST					
		Minority					
		CWSN					
		Other groups defined as marginalized group in State Rules					

15. Teacher training Institutes- DIET, Private B.Ed College, BRC, etc.- Number, Courses Run, Number of Seats, Free/Paid, Institution has been granted recognition by what body.

16. Inspection reports: for both government and private schools to be made available. The data to include, name of inspector, number of schools under him/her, dates of the visits made to the schools allocated to him/her, and details of inspection undertaken. (To be compiled and made available on a monthly basis)

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17. Information of all private schools in the district:

S . N o	Na me	Add ress	Recog nition Status	Affili ation to which Board	Name of societ y/ mana ging body	Total No of seats (inco ming class)	No . sea ts un der 25 %	No. of applica tions receive d	No of sea ts fill ed	Con tact pers on in the scho ol	Perio d of admis sion (starti ng & closin g)	Status of RTE compli ance

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No.501/2/13/2011-CA.V

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA/BHARAT SARKAR
CABINET SECRETARIAT/MANTRIMANDAL SACHIVALAYA
RASHTRAPATI BHAVAN

New Delhi dated 17th August, 2012

Subject: Implementation of Recommendations of Task Force for strengthening Compliance with Provisions for Suo Motu / Proactive Disclosures under Section 4 of the RTI Act, 2005.

Reference this Secretariat's O.M. of even number dated 14th August, 2012, on the subject matter.

2. The meeting of Committee of Secretaries scheduled to be held at 03.30 P.M. on 14th August, 2012, but postponed, will **now** be held at **3.30 P.M. on 14th September, 2012.** Agenda and venue will remain the same.

3. It is requested to kindly make it convenient to attend the meeting.

(V.P. Arora)

(V.P. Arora)
Deputy Secretary
Tele No: 2301 4378

To

Shri P. K. Misra, Secretary, D/o Personnel & Training.
Shri R.K. Singh, Home Secretary, M/o Home Affairs.
Dr. K. Radhakrishnan, Secretary, D/o Space.
Dr. R.K. Sinha, Secretary, D/o Atomic Energy.
Dr. Tishyarakshit Chatterjee, Secretary, M/o Environment & Forests.
Shri R.S. Gujral, Finance Secretary & Secretary, D/o Expenditure
Shri Arvind Mayaram, Secretary, D/o Economic Affairs.
Shri J. Satyanarayana, Secretary, D/o Electronics & Information Technology.
Shri Anil Goswami, Secretary, M/o Social Justice & Empowerment.
Shri B. A. Agarwal, Secretary, D/o Legal Affairs.
Shri V.K. Bhasin, Secretary, Legislative Department.

Copy forwarded to: -

Shri B.B. Srivastava, Secretary, Central Information Commission, with the request to kindly make it convenient to attend the meeting.

(V.P. Arora)

(V.P. Arora)
Deputy Secretary

Copy also forwarded to: -

(V.P. Arora)

(V.P. Arora)
Deputy Secretary

Principal Secretary to Prime Minister.

Internal circulation
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(Department of Personnel & Training)

New Delhi,
Dated _____ May , 2012

NOTE FOR THE COMMITTEE OF SECRETARIES

Subject: Implementation of Recommendations of Task Force for Strengthening Compliance with Provisions for Suo Motu/Proactive Disclosures under Section 4 of the RTI Act, 2005.

* * *

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The proposal is to seek approval of Committee of Secretaries (COS) on the recommendations of a Task Force set up by this Department, for strengthening compliance with provisions for suo motu (or proactive) disclosures as given in Section 4 of the RTI Act, 2005.

2.0 Background

2.1 Section 4(1)(b) of the RTI Act lays down the information which should be disclosed by Public Authorities on a suo motu or proactive basis. Section 4(2) and Section 4(3) prescribe the method of dissemination of this information. The purpose of suo motu disclosures under Section 4 is to place large amount of information in public domain on a proactive basis to make functioning of the Public Authorities more transparent and also to reduce the need for filing individual RTI applications. A copy of the Act is enclosed as **Annexure-I.**

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2.2 Since the promulgation of the Act, large amount of information relating to functioning of public bodies is being put in public domain primarily through web based disclosures. However, it is noted that the quality and quantity of disclosures is still not up to the mark and in relation to certain clauses of Section 4(1)(b) and 4(1)(c), sufficient disclosures are not being made due to lack of clear guidelines. Also, there is little monitoring of compliance with the provisions of Section 4 which has been highlighted by Chief Information Commissioner also, in his various judgments.

2.3 This issue has engaged the attention of the government. It is felt that the weak implementation of Section 4 of the Act is partly due to the fact that certain provisions of this Section have not been fully detailed and, that there is need to set up a compliance mechanism to ensure that requirements of Section 4 are fully met.

2.4 In order to address the above, this Department constituted a Task Force in May 2011, which included representatives of civil society organizations active in the field of Right to Information as well. A copy of the Order setting up the Task Force and its Terms of Reference is enclosed at **Annexure-II**.

3.0 Recommendations of the Task Force

3.1 The Task Force submitted its Report on 30.08.2011. It has addressed various items of Terms of Reference and given detailed recommendations. A copy of the Report of the Task Force is at **Annexure-III**.

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3.2 The Task Force has given recommendations on

- a) prescribing additional items for suo-motu disclosure under Section 4(1)(b)(xvii);
- b) guidelines for facilitating disclosure at different levels of Government including templates for disclosure;
- c) general recommendations about disclosure at various levels;
- d) guidelines for digital publication of proactive disclosures;
- e) guidelines for making disclosure more effective;
- f) steps to be taken in matters relating to threat to RTI Activists;
- g) guidelines for consultation with public in relation to formulation of policies and implementation thereof; and
- h) compliance with provisions of suo-motu disclosure under the RTI Act.

3.3 The recommendations of the Task Force have been processed in the Department. Although it is felt that by and large the recommendations of the Task Force are sound and feasible to implement, there are some recommendations which may not be implemented immediately. A detailed analysis of the recommendations has been made and recommendations that can be taken up for immediate implementation have been detailed in **Annexure-IV**. Recommendations that are proposed to be processed at a later date are detailed in **Annexure- V**. These recommendations are the steps to be taken in matters relating to threat to RTI Activists and guidelines for consultation with public in relation to formulation of policies and

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implementation thereof which do not deal with proactive disclosure and maybe dealt separately.

4.0 Detailed Guidelines on suo-motu disclosure

4.1 Detailed guidelines have been framed on the recommendations that can be taken up for immediate implementation. While the guidelines are mandatory for the Central Government Ministries and Departments, they are illustrative in nature for State Governments. Guidelines so framed are placed at **Annexure VI**.

4.2 Guidelines have been framed on:

- i. Prescribing additional items under Section 4(1)(b)(xvii)
- ii. Guidelines for Digital Publication
- iii. Guidelines for State Governments for facilitating disclosure at different levels of government
- iv. Detailing of Section 4(1)(b)(iii), 4(1)(b)(iv), 4(1)(b)(ix) and 4(1)(b)(xiv)
- v. Compliance mechanism with provisions of Suo Motu disclosure.

4.3 The key details of the guidelines are discussed in subsequent paragraphs.

5.0 Recommendations that maybe taken up for implementation immediately and guidelines thereof:

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5.1 Prescribing additional items for suo motu disclosure under Section 4(1)(b)(xvii)

5.1.1 Section 4(1)(b)(xvii) lays down that government may prescribe any additional item which should also be included for suo motu disclosure. Detailed guidelines have been laid down for disclosing

- i. Information relating to procurement;
- ii. Information relating to public-private partnerships;
- iii. Transfer policy for different grades/cadres of employees;
- iv. Details of posts which have been classified as sensitive posts as per directions of the Central Vigilance Commission;
- v. RTI queries and appeals received by the public authorities and responses thereto;
- vi. Details of CAG paras framed and the response thereto;
- vii. Citizens Charters;
- viii. All discretionary/non-discretionary grants/allocations; and
- ix. Details of official tours of PM, Ministers and officers.

5.2 Guidelines for State Governments for facilitating disclosure at different levels of government – suggested templates for key areas

5.2.1 The scheme of Section 4 applies uniformly to all public authorities even though they may be constituted at different levels. Different level of detailing is required at different levels of administration. These guidelines are specifically for disclosure by the State Government Departments. These

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guidelines are in addition to the guidelines prescribed for the Central Government Ministries/ Departments. Templates for disclosure at different levels of government have been prepared in four areas namely Public Distribution System; Panchayats; MGNREGA; and Primary and Secondary Schools.

5.2.2 It has also been recommended that disclosures should also be done locally in a form and manner that is easily accessible to the public; public authorities should use documents which are given to beneficiaries in relation to these schemes for disclosing salient features of the schemes; and at the Panchayat level, RTI proactive disclosure files may be maintained for perusal by information seekers.

5.3 Guidelines for Digital Publication of proactive disclosures under Section 4

5.3.1 Guidelines lay down the benchmarks to ensure that websites' disclosures are user-friendly and accessible to general public.

5.4 Guidelines for certain clauses of Section 4(1)(b) to make disclosures more effective

5.4.1 The Task Force has fleshed out detailed guidelines for four clauses of Section 4(1)(b) namely, clause 4(1)(b)(iii) regarding the procedure followed in the decision making process ; clause 4(1)(b)(iv) the norms set by it for the discharge of its functions; clause 4(1)(b)(xi) information held in electronic form; and clause 4(1)(b)(xiv) the budget and expenditure.

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5.5 Compliance with provisions of suo motu disclosure.

5.5.1 In order to monitor and enforce compliance with suo motu disclosure provisions both the public authorities and Information Commissions should share the responsibility. At the level of public authority responsibility should be given at senior levels for ensuring that information is proactively disclosed and regularly updated as per the provisions of the Act. The compliance mechanism framed in the guidelines includes preparation of a Proactive disclosure scheme by each Department/Ministry on an annual basis and its submission to the Central Information Commission; Compliance with the scheme to be reported in the annual reports of the Ministry/Department; Appointment of a senior officer not below the rank of a Joint Secretary and not below rank of Additional HOD in case of attached offices for ensuring compliance with the provisions relating to proactive disclosures; and sample audits of compliance of proactive disclosure scheme of Ministries/Departments by Information Commissions. The Ministry/Department shall have mandatory third party audits of proactive disclosure and report their compliance in Departmental RFD

6.0 Guidelines and the modalities for Implementation

6.1 The guidelines once approved by the Competent Authority, shall be implemented by public authorities of Central Government.

7.0 Comments of Ministries/Departments

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7.1 The comments of seven concerned Ministries/Departments were sought on the report of the Task Force on 13th September, 2011, 30th September, 2011 and 10th October, 2011. On the directions of Cabinet Secretariat, the comments of all Ministries/ departments in Government of India were sought on 24th November, 2011 and 24th January, 2012. Comments have been received from 24 Ministries/ departments and are placed at **Annexure- VII**. The comment received from Department of Space, Department of Expenditure, Department of Economic Affairs, Department of Atomic Energy have been suitably incorporated in the guidelines. The concerns of Department of Space and Atomic Energy and Ministry of Home Affairs on disclosure of posting and transfers of personnel manning posts of strategic importance has been suitably addressed in the guidelines by providing exemptions. The objections of Ministry of Home Affairs on disclosure of CAG/PAC paras and discretionary/ non discretionary grants have not been accepted. Other Ministries/ Departments have concurred / offered no comments on the report.

8.0 Approval Sought

8.1 Committee of Secretaries is requested to consider the above proposal and approve the acceptance of recommendations as detailed in **Annexure-IV** of this note and also to agree that recommendations contained in **Annexure-V** may be processed at a later date. Approval is sought on the

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guidelines framed as per the above recommendations and placed at

Annexure-VI

9.0 Secretary (P) has seen and approved the note for consideration of the Committee of Secretaries.

(Manoj Joshi)
Joint Secretary to Government of India
Phone: 23093668

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Annexure I



असाधारण
EXTRAORDINARY

भाग II — खण्ड I
PART II — Section I

प्राधिकार से प्रकाशित
PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY

सं० 25]	नई दिल्ली, मंगलवार, जून 21, 2005/ज्यैष्ठ 31, 1927
नं०. 25]	NEW DELHI, TUESDAY, JUNE 21, 2005/JYAISTHA 31, 1927

इस भाग में भिन्न पृष्ठ संख्या दी जाती है जिससे कि यह अलग संकलन के रूप में रखा जा सके।
Separate paging is given to this Part in order that it may be filed as a separate compilation

MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE
(Legislative Department)

New Delhi, the 21st June, 2005/Jyaistha 31, 1927 (Saka)

The following Act of Parliament received the assent of the President on the 15th June, 2005, and is hereby published for general information:—

THE RIGHT TO INFORMATION ACT, 2005 No. 22 of 2005

[15th June, 2005.]

Act to provide for setting out the practical regime of right to information for citizens to secure access to information under the control of public authorities, in order to promote transparency and accountability in the working of every public authority, the constitution of a Central Information Commission and State Information Commissions and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

WHEREAS the Constitution of India has established democratic Republic;

AND WHEREAS democracy requires an informed citizenry and transparency of information which are vital to its functioning and also to contain corruption and to hold Governments and their instrumentalities accountable to the governed;

AND WHEREAS revelation of information in actual practice is likely to conflict with other public interests including efficient operations of the Governments, optimum use of limited fiscal resources and the preservation of confidentiality of sensitive information;

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And whereas it is necessary to harmonise these conflicting interests while preserving the
paramountcy of the democratic ideal;

Now, therefore, it is expedient to provide for furnishing certain information to citizens who
desire to have it.

Be it enacted by Parliament in the Fifty-sixth Year of the Republic of India as follows:—

CHAPTER I

Preliminary

- 1 (1) This Act may be called the Right to Information Act, 2005.
- (2) It extends to the whole of India except the State of Jammu and Kashmir.
- (3) The provisions of sub-section (1) of section 4, sub-sections (1) and (2) of section 5, sections 12, 13, 15, 16, 24, 27 and 28 shall come into force at once, and the remaining provisions of this Act shall come into force on the one hundred and twentieth day of its enactment.
- 2 In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires,—
 - (a) "appropriate Government" means in relation to a public authority which is established, constituted, owned, controlled or substantially financed by funds provided directly or indirectly—
 - (i) by the Central Government or the Union territory administration, the Central Government;
 - (ii) by the State Government, the State Government;
 - (b) "Central Information Commission" means the Central Information Commission constituted under sub-section (1) of section 12;
 - (c) "Central Public Information Officer" means the Central Public Information Officer designated under sub-section (1) and includes a Central Assistant Public Information Officer designated as such under sub-section (2) of section 5;
 - (d) "Chief Information Commissioner" and "Information Commissioner" mean the Chief Information Commissioner and Information Commissioner appointed under sub-section (3) of section 12;
 - (e) "competent authority" means—
 - (i) the Speaker in the case of the House of the People or the Legislative Assembly of a State or a Union territory having such Assembly and the Chairman in the case of the Council of States or Legislative Council of a State;
 - (ii) the Chief Justice of India in the case of the Supreme Court;
 - (iii) the Chief Justice of the High Court in the case of a High Court;
 - (iv) the President or the Governor, as the case may be, in the case of other authorities established or constituted by or under the Constitution;
 - (v) the administrator appointed under article 239 of the Constitution;
 - (f) "information" means any material in any form, including records, documents,

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memos, e-mails, opinions, advices, press releases, circulars, orders, logbooks, contracts, reports, papers, samples, models, data material held in any electronic form and information relating to any private body which can be accessed by a public authority under any other law for the time being in force;

- (g) "prescribed" means prescribed by rules made under this Act by the appropriate Government or the competent authority, as the case may be;
- (h) "public authority" means any authority or body or institution of self-government established or constituted—
 - (a) by or under the Constitution;
 - (b) by any other law made by Parliament;
 - (c) by any other law made by State Legislature;
 - (d) by notification issued or order made by the appropriate Government, and includes any—
 - (i) body owned, controlled or substantially financed;
 - (ii) non-Government organization substantially financed, directly or indirectly by funds provided by the appropriate Government;
- (i) "record" includes—
 - (a) any document, manuscript and file;
 - (b) any microfilm, microfiche and facsimile copy of a document;
 - (c) any reproduction of image or images embodied in such microfilm (whether enlarged or not); and
 - (d) any other material produced by a computer or any other device;
- (j) "right to information" means the right to information accessible under this Act which is held by or under the control of any public authority and includes the right to—
 - (i) inspection of work, documents, records;
 - (ii) taking notes, extracts or certified copies of documents or records;
 - (iii) taking certified samples of material;
 - (iv) obtaining information in the form of diskettes, floppies, tapes, video cassettes or in any other electronic mode or through printouts where such information is stored in a computer or in any other device;
- (k) "State Information Commission" means the State Information Commission constituted under sub-section (1) of section 15;
- (l) "State Chief Information Commissioner" and "State Information Commissioner" mean the State Chief Information Commissioner and the State Information Commissioner appointed under sub-section (3) of section 15;
- (m) "State Public Information Officer" means the State Public Information Officer designated under sub-section (1) and includes a State Assistant Public Information Officer designated as such under sub-section (2) of section 5;
- (n) "third party" means a person other than the citizen making a request for information and includes a public authority.

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CHAPTER II

Right to information and obligations of public authorities

- 3 Subject to the provisions of this Act, all citizens shall have the right to information.
- 4 (1) Every public authority shall—
- (a) maintain all its records duly catalogued and indexed in a manner and the form which facilitates the right to information under this Act and ensure that all records that are appropriate to be computerised are, within a reasonable time and subject to availability of resources, computerised and connected through a network all over the country on different systems so that access to such records is facilitated;
 - (b) publish within one hundred and twenty days from the enactment of this Act,—
 - (i) the particulars of its organisation, functions and duties;
 - (ii) the powers and duties of its officers and employees;
 - (iii) the procedure followed in the decision making process, including channels of supervision and accountability;
 - (iv) the norms set by it for the discharge of its functions;
 - (v) the rules, regulations, instructions, manuals and records, held by it or under its control or used by its employees for discharging its functions;
 - (vi) a statement of the categories of documents that are held by it or under its control;
 - (vii) the particulars of any arrangement that exists for consultation with, or representation by, the members of the public in relation to the formulation of its policy or implementation thereof;
 - (viii) a statement of the boards, councils, committees and other bodies consisting of two or more persons constituted as its part or for the purpose of its advice, and as to whether meetings of those boards, councils, committees and other bodies are open to the public, or the minutes of such meetings are accessible for public;
 - (ix) a directory of its officers and employees;
 - (x) the monthly remuneration received by each of its officers and employees, including the system of compensation as provided in its regulations;
 - (xi) the budget allocated to each of its agency, indicating the particulars of all plans, proposed expenditures and reports on disbursements made;
 - (xii) the manner of execution of subsidy programmes, including the amounts allocated and the details of beneficiaries of such programmes;
 - (xiii) particulars of recipients of concessions, permits or authorisations granted by it;
 - (xiv) details in respect of the information, available to or held by it, reduced in an electronic form;
 - (xv) the particulars of facilities available to citizens for obtaining information, including the working hours of a library or reading room, if maintained for public use;
 - (xvi) the names, designations and other particulars of the Public Information

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Officers;

- (xvii) such other information as may be prescribed and thereafter update these publications every year;
- (c) publish all relevant facts while formulating important policies or announcing the decisions which affect public;
- (d) provide reasons for its administrative or quasi-judicial decisions to affected persons.
- (2) It shall be a constant endeavour of every public authority to take steps in accordance with the requirements of clause (b) of sub-section (1) to provide as much information suo motu to the public at regular intervals through various means of communications, including internet, so that the public have minimum resort to the use of this Act to obtain information.
- (3) For the purposes of sub-section (1), every information shall be disseminated widely and in such form and manner which is easily accessible to the public.
- (4) All materials shall be disseminated taking into consideration the cost effectiveness, local language and the most effective method of communication in that local area and the information should be easily accessible, to the extent possible in electronic format with the Central Public Information Officer or State Public Information Officer, as the case may be, available free or at such cost of the medium or the print cost price as may be prescribed.

Explanation.—For the purposes of sub-sections (3) and (4), "disseminated" means making known or communicated the information to the public through notice boards, newspapers, public announcements, media broadcasts, the internet or any other means, including inspection of offices of any public authority.

- 5 (1) Every public authority shall, within one hundred days of the enactment of this Act, designate as many officers as the Central Public Information Officers or State Public Information Officers, as the case may be, in all administrative units or offices under it as may be necessary to provide information to persons requesting for the information under this Act.
- (2) Without prejudice to the provisions of sub-section (1), every public authority shall designate an officer, within one hundred days of the enactment of this Act, at each sub-divisional level or other sub-district level as a Central Assistant Public Information Officer or a State Assistant Public Information Officer, as the case may be, to receive the applications for information or appeals under this Act for forwarding the same forthwith to the Central Public Information Officer or the State Public Information Officer or senior officer specified under sub-section (1) of section 19 or the Central Information Commission or the State Information Commission, as the case may be:

Provided that where an application for information or appeal is given to a Central Assistant Public Information Officer or a State Assistant Public Information Officer, as the case may be, a period of five days shall be added in computing the period for response specified under sub-section (1) of section 7.

- (3) Every Central Public Information Officer or State Public Information Officer, as the case may be, shall deal with requests from persons seeking information and render reasonable assistance to the persons seeking such information.

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- (4) The Central Public Information Officer or State Public Information Officer, as the case may be, may seek the assistance of any other officer as he or she considers it necessary for the proper discharge of his or her duties.
- (5) Any officer, whose assistance has been sought under sub-section (4), shall render all assistance to the Central Public Information Officer or State Public Information Officer, as the case may be, seeking his or her assistance and for the purposes of any contravention of the provisions of this Act, such other officer shall be treated as a Central Public Information Officer or State Public Information Officer, as the case may be.
- 6 (1) A person, who desires to obtain any information under this Act, shall make a request in writing or through electronic means in English or Hindi or in the official language of the area in which the application is being made, accompanying such fee as may be prescribed, to—
- (a) the Central Public Information Officer or State Public Information Officer, as the case may be, of the concerned public authority;
- (b) the Central Assistant Public Information Officer or State Assistant Public Information Officer, as the case may be,

specifying the particulars of the information sought by him or her:

Provided that where such request cannot be made in writing, the Central Public Information Officer or State Public Information Officer, as the case may be, shall render all reasonable assistance to the person making the request orally to reduce the same in writing.

- (2) An applicant making request for information shall not be required to give any reason for requesting the information or any other personal details except those that may be necessary for contacting him.
- (3) Where an application is made to a public authority requesting for an information,—
- (i) which is held by another public authority; or
- (ii) the subject matter of which is more closely connected with the functions of another public authority,

the public authority, to which such application is made, shall transfer the application or such part of it as may be appropriate to that other public authority and inform the applicant immediately about such transfer:

Provided that the transfer of an application pursuant to this sub-section shall be made as soon as practicable but in no case later than five days from the date of receipt of the application.

- 7 (1) Subject to the proviso to sub-section (2) of section 5 or the proviso to sub-section (3) of section 6, the Central Public Information Officer or State Public Information Officer, as the case may be, on receipt of a request under section 6 shall, as expeditiously as possible, and in any case within thirty days of the receipt of the request, either provide the information on payment of such fee as may be prescribed or reject the request for any of the reasons specified in sections 8 and 9:

Provided that where the information sought for concerns the life or liberty of a person, the same shall be provided within forty-eight hours of the receipt of the request.

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- (2) If the Central Public Information Officer or State Public Information Officer, as the case may be, fails to give decision on the request for information within the period specified under sub-section (1), the Central Public Information Officer or State Public Information Officer, as the case may be, shall be deemed to have refused the request.
- (3) Where a decision is taken to provide the information on payment of any further fee representing the cost of providing the information, the Central Public Information Officer or State Public Information Officer, as the case may be, shall send an intimation to the person making the request, giving—
- (a) the details of further fees representing the cost of providing the information as determined by him, together with the calculations made to arrive at the amount in accordance with fee prescribed under sub-section (1), requesting him to deposit that fees, and the period intervening between the despatch of the said intimation and payment of fees shall be excluded for the purpose of calculating the period of thirty days referred to in that sub-section;
 - (b) information concerning his or her right with respect to review the decision as to the amount of fees charged or the form of access provided, including the particulars of the appellate authority, time limit, process and any other forms.
- (4) Where access to the record or a part thereof is required to be provided under this Act and the person to whom access is to be provided is sensorily disabled, the Central Public Information Officer or State Public Information Officer, as the case may be, shall provide assistance to enable access to the information, including providing such assistance as may be appropriate for the inspection.
- (5) Where access to information is to be provided in the printed or in any electronic format, the applicant shall, subject to the provisions of sub-section (6), pay such fee as may be prescribed:

Provided that the fee prescribed under sub-section (1) of section 6 and sub-sections (1) and (5) of section 7 shall be reasonable and no such fee shall be charged from the persons who are of below poverty line as may be determined by the appropriate Government.

- (6) Notwithstanding anything contained in sub-section (5), the person making request for the information shall be provided the information free of charge where a public authority fails to comply with the time limits specified in sub-section (1).
- (7) Before taking any decision under sub-section (1), the Central Public Information Officer or State Public Information Officer, as the case may be, shall take into consideration the representation made by a third party under section 11.
- (8) Where a request has been rejected under sub-section (1), the Central Public Information Officer or State Public Information Officer, as the case may be, shall communicate to the person making the request,—
- (i) the reasons for such rejection;
 - (ii) the period within which an appeal against such rejection may be preferred; and
 - (iii) the particulars of the appellate authority.
- (9) An information shall ordinarily be provided in the form in which it is sought unless it would disproportionately divert the resources of the public authority or would be detrimental to the safety or preservation of the record in question.

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- 8 (1) Notwithstanding anything contained in this Act, there shall be no obligation to give any citizen,—
- (a) information, disclosure of which would prejudicially affect the sovereignty and integrity of India, the security, strategic, scientific or economic interests of the State, relation with foreign State or lead to incitement of an offence;
 - (b) information which has been expressly forbidden to be published by any court of law or tribunal or the disclosure of which may constitute contempt of court;
 - (c) information, the disclosure of which would cause a breach of privilege of Parliament or the State Legislature;
 - (d) information including commercial confidence, trade secrets or intellectual property, the disclosure of which would harm the competitive position of a third party, unless the competent authority is satisfied that larger public interest warrants the disclosure of such information;
 - (e) information available to a person in his fiduciary relationship, unless the competent authority is satisfied that the larger public interest warrants the disclosure of such information;
 - (f) information received in confidence from foreign Government;
 - (g) information, the disclosure of which would endanger the life or physical safety of any person or identify the source of information or assistance given in confidence for law enforcement or security purposes;
 - (h) information which would impede the process of investigation or apprehension or prosecution of offenders;
 - (i) cabinet papers including records of deliberations of the Council of Ministers, Secretaries and other officers:
 Provided that the decisions of Council of Ministers, the reasons thereof, and the material on the basis of which the decisions were taken shall be made public after the decision has been taken, and the matter is complete, or over:
- Provided further that those matters which come under the exemptions specified in this section shall not be disclosed;
- (j) information which relates to personal information the disclosure of which has no relationship to any public activity or interest, or which would cause unwarranted invasion of the privacy of the individual unless the Central Public Information Officer or the State Public Information Officer or the appellate authority, as the case may be, is satisfied that the larger public interest justifies the disclosure of such information:
 Provided that the information which cannot be denied to the Parliament or a State Legislature shall not be denied to any person.
- (2) Notwithstanding anything in the Official Secrets Act, 1923 nor any of the exemptions permissible in accordance with sub-section (1), a public authority may allow access to information, if public interest in disclosure outweighs the harm to the protected interests.
- (3) Subject to the provisions of clauses (a), (c) and (i) of sub-section (1), any information relating to any occurrence, event or matter which has taken place, occurred or happened twenty years before the date on which any request is made under section 6 shall be provided to any person making a request under that section:
 Provided that where any question arises as to the date from which the said period of twenty years has to be computed, the decision of the Central

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Government shall be final, subject to the usual appeals provided for in this Act.

- 9 Without prejudice to the provisions of section 8, a Central Public Information Officer or a State Public Information Officer, as the case may be, may reject a request for information where such a request for providing access would involve an infringement of copyright subsisting in a person other than the State.

- 10 (1) Where a request for access to information is rejected on the ground that it is in relation to information which is exempt from disclosure, then, notwithstanding anything contained in this Act, access may be provided to that part of the record which does not contain any information which is exempt from disclosure under this Act and which can reasonably be severed from any part that contains exempt information.

- (2) Where access is granted to a part of the record under sub-section (1), the Central Public Information Officer or State Public Information Officer, as the case may be, shall give a notice to the applicant, informing—

- (a) that only part of the record requested, after severance of the record containing information which is exempt from disclosure, is being provided;
- (b) the reasons for the decision, including any findings on any material question of fact, referring to the material on which those findings were based;
- (c) the name and designation of the person giving the decision;
- (d) the details of the fees calculated by him or her and the amount of fee which the applicant is required to deposit; and
- (e) his or her rights with respect to review of the decision regarding non-disclosure of part of the information, the amount of fee charged or the form of access provided, including the particulars of the senior officer specified under sub-section (1) of section 19 or the Central Information Commission or the State Information Commission, as the case may be, time limit, process and any other form of access.

- 11 (1) Where a Central Public Information Officer or a State Public Information Officer, as the case may be, intends to disclose any information or record, or part thereof on a request made under this Act, which relates to or has been supplied by a third party and has been treated as confidential by that third party, the Central Public Information Officer or State Public Information Officer, as the case may be, shall, within five days from the receipt of the request, give a written notice to such third party of the request and of the fact that the Central Public Information Officer or State Public Information Officer, as the case may be, intends to disclose the information or record, or part thereof, and invite the third party to make a submission in writing or orally, regarding whether the information should be disclosed, and such submission of the third party shall be kept in view while taking a decision about disclosure of information:

Provided that except in the case of trade or commercial secrets protected by law, disclosure may be allowed if the public interest in disclosure outweighs in importance any possible harm or injury to the interests of such third party.

- (2) Where a notice is served by the Central Public Information Officer or State Public Information Officer, as the case may be, under sub-section (1) to a third party in respect of any information or record or part thereof, the third party shall, within ten days from the date of receipt of such notice, be given

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the opportunity to make representation against the proposed disclosure.

- (3) Notwithstanding anything contained in section 7, the Central Public Information Officer or State Public Information Officer, as the case may be, shall, within forty days after receipt of the request under section 6, if the third party has been given an opportunity to make representation under sub-section (2), make a decision as to whether or not to disclose the information or record or part thereof and give in writing the notice of his decision to the third party.
- (4) A notice given under sub-section (3) shall include a statement that the third party to whom the notice is given is entitled to prefer an appeal under section 19 against the decision.

CHAPTER III**The Central Information Commission**

- 12 (1) The Central Government shall, by notification in the Official Gazette, constitute a body to be known as the Central Information Commission to exercise the powers conferred on, and to perform the functions assigned to, it under this Act.
- (2) The Central Information Commission shall consist of—
- (a) the Chief Information Commissioner; and
 - (b) such number of Central Information Commissioners, not exceeding ten, as may be deemed necessary.
- (3) The Chief Information Commissioner and Information Commissioners shall be appointed by the President on the recommendation of a committee consisting of—
- (i) the Prime Minister, who shall be the Chairperson of the committee;
 - (ii) the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha; and
 - (iii) a Union Cabinet Minister to be nominated by the Prime Minister.
- Explanation.—For the purposes of removal of doubts, it is hereby declared that where the Leader of Opposition in the House of the People has not been recognised as such, the Leader of the single largest group in opposition of the Government in the House of the People shall be deemed to be the Leader of Opposition.
- (4) The general superintendence, direction and management of the affairs of the Central Information Commission shall vest in the Chief Information Commissioner who shall be assisted by the Information Commissioners and may exercise all such powers and do all such acts and things which may be exercised or done by the Central Information Commission autonomously without being subjected to directions by any other authority under this Act.
- (5) The Chief Information Commissioner and Information Commissioners shall be persons of eminence in public life with wide knowledge and experience in law, science and technology, social service, management, journalism, mass media or administration and governance.
- (6) The Chief Information Commissioner or an Information Commissioner shall not be a Member of Parliament or Member of the Legislature of any State or Union territory, as the case may be, or hold any other office of profit or connected with any political party or carrying on any business or pursuing any profession.

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- (7) The headquarters of the Central Information Commission shall be at Delhi and the Central Information Commission may, with the previous approval of the Central Government, establish offices at other places in India.
- 13 (1) The Chief Information Commissioner shall hold office for a term of five years from the date on which he enters upon his office and shall not be eligible for reappointment:

Provided that no Chief Information Commissioner shall hold office as such after he has attained the age of sixty-five years.

- (2) Every Information Commissioner shall hold office for a term of five years from the date on which he enters upon his office or till he attains the age of sixty-five years, whichever is earlier, and shall not be eligible for reappointment as such Information Commissioner:

Provided that every Information Commissioner shall, on vacating his office under this sub-section be eligible for appointment as the Chief Information Commissioner in the manner specified in sub-section (3) of section 12:

Provided further that where the Information Commissioner is appointed as the Chief Information Commissioner, his term of office shall not be more than five years in aggregate as the Information Commissioner and the Chief Information Commissioner.

- (3) The Chief Information Commissioner or an Information Commissioner shall before he enters upon his office make and subscribe before the President or some other person appointed by him in that behalf, an oath or affirmation according to the form set out for the purpose in the First Schedule.
- (4) The Chief Information Commissioner or an Information Commissioner may, at any time, by writing under his hand addressed to the President, resign from his office:

Provided that the Chief Information Commissioner or an Information Commissioner may be removed in the manner specified under section 14.

- (5) The salaries and allowances payable to and other terms and conditions of service of —
- (a) the Chief Information Commissioner shall be the same as that of the Chief Election Commissioner;
- (b) an Information Commissioner shall be the same as that of an Election Commissioner:

Provided that if the Chief Information Commissioner or an Information Commissioner, at the time of his appointment is, in receipt of a pension, other than a disability or wound pension, in respect of any previous service under the Government of India or under the Government of a State, his salary in respect of the service as the Chief Information Commissioner or an Information Commissioner shall be reduced by the amount of that pension including any portion of pension which was commuted and pension equivalent of other forms of retirement benefits excluding pension equivalent of retirement gratuity:

Provided further that if the Chief Information Commissioner or an Information Commissioner if, at the time of his appointment is, in receipt of retirement benefits in respect of any previous service rendered in a Corporation

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established by or under any Central Act or State Act or a Government company owned or controlled by the Central Government or the State Government, his salary in respect of the service as the Chief Information Commissioner or an Information Commissioner shall be reduced by the amount of pension equivalent to the retirement benefits:

Provided also that the salaries, allowances and other conditions of service of the Chief Information Commissioner and the Information Commissioners shall not be varied to their disadvantage after their appointment.

- (6) The Central Government shall provide the Chief Information Commissioner and the Information Commissioners with such officers and employees as may be necessary for the efficient performance of their functions under this Act, and the salaries and allowances payable to and the terms and conditions of service of the officers and other employees appointed for the purpose of this Act shall be such as may be prescribed.
- 14 (1) Subject to the provisions of sub-section (3), the Chief Information Commissioner or any Information Commissioner shall be removed from his office only by order of the President on the ground of proved misbehaviour or incapacity after the Supreme Court, on a reference made to it by the President, has, on inquiry, reported that the Chief Information Commissioner or any Information Commissioner, as the case may be, ought on such ground be removed.
- (2) The President may suspend from office, and if deem necessary prohibit also from attending the office during inquiry, the Chief Information Commissioner or Information Commissioner in respect of whom a reference has been made to the Supreme Court under sub-section (1) until the President has passed orders on receipt of the report of the Supreme Court on such reference.
- (3) Notwithstanding anything contained in sub-section (1), the President may by order remove from office the Chief Information Commissioner or any Information Commissioner if the Chief Information Commissioner or a Information Commissioner, as the case may be,—
 - (a) is adjudged an insolvent; or
 - (b) has been convicted of an offence which, in the opinion of the President, involves moral turpitude; or
 - (c) engages during his term of office in any paid employment outside the duties of his office; or
 - (d) is, in the opinion of the President, unfit to continue in office by reason of infirmity of mind or body; or
 - (e) has acquired such financial or other interest as is likely to affect prejudicially his functions as the Chief Information Commissioner or a Information Commissioner.
- (4) If the Chief Information Commissioner or a Information Commissioner in any way, concerned or interested in any contract or agreement made by or on behalf of the Government of India or participates in any way in the profit thereof or in any benefit or emolument arising there from otherwise than as a member and in common with the other members of an incorporated company, he shall, for the purposes of sub-section (1), be deemed to be guilty of misbehavior.

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- 15** (1) Every State Government shall, by notification in the Official Gazette, constitute a body to be known as the (name of the State) Information Commission to exercise the powers conferred on, and to perform the functions assigned to, it under this Act.
- (2) The State Information Commission shall consist of—
- (a) the State Chief Information Commissioner, and
 - (b) such number of State Information Commissioners, not exceeding ten, as may be deemed necessary.
- (3) The State Chief Information Commissioner and the State Information Commissioners shall be appointed by the Governor on the recommendation of a committee consisting of—
- (i) the Chief Minister, who shall be the Chairperson of the committee;
 - (ii) the Leader of Opposition in the Legislative Assembly; and
 - (iii) a Cabinet Minister to be nominated by the Chief Minister.
- Explanation.—For the purposes of removal of doubts, it is hereby declared that where the Leader of Opposition in the Legislative Assembly has not been recognised as such, the Leader of the single largest group in opposition of the Government in the Legislative Assembly shall be deemed to be the Leader of Opposition.
- (4) The general superintendence, direction and management of the affairs of the State Information Commission shall vest in the State Chief Information Commissioner who shall be assisted by the State Information Commissioners and may exercise all such powers and do all such acts and things which may be exercised or done by the State Information Commission autonomously without being subjected to directions by any other authority under this Act.
- (5) The State Chief Information Commissioner and the State Information Commissioners shall be persons of eminence in public life with wide knowledge and experience in law, science and technology, social service, management, journalism, mass media or administration and governance.
- (6) The State Chief Information Commissioner or a State Information Commissioner shall not be a Member of Parliament or Member of the Legislature of any State or Union territory, as the case may be, or hold any other office of profit or connected with any political party or carrying on any business or pursuing any profession.
- (7) The headquarters of the State Information Commission shall be at such place in the State as the State Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, specify and the State Information Commission may, with the previous approval of the State Government, establish offices at other places in the State.
- 16** (1) The State Chief Information Commissioner shall hold office for a term of five years from the date on which he enters upon his office and shall not be eligible for reappointment:
Provided that no State Chief Information Commissioner shall hold office as such after he has attained the age of sixty-five years.
- (2) Every State Information Commissioner shall hold office for a term of five

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years from the date on which he enters upon his office or till he attains the age of sixty-five years, whichever is earlier, and shall not be eligible for reappointment as such State Information Commissioner:

Provided that every State Information Commissioner shall, on vacating his office under this sub-section, be eligible for appointment as the State Chief Information Commissioner in the manner specified in sub-section (3) of section 15:

Provided further that where the State Information Commissioner is appointed as the State Chief Information Commissioner, his term of office shall not be more than five years in aggregate as the State Information Commissioner and the State Chief Information Commissioner.

- (3) The State Chief Information Commissioner or a State Information Commissioner, shall before he enters upon his office make and subscribe before the Governor or some other person appointed by him in that behalf, an oath or affirmation according to the form set out for the purpose in the First Schedule.
- (4) The State Chief Information Commissioner or a State Information Commissioner may, at any time, by writing under his hand addressed to the Governor, resign from his office:
Provided that the State Chief Information Commissioner or a State Information Commissioner may be removed in the manner specified under section 17.
- (5) The salaries and allowances payable to and other terms and conditions of service of—
 - (a) the State Chief Information Commissioner shall be the same as that of an Election Commissioner;
 - (b) the State Information Commissioner shall be the same as that of the Chief Secretary to the State Government:

Provided that if the State Chief Information Commissioner or a State Information Commissioner, at the time of his appointment is, in receipt of a pension, other than a disability or wound pension, in respect of any previous service under the Government of India or under the Government of a State, his salary in respect of the service as the State Chief Information Commissioner or a State Information Commissioner shall be reduced by the amount of that pension including any portion of pension which was commuted and pension equivalent of other forms of retirement benefits excluding pension equivalent of retirement gratuity:

Provided further that where the State Chief Information Commissioner or a State Information Commissioner if, at the time of his appointment is, in receipt of retirement benefits in respect of any previous service rendered in a Corporation established by or under any Central Act or State Act or a Government company owned or controlled by the Central Government or the State Government, his salary in respect of the service as the State Chief Information Commissioner or the State Information Commissioner shall be reduced by the amount of pension equivalent to the retirement benefits:

Provided also that the salaries, allowances and other conditions of service of the State Chief Information Commissioner and the State Information Commissioners shall not be varied to their disadvantage after their appointment.

- (6) The State Government shall provide the State Chief Information

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Commissioner and the State Information Commissioners with such officers and employees as may be necessary for the efficient performance of their functions under this Act, and the salaries and allowances payable to and the terms and conditions of service of the officers and other employees appointed for the purpose of this Act shall be such as may be prescribed.

- 17 (1) Subject to the provisions of sub-section (3), the State Chief Information Commissioner or a State Information Commissioner shall be removed from his office only by order of the Governor on the ground of proved misbehaviour or incapacity after the Supreme Court, on a reference made to it by the Governor, has on inquiry, reported that the State Chief Information Commissioner or a State Information Commissioner, as the case may be, ought on such ground be removed.
- (2) The Governor may suspend from office, and if deem necessary prohibit also from attending the office during inquiry, the State Chief Information Commissioner or a State Information Commissioner in respect of whom a reference has been made to the Supreme Court under sub-section (1) until the Governor has passed orders on receipt of the report of the Supreme Court on such reference.
- (3) Notwithstanding anything contained in sub-section (1), the Governor may by order remove from office the State Chief Information Commissioner or a State Information Commissioner if a State Chief Information Commissioner or a State Information Commissioner, as the case may be,—
- (a) is adjudged an insolvent; or
 - (b) has been convicted of an offence which, in the opinion of the Governor, involves moral turpitude; or
 - (c) engages during his term of office in any paid employment outside the duties of his office; or
 - (d) is, in the opinion of the Governor, unfit to continue in office by reason of infirmity of mind or body; or
 - (e) has acquired such financial or other interest as is likely to affect prejudicially his functions as the State Chief Information Commissioner or a State Information Commissioner.
- (4) If the State Chief Information Commissioner or a State Information Commissioner in any way, concerned or interested in any contract or agreement made by or on behalf of the Government of the State or participates in any way in the profit thereof or in any benefit or emoluments arising therefrom otherwise than as a member and in common with the other members of an incorporated company, he shall, for the purposes of sub-section (1), be deemed to be guilty of misbehaviour.

CHAPTER V

Powers and functions of the Information Commissions, appeal and penalties

- 18 (1) Subject to the provisions of this Act, it shall be the duty of the Central Information Commission or State Information Commission, as the case may be, to receive and inquire into a complaint from any person,—
- (a) who has been unable to submit a request to a Central Public Information Officer or State Public Information Officer, as the case may be, either by reason that no such officer has been appointed under this Act, or because the Central Assistant Public Information Officer or State Assistant Public Information Officer, as the case may be, has refused to accept his or her

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application for information or appeal under this Act for forwarding the same to the Central Public Information Officer or State Public Information Officer or senior officer specified in sub-section (1) of section 19 or the Central Information Commission or the State Information Commission, as the case may be;

- (b) who has been refused access to any information requested under this Act;
 - (c) who has not been given a response to a request for information or access to information within the time limit specified under this Act;
 - (d) who has been required to pay an amount of fee which he or she considers unreasonable;
 - (e) who believes that he or she has been given incomplete, misleading or false information under this Act; and
 - (f) in respect of any other matter relating to requesting or obtaining access to records under this Act.
- (2) Where the Central Information Commission or State Information Commission, as the case may be, is satisfied that there are reasonable grounds to inquire into the matter, it may initiate an inquiry in respect thereof.
- (3) The Central Information Commission or State Information Commission, as the case may be, shall, while inquiring into any matter under this section, have the same powers as are vested in a civil court while trying a suit under the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908, in respect of the following matters, namely:—
- (a) summoning and enforcing the attendance of persons and compel them to give oral or written evidence on oath and to produce the documents or things;
 - (b) requiring the discovery and inspection of documents;
 - (c) receiving evidence on affidavit;
 - (d) requisitioning any public record or copies thereof from any court or office;
 - (e) issuing summons for examination of witnesses or documents; and
 - (f) any other matter which may be prescribed.
- (4) Notwithstanding anything inconsistent contained in any other Act of Parliament or State Legislature, as the case may be, the Central Information Commission or the State Information Commission, as the case may be, may, during the inquiry of any complaint under this Act, examine any record to which this Act applies which is under the control of the public authority, and no such record may be withheld from it on any grounds.
- 19** (1) Any person who, does not receive a decision within the time specified in sub-section (1) or clause (a) of sub-section (3) of section 7, or is aggrieved by a decision of the Central Public Information Officer or State Public Information Officer, as the case may be, may within thirty days from the expiry of such period or from the receipt of such a decision prefer an appeal to such officer who is senior in rank to the Central Public Information Officer or State Public Information Officer as the case may be, in each public authority:
- Provided that such officer may admit the appeal after the expiry of the period of thirty days if he or she is satisfied that the appellant was prevented by sufficient cause from filing the appeal in time.
- (2) Where an appeal is preferred against an order made by a Central Public Information Officer or a State Public Information Officer, as the case may be, under section 11 to disclose third party information, the appeal by the concerned third party shall be made within thirty days from the date of the

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order.

- (3) A second appeal against the decision under sub-section (1) shall lie within ninety days from the date on which the decision should have been made or was actually received, with the Central Information Commission or the State Information Commission:
 Provided that the Central Information Commission or the State Information Commission, as the case may be, may admit the appeal after the expiry of the period of ninety days if it is satisfied that the appellant was prevented by sufficient cause from filing the appeal in time.
- (4) If the decision of the Central Public Information Officer or State Public Information Officer, as the case may be, against which an appeal is preferred relates to information of a third party, the Central Information Commission or State Information Commission, as the case may be, shall give a reasonable opportunity of being heard to that third party.
- (5) In any appeal proceedings, the onus to prove that a denial of a request was justified shall be on the Central Public Information Officer or State Public Information Officer, as the case may be, who denied the request.
- (6) An appeal under sub-section (1) or sub-section (2) shall be disposed of within thirty days of the receipt of the appeal or within such extended period not exceeding a total of forty-five days from the date of filing thereof, as the case may be, for reasons to be recorded in writing.
- (7) The decision of the Central Information Commission or State Information Commission, as the case may be, shall be binding.
- (8) In its decision, the Central Information Commission or State Information Commission, as the case may be, has the power to—
 - (a) require the public authority to take any such steps as may be necessary to secure compliance with the provisions of this Act, including—
 - (i) by providing access to information, if so requested, in a particular form;
 - (ii) by appointing a Central Public Information Officer or State Public Information Officer, as the case may be;
 - (iii) by publishing certain information or categories of information;
 - (iv) by making necessary changes to its practices in relation to the maintenance, management and destruction of records;
 - (v) by enhancing the provision of training on the right to information for its officials;
 - (vi) by providing it with an annual report in compliance with clause (b) of sub-section (1) of section 4;
 - (b) require the public authority to compensate the complainant for any loss or other detriment suffered;
 - (c) impose any of the penalties provided under this Act;
 - (d) reject the application.
- (9) The Central Information Commission or State Information Commission, as the case may be, shall give notice of its decision, including any right of appeal, to the complainant and the public authority.
- (10) The Central Information Commission or State Information Commission, as the case may be, shall decide the appeal in accordance with such procedure as may be prescribed.

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- 20 (1) Where the Central Information Commission or the State Information Commission, as the case may be, at the time of deciding any complaint or appeal is of the opinion that the Central Public Information Officer or the State Public Information Officer, as the case may be, has, without any reasonable cause, refused to receive an application for information or has not furnished information within the time specified under sub-section (1) of section 7 or malafidely denied the request for information or knowingly given incorrect, incomplete or misleading information or destroyed information which was the subject of the request or obstructed in any manner in furnishing the information, it shall impose a penalty of two hundred and fifty rupees each day till application is received or information is furnished, so however, the total amount of such penalty shall not exceed twenty-five thousand rupees: Provided that the Central Public Information Officer or the State Public Information Officer, as the case may be, shall be given a reasonable opportunity of being heard before any penalty is imposed on him: Provided further that the burden of proving that he acted reasonably and diligently shall be on the Central Public Information Officer or the State Public Information Officer, as the case may be.
- (2) Where the Central Information Commission or the State Information Commission, as the case may be, at the time of deciding any complaint or appeal is of the opinion that the Central Public Information Officer or the State Public Information Officer, as the case may be, has, without any reasonable cause and persistently, failed to receive an application for information or has not furnished information within the time specified under sub-section (1) of section 7 or malafidely denied the request for information or knowingly given incorrect, incomplete or misleading information or destroyed information which was the subject of the request or obstructed in any manner in furnishing the information, it shall recommend for disciplinary action against the Central Public Information Officer or the State Public Information Officer, as the case may be, under the service rules applicable to him.

CHAPTER VI**Miscellaneous**

- 21 No suit, prosecution or other legal proceeding shall lie against any person for anything which is in good faith done or intended to be done under this Act or any rule made thereunder.
- 22 The provisions of this Act shall have effect notwithstanding anything inconsistent therewith contained in the Official Secrets Act, 1923, and any other law for the time being in force or in any instrument having effect by virtue of any law other than this Act.
- 23 No court shall entertain any suit, application or other proceeding in respect of any order made under this Act and no such order shall be called in question otherwise than by way of an appeal under this Act.
- 24 (1) Nothing contained in this Act shall apply to the intelligence and security organisations specified in the Second Schedule, being organisations established by the Central Government or any information furnished by such organisations to that Government: Provided that the information pertaining to the allegations of corruption and human rights violations shall not be excluded under this sub-section: Provided further that in the case of information sought for is in respect of

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allegations of violation of human rights, the information shall only be provided after the approval of the Central Information Commission, and notwithstanding anything contained in section 7, such information shall be provided within forty-five days from the date of the receipt of request.

- (2) The Central Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, amend the Schedule by including therein any other intelligence or security organisation established by that Government or omitting therefrom any organisation already specified therein and on the publication of such notification, such organisation shall be deemed to be included in or, as the case may be, omitted from the Schedule.
- (3) Every notification issued under sub-section (2) shall be laid before each House of Parliament.
- (4) Nothing contained in this Act shall apply to such intelligence and security organisation being organisations established by the State Government, as that Government may, from time to time, by notification in the Official Gazette, specify:

Provided that the information pertaining to the allegations of corruption and human rights violations shall not be excluded under this sub-section:

Provided further that in the case of information sought for is in respect of allegations of violation of human rights, the information shall only be provided after the approval of the State Information Commission and, notwithstanding anything contained in section 7, such information shall be provided within forty-five days from the date of the receipt of request.

- (5) Every notification issued under sub-section (4) shall be laid before the State Legislature.
- 25 (1) The Central Information Commission or State Information Commission, as the case may be, shall, as soon as practicable after the end of each year, prepare a report on the implementation of the provisions of this Act during that year and forward a copy thereof to the appropriate Government.
- (2) Each Ministry or Department shall, in relation to the public authorities within their jurisdiction, collect and provide such information to the Central Information Commission or State Information Commission, as the case may be, as is required to prepare the report under this section and comply with the requirements concerning the furnishing of that information and keeping of records for the purposes of this section.
- (3) Each report shall state in respect of the year to which the report relates,—
 - (a) the number of requests made to each public authority;
 - (b) the number of decisions where applicants were not entitled to access to the documents pursuant to the requests, the provisions of this Act under which these decisions were made and the number of times such provisions were invoked;
 - (c) the number of appeals referred to the Central Information Commission or State Information Commission, as the case may be, for review, the nature of the appeals and the outcome of the appeals;
 - (d) particulars of any disciplinary action taken against any officer in respect of the administration of this Act;
 - (e) the amount of charges collected by each public authority under this Act;
 - (f) any facts which indicate an effort by the public authorities to administer and implement the spirit and intention of this Act;

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- (g) recommendations for reform, including recommendations in respect of the particular public authorities, for the development, improvement, modernisation, reform or amendment to this Act or other legislation or common law or any other matter relevant for operationalising the right to access information.
 - (4) The Central Government or the State Government, as the case may be, may, as soon as practicable after the end of each year, cause a copy of the report of the Central Information Commission or the State Information Commission, as the case may be, referred to in sub-section (1) to be laid before each House of Parliament or, as the case may be, before each House of the State Legislature, where there are two Houses, and where there is one House of the State Legislature before that House.
 - (5) If it appears to the Central Information Commission or State Information Commission, as the case may be, that the practice of a public authority in relation to the exercise of its functions under this Act does not conform with the provisions or spirit of this Act, it may give to the authority a recommendation specifying the steps which ought in its opinion to be taken for promoting such conformity.
- 26** (1) The appropriate Government may, to the extent of availability of financial and other resources,—
- (a) develop and organise educational programmes to advance the understanding of the public, in particular of disadvantaged communities as to how to exercise the rights contemplated under this Act;
 - (b) encourage public authorities to participate in the development and organisation of programmes referred to in clause (a) and to undertake such programmes themselves;
 - (c) promote timely and effective dissemination of accurate information by public authorities about their activities; and
 - (d) train Central Public Information Officers or State Public Information Officers, as the case may be, of public authorities and produce relevant training materials for use by the public authorities themselves.
- (2) The appropriate Government shall, within eighteen months from the commencement of this Act, compile in its official language a guide containing such information, in an easily comprehensible form and manner, as may reasonably be required by a person who wishes to exercise any right specified in this Act.
- (3) The appropriate Government shall, if necessary, update and publish the guidelines referred to in sub-section (2) at regular intervals which shall, in particular and without prejudice to the generality of sub-section (2), include—
- (a) the objects of this Act;
 - (b) the postal and street address, the phone and fax number and, if available, electronic mail address of the Central Public Information Officer or State Public Information Officer, as the case may be, of every public authority appointed under sub-section (1) of section 5;
 - (c) the manner and the form in which request for access to an information shall be made to a Central Public Information Officer or State Public Information Officer, as the case may be;
 - (d) the assistance available from and the duties of the Central Public Information Officer or State Public Information Officer, as the case may be, of a public authority under this Act;

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- (e) the assistance available from the Central Information Commission or State Information Commission, as the case may be;
 - (f) all remedies in law available regarding an act or failure to act in respect of a right or duty conferred or imposed by this Act including the manner of filing an appeal to the Commission;
 - (g) the provisions providing for the voluntary disclosure of categories of records in accordance with section 4;
 - (h) the notices regarding fees to be paid in relation to requests for access to an information; and
 - (i) any additional regulations or circulars made or issued in relation to obtaining access to an information in accordance with this Act.
- (4) The appropriate Government must, if necessary, update and publish the guidelines at regular intervals.
- 27 (1) The appropriate Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, make rules to carry out the provisions of this Act.
- (2) In particular, and without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing power, such rules may provide for all or any of the following matters, namely:—
- (a) the cost of the medium or print cost price of the materials to be disseminated under sub-section (4) of section 4;
 - (b) the fee payable under sub-section (1) of section 6;
 - (c) the fee payable under sub-sections (1) and (5) of section 7;
 - (d) the salaries and allowances payable to and the terms and conditions of service of the officers and other employees under sub-section (6) of section 13 and sub-section (6) of section 16;
 - (e) the procedure to be adopted by the Central Information Commission or State Information Commission, as the case may be, in deciding the appeals under sub-section (10) of section 19; and
 - (f) any other matter which is required to be, or may be, prescribed.
- 28 (1) The competent authority may, by notification in the Official Gazette, make rules to carry out the provisions of this Act.
- (2) In particular, and without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing power, such rules may provide for all or any of the following matters, namely:—
- (i) the cost of the medium or print cost price of the materials to be disseminated under sub-section (4) of section 4;
 - (ii) the fee payable under sub-section (1) of section 6;
 - (iii) the fee payable under sub-section (1) of section 7; and
 - (iv) any other matter which is required to be, or may be, prescribed.
- 29 (1) Every rule made by the Central Government under this Act shall be laid, as soon as may be after it is made, before each House of Parliament, while it is in session, for a total period of thirty days which may be comprised in one session or in two or more successive sessions, and if, before the expiry of the session immediately following the session or the successive sessions aforesaid, both Houses agree in making any modification in the rule or both Houses agree that the rule should not be made, the rule shall thereafter have effect only in such modified form or be of no effect, as the case may be; so, however, that any such modification or annulment shall be without prejudice to the validity of anything previously done under that rule.

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- (2) Every rule made under this Act by a State Government shall be laid, as soon as may be after it is notified, before the State Legislature.
- 30 (1) If any difficulty arises in giving effect to the provisions of this Act, the Central Government may, by order published in the Official Gazette, make such provisions not inconsistent with the provisions of this Act as appear to it to be necessary or expedient for removal of the difficulty:
Provided that no such order shall be made after the expiry of a period of two years from the date of the commencement of this Act.
- (2) Every order made under this section shall, as soon as may be after it is made, be laid before each House of Parliament.
- 31 The Freedom of Information Act, 2002 is hereby repealed.

THE FIRST SCHEDULE**[See sections 13(3) and 16(3)]****Form of oath or affirmation to be made by the Chief
Information Commissioner/the Information
Commissioner/the State Chief Information Commissioner/the
State Information Commissioner**

"I,, having been appointed Chief Information
Commissioner/Information Commissioner/State Chief Information
Commissioner/State Information Commissioner

swear in the name of God

solemnly affirm

that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the Constitution of India as by
law established, that I will uphold the sovereignty and integrity of India,
that I will duly and faithfully and to the best of my ability, knowledge and
judgment perform the duties of my office without fear or favour, affection
or ill-will and that I will uphold the Constitution and the laws."

515)

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Annexure II

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 Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions
 Department of Personnel & Training

New Delhi, 6th May, 2011**OFFICE MEMORADUM**

Subject: Constitution of Task Force for effect implementation of Section 4 of the RTI Act, 2005

It has been decided to set up a Task Force consisting of following members to review the provisions regarding suo motu disclosure given in Section 4 of the RTI Act, 2005 and to recommend measures for its better implementation and enforcement:

- | | |
|--|------------------|
| (1) JS (AT&A), Department of Personnel and Training | Chairperson |
| (2) One representative of M/o. Information Technology not below the rank of DS/Director to be nominated by Secretary (IT). | Member |
| (3) One representative of D/o. AR&PG not below the rank of DS/Director to be nominated by Secretary (AR&PG). | Member |
| (4) One representative of M/o. Law not below the rank of DS/Director to be nominated by Secretary (Law). | Member |
| (5) to (7) Secretaries of Governments' of Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar dealing with implementation of RTI Act in their State | Member |
| (8) to (11) Five representatives of non-government organizations working in the field of RTI, one each from: | |
| (a) NCPRI, New Delhi | |
| (b) IT for Change, Bangalore | |
| (c) Mahiti Adhikar Gujarat Pahal (MAGP), Gujarat | |
| (d) 'JOSH', New Delhi | |
| (e) Satark Nagrik Sangathan (SNS), New Delhi | Member |
| (12) Shri K.G.Verma, Director (RTI), DOPT | Member-Secretary |

2. The terms of reference of the Task Force will be as under:
- (a) To examine the provisions of Section 4(1)(b) to recommend guidelines for disclosures to be made at various levels of administration;

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- (b) To recommend other items which may be included for suo motu disclosure, as provided in Section 4(1)(b)(xvii);
- (c) To explore the possibility of prescribing simple templates for disclosing specific category of information in order to facilitate disclosure;
- (d) To recommend mediums through which such disclosure is to be made at various levels which would include disclosure through electronic means also;
- (e) To recommend guidelines for complying with the provisions under Section 4(1)(b)(vii) and Section 4 (1) (c) and Section 4 (1) (d);
- (f) To give recommendations as to how compliance with the provision of Section 4 (1) (b), (c) (d) and Sections 4 (2) to 4 (4) may be better enforced.
- (g) To recommend measures for protection of persons seeking information under the RTI Act
- (h) Any other issue incidental to the above.

5. This Task Force may have consultations with other Ministries, State Governments, CIC and SICS and also with other NGOs for finalizing its report. The methodology for working of the task force will be laid down by the task force itself.

4. The Task Force will finalize its recommendation by 31st July 2011 and submit it to the Department for consideration.

(Anuradha S. Chagti)

Deputy Secretary

Phone: 23093074

To :

1. Secretary, M/o Information Technology, Govt. of India, New Delhi
2. Secretary, D/o Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances, Govt. of India, New Delhi
3. Secretary, Ministry of Law, Govt. of India, New Delhi
4. Principal Secretary, Administrative Reforms, Govt. of Uttar Pradesh
5. Special Chief Secretary to Govt. (COORDN& GPM&AR), Govt. of Andhra Pradesh,
6. Principal Secretary, General Administration Department, Govt. of Bihar
7. Head of Organisation, NCPRI, New Delhi
8. Head of Organisation, IT for Change, Bangalore
9. Head of Organisation, Mahiti Adhikar Gujarat Pahal (MAGP), Gujarat
10. Head of Organisation, JOSH, New Delhi
11. Head of Organisation, Satark Nagrik Sangathan (SNS), New Delhi

} With a request to
nominate a Senior
person so that
participation may
be meaningful

Copy to :

1. Sr.PPS to Secretary (Personnel) – for information
2. Chief Secretary, Govt. of Uttar Pradesh – for information
3. Chief Secretary, Govt. of Bihar – for information
4. Chief Secretary, Govt. of Andhra Pradesh – for information
5. PS to Joint Secretary (AT&A), DoPT
6. Director (RTI), DoPT

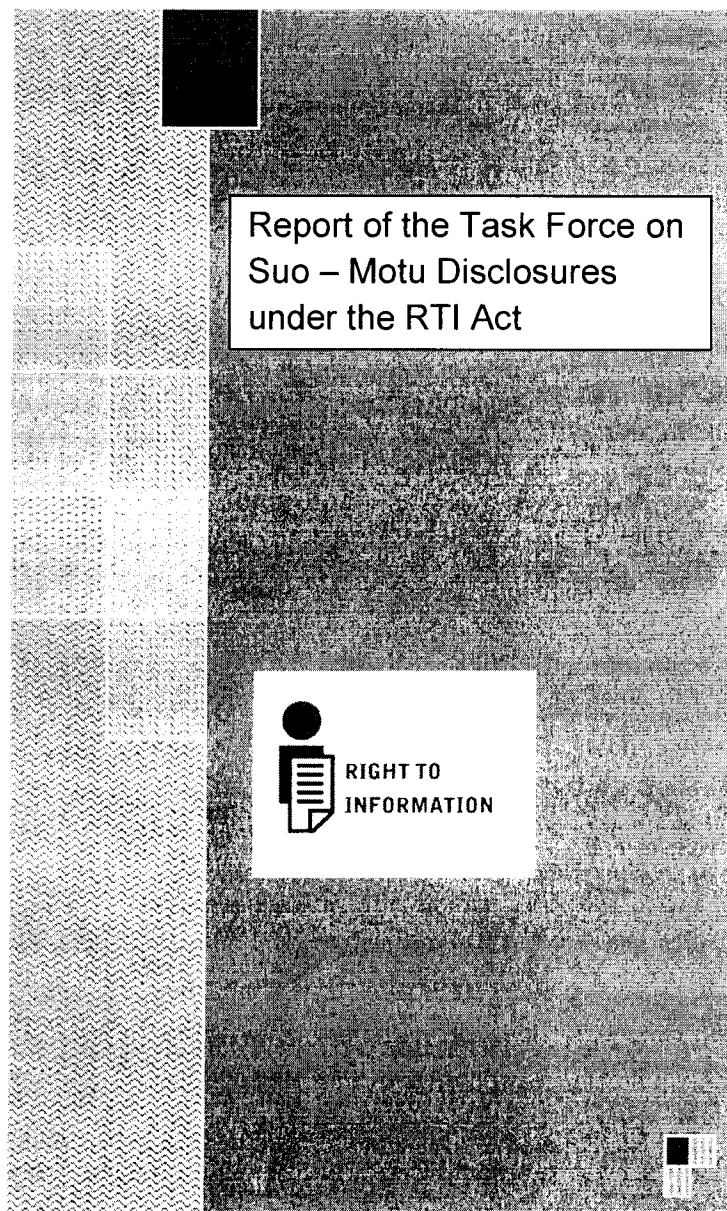
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Annexure III



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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Section 4 of the RTI Act mandates that Public Authorities would proactively or in suo motu manner disclose information under various headings listed in Section 4(1)(b) to the public and regularly update this information. The purpose is to encourage large amount of information to be kept in public domain on a suo motu basis which will not only make functioning of the public authorities more transparent but would also reduce or lessen the need for filing individual RTI applications for seeking such information.

1.2 Since the promulgation of the Act in 2005, large amount of information relating to functioning of the government is being put in public domain. However, still the quality and quantity of proactive disclosures are not up to the desired level. Central as well as State Information Commissions have also highlighted this issue.

1.3 The issue has engaged the attention of the Government of India also and it was felt that the weak implementation of the Section 4 of the RTI Act is partly due to the fact that certain provisions of this Section have not been fully detailed and, in case of certain other provisions there is need for laying down detailed guidelines. It was also felt that there is need to further review Section 4(1)(b) to examine if any more items need to be prescribed for proactive disclosure as laid down in Section 4(1)(b)(xvii). Further, it was felt that there is need to set up a compliance mechanism to ensure that requirements of Section 4 disclosures are fully met.

Constitution of the Task Force

1.4 In view of the above, a Task Force was set up by Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT), Government of India, in May 2011, which also included representatives of civil society organizations active in the field of Right to Information, with following terms of reference:

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- (a) To examine the provisions of Section 4(l)(b) and to recommend guidelines for disclosures to be made at various levels of administration;
- (b) To recommend other items which may be included for suo motu disclosure, as provided in Section 4(l)(b)(xvii);
- (c) To explore the possibility of prescribing simple templates for disclosing specific category of information in order to facilitate disclosure;
- (d) To recommend mediums through which such disclosure is to be made at various levels, which would include disclosure through electronic means also;
- (e) To recommend guidelines for complying with the provisions under Section 4(l)(b)(vii) and Section 4(l)(c) and Section 4(1)(d);
- (f) To give recommendations as to how compliance with the provision of Section 4 (1) (b), (c) (d) and Sections 4 (2) to 4 (4) may be better enforced;
- (g) To recommend measures for protection of persons seeking information under the RTI Act;
- (h) Any other issue incidental to the above.

1.5 Government Order setting up of the Task Force is at **Annexure 1.1**. The names of members of the task force are at **Annexure 1.2**.

Meetings of the Task Force

1.6 The first meeting of the Task Force was held on 25th May 2011, where detailed discussions were held regarding the purpose of the constitution of

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Task Force and also the issues that need to be addressed. The minutes of the meeting are enclosed as **Annexure 1.3**. Members agreed that there was need for clarifying certain provisions of Section 4(1)(b) and also for laying down detailed guidelines in respect of certain specific provisions. It was also agreed that it may not be possible for Public Authorities at different levels of administration to display the same information. Rather, it would be useful to detail what information would be disclosed at different levels of administration so that provisions of the Act can be better complied with. For example, in the case of Public Distribution System the disclosures at the state, district and up to the fair price shop are likely to be different and this needs to be spelt out.

1.7 After detailed discussions, it was felt that on many of the issues wider consultations may be required to ensure that Task Force is better informed and also that good practices being adopted in various regions of the country may also be incorporated in its recommendations. Accordingly, it was decided to form five sub-groups to deliberate on specific themes pertaining to the terms of reference. Each of these sub-groups was expected to consult with informed persons in the relevant area and to prepare a set of recommendations which were to be discussed by the larger group. This is detailed in the minutes of the meeting referred to above.

1.8 The sub-groups met separately to deliberate on the issues. Later, a national consultation was organized in Delhi where civil society members from various fields were also invited to deliberate on the specific themes allocated to each sub-group. A Report on the deliberations made in the workshop and recommendations of various sub-groups is enclosed at **Annexure 1.4**.

Recommendations of the Task Force

1.9 The Task Force met on 19.08.2011 to deliberate and to finalize its recommendations. The Report of the national consultation was discussed during the workshop and after detailed discussions, recommendations of the Task Force were finalized. Detailed recommendations on various terms that were referred are contained in subsequent chapters. However, following apply to all recommendations:

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- (a) The Task Force recommends that proactive disclosures should be done in local language so that it remains accessible to public. It should be presented in a form that is easily understood and if technical words are used they should be carefully explained. As provided in 4(1)(b), disclosures should be made in as many mediums as feasible and disclosures should be kept up to date.
- (b) The Task Force recognizes that while large number of recommendations can be taken up for implementation immediately, there are many recommendations whose implementation may require setting up of infrastructure, etc. These have been included in the report as aspirational recommendations with the hope that government will take early steps to set up the requisite infrastructure so that these recommendations may also become a reality, may be over an extended timeframe. *Such recommendations have been italicized.*
- (c) The Task Force takes note of the fact that as per the scheme of the Act state governments are not accountable to central government for implementation of the RTI Act. As such, although many of the recommendations need to be implemented at the state government level, they can only be circulated to state governments as recommendations rather than enforceable directions.
- (d) The Task Force has given detailed policy recommendations on various items included in the Terms of Reference. However, in order to ensure that these recommendations are implemented effectively, DOPT would need to elaborate on many of these recommendations in the form of clear cut guidelines keeping the general policy recommendation in view.

1.10 Recommendations on different issues covered by the Terms of Reference are given in subsequent chapters.

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under Section 4(1)(b)(xvii)**

2.1 Section 4(1)(b)(xvii) lays down that government may prescribe any additional item which should also be included for suo motu disclosure. So far, no additional items have been prescribed by central government. The Task Force reviewed the list of items and recommends that following items should be included for disclosure under the Suo motu Disclosure Scheme of Section 4(1)(b) by framing of suitable rules in this regard. State Governments would be urged to frame similar rules for their public authorities.

All procurement related information

2.1.1 All information relating to procurement made by public authorities beginning with the publication of notice/tender and up to the stage of final purchase order detailing the name of the supplier of goods/services being procured and the rate at which such procurement is to be done should be disclosed. Government may fix different limits of procurements for different levels of public authority for which this disclosure is to be made.

Public Private Partnerships

2.1.2 If Public services are proposed to be provided through a Public Private Partnership (PPP), all information relating to the PPPs must be disclosed in the public domain. This may include details of the special purpose vehicle, if any set up, concession agreements, operation and maintenance manuals and other documents generated as part of the implementation of the PPP project. Further, information about fees, tolls, or other kinds of revenue that may be collected under authorization from the Government may also be proactively disclosed. All payments made under the PPP project may also be disclosed in a periodic manner along with the purpose of making such payment.

Transfer Policy and Transfer Orders

2.1.3 Transfer policy for different grades/cadres of employees serving in public authority should be proactively disclosed. All transfer orders may be publicized through the website or in any other manner listed in Section 4(4) of the Act. Where a transfer is effected without adhering to the norms laid down in the transfer policy or cases where an employee has not been transferred even

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though he/she has completed maximum tenure specified for that position this information should also be disclosed.

Sensitive Posts

2.1.4 The Central Vigilance Commission had issued a circular in 1999 requiring all ministries, departments and public sector undertakings under the Government of India to identify sensitive posts where public dealing exists and there is potential for corruption. However, the sensitive posts themselves have not been advertised in the public domain. Public Authorities should proactively disclose posts identified as sensitive and details of the officers/officials occupying those posts including the date since when they are holding the posts.

RTI Queries

2.1.5 All public authorities should proactively disclose RTI queries and appeals received and their responses, on the websites maintained by public authorities.

CAG & PAC paras

2.1.6 Public authorities should proactively disclose the CAG paras framed in regard to their Ministry/Department and the response of the Ministry/Department to those paragraphs. In addition, a tabular statement should be given regarding pendency of CAG paras.

Citizens Charter

2.1.7 Citizens Charter prepared by the Ministry/Department should be proactively disclosed and six monthly report on the performance against the benchmarks set in Citizens Charter should also be displayed on the website of public authorities.

Discretionary and Non-discretionary grants

2.1.8 All discretionary/non-discretionary grants/allocations to state governments/NGOs/Other to institutions by Ministry/Department should be placed on the website of the Ministry/Department concerned.

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2.2 Department of Personnel & Training, which is responsible for implementation of RTI Act in Government of India, may prepare suitable format/templates for disclosure of the above information.

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Chapter 3

Guidelines for facilitating disclosure at different levels of government – Suggested templates for key areas

3.1 The scheme of Section 4 applies uniformly to all public authorities even though they may be constituted at different levels. It is felt that at different levels of administration different level of detailing is required and if that could be facilitated by development of suitable templates it would not only improve the quality of disclosures but would also facilitate more transparency in governance. For example, in the case of Public Distribution System (PDS) disclosures at the level of Fair Price Shops (FPS) should go down to the level of ration card holder, while at the level of district/state, agencies dealing with the disclosures would need to be more broad-based. Keeping this in view the group identified four areas for development of templates.

- (a) Public Distribution System;
- (b) Panchayats;
- (c) MGNREGA; and
- (d) Primary and Secondary Schools.

These four areas have been selected on the ground that they constitute some of the most significant services being provided at the ground level. However, Task Force recommends that similar templates need to be worked out for other important areas such as health services, services relating to social benefits, etc.

Templates for Information Disclosure

3.2 The templates of information disclosure at various levels of service delivery in relation to the above four areas are enclosed at the end of the Report as a separate section. The general principles which should be adopted for disclosure at various levels, as recommended by the Task Force are given below:

Use of Information boards/walls

3.2.1 Section 4(4) of the RTI Act states that information should be disseminated taking into consideration 'the most effective method of communication in that local area and the information should be easily

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accessible'. Given the limited reach and accessibility of the internet in India, information disclosures, as far as practically possible, must also be done locally in a form and manner that is easily accessible to people. It is recommended that at village / block level relevant information should be painted on walls and provided on boards in the local language at prominent public places.

Information disclosure through any document/proof of delivery that is available to beneficiaries

3.2.2 Any document relating to a scheme/program of the department that is held by a citizen (eg. ration card, school books etc.) should be used as a mode of disclosure. Information in the local language can be printed on such documents. Stickers can be used to update/change the information, if required.

RTI Proactive Disclosure File

3.2.3 Panchayat is the first public authority or unit which has an interface with citizens. In their case many of the information can be painted on the walls. However, all the information that is painted on the walls should also be kept ready for perusal in a "RTI Proactive Disclosure File". This file should also contain details of all the moneys received and all the guidelines which are sent to Panchayats by various government authorities for implementation of schemes.

Use of SMS telephony

3.2.4 The vast proliferation of mobile phones across India, including in villages, makes it one of the best forms of reaching out information to people. Mobile phones can be used to communicate information and to provide a mechanism for citizens to seek specific information through SMS. Many services now have the provision wherein a citizen may SMS a query to a number and get detailed and real-time information in response. People should be able to track applications/complaints through SMS. Beneficiaries should be able to track their entitlements via SMS. Disseminating information through SMS is also a cost-effective medium. Several states use this medium in an extremely innovative manner. For example- in Chhatisgarh, all the ration cardholders of an area are sent an SMS when the truck carrying their entitlements is dispatched from the godown. The use of SMS for proactive disclosure may be replicated by public authorities all over India.

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3.2.5 State-Level toll free helpline which should provide information to people on all major public services may be set up. Information on all aspects of the schemes/programs of major departments should be provided through this line and people should be able to track their entitlements/applications in real-time through the helpline. The helpline could also be used for registering grievances of citizens.

Information Centers at the block level

3.2.6 Information and facilitation centers should be set up at the Block level to proactively provide information to citizens about the schemes and programs of the government. These centers should also assist citizens track their applications and entitlements and register grievances. There is a provision for such centers under MGNREGA and the proposed National Food Security Act. Block level facilitation centres have already been set up in several states, for example, Common Service Centres and Rajiv Gandhi Sewa Kendra and these could be used for dissemination of information.

Records for inspection by community

3.2.7 All Schools and local bodies which have maximum interface with citizens may make available records for inspection by community wherever possible. For example, in Delhi all records and documents related to budget expenditure up to date details of scholarships and incentives awarded and other relevant registers in schools are made available for inspection for public on the last working day of the month.

'Good' and 'Innovative' practices adopted by State Governments

3.3 State governments may adopt innovative practices to disseminate information at local level. Some of these practices are listed below:

- Read out all information about benefits of schemes, budgets, expenditure, MGNREGA works, payments etc in the Gramsabha. Example - Yakubbbhai Kothariya works as a Gram Panchayat Secretary and a PIO in Gujarat. Even before the RTI Act was in place, Yakubbbhai was fond of using folk lyrics as a medium of disseminating information.

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In his Gram Sabha, he talks about various scheme by connecting it with incidents in the village and sings a folk song marking the specific characteristics of a scheme. His Gram Sabhas are frequented by large numbers of residents on a regular basis.

- Disseminate information about schemes and programmes by setting up a desk whilst organizing the 'Village Mela (fair)' or any Folk Fair that is conducted in the region. This can also be done in collaboration with village youth mandal, or SHG or any Community bases organization.
- Organization of "Information Mela (fair)" at the village school on important days like Independence Day, Republic Day". This works very effectively in the villages, and people feel connected with village school.
- Community radio can become another media of dissemination of info. This proves very effective.
- In Panchmahal district, Gujarat, during the RTI campaign for pro-active disclosures it was observed that the multi-media vehicle used for dissemination of information was widely accepted. The pamphlets, guidelines of various schemes, including forms were disseminated by "**RTI on Wheels**" a multimedia vehicle. The films and case stories of use of information for achieving transparency in governance were screened.
- In Goa, it's a regular practice that details of the gramsabha are reported in local newspapers.
- Other media like street plays, puppet shows can also be used for information dissemination.
- If there are any specific programmes or schemes meant specifically for the region or village then in such cases, pro-active disclosure should be prepared in the form of charts giving details of such schemes/programme.

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(Department of Personnel & Training)****Chapter 4****Guidelines for Digital Publication of proactive disclosures under Section 4**

4.1 Internet has become a powerful medium for quick, easy and widespread dissemination of information. It will assume even more importance in the future as more and more documents are generated in digital format. Although, Section 4 correctly lays down that information should be provided through many mediums depending upon the level of public authority and the recipient of information (for example, in case of Panchayat wall painting may be more effective means of dissemination of information), the Task Force recognizes that more and more proactive disclosure would gradually be made through Internet. As such, there is need for more clear guidelines for web-based publication of information for information disclosure.

4.2 The Task Force is aware that Department of Information Technology has been working on setting of technical standards for government websites. It is also aware that Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances is also working on guidelines for websites of government departments. These guidelines would prescribe the manner in which websites need to be designed and how information should be disclosed. Task Force recommends that while adhering to the standards of government guidelines as laid down by Department of Information Technology and Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances the following principles should also be kept in view to ensure that websites' disclosures are complete, easily accessible, technology and platform neutral and in a form which conveys the desired information in an effective and user-friendly manner.

- (a) The website should have a simple public interface and should not require any registration/login to access it or to access the MIS.
- (b) The website should have universal access i.e., it should be accessible to all, irrespective of technology, platforms, devices or disabilities of any kind.
- (c) It should be the endeavor of all public authorities that all entitlements to citizens and all transactions between the citizen and government are gradually made available through computer based interface. It was noted that 'Electronic Service Delivery Bill' under

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formulation in Government of India would provide the necessary impetus.

- (d) Websites should contain detailed information from the point of origin to the point of delivery of entitlements/services provided by the public authorities to citizens.
- (e) The effort should be made to ensure that all orders of the public authority are issued only after such orders have been uploaded on the website. Such a system exists in Andhra Pradesh and can be adopted in other governments easily.
- (f) Website should have good search engine and documents uploaded should have key words assigned to them so that independent searches of the database are possible.
- (g) Website should contain all the relevant acts, rules forms and other documents which are normally accessed by citizens.
- (h) Websites should have detailed directory of key contacts, details of officials of the public authority.
- (i) Websites should not use too many technical words and, if used, they should be properly explained.
- (j) Website should be multi-lingual to remain accessible to ordinary public.
- (k) It is obligatory under Section 4(1)(b)(xiv) of the RTI Act for every public authority to proactively disclose 'details in respect of the information, available to or held by it, reduced in an electronic form'. In such a listing required under this section, it should also be required to indicate which digitally held information is made available publicly over the internet and which not.
- (l) As departments reorganize their systems and processes to enable themselves for electronic service delivery, it is recommended that during process reengineering the requirement of bringing due transparency as provided in the RTI Act are given due consideration at the design stage itself.

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- (m) To maintain reliability of information and its real time updation, information generation in a digital work flow should be 'locked' to key work outputs, like a muster roll and salary slip (NREGA in Andhra Pradesh) or formalization of a government order (Andhra Pradesh). Such an approach will lead to automation of proactive disclosure.
- (n) Proper digital proactive disclosure is contingent upon appropriate digital record keeping. Section 4(1)(a) of the RTI Act makes a clear recommendation for digitizing and extensive networking of government records. This issue is also connected to the issue of informational aspects of e-governance based process re-engineering. New government-wide as well as department-specific electronic record keeping norms and schemes should be developed, and a study group can be set up for this purpose. Citizen's right to information should be a key design principle for these new electronic record keeping schemes.
- (o) All information and documents should have appropriate meta-data which ensures easy discovery of information. It would also enable organisation and presentation of information along many different parameters as required (for instance, data could be arranged village-wise).
- (p) Information must be presented from a user's perspective, which may require re-arranging it, simplifying it etc. However, original documents in original formats should continue to be made available because these are needed for community monitoring of government's functioning.
- (q) Information should be easily searchable and discoverable, and therefore not just in a scanned document form. In order to search scanned documents, optical character recognition techniques are available and these should be incorporated as far as possible. Information/ documents should be time-stamped with proper versioning. Earlier versions should be archived and be publicly accessibility.

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- (r) Information should be uploaded using only open standards like ODF, PDF/A, JPG, OGG etc, so that it is neutral to the technology platform of the user. Since, the accessed information is the user's right to access and she cannot be forced to use certain technology platforms rather than others. The Department of Information Technology has come up with a policy on 'Open Standards in e-governance' which should be meticulously followed. All standard web accessibility guidelines, especially relating to visual disabilities should be followed.
- (s) Department of Science & Technology is working on a 'Data Sharing and Accessibility Policy' which is based on the principle that all publicly funded information should be readily available. Once such policy is approved this should be strictly adhered to.
- (t) Information and data should be presented in open data formats whereby it can be pulled by different Application Protocol Interfaces to be used in different fashions more appropriate to specific contexts and needs. Information/ data can, for instance, be presented in powerful visuals ways using visualisation techniques. Such visual representation of information/ data can give insights that may remain largely hidden in a textual or tabular presentation of data. In some contexts, pictures and audio/videos recordings etc may be more useful. There have been moves in some part of the country to video record gram sabha meetings. A picture of a NREGA worksite, for instance, may tell much more than words can. All such different media and forms should be used for proactive disclosure.
- (u) In the long run, government may consider setting up one website where proactive disclosures of all public authorities are available at one place. Such experiments are already on in some other countries such as USA and this would facilitate public access to government information.
- (v) Government may consider utilizing large infrastructure which is being created as common service centers to provide information to public through these CSCs. Task Force also recommends that practices being adopted in Mexico and Kenya in this regard, may also be considered.

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Chapter 5

Guidelines for certain clauses of Section 4(1)(b) to make disclosures more effective

5.1 At the outset it must be emphasized that various sub-clauses of Section 4(1)(b) must be treated as elements of an integrated disclosure scheme. For example the functions and responsibilities of a public authority cannot be understood in isolation from the powers and functions of its employees, the norms that inform its decision making processes and the rules, instructions and manuals that are used in the discharge of its functions. Description of one element presupposes the existence of another. So every public authority must endeavour to integrate the information mentioned in these sub-clauses while preparing voluntary disclosure materials.

5.2 Considering that disclosures in regard to certain clauses have been relatively weak, the Task Force has fleshed out detailed guidelines for four clauses as given below:

4(1)(b)(iii)

'the procedure followed in the decision making process, including channels of supervision and accountability';

4(1)(b)(iv)

'the norms set by it for the discharge of its functions';

4(1)(b)(xiv)

'the budget allocated to each of its agency indicating the particulars of all plans, proposed expenditures and reports on disbursements made';

4(1)(b)(xi)

'details in respect of information, available to or held by it, reduced in an electronic form'

The Task Force has deliberated on each of these sub-clauses and detailed guidelines in regard to sub-clauses are given subsequently.

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Guidelines for Section 4(1)(b)(iii)

5.3 As per Section 4(1)(b)(iii) public authorities are required to proactively disclose "the procedure followed in the decision-making processes including channels of supervision and accountability". All government departments have specific duties and responsibilities under the respective Allocation of Business Rules (AOB) issued by the appropriate Government. The constitutional provisions and statutes each department is required to implement are clearly laid down in the AOB. The manner of disposal of matters assigned to each Department/Ministry is described in the Transaction of Business Rules (TOB). Additionally, every department will have a specific set of schemes and development programmes which they are required to implement directly or through their subordinate offices or other designated agencies. These documents contain the specific operations that every public authority is required to undertake in the course of implementing the programme or scheme. Every operation mandated under the AOB read with the TOB can be linked to a specific decision-making chain. All government officers have to follow laid down office procedure manual or the other rules which gives details of how representations, petitions and applications from citizens must be dealt with. Templates, formats, and basic steps of decision-making are briefly explained in such manuals. These descriptions constitute the elements of decision-making processes in general.

5.4 Additionally, in the routine work of governance, government functionaries are required to make decisions in a discretionary manner but broad guiding principles are laid down in some rule or the other. For example, the General Financial Rules lay down procedures for a variety of operations relating to government finances. How sanction must be accorded for incurring expenditure; how losses to government must be reported; how responsibility for losses may be fixed on any government servant; how budgets, demand for grants are prepared and submitted; how public works must be sanctioned and executed; how commodities and services may be procured by a public authority; are all explained in these manuals which is updated from time to time. The challenge is to present a simplified version of the decision-making procedure that is of interest to a common member of the citizenry.

5.5 In view of the above, the Task Force recommends following guidelines for detailing the decision making processes:

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- (a) To start with every public authority may specifically identify the major outputs/ tangible results/ services/ goods that it is responsible for providing to the public or to whosoever is the client of the public authority.
- (b) The decision-making chain may be identified in the form of a flow chart explaining the rank/grade of the public functionaries involved in the decision-making process clarifying the specific stages in the decision-making hierarchy.
- (c) The powers of each officer including powers of supervision over subordinates involved in the chain of decision-making must also be spelt out next to the flow chart or in a simple bullet-pointed format in a text-box. The exceptional circumstances when such standards decision-making processes may be overridden and by whom should also be explained clearly. Where decentralization of decision-making has occurred in order to grant greater autonomy to public authorities such procedures must also be clearly explained.
- (d) This design of representation may then be extended to cover all statutory and discretionary operations that are part of the public authority's mandate under the AOB read with the TOB.
- (e) In the event of a public authority altering an existing decision-making process or adopting an entirely new process, such changes must be explained in simple language in order to enable people to easily understand the changes made.

Guidelines for Section 4(1)(b)(iv)

5.5 As per Section 4(1)(b)(iv) public authorities are required to proactively disclose "the norms set by it for the discharge of its functions". Primarily, the intention of this clause is that every public authority should proactively disclose the standards by which its performance should be judged. The Task Force noted that these are standards against which accountability in the decision making process may be demanded. Norms can be qualitative and quantitative in nature. They could be temporal also, for example, time limits may be specified for taking specific actions. They could be statutory norms which are to be followed while taking certain actions or performing certain duties by public authorities. In order to ensure compliance with this clause, public authorities would need to

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develop norms for major functions that are being performed, if they do not already exist.

5.6 In this context, the Task Force noted that Citizen Charters, which are mandatory, to be prepared for each central Ministry/Department/authority, are good examples of vehicles created for laying down norms of performance for major functions and for monitoring achievements against those standards. Keeping these in view, the Task Force recommends that:

- (a) Wherever norms have been specified for the discharge of its functions by any statute or government orders they should be proactively disclosed, particularly linking them with the decision making processes as detailed earlier.
- (b) All public authorities should publish their Citizens Charters and proactively disclose the following:
 - Defining the services and goods that the particular public authority/office provides directly (or indirectly through any other agency/contractor).
 - Detailing and describing the processes by which the public can access and/or receive the goods and services that they are entitled to, from the public authority/office along with the forms, if any prescribed, for use by both the applicant and the service providing agency. Links to such forms (online), wherever available, should be given.
 - Describing the conditions, criteria and priorities under which a person becomes eligible for the goods and services, and consequently the categories of people who are entitled to receive the goods and services.
 - Defining the quantitative and tangible parameters, (weight, size, frequency etc,) and timelines, that are applicable to the goods and services that are accessible to the public.
 - Defining the qualitative and quantitative outcomes that each public authority/office plans to achieve through the goods and services that it was obligated to provide.

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- Laying down individual responsibility for providing the goods and services (who is responsible for delivery/implementation and who is responsible for supervision).

5.7 Public authorities should annually publish their performance against the norms guaranteed under the Citizens Charter and should also undertake periodic revision of Charters to include additional items or to reframe the existing norms for improved service delivery.

Guidelines for Section 4(1)(b)(xi)

5.8 As per Section 4(1)(b)(xi) public authorities are required to proactively disclose "the budget allocated to each of its agency indicating the particulars of all plans, proposed expenditures and reports on disbursements made".

- (a) The Task Force recommends that keeping in view of the technical nature of the government budgets it is essential that Ministries/Departments prepare simplified versions of their budgets which can be understood easily by general public and keep them also in public domain. More detailed guidelines in this regard may need to be prepared in consultation with Department of Expenditure and also some civil society organizations which regularly publish simplified versions of government budgets for general public. Presentation of budgets and their periodic monitoring reports may also be presented in a more user-friendly manner through graphs and tables, etc.
- (b) Outcome budget being prepared by Ministries/Departments of Government of India should be prominently displayed and be used as a basis to identify physical targets planned during the budgetary period and the actual achievement vis-à-vis those targets. In this regard, Task Force also recommends that the monthly programme implementation calendar method of reporting being followed in Karnataka may serve as a useful model.
- (c) The budget released to various agencies and subsidiaries should be put on the website on a monthly basis and budgets of subsidiary authorities may be made accessible through links from the website of the Ministry/Department. If a subsidiary does not have a website then the budgets and expenditure reports of such subsidiary authority may be uploaded on the website of the principal public authority.

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- (d) Efforts should be made that raw data relating to approved budgets, expenditure incurred, etc., is made available in easily downloadable, machine readable manner using open standards such as XML.
- (e) Wherever required by law or executive instruction, sector specific allocations and achievements of every department or public authority (where feasible) must be highlighted. For example, gender, children, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and religious minorities must receive special focus in all budgetary allocations and developmental target setting. The sector-wise breakup of these targets and actual outcomes must be given in simplified form to enable the vulnerable segments of society to understand the budgets of public authorities better.

Guidelines for Section 4(1)(b)(xiv)

5.9 As per Section 4(1)(b)(xiv) public authorities are required to proactively disclose details of the kinds of information that they themselves hold or information that is available to them, which is reduced in an electronic form. On the one hand, this clause serves as a means of proactively disclosing the progress made in computerizing information under Section 4(1)(a) of the RTI Act in a periodic manner. On the other, it provides people with clarity about the kinds of electronic information that, although not held by the public authority, is available to them.

5.10 The Task Force recommends that keeping in view the varied levels of computerization of records and documents in public authorities, data about records that have been digitized may be proactively disclosed on the respective websites, excluding those records /files /information that is exempted under Section 8. The data about digitized record may include the name of the record and any categorization or indexing used; the subject matter and any other information that is required to be compiled in relation to a file as prescribed by Manual of Office Procedure (and to be prescribed by MOP for electronic records that is under finalization by DARPG), the division/ section/ unit/ office where the record is normally held; the person, with designation, responsible for maintaining the record; and the life span of the record, as prescribed in the relevant record retention schedule.

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(Department of Personnel & Training)**Chapter 6****Steps to be taken in matters relating to threat to RTI activists**

6.1 The Task Force discussed the issue relating to threat of RTI activists and felt that this is a serious matter which would require more detailed discussions especially with law enforcement agencies. However, Task Force members felt that pending such detailed deliberations following may be taken up for immediate action:

- (a) Parliamentary Standing Committee, while discussing 'Whistle Blowers Bill' has also given certain guidance in regard to threat to RTI users. These may be adequately addressed while redrafting the Bill.
- (b) National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has a policy to take action in matters relating to human rights defenders. The Task Force is of the view that RTI activists are also covered under the definition of a human rights defender and NHRC may be impressed upon to recognize them as such. This recognition would go a long way in helping the police to take complaints from the victims or an attack on a RTI activist as a result. The NHRC should also be requested to take action on complaints of attacks on RTI users and to seek report from the concerned police about the progress of the investigation in relation to such attacks and to give suitable directions to ensure the safety of the life and property of activists under threat.
- (c) The Task Force is of the view that if an RTI user or activist is being threatened or attacked to prevent him from accessing information under the Act, then it becomes a complaint case under Section 18 of the RTI Act and Information Commissions may take cognizance of such complaints and may conduct necessary enquiries, etc., as provided in the Act. They should also ensure that information seeking of which caused such attacks or threats is expeditiously publicized.
- (d) State Information Commission of Gujarat has taken some proactive steps whereby directions are issued to police authorities and district collectors immediately (upon receiving complaints under section 18 of RTI Act, along with details of the threats/attacks/pressures and copy of intimation of the same to nearest police station) for providing necessary

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protection to an RTI activist under threat and also for conducting enquiries. In case an RTI applicant is attacked, the complaints filed by applicants closest relation or civil society organization or mandal are also taken into consideration for immediate actions. Other states may also be encouraged to adopt similar practice.

- (e) The Task Force also recommends that the forums of civil societies active in the field of Right to Information in various states may also be activated to take up serious cases of threat and attacks on RTI activists before state authorities and State Information Commissions. This would bring in necessary pressure on the law enforcement agencies to take prompt action in such matters.

6.2 Although Task Force has deliberated on the issues relating to threat to RTI activists and has given recommendations in this regard, it is of the view that this issue needs more detailed discussions, particularly with law enforcing agencies, in order to work out more specific action plan for tackling this problem.

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Chapter 7

Guidelines for consultation with public in relation to the formulation of policies and implementation thereof

7.1 Section 4(1)(b)(vii) requires that public authorities should publish the particulars of any arrangement that exists for consultation with or representation by the members of the public in relation to the formulation of its policy or implementation thereof. In addition, Section 4(c) requires that public authorities should publish all relevant facts while formulating important policies or announcing decisions which affect people.

7.2 The Task Force noted that so far public authorities have not complied with this provision. The Task Force further noted that each public authority cannot have a different policy on such important issue as policy for consultations has to be laid down by the respective government, which should then be adhered to by various Ministries/Departments/Attached Offices. Therefore, a policy and a framework for consultation need to be formulated to ensure standardization and institutionalization.

7.3 The Task Force recognizes that it may not be very easy to frame exhaustive guidelines with actionable specificity for all public authorities across all kinds and types of policy decisions. Task Force, however, recommends that any policy consultation process must be based on three main principles:

- (a) **Transparency:** The Right to Information Act provides a statutory mandate for transparency of all information held by the State subject to limited and predefined exclusions. The policy consultative process must operate within the framework of the RTI Act, while providing institutionalized platforms for citizen participation.
- (b) **Inclusiveness:** The ideal of democracy mandates processes of universal inclusion either directly or through representation. The policy consultative process must balance both inclusiveness and practicality for meaningful citizen participation.
- (c) **Equity:** Special efforts must be made to solicit and incorporate views of those groups/persons directly affected by decisions.

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7.4 The Task Force deliberated on the kind of policies which must be open for public consultation and debate. In this context, it was emphasized that the purpose of public consultation is not only to solicit views of the affected parties but also to tap professional expertise in various fields which resides outside government systems. In today's world, knowledge is developing very fast and many a times non-government bodies may have more up-to-date knowledge about various sectors which need to be tapped to ensure that policies are better informed by the best practices across the world.

7.5 The Task Force deliberated on the kind of policies where consultation should be mandated. It noted that under the general definition of policy many minor decisions would also be included and it would not be wise to burden the system with consultation on each and every such issue. After detailed discussions it was recommended that:

- (a) Public consultation should definitely be held wherever any Bill is proposed to be introduced or rules/regulations are proposed to be framed for an existing or proposed Bill. The Task Force noted that there could be some Bills where such consultation cannot be mandated because of statutory or historical reason such as introduction of Finance Bill, etc., or on matters relating to national security, etc., which are exempted under Section 8 of the RTI Act. Consultation would not be necessary in such cases.
- (b) Public consultation should also definitely be held when major policy decisions which directly affect public at large are proposed to be taken such as national policies on health, education, social welfare, natural resources, etc.
- (c) It is expected that consultations will normally be held through web-based processes. However, Ministries may adopt other means such as publication in newspapers, etc., to seek participation.
- (d) It would be useful for Ministries/Departments to prepare databases of organizations which have specific knowledge and interests in the fields that Ministry/Department works in so that such knowledgeable resource persons are definitely tapped during the consultation process. Similarly, civil society organizations which are active in the respective

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fields should also be included in the database for the purposes of consultation.

(e) Ministries/Departments should prepare a consultation document which should be posted on the website. These documents should:

- Explain who will use the responses and for what purpose?
- Explicitly state to who to respond to direct queries to, giving a name, address, telephone number and email address.
- Clearly state the deadline for responses, any alternative ways of contributing and the language(s) in which responses are preferred.
- Make it clear that responses, including the names and addresses of respondents, may be made public unless confidentiality is specifically requested.
- State the date when and the web address where the summary of responses will be published.
- Include relevant documents on the subject along with the online questionnaire or survey. Not only does this lead to a more informed consultation exercise, but it also ensures that stakeholders have a better understanding of the issues.
- Provide a well-written executive summary that covers the main points so that consultees can decide whether the consultation is relevant to them or not.
- Provide material on previous consultation(s) on the same topic, if any.
- Avoid jargon and only use technical terms where absolutely necessary. Explain complicated concepts as clearly as possible and, where there are technical terms, provide a glossary.
- Ask focused questions, and be clear about the specific points on which views are sought. Encourage respondents to provide evidence, where appropriate, to support their responses. Make it clear, if there are particular areas, where their input would be especially valuable. Responses are likely to be more useful and focused if the respondents know where to concentrate their efforts.

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- (f) As regards timeframe for consultation, it may vary from consultation to consultation depending on the complexity of the issue and nature of consultation. However, it is expected that minimum time of consultation should be at least six weeks which may extend up to twelve weeks.
- (g) It is not necessary that all comments/ suggestion is to be individually responded to. The Task Force recommends that once responses are received on the consultation document, they should be analyzed and a short summary emphasizing the main points should be posted on the website at the end of the process. It may be highlighted that what is important is not only the number of respondents who express a particular view but the quality of the response and evidence in support of that response. Ministries/Departments may solicit more detailed views from individuals/organizations who have offered very substantive and useful comments to further seek clarifications, if any, required.
- (h) The results of consultation should be presented to the competent authority while submitting the proposal for approval after making changes or amendments, if any, based on consultations.

7.6 The Task Force took note of the fact that sub-group on transparency and accountability of NAC is also indicated in drafting recommendations regarding consultations during the pre-legislative process. As such, the guidelines which may be issued based on the Task Force recommendations, may be suitably amended whenever recommendations of the NAC are available and accepted by the government.

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Chapter 8

Compliance with provisions of suo motu (Proactive Disclosure) under the RTI Act.

8.1 The Task Force agreed that although there has been improvement in proactive disclosures since the promulgation of RTI Act, much more needs to be done - both in quality and quantity of disclosures. One important issue is ensuring compliance with the provisions of suo motu disclosure as provided in the Act. This issue has been discussed several times both within government and at the level of Information Commissions but an acceptable mechanism for ensuring compliance is yet to emerge.

8.2 The Task Force is of the view that both the public authorities and Information Commissions should share the responsibility to monitor and enforce compliance with suo motu disclosure provisions. At the level of public authority responsibility should be given at senior levels for ensuring that information is proactively disclosed and regularly updated as per the provisions of the Act. Information Commissions would need to develop mechanisms to monitor whether action is being taken as per the provisions of the Act and, if weaknesses are found, they are already authorized to issue directions to public authorities under Section 25(5) of the Act. Keeping the above in view, the Task Force makes following recommendations for improving compliance with the provisions of the RTI Act regarding proactive disclosures.

Proactive Disclosure Scheme

8.2.1 Each Ministry/Department of government should prepare a proactive disclosure scheme for their Ministry/Department which should also include the proactive disclosures to be made by attached and subordinate offices of that Ministry/Department. This is necessitated as many of the clauses of Section 4(1)(b) would need to be specifically detailed for a specific Ministry/Department and their offices. For example, under Section 4(1)(b)(iii) the procedure followed in the decision making process needs to be detailed. Elsewhere in this Report recommendations have been made as to which decisions should be covered for proactive disclosures. This would be different for different Ministry and should be carefully detailed in the scheme specific to that Ministry. Similarly, how the budgets of the Ministry/Department are to be put up in the user-friendly manner as recommended elsewhere in this report would be different for different Ministries/ Departments. The norms set by

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public authority for discharge of its functions would also be specifically detailed for each public authority/Ministry/Department. It is in this context that need for a Ministry/Department specific proactive disclosure scheme which conforms to the provisions of RTI Act, is felt and it is in this context that this recommendation is being made.

Task Force is aware that this recommendation would need to be fleshed out in more detail and may be once recommendation is accepted, DOPT would need to prepare a sample scheme which may then be circulated to all the Ministries/Departments to emulate.

It is recommended that this scheme would be prepared by all Ministries/Departments first time and filed to the Central Information Commission by 31st March 2012. Subsequently, while preparing the annual compliance report Ministry/Department would be expected to review the scheme itself on an annual basis and make appropriate changes. That may become necessary with time. This proactive disclosure scheme would become the bench mark for evaluating compliance with the requirements of the Act. It is also expected that Information Commissions would be authorized to review the scheme and to comment on its completeness. In case there are gaps it would send appropriate recommendations to Ministry/Department for revisions which would need to be complied with as per the provisions of the Act.

Nodal Officer

8.2.2 Each Central Ministry/Department would appoint a senior officer not below the rank of a Joint Secretary and not below rank of Additional HOD in case of attached offices for ensuring compliance with the proactive disclosure scheme. Officers of similar seniority should be appointed in State Government. Nodal Officer would work under the supervision of the Secretary of the Ministry/Department or the HOD of the attached office as the case may be. Nodal Officers of Ministry/Department and HOD separately would also ensure that the formations below the Ministry/Department/Attached Office also disclose the information as per the proactive disclosure scheme. The Task Force recommends that once the above recommendation is accepted capacity building programmes for the nodal officers be organized by DOPT to sensitize them with the provision of the Act and also to facilitate their working.

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8.2.3 All Ministries/Departments/Attached Offices would submit an annual report to CIC within three months of the close of the year detailing compliance made with the approved proactive disclosure scheme and also list out any changes in the scheme which are deemed to be appropriate.

Annual Reports to Parliament/Legislatures

8.2.4 Government has recently issued directions to all Ministries/Departments to include a chapter on RTI Act in their Annual Reports submitted to the Parliament. Details about compliance with proactive disclosure scheme should mandatorily be included in the relevant chapter in Annual Report of Ministry/Department.

Inclusion in RFDs

8.2.5 Task Force noted that DOPT have requested Performance Management Division to include compliance with suo motu disclosures provisions of RTI Act as one of the mandatory actions in the Results Framework Documents (RFD) for the Department. The Task Force endorses this suggestion of the Department and requests government that this may be enforced at the earliest.

Audits by Information Commissions

8.2.6 At a later date, Information Commissions may strengthen their infrastructure and undertakes sample audits of compliance with proactive disclosure scheme results of which should be included in the Annual Report of Information Commissions submitted to the respective legislative body.

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Annexure 1.1

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(Department of Personnel & Training)****No.1/6/2011-IR****Government of India****Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions
Department of Personnel & Training****New Delhi, 6th May, 2011****OFFICE MEMORADUM****Subject: Constitution of Task Force for effect implementation of Section 4 of the RTI Act, 2005**

It has been decided to set up a Task Force consisting of following members to review the provisions regarding suo motu disclosure given in Section 4 of the RTI Act, 2005 and to recommend measures for its better implementation and enforcement:

- | | |
|--|------------------|
| (1) JS (AT&A), Department of Personnel and Training | Chairperson |
| (2) One representative of M/o. Information Technology
not below the rank of DS/Director to be nominated
by Secretary (IT). | Member |
| (3) One representative of D/o. AR&PG
not below the rank of DS/Director to be nominated
by Secretary (AR&PG). | Member |
| (4) One representative of M/o. Law
not below the rank of DS/Director to be nominated
by Secretary (Law). | Member |
| (5) to (7) Secretaries of Governments' of Uttar Pradesh,
Andhra Pradesh, Bihar dealing with implementation
of RTI Act in their State | Member |
| (8) to (11) Five representatives of non-government organizations working in the field of
RTI, one each from: | |
| (f) NCPRI, New Delhi | |
| (g) IT for Change, Bangalore | |
| (h) Mahiti Adhikar Gujarat Pahal (MAGP), Gujarat | |
| (i) 'JOSH', New Delhi | |
| (j) Satark Nagrik Sangathan (SNS), New Delhi | Member |
| (12) Shri K.G.Verma, Director (RTI), DOPT | Member-Secretary |

2. The terms of reference of the Task Force will be as under:
- (i) To examine the provisions of Section 4(1)(b) to recommend guidelines for disclosures to be made at various levels of administration;

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- (j) To recommend other items which may be included for suo motu disclosure, as provided in Section 4(1)(b)(xvii);
- (k) To explore the possibility of prescribing simple templates for disclosing specific category of information in order to facilitate disclosure;
- (l) To recommend mediums through which such disclosure is to be made at various levels which would include disclosure through electronic means also;
- (m) To recommend guidelines for complying with the provisions under Section 4(1)(b)(vii) and Section 4 (1) (c) and Section 4 (1) (d);
- (n) To give recommendations as to how compliance with the provision of Section 4 (1) (b), (c) (d) and Sections 4 (2) to 4 (4) may be better enforced.
- (o) To recommend measures for protection of persons seeking information under the RTI Act
- (p) Any other issue incidental to the above.

5. This Task Force may have consultations with other Ministries, State Governments, CIC and SICS and also with other NGOs for finalizing its report. The methodology for working of the task force will be laid down by the task force itself.

4. The Task Force will finalize its recommendation by 31st July 2011 and submit it to the Department for consideration.

(Anuradha S. Chagti)

Deputy Secretary

Phone: 23093074

To :

1. Secretary, M/o Information Technology, Govt. of India, New Delhi
2. Secretary, D/o Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances, Govt. of India, New Delhi
3. Secretary, Ministry of Law, Govt. of India, New Delhi
4. Principal Secretary, Administrative Reforms, Govt. of Uttar Pradesh
5. Special Chief Secretary to Govt. (COORDN& GPM&AR), Govt. of Andhra Pradesh,
6. Principal Secretary, General Administration Department, Govt. of Bihar
7. Head of Organisation, NCPRI, New Delhi
8. Head of Organisation, IT for Change, Bangalore
9. Head of Organisation, Mahiti Adhikar Gujarat Pahel (MAGP), Gujarat
10. Head of Organisation, JOSH, New Delhi
11. Head of Organisation, Satark Nagrik Sangathan (SNS), New Delhi

} With a request to
nominate a Senior
person so that
participation may
be meaningful

Copy to :

1. Sr.PPS to Secretary (Personnel) – for information
2. Chief Secretary, Govt. of Uttar Pradesh – for information
3. Chief Secretary, Govt. of Bihar – for information
4. Chief Secretary, Govt. of Andhra Pradesh – for information
5. PS to Joint Secretary (AT&A), DoPT
6. Director (RTI), DoPT

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Annexure 1.2

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(Department of Personnel & Training)****NAMES OF MEMBERS OF THE TASK FORCE****Government Nominees**

1. Sh. Rajeev Kapoor, Joint Secretary, DoPT
2. Sh. Deepak Kumar, Principal Secretary, GAD, Govt of Bihar
3. Sh. R. K. Srivastava, DLA, Deptt of Legal Affairs, Delhi
4. Ms. N. Rama Devi, Dy. Secretary, Govt of Andhra Pradesh
5. Ms. Ritika Bhatia, Director, Deptt of AR&PG, Delhi
6. Sh. K. G. Verma, Director (RTI), DoPT

Representatives of Civil Society Organisations

1. Sh. Nikhil Dey, Co-convenor, NCPRI
2. Sh. Venkatesh Nayak, C-convenor and Prog Coordinator, NCPRI & CHRI, Delhi
3. Ms. Anjali Bhardwaj, Director, Satark Nagrik Sangathan, Delhi
4. Sh. Parminder Singh, IT for Change, Bangalore
5. Ms. Aheli Chowdhury, Founder Member, JOSH, Delhi
6. Ms. Pankti D. Jog, Executive Secretary, MAGP, Gujarat

Special Invitees

1. Anuradha S. Chagti, Dy Secretary (RTI), DoPT
2. Ms. Rakshita, NCPRI, Delhi
3. Ms. Amrita Johari, Info and Research coordinator, Satark Nagrik Sangathan, Delhi

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Annexure 1.3

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MINUTES OF THE FIRST MEETING OF THE TASK FORCE FOR EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF SECTION 4 OF THE RTI ACT, 2005 HELD ON 25TH MAY 2011, AT NORTH BLOCK, NEW DELHI.

The first meeting of the task force for effective implementation of the Section 4 of the RTI Act, 2005 was held under the Chairmanship of Sh. Rajeev Kapoor, JS (AT&A), DoPT on 25th May, 2011, at North Block, New Delhi. The meeting was attended by:

- i. Ms. N. Ramadevi, Deputy Secretary, Govt. of Andhra Pradesh
- ii. Ms. Pankti D. Jog, Executive Secretary, MAGP, Gujarat
- iii. Shri R.K. Srivastav, Dy. Legal Adviser, D/o Legal Affairs, Delhi
- iv. Shri Venkatesh Nayak, Co-convenor and Programme Coordinator, NCPRI, CHRI, Delhi
- v. Ms. Aheli Chowdhury, Founder Member, JOSH, Delhi
- vi. Shri Gurumurthy K, Director, IT for Change, Bangalore
- vii. Ms. Anjali Bhardwaj, Director, Satark Nagarik Sangathan, Delhi
- viii. Shri Nikhil Dey, Co-convenor, NCPRI, Delhi
- ix. Shri Deepak Kumar, Principal Secretary, GAD, Govt. of Bihar
- x. Ms. Rakshita, NCPRI, Delhi
- xi. Ms. Amrita Johir, Infor. & Research Coordinator, Satark Nagrik Sangathan, Delhi
- xii. Ms. Ritika Bhatia, Director, D/o AR&PG, Delhi
- xiii. Shri K.G. Verma, Director(RTI), DoPT, Delhi
- xiv. Ms. Anuradha S. Chagti, DS(RTI), DoPT, Delhi
- xv. Shri R.K. Girdhar, US(RTI), DoPT, Delhi
- xvi. Shri B. Sengupta, DO(RTI), DoPT, Delhi

2. Sh. Rajeev Kapoor, Joint Secretary (DoPT) welcomed all the participants and apprised them of the need for constituting the Task Force. He pointed out that it was generally felt that provisions of Section 4 are not being properly implemented and there is no enforcement of compliance with the same. This was due to:

- a) Lack of clarity regarding certain provisions such as Sec 4(1)(b)(iii), 4 (1)(b)(iv), 4 (1)(b)(xiv).
- b) Absence of guidelines for some provisions such as 4 (1)(b)(vii) , 4(1)(c), 4(1)(d) and 4(2).
- c) Lack of review to suggest what more could or should be prescribed under 4(1)(xvii).
- d) Structure of the section (4) – same disclosures at all levels (sub-division to Ministry) may not be appropriate.

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- e) Mode of disclosure and formats in which disclosures are to be made may improve compliance.
- f) Absence of mechanisms for enforcing compliance.

Thereafter he elaborated on the scope and the future course of action and requested the members present to put forth their views on the following agenda items:

- a) Activity plan for completion as the report has to be finalized by 15 July, 2011.
- b) Responsibilities of the task force members to be defined.
- c) Whether there was a need to co-opt other members?
- d) Make Sub groups to deliberate on different aspects?
 - Policy on consultation.
 - Protection of persons seeking information under the RTI Act.
 - Different modes of disclosure at different levels – panchayat, district etc.
 - Enforcement of suo moto disclosure.
 - Guidelines on sub sections which need clarification.

3. **Sh. Deepak Kumar, Principal Secretary, GAD, Bihar** was in agreement that compliance of Section 4 of the RTI Act was critical to the success of the implementation of the RTI regime. He apprised the members of the steps taken by the Bihar government including the Jaankari call centre which not only facilitated access to filing of RTI Applications but also disseminated information.

4. **Sh. Nikhil Dey, Convener, NCPRI** stated that their working in the field indicated that the Public authorities were not averse to suo-moto disclosure, it was a question of what to put and how to put it. He stressed that transparency needs to start from the top level. There has to be a move from the minimal to the aspirational level in public disclosures. The social audit in MNREGS is a model of what can be achieved in government schemes if there is a will to implement it. He suggested that this model may be adopted for all other schemes of the Government of India and the Planning Commission can play an active part in this. He suggested that audits be used as an incentive.

5. **Ms. Ritika Bhatia, Director (DARPG)** informed that the DARPG is finalizing a report on Internal control and risk management to be inbuilt into

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Plan schemes. She suggested that Proactive disclosure under the RTI Act may also be made a part of it.

6. **Sh. Rajeev Kapoor, Joint Secretary** informed the members that the DoPT had already written to all Departments/ Ministries in Government of India to include a Chapter on RTI in their Annual Reports. Secretary (Performance Management) had also been requested that suo moto disclosure under section 4 of the RTI Act may be included as a mandatory success indicator in the RFDs of all Departments.

7. **Ms. Anjali Bhardwaj, Satark Nagrik Sangathan** stressed the need for developing a culture of Information gathering. Collated information should be provided at various levels like ward level, Municipal corporation level, panchayat level etc. The manner in which information is displayed needs to be changed for example by using electronic boards or it could be kept in information centres. The information should be in such a form and language as to be decipherable by the lowest strata of society. She highlighted the fact that not only providing suo-motu information but how to make it more accessible to the citizenry, should be an area to ponder on. The need was providing dynamic information to the people with stress on quality with the content of information could also help in stemming attacks on RTI Activists. All Plan schemes of the Government should make it mandatory to reflect implementation of Section 4. There should also be a provision of compensation in cases where Section 4 is not implemented.

8. **Sh. Gurumurthy, IT for Change**, was of the view that all information should be on website since there is a pan India change in mindset and technological development. Internet is necessary and there was a huge amount of investment in E-governance. People Information System (PIS) (information Hub) is the need of the hour to identify what information people require and then provide that information to the people. The mindset change should be from Transparency by design rather than transparency by default. There was a need for open standards in e-governance. Data has to be granular and should allow others to access and aggregate the data which the government puts on. This will help put in systems and indicate trends. There should be a survey of what proactive information people need and government machinery to concentrate more on that.

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9. **Ms. Aheli Chowdhury, JOSH** pointed out that Section 4 is not implemented as a reality. There is an absence of guidelines. There needs to be fixing of responsibility in case of non-compliance of Section 4 by the Public Authorities. One person should be responsible for implementing Section 4. For dissemination of information there should be a combination of methods like wall painting, boards, internet etc. There should be study to identify areas/subjects which attract repeated RTI applications and those may be converted into FAQs and put on the website for the citizenry.

10. **Sh. Venkatesh Nayak, CHRI** emphasized the need for having a look at the existing systems from the point of view of transparency. Public Accountability mechanisms had to be defined like uploading information and its monitoring in the various MIS which had been developed. These were essential for the systems to work. Examples of the advantages of having real time updates on Government websites regarding public service delivery were discussed. An example of this was the MIS updates in Andhra Pradesh under the MGNREGA. He reiterated that section 4(1)(c) and 4(1)(d) were the heart and soul of section 4. All government websites should adhere to the Guidelines for Indian Government websites to enable a common pattern for display of information. He stressed on a need of change of mindset, especially at the highest level. There was need to ensure that all new laws had consistency with the RTI Act and there should be guidelines on what should be included. The government had to find more ways of disseminating information like harnessing the strength of mobile, radio, cyber cafes. He pointed out that the new guidelines on cyber cafes could become counterproductive to this aim. The information disseminator should approach to create a system of automatically uploading the important issues on website and cater to the three types of information seekers, namely, people seeking information for improving their general knowledge/awareness; Clients of Public Authority who make use of this service for public consultation on policy; and people seeking information to reflect on accountability. He favored that all decision taken during a week should be uploaded on the website.

11. **Sh. Rajeev Kapoor, Joint Secretary** mentioned that monthly reports departments can be uploaded on website. As far as putting all decisions taken in a week on the website he held that information should be content driven rather

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than process driven. Therefore information on periodic data would probably not serve the purpose.

12. Ms. Ritika Bhatia, Director (DARPG) informed the participants that the Manual of Office Procedure has been revised and the guidelines on website content has been laid down. Under these all websites be re-designed under the e-governance to make it citizen friendly/accessible. This would be done within six months. Once they have specific guidelines on Section 4 of the RTI Act it would be easy to implement and monitor and it would be helpful if the format for all is common.

13. Sh. R.K. Srivastava, Dy. Legal Advisor, Department of Legal Affairs, felt that there should be a centralised monitoring authority in compliance of Section 4 in every Ministry/Department. There should be access to Information through for example like cyber café in district level and where the information was not available one can proceed to file an RTI application.

14. Ms. Pankti D. Jog, MAGP expressed her views that there had to be a distinction between static and dynamic data which is put on the website. For example the proactive disclosure during a disaster situation cannot be static and needs to be updated frequently. There needs to be a set of guidelines/templates for different set of public authorities like anganwadis etc. One public authority could act as an illustration for other public authorities of the same type, which would help spread the best practice.

15. Ms. N. Ramadevi, Dy Secretary (Govt. of AP) apprised the participants of the work done in Andhra Pradesh. She informed that 18 templates have been communicated to the public authorities in the state. Along with that all Government orders issued by the state are put on the website. She suggested that if FAQs are made for all Departments it would be very easy. She further suggested the introduction of a penal clause for non-compliance of the Section 4 along with half yearly review and regular monitoring.

16. Sh. Nikhil Dey, Convener, NCPRI suggested that since a large number of issues involving public consultation needed the concurrence of the Planning Commission, Ministry of Law, Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Environment and Forests there should be some check at that point. He further suggested that best practices from states may be published.

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17. **Sh. Venkatesh Nayak, CHRI**, spoke of segregation of information which is displayed through wall paintings in villages. He suggested that the outside walls should have information generic to all and the inner walls should have information which is specific. He pointed out that there was a question of upkeep of the walls also as they could degenerate due to the weather conditions.

18. **Sh. Rajeev Kapoor, Joint Secretary** summarized the discussion and agreed that the implementation of the Suo-moto disclosure under was weak. There was need for disclosure at different levels and the internet could not be the only means for it. There was need to use other means like the mass media, walls etc. Guidelines had to be kept in view while hosting on the web. There was a need for a policy on consultation during policy making in the government.

Broadly, the conclusions that emerged from the meeting are summarized below:

- (a) The weak implementation of Section 4 of the RTI Act is partly due to the fact that certain provisions of this section have not been fully detailed and in case of some other provisions, there is need for laying down detailed guidelines as to what information needs to be provided and in which form. In view of this, it was agreed that effort should be made to plug these gaps.
- (b) It was agreed that while internet has become an important medium for dissemination of information, at lower formations such as panchayats, dispensaries, block offices etc, other modes of communication would need to be adopted to ensure better access to these disclosures.
- (c) Given that the work that this task force has to accomplish, it would be useful to form sub-groups and assign specific items of work to each of these sub-groups. The convener of the sub-group would thereafter hold consultation with other knowledge persons/organization and prepare a discussion/note, which would then be considered by the entire task force for finalization. The convener would be expected to draw up a brief plan for activities to complete consultations and submission of a discussion paper by end of June.

In view of this, following decisions were taken

- I. There would be 5 subgroups which would look into the following:
 - i. Formulating policy on consultation to mandate public consultations and participation in pre-legislative process and identify additions to Section

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- 4(1)(b)(xvii) to be convened by Sh. Nikhil Dey, NCPRI. Sh. Rajeev Kapoor, Joint Secy, DoPT will join this sub-group.
- ii. Templates for disclosure at different levels in 5 services in rural and 5 critical services in urban areas namely PDS,, Education health, Rural Development and Panchayat, Social security (pensions) and District Collectors office. The convenors for this sub group are Ms. Pankti Jog, MAGP(Rural), Ms. Anjali Bhardwaj, SNS (Urban). Ms. N. Ramadevi, Deputy Secretary, State Government of Andhra Pradesh will join this sub-group.
 - iii. Detailing of sections Sec 4(1)(b)(iii), 4 (1)(b)(iv), 4(1)(b)(xi), 4(1)(b)(xiv) to lend clarity to these sections. Sub group to be convened by Sh. Venkatesh Naik , CHRI, Ms. Aheli Chaudhary, JOSH. Sh. K.G. Verma, Director, DoPT will join this sub-group.
 - iv. Guidelines for digital publications under RTI thereby supporting proactive disclosure of information headed by Sh. Gurumurthy.
 - v. Guidelines to suggest modes and means to facilitate people in filing RTI applications headed by Sh. Deepak Kumar.
- II. It was decided that each sub-group can co-opt any member as deemed fit, to enhance diversity in views, experience and opinions. Each sub-group would formulate its own process of initiating consultations to come up with its recommendations within one month of its constitution.
 - III. It was decided that the next meeting of the group would be held after a month.
 - IV. The issue of protection of RTI activists to be taken up in a separate meeting where representative of MHA would also be invited.
 - V. DoPT would write to different states to invite best practices in the implementation of Section 4 to feed into the recommendations of the working Group.
 - VI. Ensure that the recommendations of the Task Force feed into the implementation of the recommendations of the ARCs 11th Report on E-governance
 - VII. Minutes of this meeting and the OM constituting the task force would be put on website and DoPT would invite public response on them.
 - VIII. It was decided that the conveners of the above sub-groups would formulate a work plan including plans for organizing consultations during the next month. The work plans along with the budgetary requirements may be forwarded to Mrs. Anuradha S. Chagti, Deputy Secretary, (RTI), Room No. 280, Department of Personnel and Training, North Block, Telephone 23093074, Fax 23093022, email osdrti-dopt@nic.in in the prescribed proforma so that these could be budgeted. (Annexure 1).

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Annexure '1'

Application Proforma
Task Force for effective implementation of Section 4 of the RTI Act, 2005

A		
1	Sub-group	
2	Conveners	

B. Details of Institution leading the sub group		
1	Name of the Institution	
2.	Particulars of the Institution	
i	Complete postal address	
ii	Telephone Nos.	
iii	Fax Nos.	
iv	E-mail Address	
3	Particulars of Nodal Officer	
i	Name	
ii	Designation	
iii	Tel and Fax No. (Including mobile No.)	
iv	E-mail id	

C. Details of Proposal		
1	Proposed work Plan	
2.	Time lines	
3.	Detailed estimates of expenditure activity wise	
4.	Total amount of grant required	

D. Details required for release of funds		
1.	Type of registration	
2	Agency name	
3	Act/ Registration No	
4	Date of registration	
5	TIN Number	
6	TAN Number	
7	Name of Bank	
8	Name of bank branch	
9	Branch address	
10	Bank Account No	
11	Agency name as per bank details	

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Annexure 1.4

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**Report of the National Consultation
organized on 16-17 July 2011,
New Delhi**

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On 6th May, 2011 the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT), Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pension, Government of India constituted a Task Force to “review provisions regarding suo-moto disclosure given in Section 4 of the Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2005 and to recommend measures for its better implementation and enforcement”.

The Task Force comprises of the following members:

- Rajeev Kapoor, Joint Secretary, (AT &A), Department of Personnel and Training (Chairperson)
- Anuradha S Chagti, DS (RTI), DoPT, Government of India
- Deepak Kumar, Principal Secretary, GAD, Government of Bihar
- K G Verma, Director (RTI), DoPT, Government of India
- Pankti Jog, Executive Secretary, Mahiti Adhikar Gujarat Pahel (MAGP), Gujarat
- Venkatesh Nayak, Programme Coordinator, Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI), New Delhi
- Aheli Choudhary, Founder Member, JOSH, New Delhi
- Gurumurthy K, Director, IT for Change, Bengaluru
- Anjali Bharadwaj, Director, Satark Nagarik Sangathan (SNS), New Delhi
- Nikhil Dey, Co-convener, National Campaign for Peoples’ Right to Information (NCPRI), New Delhi

Each of the sub groups of the Task Force (explained below) carried out independent consultations with groups and individuals having practical grass root experiences with the implementation of Section 4 of the RTI Act. This report has tried to incorporate most of the recommendations that arose out of those rich discussions. The report is organized in the following way:

- a) Terms of Reference of the Task Force- its scope and mandate
- b) National Consultation on the effective implementation of Section 4 of the RTI Act
- c) Recommendations and guidelines of each of the sub groups of the Task Force
- d) Miscellaneous suggestions and feedback

Annexures enclosed include the following:

- a) Right to Information Act, 2005
- b) Order constituting the Task Force to review provisions regarding suo-moto disclosure given in Section 4 of the Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2005 and to recommend measures for its better implementation and enforcement
- c) Minutes of the first meeting of the Task Force

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- d) Agenda of the National Consultation on the effective implementation of Section 4 of the RTI Act, IIPA, New Delhi

Terms of Reference

The Task Force has been mandated with the following Terms of Reference:

- a) To examine the provisions of Section 4(1)(b) and recommend guidelines for disclosures to be made at various levels of administration
- b) To recommend other items which may be included for suo moto disclosure, as provided in Section 4(1)(b)(xvii)
- c) To explore the possibility of prescribing single templates for disclosing specific category of information in order to facilitate disclosure
- d) To recommend mediums through which such disclosure is to be made at various levels, which could include disclosure through electronic mediums as well
- e) To recommend guidelines for complying with the provisions under Section 4(1)(b)(vii) and Section 4(1)(d)
- f) To give recommendations as to how compliance with the provision of Section 4(1)(b), (c), (d) and Section 4(2)- Section 4(4) may be better enforced
- g) To recommend measures for protection of persons seeking information under the RTI Act
- h) Any other issue incidental to the above

In its meeting on the 12th May 2011, the Task Force discussed the need for broader and wider consultations that is required to tap into the experience of a range of peoples' campaigns, NGOs etc situated across the country who have been advocating for a stronger and more comprehensive interpretation and implementation of RTI Act (in particular Section 4 of the Act) It was agreed to by the members that the Task Force would principally look into collating the vast amount of work that each of these campaigns have already done in their past in this area and bring all the experiences together to facilitate greater sharing and dissemination of their practices.

The Task Force agreed to divide themselves into sub groups to focus on the different aspects of Section 4 of the RTI Act. Each of these sub groups were mandated to look into the following areas:

- i. Formulating policy on consultation to mandate public consultations and participation in the process preceding key policy decisions and legislations and identify additions to Section 4(1)(b)(xvii)
- ii. Templates for disclosure at different levels in 5 services in rural and 5 critical services in urban areas namely PDS,, Education health, Rural Development and Panchayat, Social security (pensions) and District Collectors office

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- iii. Detailing of sections Sec 4(1)(b)(iii), 4(1)(b)(iv), 4(1)(b)(xi), 4(1)(b)(xiv) to lend clarity to these sections.
- iv. Guidelines for digital publications under RTI thereby supporting proactive disclosure of information
- v. Guidelines to suggest modes and means to facilitate people in filing RTI applications

For this purpose, it was decided to organize, with the Indian Institute of Public Administration, a National Consultation on the Effective Implementation of Section 4 of the RTI Act in New Delhi on the 16th-17th July 2011.

National Consultation on the effective implementation of Section 4 of the RTI Act
Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi
16th-17th July 2011

A National Consultation was organized by the Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA) in New Delhi on the 16th-17th July 2011 to bring together various groups and individuals working closely with the advocacy and implementation of the Right to Information Act. The two day long consultations comprised of workshops and presentations made by each of the sub groups on the different aspects of Section 4 that they were mandated to work on. (Agenda attached)

Day one of the consultation began with a panel discussion to introduce the potential of Section 4 of the Right to Information Act. Subsequently, each of the sub groups organized themselves separately, to carry out focused group discussions through workshops on individual aspects of the Section 4. The workshop entailed bringing cases of best practices to each other's notice and formulating potential recommendations with adequate focus on mechanisms for monitoring and enforcement.

The second day of the consultation began with each of the sub groups presenting the outcome that each one of them arrived at through the course of the workshop. The sub group working on use of templates to facilitate accessible and user friendly dissemination of information presented examples of how templates can be designed to display key information with respect to the functioning of Panchayat offices, MGNREGA work sites, primary schools, PDS shops etc.

The sub group working on evolving a transparent, consultative and democratic process preceding key policy decisions and legislations presented the principles of such a desired process and worked out the broad framework of such a process

The sub group working on use of information technology to facilitate more widespread use of Section 4 identified presented the existing practices of the

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Government and ways and means through which they can be optimized and expanded on creatively.

The sub group working on the scope of Section 4 in making transparent the processes, norms, budgets and rules governing Government activities presented both existing practices and the potential reach of Section 4 of the Act in terms of making them more accountable.

Detailed recommendations and guidelines of each of the sub groups have been described in the following chapters of the report.

The consultation ended with remarks made by the Chief Information Commission, Shri Shailesh Gandhi on the potential and challenges of the office of the Information Commission. He presented the participants suggestions on how to use the power of the orders of the Commission more effectively. Specifically in context to Section 4 of the RTI Act, he saw it to be the untapped potential of the RTI Act and envisaged its use in more creative ways.

Sub Group 1- Devising templates for disclosure at different levels in critical services in rural and urban areas

Section 4 of the RTI Act 2005 lays down several particulars of information that public authorities must proactively provide to people.

Section 4(3) of the RTI Act states, *'For the purposes of sub-section (1), every information shall be disseminated widely and in such form and manner which is easily accessible to the public'*.

Section 4(4) of the RTI Act states, *'All materials shall be disseminated taking into consideration the cost effectiveness, local language and the most effective method of communication in that local area and the information should be easily accessible, to the extent possible in electronic format with the Central Public Information Officer or State Public Information Officer, as the case may be, available free or at such cost of the medium or the print cost price as may be prescribed'*.

The terms of reference of the task force set up by the DoPT included: *'2(c) To explore the possibility of prescribing simple templates for disclosing specific category of information in order to facilitate disclosure; and (d) To recommend mediums through which such disclosure is to be made at various levels, which would include disclosure through electronic means also.'*

Guidelines for developing templates for providing information under Section 4 of the RTI act have been evolved by the taskforce:

1. Templates should be created for disclosure of information at various levels -

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At the point of delivery- eg ration shop

At the Block level

At the District level

At the State level

At the Central level

Any other relevant offices/locations where there is public dealing

2. Mediums of disclosure

- Information boards/walls

Section 4(4) of the RTI Act states that information should be disseminated taking into consideration *'the most effective method of communication in that local area and the information should be easily accessible'*. Given the limited reach and accessibility of the internet in India, information disclosures, as far as practically possible, must be done locally in a form and manner that is easily accessible to people. Relevant information should be painted on walls and provided on boards in the local language at prominent public places.

- SMS

The vast proliferation of mobile phones across India, including in villages, makes it one of the best forms of reaching out information to people. Mobile phones can be used to communicate information and to provide a mechanism for citizens to seek specific information through SMS. Many services now have the provision wherein a citizen can SMS a query to a number and get detailed and real-time information in response. People should be able to track applications/complaints through SMS. Beneficiaries should be able to track their entitlements via SMS. Disseminating information through SMS is also a cost-effective medium as bulk SMS packages cost about 3 paise per SMS. Several states use this medium in an extremely innovative manner. For example- in Chhatisgarh, all the ration cardholders of an area are sent an SMS when the truck carrying their entitlements is dispatched from the godown. This sort of use should be replicated by public authorities all over India.

- Call centers / IVR / Information helpline

All departments should have a State-Level toll free helpline which should provide information to people. Information on all aspects of the schemes/programs of the department should be provided through this and people should be able to track their entitlements/applications in real-time through the helpline. The helpline could also be used for registering grievances of citizens.

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- Information Centres at the block level- Information and facilitation centres should be set up at the Block level to proactively provide information to citizens about the schemes and programs of the government. These centres should also assist citizens track their applications and entitlements and register grievances. There is a provision for such centres under MGNREGA and the proposed Nation Food Security Act. Block level facilitation centres have already been set up in several states for example- Common Service Centres and Rajiv Gandhi Sewa Kendras.
- Any document/proof of delivery that is available to beneficiaries- Any document relating to a scheme/program of the department that is held by a citizen (eg- ration card, school books etc.) should be used as a mode for disclosure. Information in the local language can be printed on such documents. Stickers can be used to update/change the information, if required.
- Website-
The RTI Act mandates all public authorities to computerise all records and provide as much information as possible through the internet [Sections 4(1)(a), 4(2) and 4(4)]. As there is no limit to the amount of data that can be uploaded on the website, public authorities must provide as much information as possible through their website, in keeping with the following points:
 - The website should have a simple public interface and should not require any registration/login to access it or to access the MIS.
 - The website should have universal access i.e. it should be accessible to ALL irrespective of technology, platforms, devices or disabilities of any kind.
 - Any entitlement that has to be delivered to a citizen or any transaction between the citizen and the government, must be computer-based (MIS) and this database must be displayed on the website of the relevant public authority.
 - The website must contain detailed, exhaustive information from the point of origin to the point of delivery of all entitlements/services provided by the public authority.
 - The website should display the list of beneficiaries of any scheme/service that the public authority provides and details of the actual benefits provided to each beneficiary.
 - All information that is displayed through any other means (boards/walls/booklets etc) must be displayed on the website.

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The URL of the exact webpage where the information is available should be prominently displayed wherever that information is disseminated through other mediums.

- All applications/complaints made to the department should be provided a unique number and the website should provide a mechanism for tracking these. All applications/complaints should also be uploaded on the website.
- All orders of the public authority should be generated on the website so that these are uploaded as soon as they are generated. Several states, including Andhra Pradesh, follow this mechanism wherein, the order number can only be procured if the order is generated online and is displayed on the website.
- Documents that are available in an electronic copy should be uploaded in their original form and should not be scanned and uploaded.
- The website should provide a sitemap.
- The website should have a good search engine and all documents uploaded should have keywords assigned to them so that they show up in search results.
- All the relevant Acts and rules should be displayed on the website
- All forms should be available on the website
- The website should have a detailed directory, giving contact details, including mobile phone numbers, of all officials of the public authority.

3. Principles for information disclosure

- No abbreviations/ technical short-forms should be used
- All disclosure should be done in the local language/ the language that is most understood in the area.
- Information should be disseminated using as many mediums as possible.
- Disclosures should be in real time, as far as possible
- All information that is displayed/disseminated through any means must carry the date on which it was compiled and the name and designation of the official who has compiled it. It should also state the frequency of its updation.
- Information on all obligations and commitments of the public authority towards citizens should be clearly provided in the public domain. This should include but not necessarily be restricted to-

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- Defining the services and goods that the particular public authority/office provides directly (or indirectly through any other agency/contractor).
 - Detailing and describing the processes by which the public can access and/or receive the goods and services that they are entitled to from the public authority/office.
 - Describing the conditions under which a person becomes eligible for the goods and services, and consequently the categories of people who are entitled to receive the goods and services.
 - Defining the quantitative and tangible parameters, (weight, size, frequency etc,) and timelines, that are applicable to the goods and services that are accessible to the public.
 - Defining the qualitative and quantitative outcomes that each public authority/office had undertaken to achieve through the goods and services that it was obligated to provide. (For example- level of cleanliness for sanitation services, incidence of vector based diseases for health care services etc.)
 - Laying down individual responsibility for providing the goods and services (who is responsible for delivery/implementation and who is responsible for supervision).
 - All the files/records of the public authority should be available for inspection on demand by citizens or at a predetermined time and place every week. Photocopies of the same should also be provided on payment of the actual cost of photocopy. This provision should be widely publicised through boards, pamphlets and the website.
 - Within each public authority, an official should be designated as the official responsible for ensuring compliance with section 4 and for maintaining and updating the disclosures made under section 4 of the RTI Act. This could be the head of the public authority or a PIO.
4. Panchayat is the first public authority or unit which a citizen at the village level deals with every day for his/her work. However the guidelines give some clear instructions to set up a practice of disclosures and dissemination on a periodic basis. They are:
- All the information that is painted on the walls, should also be kept ready for perusal in an "RTI file or Pro-Active Disclosure file".
 - In every concerned Government Department, a copy of any important decision and/or communication that is marked to various authorities is copied to the RTI file, subject to the provisions of disclosure under the RTI Act, and will be termed as a 'Copy to Citizen'
 - 90% of the information received by the Panchayat and information submitted by the Panchayat, falls under section 4 of the Act. A copy of the same must

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be marked to "Citizens File" i.e. RTI file. Like for example any policy document, GR, OM, GOs, Circulars, instructions, guidelines, reports, copy of acts, rules, regulation falls into the pro-active disclosure category. Similarly any reports, list of probable beneficiaries, quarterly report, annual administrative reports, proposed budgets, planning, estimates etc should be marked to RTI file for pro-active disclosures'.

5. Some of the dissemination techniques that can be easily used:

- **Gram Sabha**
Read out all information about benefits of schemes, budgets, expenditure, MGNREGA works, payments etc in the Gramsabha. Example - *Yakubhai* works as a Panchayat Secretary and a PIO. Even before the RTI Act was in place, *Yakubhai* was fond of using folk lyrics as a medium of disseminating information. In his Gram Sabha, he talks about various scheme by connecting it with incidents in the village and sings a folk song marking the specific characteristics of a scheme. His Gram Sabhas are frequented by large numbers of residents on a regular basis.
- Disseminate information about schemes and programmes by setting up a desk whilst organizing the 'Village meal' or any Folk Fair that is conducted in the region. This can also be done in collaboration with village youth mandal, or SHG or any CBO.
- Organization of "Mahit Mela" at the village school on important days like Independence Day, Republic Day". (This works very effectively in the villages, and people feel connected with village school)
- Community radio can become another media of dissemination of info. This proves very effective.
- **Announcements in the village**
In Panchmahal, Gujarat, during the RTI campaign for pro-active disclosures it was observed that the multi-media vehicle used for dissemination of information was widely accepted. The pamphlets, guidelines of various schemes, including forms were disseminated by "RTI on Wheels" a multimedia vehicle. The films and case stories of use of information for achieving transparency in governance were scanned.
- In Goa, it's a regular practice that details of the Gramsabha is reported in the local newspaper.

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- Other media like street plays, puppet shows can also be used for info dissemination.
- Every Public Authority must have a plan of action for dissemination of information. Thus this work should not be optional but mandatory, as per Section 4, RTI Act. Like for example, in Banaskantha District, the school enrollment drive and function (where in district officials remain present) was used as media of disseminating information. Officials were asked to speak on the budgets for the schemes meant for NT-DNT communities. The accountability of the officials from village level and upwards for the citizen is a must and is unfortunately neglected. Our reporting mechanism is one way and it only recognizes an authority 'Above' and not below – 'citizen'.
- If there are any specific programmes or schemes meant specifically for the region or village then in such cases, pro-active disclosure should be prepared in the form of charts giving details of such schemes/programme.
- Any order from the Courts related to MGNREGA or land, or Panchayat should be proactively disclosed, through modes of dissemination discussed above.
- A copy of the affidavits of candidates in Panchayat elections should be hung out outside the Panchayat office, on the window or on the notice board.

*Recommended templates for disclosure of information under Section 4 of the RTI Act
for the Public Distribution System*

1. Methodology

The formats for the recommended templates have been evolved on the basis of-

- Provisions of the PDS Control Order, 2001
- Provisions of Section 4 of the RTI Act
- Orders of the Central Information Commission passed in response to complaints by various NGOs working on the PDS in Delhi
- Consultations with ration cardholders
- Experience of organizations working on the PDS in different states
- Consultation held with the Rozi Roti Adhikar Abhiyan in June 2011
- Consultations held on 16th and 17th of July 2011 in Delhi organized by DoPT and the IIPA.

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2. Framework

Templates have been prepared for disclosures at the following levels:

1. Fair Price Shop
2. Block Level
3. District Level
4. State Level
5. Central Level
6. Information from other sources (organisations involved in procurement, transportation etc)

Modes of Disclosures:

1. Information boards/ walls
2. Websites
3. Mobile phones- SMS/ MMS
4. Call centers / IVR
5. Ration card

3. Templates**I. Disclosures at the FPS**

1. Static Information to be painted at the FPS in the local language

Template 1.1: Entitlement, scale of issue and retail issue price of essential commodities for all types of ration cards

Ration	APL		BPL		Antodyaya		Annapurnna	
	Price	Quantity	Price	Quantity	Price	Quantity	Price	Quantity
Wheat								
Flour								
Rice								
Edible oil								
Sugar								
Kerosene								
Maize, Bazra/ millet								
other/salt								
Sample of all commodities to be displayed at the FPS								

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Template 1.2: Information about the FPS

1. Names of Villages/ Mohallas/ Areas covered by the FPS: -----		
1	Name of license holder	
	License number (display copy of license)	Date of issue
	Name of shop keeper	Phone no
2	Time of shop opening-----	
	Time of shop closing-----	
	Days the shop remains open in a week	
3	List of records held by the FPS- Stock register, sale register, list of cardholders attached to the shop, etc.	

Template 1.3: Information about the grievance redress mechanism

Complaints Register

Ration cardholders can register their complaints in the complaints register available in the Fair Price Shop. Cardholders can demand inspection of the complaints register.

State-level toll free INFORMATION and GRIEVANCE REDRESS HELPLINE (details later in the section 'Proposed new measures')

e.g. 1800-111-222-333

Name, designation and contact of the grievance redress authority

Complaints regarding the functioning of the Public Distribution System can be made to:

- Helpline number:
- At the Block level:
- At the District level
- At the State level
- Vigilance committees at all levels
- Other relevant authority

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Template 1.4: Public audit of records of the FPS (details later in the section
“Proposed new measures”)

Records of FPS available for public audit

(based on the Delhi model)

- All records of the FPS are available for inspection to cardholders on demand
- On the last Saturday of every month, all the records of the FPS will be available for audit by the people at the FPS between 2 to 5 pm
- On the first Saturday of every alternate month, all records of the FPS will be available for audit by people at the Circle/block/panchayat level office from 2 to 5 pm

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Template 1.5: Information about the RTI Act

Right to Information Act 2005

Under the RTI Act, citizens have the right to access information from the Department of Food and Civil Supplies.

- Applications for seeking information have to be submitted in writing with the prescribed fee, to Public Information Officer (PIO) or Assistant Public Information Officer (APIO).
- RTI application fee is Rs. ____ and photocopy charges for providing copies of records is Rs. ____ per page.
- No fee for citizens below the poverty line
- Information will be provided within 30 days

Name, designation and contact details of relevant officials under the RTI Act				
Public Information Officer (PIO)	Name of officer	Designation of officer	Office address & Room no.	Mobile phone no.
Assistant Public Information				

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2. Dynamic information at the FPS to be painted / available on blackboards and made available in a file for inspection on demand in local language

Template 2.1: Stock Position (prev. month)

REQUIREMENT, STOCK AND DISTRIBUTION FOR THE MONTH -----												
Ration	APL				BPL				AAY			
	Requi red	Balan ce of prev mont h	Stock provid ed in this month	Distribu ted in this month	Requi red	Balan ce of prev mont h	Stock provid ed in this month	Distribu ted in this month	Requi red	Balan ce of prev mont h	Stock provid ed in this month	Distribu ted in this month
Wheat												
Flour												
Rice												
Edible oil												
Sugar												
Keros ene												
Board verified by On												

Template 2.2: Vigilance Committee FPS-levelFPS-level Ration Vigilance Committee

The last meeting of the Vigilance Committee was held on

The next meeting of the Vigilance Committee will be held on ...

Minutes of the committee meetings are available for inspection at

Members of the ration vigilance committee

Name	Designation	Phone number & address
	Chairperson	

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Number of Ration Cards (as on.....)		
	Number of cards	Total number of members
APL		
BPL		
AAY		
Annapurna		
Applications pending		
Total		

Template 2.3: List of ration cardholders

- The list of all cards (attached to the shop) must be displayed at the FPS. The print out of the list could be stuck on the wall and a register be maintained which should be available for inspection on demand.

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II. Disclosures at the block/ panchayat* level office (*or other appropriate authority for areas under the sixth schedule of the Constitution and for urban areas)

Template 1: Entitlement, scale of issue and retail issue price of essential commodities for all types of ration cards

Ration	APL		BPL		Antodyaya		Annapurnna	
	Price	Quantity	Price	Quantity	Price	Quantity	Price	Quantity
Wheat								
Flour								
Rice								
Edible oil								
Sugar								
Kerosene								
Maize, Bajra/ millet								
other/salt								
Sample of all commodities to be displayed at the FPS								

Template 2: Monthly stock position of each FPS

REQUIREMENT, STOCK AND DISTRIBUTION FOR THE MONTH -----												
FPS Name & Number: Address:												
Ration	APL				BPL				AAY			
	Required	Balance of prev month	Stock provided in this month	Distributed in this month	Required	Balance of prev month	Stock provided in this month	Distributed in this month	Required	Balance of prev month	Stock provided in this month	Distributed in this month
Wheat												
Flour												
Rice												
Sugar												
Kerosene												

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Template 3: Name, designation & duties of officials

S. No.	Name	Designation	Duties
1		Food Supplies Officer	-
2		Inspector	-
3			-
4			-
5			-

Template 4: Grievance redress mechanisms**Complaints Register**

Ration cardholders can register their complaints in the complaints register available in the Fair Price Shop. Cardholders can demand inspection of the complaints register.

State-level toll free INFORMATION and GRIEVANCE REDRESS HELPLINE (details later
in the section 'Proposed new measures')

e.g. 1800-111-222-333

Name, designation and contact of the grievance redress authority

Complaints regarding the functioning of the Public Distribution System can be made to:

- Helpline number:
- At the Block level:
- At the District level
- At the State level
- Vigilance committees at all levels
- Other relevant authority

Template 5: Status of complaints filed

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(to be maintained in a register shown on demand/ print outs pinned on a notice board)

S. No.	Name of complainant & complaint	Date of filing complaint	Name & designation of officer who received the complaint	Current status of grievance	Name and number of FPS/KOD against whom complaint was filed

Complaints received in the last six months (Painted)

S. No.	Name and number of FPS/KOD against whom complaints were filed	Total number of complaints filed	Action taken against FPS/KOD
1			
2			

6. Public audit of records of the FPS (details later in the section “Proposed new measures”)**Records of FPS available for audit**

(Based on Delhi model)

- All records of the FPS are available for inspection to cardholders on demand
- On the last Saturday of every month, all the records of the FPS will be available for audit by the people at the FPS between 2 to 5 pm
- On the first Saturday of every alternate month, all records of the FPS will be available for audit by people at the Circle/block/panchayat level office between 2 to 5 pm

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Template 7: Vigilance Committee at Block/ Panchayat- level

Block/Panchayat-level Ration Vigilance Committee

The last meeting of the Vigilance Committee was held on

The next meeting of the Vigilance Committee will be held on ...

Minutes of the committee meetings are available for inspection at ...

Members of the vigilance committee

Name	Designation	Phone number & address
	Chairperson	

Template 8: List of ration cardholders

Number of Ration Cards (as on.....)		
	Number of cards	Total number of members
APL		
BPL		
AAY		
Annapurna		
Applications pending		
Total		

- The list of all cards (attached to the shop) must be displayed securely, in an accessible place at the Block/Panchayat- level office. The print out of the list could be stuck on the wall and a register be maintained which should be available for inspection on demand.
- The list should be painted in the village

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Template 9: Procedure for applying for a new APL, BPL and AAY ration card/other services and the time-frame for disposal

Procedure for applying for a new APL, BPL and AAY ration card/other services and the time-frame for disposal				
Type of Card	Eligibility	Documents required	Fee, if any	Time-frame for disposal
APL Card				
BPL Card/ AAY Card				
Modification to card				

All application should be given a unique number and people should be able to track the status of their application on the website of the department. Reasons for rejection of any application must be recorded online and should be communicated to the applicant.

Template 10: Boards displaying all relevant orders

- Board should display relevant orders by:
 - Food Department
 - Supreme Court
- Orders pertaining to closure/transfer of FPS, policy changes etc.

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Template 11: Information about the RTI Act

Right to Information Act 2005

Under the RTI Act, citizens have the right to access information from the Department of Food and Civil Supplies.

- Applications for seeking information have to be submitted in writing with prescribed fee, to Public Information Officer (PIO) or Assistant Public Information Officer (APIO).
- RTI application fee is Rs. ____ & photocopy charges for providing copies of records is Rs. ____ per page.
- No fee for citizens below the poverty line
- Information will be provided within 30 days
- If information is not provided within the stipulated time-frame, first appeal can be to the First Appellate Authority in the Department, and the Second appeal can be filed to the Information Commission
- If information is not provided in time, a penalty of Rs. 250 per day, subject to a maximum on Rs. 25000 can be levied on the PIO by the Information Commission.
- **Under Section 4 of the Act, the department is required to proactively provide information to citizens. The Section 4 publication is available in the office of the PIO in room no. ____ and can be inspected any time during office hours for free.**

Name, designation and contact details of relevant officials under the RTI Act

Public Information Officer (PIO) Assistant Public Information	Name of officer	Designation of officer	Office address & Room no.	Mobile phone no.

Template 12: Board displaying list of documents available for inspection

All documents of this office can be inspected by citizens and photocopies can be taken at actual cost

Name of document	Officer responsible for maintaining the document	Time for inspection

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- List of card-holders (FPS-wise and Block-wise)
- Monthly stock position of all FPS in the district
- Minutes of meetings/reports of FPS-level, block-level and district-level vigilance committees
- Status of complaints filed

Template 2: Board displaying list of documents available for inspection

All documents of this office can be inspected by citizens and photocopies can be taken at actual cost

Name of document	Officer responsible for maintaining the document	Time for inspection

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Template 3: Entitlement, scale of issue and retail issue price of essential commodities for all types of ration cards

Ration	APL		BPL		Antodyaya		Annapurnna	
	Price	Quantity	Price	Quantity	Price	Quantity	Price	Quantity
Wheat								
Flour								
Rice								
Edible oil								
Sugar								
Kerosene								
Maize, Bajra/ millet								
Sample of all commodities to be displayed at the FPS								

Template 4: Grievance redress mechanisms

Complaints Register

Ration cardholders can register their complaints in the complaints register available in the Fair Price Shop. Cardholders can demand inspection of the complaints register.

State-level toll free INFORMATION and GRIEVANCE REDRESS HELPLINE (details later in the section 'Proposed new measures')

e.g. 1800-111-222-333

Name, designation and contact of the grievance redress authority
Complaints regarding the functioning of the Public Distribution System can be made to:

- Helpline number:
- At the Block level:
- At the District level
- At the State level
- Vigilance committees at all levels
- Other relevant authority

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Template 5: Name, designation & duties of officials

S. No.	Name	Designation	Duties
1		Additional Commissioner	
2		Assistant Commissioner	
3		Food Supplies Officer	
4		Inspector	
5			

Template 6: Public audit of records of the FPS

Records of FPS available for audit

(details later in the section "Proposed new measures")

- All records of the FPS are available for inspection to cardholders on demand at the FPS
- On the last Saturday of every month, all the records of the FPS will be available for audit by the people at the FPS between 2 to 5 pm
- On the first Saturday of every alternate month, all records of the FPS will be available for audit by people at the Circle/block/panchayat level office between 2 to 5 pm

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Template 7: Vigilance Committee District- level

District-level Ration Vigilance Committee

The last meeting of the Vigilance Committee was held on
 The next meeting of the Vigilance Committee will be held on ...
 Minutes of the committee meetings are available for inspection at

Members of the vigilance committee

Name	Designation	Phone number & address
	Chairperson	

Template 8: List of ration cardholders

Number of Ration Cards (as on.....)		
	Number of cards	Total number of members
APL		
BPL		
AAY		
Annapurna		
Applications pending		
Total		

- The list of all cards (attached to the shop) must be displayed at the Block/Panchayat- level office and at the FPS. The print out of the list could be stuck on the wall and a register be maintained which should be available for inspection on demand.
- The list should be painted in the village

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**Template 9: Procedure for applying for new card/other services and time-frame
for disposal of applications**

Procedure for applying for a new APL, BPL and AAY ration card/other services and the time-frame for disposal				
Type of Card	Eligibility	Documents required	Fee, if any	Time-frame for disposal
APL Card				
BPL Card/ AAY Card				
Modification to card				

All application should be given a unique number and people should be able to track the status of their application on the website of the department. Reasons for rejection of any application must be recorded online and should be communicated to the applicant.

Template 10: Boards displaying all relevant orders

- Board should display relevant orders by:
 - Food Department
 - Supreme Court
- Orders pertaining to closure/transfer of FPS, policy changes etc.

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Template 11: Information about the RTI Act

Right to Information Act 2005

Under the RTI Act, citizens have the right to access information from the Department of Food and Civil Supplies.

•Applications for seeking information have to be submitted in writing with prescribed fee, to Public Information Officer (PIO) or Assistant Public Information Officer (APIO).

•RTI application fee is Rs. ____ and photocopy charges for providing copies of records is Rs. ____ per page.

•No fee for citizens below the poverty line

•Information will be provided within 30 days

•If information is not provided within the stipulated time-frame, the first appeal can be to the First Appellate Authority in the Department, and the Second appeal can be filed to the Information Commission

•If information is not provided in time, a penalty of Rs. 250 per day, subject to a maximum on Rs. 25000 can be levied on the PIO by the Information Commission.

•Under Section 4 of the Act, the department is required to proactively provide information to citizens. The Section 4 publication is available in the office of the PIO in room no. ____ and can be inspected any time during office hours for free.

Name, designation and contact details of relevant officials under the RTI Act

Public Information Officer (PIO)	Name of officer	Designation of officer	Office address & Room no.	Mobile phone no.
Assistant Public Information Officer (APIO)				

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Note: The MIS used by Chhatisgarh and Tamil Nadu are extremely comprehensive and provide real-time information on the functioning of the PDS. While the Chhatisgarh website has free public access to the MIS (www.cg.nic.in/citizen), the Tamil Nadu MIS is only for internal use and is not accessible by the public. All the content listed out in this section is already being recorded in real-time in Chhatisgarh/Tamil Nadu. Other states can emulate the model of these 2 states.

1. Contents of website related to distribution of grain (to be updated in real-time, as far as possible)

- List of all FPS/KODs (Block-wise & District-wise)
- Entitlement, scale of issue and retail issue price of essential commodities for all types of ration cards
- Types of ration cards
- Procedure for applying for new card/other services and time-frame for disposal of applications
- List of card-holders (FPS-wise, Village-wise, Block-wise & District-wise)
- Actual disbursement made on each card (will require shop-level information to be entered into the MIS)
- Monthly stock position of all FPS
- Grievance redress mechanisms for PDS (including details of how and where to lodge a complaint using each of the mechanisms)
- Minutes of meetings/reports of FPS-level, block-level, district-level and state-level vigilance committees
- Information about the RTI Act and section 4 disclosures of the department
- Information about the mechanism for public audit of records of FPS
- Name, designation & duties of all officials of the Department
- Status of complaints filed
- Status of applications submitted
- Status of RTI applications filed
- Status of public audit reports
- ALL orders issued by the department and any other relevant orders which affect the PDS. The department should have a mechanism whereby orders can only be generated through the website and automatically uploaded in the relevant section of the website. Several states, including Andhra Pradesh, follow this mechanism wherein, the order number can only be procured if the order is generated online and is displayed on the website.
- Monthly food grains bulletin (must provide information upto block-level)

All this information should be provided in a searchable format. The website should not require any password/login to access/view this information. The MIS of the Department should be completely visible to people accessing the site.

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2. Contents of website related to procurement of grain (to be updated in real-time, as far as possible)

- MSP & Bonus for all commodities
- Names of farmers (village-wise, block-wise, district-wise)
- Quantity procured and amount paid to each farmer
- Norms for fair average quality
- List of mills (along with capacity of each mill)
- Quantity of grain given and received from each mill

Information on procurement should also be displayed at the procurement centre-level and the block-level offices and at all other offices/sites involved in procurement of grain.

V. Disclosures at the Central Level (through the website)

- All relevant content related to procurement including details of agencies involved
- All relevant content related to transportation including details of agencies involved
- All relevant content related to distribution and linking to state level MIS
- Real-time information on grain movement
- All orders issued by the ministry, Supreme Court etc. which affect the functioning of the PDS
- Monthly food grains bulletin (with information upto block-level)

VI. Information from other sources (organisations involved in procurement, transportation etc.)

All relevant information related to the PDS must be displayed on the website of the relevant organization and should be linked to the Ministry/Food Department website. Eg- Railways which is involved in transportation of food grains, should display real-time information on movement of grains on its website.

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A toll-free number should be set up in every state to provide PDS related information to people. Information on all aspects of the PDS should be provided through this and people should be able to track their entitlements/applications in real-time through the helpline. The helpline could also be used for registering grievances of citizens.

2. Information through SMS

- A mechanism for registering mobile numbers of cardholders linked to FPS should be set-up
- When the truck leaves for the FPS from the godown, an SMS should be sent to all the registered cardholders, informing them of the truck number, the commodities being sent and the quantity of the commodities. Such a system has already been set up in several states.
- SMS service should also be provided for accessing other types of information. To begin with, this could be restricted to static information (entitlement, location of PIO, contact of vigilance committee etc.). Later even dynamic information such as stock availability in FPS, status of applications/complaints etc. can also be provided through SMS. Many states already provide this information through SMS.

3. Public Audit of records of FPS

- On the last Saturday of every month, all the records of the FPS should be available for audit by people at the FPS between 2 to 5 pm
- On the first Saturday of every alternate month, all records of the FPS should be available for audit by people at the Circle/block/panchayat level office between 2 to 5 pm
- Currently, in Delhi, records of FPS are supposed to be available for public audit on every Saturday (except one) at the Circle-level office. This system should be replicated by all states.

4. Online generation of department orders-

The state Departments should have a mechanism whereby orders can only be generated through the website and automatically uploaded in the relevant section of the website. Several states, including Andhra Pradesh, follow this mechanism wherein, the order number can only be procured if the order is generated online and is displayed on the website. This ensures that people have real-time access to the orders of the Department

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Critical information on changes to the PDS must be reached out to people through the mainstream media. For example- any changes in the monthly entitlements of cardholders must be prominently advertised in the newspaper every month.

6. Printing information on ration cards-

Information on entitlements, grievance redress mechanism and public audit should be printed prominently on the ration card. Wherever, the information needs to be updated, stickers can be used.

7. Photographs-

- When the truck offloads supplies at the FPS, the truck driver should take a photograph of the stock (alongwith a vigilance committee member) and should MMS this to the department. This photograph should be linked to the website and should display the time and exact location (latitude and longitude).
- This mechanism is already in place in some states and should be replicated all over.

Recommended templates for disclosure of information under Section 4 of the RTI Act for the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)

The templates captures important, and frequently asked information about MGNREGA that needs to be disclosed both on walls and in the file named "Pro-active Disclosure" (as explained previously)

There needs to be clear instructions that indicate the following:

The information which falls into "proactive Disclosure" should be kept ready at the Village Panchayat Office and must be shown to the citizen upon oral request without taking any inspection charges, written application and application charges. The photocopy of the same can be provided by levying photocopy charges.

1. General Information about MGNREGA;

- ❖ Any family residing in the village can acquire a Job Card by approaching the Panchayat.
- ❖ A family having a job card can demand for 100 days of employment in a year.
- ❖ An application demanding work has to be given to the Panchayat. Kindly take a receipt of your application submitted.

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- ❖ If you do not get employment within 15 days of your application, then you may approach Block Development Officer/programme officer for an Un-Employment Allowance.
- ❖ Payment of unemployment allowance will continue till you are provided with work. For the first month of not having received employment, you are entitled to 1/4 of the MGNREGA minimum wage and from next month onwards ½ of the MGNREGA minimum wages. (MGNREA min wages=Rs.- -----)
- ❖ If you have worked under MGNREGA, the payment of which should be given to you within 15 days of work. In case you are not getting payment, you can approach labour court under the Payment of Wages Act, under which you are entitled to a compensation upto 10 times of the payment.
- ❖ To know more about MGNREGA dial helpline No : 1800 (example)

2. Job Card Board in Every village (on the wall and file)

(All the job card holders name to be displayed on this board, including those who have not applied for any work or not worked even for a day)

Name of the Job card holder	Job card Number	Year									
		2010-11		2011-12		2012-13		2013-14		2014-15	
		Da ys	Amo unt	Da ys	Amo unt	Da ys	Amo unt	Da ys	Amo unt	Da ys	Amo unt

Table showing details for development works as under

S r. No	Na me of the wor k	Co de of the wo rk	Sanctioned amount			Amount spent			Work commenced on	Work completed on	Status of work	
			Lab our	Mate rial	tot al	Lab our	Mate rial	tot al			compl ete	incomp lete
1												
2												

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Details of material used:

Sr . No	Name of the work	Cement		Bolders		Pebbles		Sand		Bricks		Water			
		Qty	Rate	Qty	Rate	Qty	Rate	Qty	Rate	Qty	Rate	Qty	Rate	Qty	Rate

2. List of registers to be maintained at Panchayat level for MGNREGA

List applications for registration	list of sanction works
Registration list	Payment register
List of job card issued to	Unemployment Allowance Register
Job Card Register	Employment Register
estimates of sanctioned work	Allotment of Work register
Muster roll received register	Muster roll issue register
Asset Register	Cash Book
Complaint register	

The above mentioned registers are maintained at Panchayat level. If any citizen wants to inspect the same, can contact Panchayat Secretary or Gramsevak. The inspection is free of any charge. The copies of which can be accessed by paying actual photocopy charges.

What is social audit or who will do it and when?

- The records related to all the work conducted under MGNREGA will be read out in public for audit and verification.
- Social audit team will procure all the records of completed works and will disseminate for verification.
- The complaints of discrepancies if any are recorded.
- The report will be produced before the special Gramsabha- "Social Audit Gramsabha"
- The social audit report can be accessed at Panchayat Secretary

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About Social Audit :

Name of Social audit team members	Date of Last meeting	Date of next meeting

3. Display board at work place

Name of work/description					
Sanction cost of work					
A-MATERIAL COST					
B-WAGES					
SKILLED					
UNSKILLED					
Date of work started					
expected date of work completion					
No of workers present	Physically challenged	Old age	pregnant	other	total

Other Side of the board:

According to Schedule of Rates the details of task should that every worker should do (minimum) should be given. SOR details can also be given here

Soft

Hard

Very hard

There should be a separate 'File' of Each work under MGNREGA, which will be available at Panchayat for inspection free of any cost.

The file of each work should contain following photocopies:

- a. Copy of 'Administration sanction', 'Technical Sanction', and 'Financial Sanction'
- b. Copy of the Estimate
- c. List of people who got payment – payment list)
- d. Photocopy of the bills of material used in the work
- e. Utilization Certificate
- f. Completion Certificate
- g. Measurement Book.

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Recommended templates for disclosure of information under Section 4 of the RTI Act for Panchayat

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

Designation	Name	Phone No
Name and Address of Sarpanch (Village Head)		
Name and Address of Chairman of Social Justice Committee of village		
Name and address of Panchayat Secretary (Talati)		
Revenue Secretary/Patwari		
Assistant secretary		
Name and address of Panchayat's Peon		
Name and address of operator of village water works		
Gramsevak (Dev)		
Gram Seval (Agriculture)		
Any Other		

2. Details about PIO and Appellate Authorities under RTI act 2005 (Should be displayed on outside wall of the Panchayat)

Heads	Name	Designation	Phone Number	Address
PIO				
First Appellate Authority				
Second Appellate Authority				

Kindly bring to the notice of PIO if any information disclosed on the walls is misleading or wrong, or not updated. Citizen may also file complaint under section 18 of RTI ac to State information commission.

RIGHT TO INFORMATION ACT 2005

- ❖ Citizen has right to take photocopy, right to inspect the work and records, held by any public authority.
- ❖ Approach Public information Officer for information.

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- ❖ Application for information need to be submitted to public information officer with application fee ----- which can be paid by: -----
- ❖ If you need assistance in writing application, PIO is suppose to help you as per provisions of the act.
- ❖ PIO is suppose to furnish you information within 30 days. If information is not held by Panchayt, PIO may transfer your application to respective public authority.
- ❖ Any information provided after prescribed time limit will be given free of any charge.
- ❖ Citizen need not give application or application fee or wait for 30 days for inspecting any information that is disclosed on the walls.
- ❖ Citizen may also file direct complaint under section 18 of RTI act, in case she/he not getting info or getting misleading info.
- ❖ Citizen may file first appeal befoe applet authority.

3. Details of information about village population:

Type			
	Female	Male	total
Total population			
SC			
ST			
Voters			
Type of family			
Total family			
BPL Card holder			
Antyoday card holders			

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4. Details about Village Population (to be kept in File)

Type	population		
	Female	Male	Total/persons
Total Population of village (0 to 6 years children)			
Schedule Caste			
Schedule Tribe			
SEBC			
Minorities			
Others			
Total Voters			
Schedule Caste			
Schedule tribe			
SEBC			
Minorities			
Others			
Handicapped			
Farmers (Land holders)			
Schedule caste Farmers (Land holders)			
ST Farmers (Land holders) (Tribal)/Adivasi			
OBC Farmers (Land holders)			
MINORITY Farmers (Land holders)			
Type of Families			
Total families	Numbers		
BPL FAMILIES			
APL Families			
Antodiyaya families			
Ann-purnna families			
Families having Toilets at their house			
Families not having toilets at their house			
Families having electricity connection			
Families not having electricity connection			
Families having agriculture land			
Landless families			
Marginal farmers			
Families having Tap connection in their house			
Families dwelling Kucha houses			
Families having pucca houses			
Grazing land		Hecters	
Fallow Land		Hecters	
Wasteland		Hecters	
Village Revenue land			
Others			

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5.Information about animals in village (file)

Species/type	Numbers
COW	
Ox	
Buffaloes	
Goat	
Sheep	
Camel	
hen /poultry	

6. Panchayat employees' duties (functions) and authorities (information with Patwari/village secretary) (file) , Gamsevak,

Talati(Patwari)	
Panchayat secretray	
Gram Sevak	
Peon/s	
Water work operator	
Others	
Do the above mentioned employees stay /reside in the village	

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Gram Sabha Details: table 4

- ❖ Minimum Gram Sabha held during the year:
- ❖ Date of last Gramsabha :
- ❖ Date of next Gramsabha :
- ❖ The officials from block level to be present:

The proceedings of the Gramsabha and resolutions can be inspected from Panchayat free of any charge. The copy of which can be obtained upon paying photocopy charges.

Details of meeting held at Panchayat

Sr. No	Type of Meeting	Time span between two meetings	Where	participants	Who will chair?	Agenda
1	Ward Sabha (meeting)		Ward	10% of the voters (ward) required to be present	Ward panch	Work to be taken up at ward level & Schemes
	Gramsabha		Panchayat level	10% of the voters (from panchayat) required to be present.	Sarpanch	Work to be taken up at Panchayat level & Schemes
	Panchayat corum or Gram sachivalay		Panchayat	Ward panch and Panchayat employee	Sarpanch	Implementation of schemes, status, progress report, complaints etc.

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Details of other committees at village level:

Sr. No	Name of the committee	No of members	Meeting held	Date of last meeting	Next meeting
1	Social Justice Committee	5	Every 3 months		
2	Village Water Committee	12	Every 2 months		
3	Village Vigilance committee (MGNREGA)	7	Every 2 months		
4	Village Health committee	5	Every 2 months		
5	Vigilance committee for PDS	5	Every month		
6	School Management Committee				

The minutes of meetings are available in the Panchayat and can be inspected free of any charge. The copy can be obtained by paying photocopy charges.

Name of committee : Social Justice committee

Sr.	Name of Members	Designations	SC/ST/OBC/Others	Female/Male

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Name of committee : Vigilance committee for PDS

Sr.	Name of Members	Designations	SC/ST/OBC/Others	Female/Male

Name of committee : Village Health committee

Sr.	Name of Members	Designations	SC/ST/OBC/Others	Female/Male

Kindly prepare Information for every committee (file)

Social Justice committee	Village water and sanitation committee	Village welfare committee
Village water committee	Village Health committee	Village education committee
Monitoring committee MGNREGA As per panchayat ward	Village Ration shop monitoring committee	E-Gram Computer committee

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List of Records available for inspection free of charge at Panchayat Office. Copy can be obtained by paying photocopy charges.

1. Panchayati Act, Rules
2. MGNREGA Act, Guidelines, rules
3. Right to information Act and copy of rules
4. Copy of Land revenue act/code
5. Budget
6. Audit Report
7. Annual Administrative report of the panchayat (at least last five years)
8. Proceedings and resolutions of Gramsabha
9. Proceedings and resolutions of meetings held by various committees like 9 mentioned above)
10. Report that are presented by government officials in the Gramsabha.
11. Revenue record (Register 6- A, - A etc)
12. Registers regarding MGNREGA
13. Voters list of the village
14. BPL List Card holders list
15. BPL Ration card holders List
16. Antyoday Family List.
17. Cash Book
18. Asset Register
19. Stock Register
20. Patta Register
21. Complaint Register

Details of Panchayat taxes (File)

Type of tax	Responsible person	Number
House tax		
Sanitation tax		
Light tax		
General water tax		
Profession tax		
Land revenue		
Sewerage tax		

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Diva Bati tax		
Fee: market fee		
Fee for use of well water for other purposes		
Fee for gutter cleaning		
Village choky fee		
Fee for animal keeping house		

Attach panchayat tax rules here

Panchayat Budget

Year	Revenue of Panchayat (income of panchayat)	Grants Received **	donation received	Total income	Private (Royalty, CSR, other income)	Total expenditure	Balance
2007-08							
2008-09							
2009-10							
2010-11							
2011-12							

***grants or assistance received from MPLAD/MLA, District Planning Board, development programm, 13th finance commission's grants and others

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Type of Water body	Number	Area	Capacity of storing water
River/Dam			
Talab			
Handpump		NA	
Private wells			
Public Wells			

Schemes run by Central Government Assistance:

Sr. no	Scheme	Who is entitled?	What is the benefit?	Where to apply	Documents required for applying	Time limit of decision	Who will take the decision	Where to file appeal
	Indira Awas							

Schemes run by State Government Assistance:

Sr. no	Scheme	Who is entitled?	What is the benefit?	Where to apply	Documents required for applying	Time limit of decision	Who will take the decision	Where to file appeal
	Indira Awas							

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(Department of Personnel & Training)****Waiting list of Indira Awas Yojana:**

Name	Remark

List of Beneficiaries of various schemes of last five years:

1. Housing Scheme
2. Pension Scheme (widow, old age, differently able)
3. Allotment of land patta
4. Bankable schemes

Name of the scheme:

Name of person benefited	Year of receiving benefit

Details of village development work

	type of work	number of works	Budget	incurred expenditure	status of work complete/ incomplete
1	Roads				
2	well recharge				
3	check dams				
4	Gutter				

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5	Sanitation				
6	Anganwadi				
7	School				
8	community center hall				
9	drinking water pipeline				
10	Others				

Details of work done: Road

From --- to ---	Year	Under which scheme	Estimated cost	Total cost	Date of completion of work

Details of work: Well recharging

Following functions are done by Panchayat.

1. Birth Registration
2. Death registration
3. Valuation of house or shop

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4. Entries of land entitlements in the register.

Other facilities available in village (file)

Facility	where it is located in village /taluka	Contact	phone number
Milk cooperative society			
Agriculture cooperative society			
Bank			
Post office			
Fire brigade house			
Veterinary clinic			
seeds distribution			
Women groups			
Children groups			
Disaster mitigation and management unit			

Regarding Police station

Address of police station or outpost		
Name of PI/PSI		Ph:
Name of Police Mitra		Ph:
Social defense officer name and address		Ph:

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Instructions:

1. All the above information should be on the except those table where is specifically mentioned for keeping it only in the file.
2. Copy of all GRs, circulars, GOs, OMs, policies, rules, guidelines received by Panchayat, or reports, budgets, list of proposed beneficiaries, submitted by Panchayat should be marked to RTI file (pro-active disclosure file). This will a copy of the citizen.

Recommended templates for disclosure of information under Section 4 of the RTI Act for Government Schools

- Given below are sample templates for information disclosure, some of them are to be put up as boards/ or wall writings and some of them to be made available as hard copies
- A board to be displayed of all records/documents/information that are available as hard copies in the school premise

Information to be displayed at the government schools:**Sample Board 1: Details of information for Grievance Redressal**

Nature of Information	Authorit y for redressa l	Name of redress al officer	Office Addres s and phone numbe r	Time lines For redress al	Public Dealin g Day and time	Appellat e Authorit y and process of appeal
Issues Related to Availability/Appointm ent of Teachers						
Issues related to admission						
Issues related to school infrastructure						
Issues related to corporal punishment, discrimination, child rights						

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Sample Board 3: Student Enrolment Information: (Hard Copy)

This information to be compiled and kept available for each academic year

Categories	Class I		Class II		Class III		Class IV		Class V		Class VI		Class VII		Class VIII	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Children with Special Needs																
SC																
ST																
OBC																
Minorities																
Others																
Total																

Sample Board 4: Entitlement and Incentive Information:

	Nature of Incentive/ Entitlements	Eligibility criteria	Amount to be Disbursed	Number of students eligible for the same	Number of students who have received	When disbursed [specify date]	Dated Receipt given And by whom
1	Textbooks						
2	Uniform						
3	Scholarships						
4	Any other						

Information to be provided in details in hard copy -name of beneficiary , grade, name of guardian, address and contact details of beneficiary.

Sample Board 5: Details of budgetary expenditure: (in Hard Copy)

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Detail of budget received by the school

Name of Budget Head	Amount Received	Date of Receipt	Amount Spent	Period of Expenditure	Nature of expenditure
Teaching Learning Material (TLM)					
School Development Grant (SDG)					
Maintenance					
Additional Classrooms					
Major Repairs					
Computer Aided Learning					
Any other					
Total					

Sample Board 6: Information about School Management Committee (SMC)

Date of appointment/constitution of committee:

Sl. No.	Name of member	Designation	Male/female	Category	Name and Class of Child whose parent is a member

Date of Next Meeting of SMC _____ **(to be updated monthly)**

Sample Board 7: Details of School Management Committee: (In Hard Copy)

Sl. No.	Date of Meeting	Number of members present	Name of Person holding meeting register
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

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7			

Issue 8: Copy of the Three Year Long SDP, with annual sub-parts, Copy of the DISE Report Card

Sample Board 9: Details of Mid Day Meal (MDM):

Day	Menu to be Served	Menu Served
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday		

To be made available in hard copy: copy of order of State Government on MDM as per Supreme Court order, supply register of MDM- norm of supply/delivery to include amount and date of delivery on a monthly basis, actual date of delivery and actual amount received, and payment register/record on MDM-Name of cook, payment received-date and amount of the payment received by the cook.

Sample Board 10: Details of Inspection of School: (In Hard Copy)

Sl. No.	Name of Inspector	Date of Visit	Details of officer from who Inspection report can be accessed

Sample Board 11: Issues Inspected by the School Inspector:

Sl. No.	Items	Inspectors Comments
1.	State of Infrastructure	
a.	Classrooms	
b.	Toilets	
c.	Drinking Water	
2.	Teachers	
a.	Attendance	
3.	Quality of Teaching	

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a.	State of notebooks	
b.	State of learning abilities	
4.	Children Related	
a.	Attendance	
b.	Any other	

Date of last Inspection:

Name of officer from whom the Inspection Report can be accessed

Sample Board 12: Medical Facilities available:

Medical Facility	Name/ Contact person	Address and Phone Number
Visiting Doctor		
Nurse		
Primary Health Centre		
Ambulance		
Any other		

Please also mention where the first-aid box is available in the school premise _____

Sample Board 13: Schemes and Programmes Implemented in School: (Hard Copy) Including under innovation fund, PPP, others and principal components of the same.

Sample Board 14. Support system for Children with Special Needs: (Hard Copy)

Sample Board 15: Public Notice on Right to Information Act:

Public Notice on Right to Information Act

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Right to Information Act 2005

Under the RTI Act, citizens have the right to access information from the school and the Department of Education.

- Applications for seeking information have to be submitted in writing with prescribed fee, to Public Information Officer (PIO) or Assistant Public Information Officer (APIO).
- RTI application fee is Rs. ____ and photocopy charges for providing copies of records is Rs. ____ per page.
- No fee for citizens below the poverty line
- Information will be provided within 30 days
- In case information is incomplete or unsatisfactory, first appeal to be made to the First Appellate Authority

Name, designation and contact details of relevant officials under the RTI Act

Official in custody of information in hard copy in school	Name of officer	Designation of officer	Room no. and Public Dealing Time	Mobile phone no.

Public Information Officer (PIO)	Name of officer	Designation of officer	Room no.	Mobile phone no.

First Appellate Authority (FAA)	Name of officer	Designation of officer	Room no.	Mobile phone no.

List of Information that needs to be made available at Zonal /District Office of Education Department

- Given below are sample templates for information disclosure, some of them are to be put up as boards/ or wall writings and some of them to be made available as hard copies

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- A board to be displayed of all records/documents/information that are available as hard copies in the school premise

Sample Board 1: Roles and Responsibilities:

Nature of Information	Designation/Authority level responsible	Name of the official	Office Address and Phone No.	Public Dealing Day and time	Name and designation of the Redressal Officer	Timeliness for Redressal
Issues related to availability/appointment of teachers						
Issues related to admission						
Issues related to school infrastructure						
Issues related to mental and physical harassment, discrimination and child rights						
Issues related to incentive schemes						
Issues related to Mid Day Meal						
Issues related to Financial allocations to school						
Others						
OVERALL GREVIANCE REDRESSAL STATUS:						
Number of Complaints Received This Month:						
Number of Complaints Redressed:						
Total Number of Complaints Unresolved :						
Phone number of Child Helpline						
Phone number of RTE helpline if available						

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1. Organogram
2. Copy of the Citizen's Charter
3. School wise School Development Plans (SDPs)
4. Process document of compilation of School Development Plans (SDPs)
5. Copy of Aggregated SDP
6. District Plan under SSA- Details of the planning process undertaken, including time when it is done at each stage and names of people responsible.
7. District Report Card of DISE
8. All circulars/orders/notice/notifications issued to be displayed for the period of week, summary of orders, backlog/previous orders/circulars/notice/notifications can be obtained at particular time from particular person. The name, designation, and time of availability for public viewing to be clearly displayed on board.
9. Information of all projects running in District- including government schemes, schemes functioning under Innovation Fund and those under PPP mode. Details to be included are- department running scheme, nature of input provided/service provided under partnership, quantum of funds disbursed by government, name of private partners and contribution of private partner (if applicable).

10. District office to display/make available all information of each block-

	Block 1	Block 2
Number of Schools Overall		
Elementary Schools		
Primary		
UP		
Elementary (Class I-8)		
Total Schools having elementary sections		
Total Schools RTE compliant on teacher availability		
Total Schools RTE compliant on infrastructure		
Total Schools RTE compliant on all indicators		
Secondary		
Higher Secondary		
Pre- Primary Education		
ICDS Centres		
Preschools		
Schools with PS section		
Specified Category Schools		
Kendriya Vidyalaya		
Sainik Schools		
Narvodaya Schools		

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SC Hostels		
Tribal Ashrams		
Residential Schools		
Residential Bridge Course		
Non-Residential Bridge Course		
Seasonal Hostels		
KGBVs		
Model Schools		
Special Schools for Children with disability (will also need to be broken into multi-disability special schools, and for the individual specific disability)		
Schools imparting special training within the existing school premises and ongoing processes		
Private Schools		
Aided		
Total seats in the incoming school		
Total seats reserved for weaker /disadvantaged section (as per aid)		
Unaided		

School wise details in Hard Copy**11. Teachers Information:**

		Total	Block 1	Block 2
	Total Number of Teachers			
	(Teachers by regular/parateachers/contract teachers/guest teachers)			
	Number of Resource Teachers for Children with Disability			
	Number of Subject teachers-Health and Physical Education			
	Number of Subject teachers-Art Education			
	Number of Subject teachers-Work Education			
	Residential Facilities and Special Training Related Information*			
	Residential Bridge Course			
	Non-Residential Bridge Course			
	Seasonal Hostels			

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	Month (from-to) when Hostels run			
	Schools imparting special training within the existing school premises and ongoing processes			
	KGBVs			
	Tribal Hostels			
	SC Hostels			
	Mobile School or other means of imparting education to migrant population			

* Information about villages/schools where these are provided to made available on request.

12. Names of teachers receiving awards for meritorious work and name of awards

13. Financial/ Budget related details

	Account Head	Allocation	Money Received	Date of Receipt	Date of Disbursal	Money Spent

This information will need to be contextualised based on State
Both aggregate budgetary information and for individual blocks and panchayats and schools to be provided in Hard Copy

14. Child Population Details

			Total	Block 1	Block 2	Block 3	
6-14	Total Population	Total					
		Boys					
		Girls					
		Dalits					
		SC					
		ST					
		Minority					
		CWSN					
	Out of School	Total					
		Boys					
		Girls					
		Dalits					
		SC					
		ST					
		Minority					
		CWSN					
		Other groups defined as					

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		marginalized group in State Rules					
--	--	---	--	--	--	--	--

15. Teacher training Institutes- DIET, Private B.Ed College, BRC, etc.- Number, Courses Run, Number of Seats, Free/Paid, Institution has been granted recognition by what body.
16. Inspection reports: for both government and private schools to be made available. The data to include, name of inspector, number of schools under him/her, dates of the visits made to the schools allocated to him/her, and details of inspection undertaken. (To be compiled and made available on a monthly basis)

17. Information of all private schools in the district:

S . N o	Na me	Add ress	Recog nition Status	Affili ation to which Board	Name of societ y/ mana ging body	Total No of seats (inco ming class)	No . sea ts un der 25 %	No. of applica tions receive d	No of sea ts fill ed	Con tact pers on in the scho ol	Perio d of admis sion (starti ng & closin g)	Status of RTE compli ance

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Sub Group- digital publications under RTI thereby supporting proactive disclosure of information

Guidelines for digital proactive disclosure under the RTI Act (and its proactive monitoring and enforcement)

1. What information should be pro-actively disclosed through digital means

- Unlike for non-digital media, there is very little cost in making all information that is available to a department/ Public Authority (PA) in digital form completely public. The key operational issue with regard to proactive disclosure therefore changes from which information to pro-actively disclose, to which may not be so disclosed, and why. Every information available with governments in digital form should by default be considered for proactive disclosure through digital means. Automated processes for proactive disclosure, discussed later, further reduce the cost of doing so.
- It is obligatory under section 4.1.b.xiv of the RTI Act for every PA to pro-actively disclose 'details in respect of the information, available to or held by it, reduced in an electronic form'. In such a listing required under this section, it should also be required to indicate which digitally held information is made available publicly over the Internet and which not, and the specific reason thereof.
- With huge investments going into e-governance, more and more information is held by government today in digital means. The proposed Electronic Delivery of Services (EDS) Act seeks to make it mandatory to deliver all services in a digital form within five years of its enactment. Present paper based processes, due to structural constraints of such processes are designed keeping in mind two key objectives; management's right to know and review (addressed by MISes) and maintaining a complete audit trail. Digital processes allows all information to be simultaneously structured with a view to another all-important objective – the citizen's right to know and monitor governance activity. It is required that as process re-engineering is done for e-governance and EDS, citizen's right to information is considered at par with that of the management and auditors, unless there is some compelling reason to the contrary, in keeping with the legitimate exceptions allowed under the RTI Act. RTI is therefore to be taken as a key 'design principle' for new digital process re- engineering. This represents the real import of proactive disclosure in a digital context. (We can call this design principle as 'CC. Citizen'.)

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- To maintain reliability of information and its real time updation, information generation in a digital work flow should be 'locked' to key work outputs, like a muster roll and salary slip (NREGA in Andhra Pradesh) or formalisation of a government order (Andhra Pradesh). Such an approach will lead to automation of proactive disclosure.
- In an effort to move towards 'as complete a disclosure of information as possible' as required by the letter and spirit of the Act 'so that the public have minimum resort to the use of this Act to obtain information', every department must come out with an 'public information policy' (or proactive disclosure policy) every year. This policy should contain the department's plan for proactive disclosure and progress towards full conformity with the letter and spirit of the RTI Act. This policy should be put up for public comments/ consultations and then be submitted to the concerned Information Commission to obtain its concurrence. Such a policy should specifically mention what new categories of information have been declared under section 4.1.b.17 as requiring proactive disclosure. In UK and Australia, all public authorities must adopt a publication scheme approved by the Information Commissioner.
- Such a public information policy should interpret the intention of the RTI Act in terms of the specific mandate and activities of the department, with respect to all levels of the department's activity and presence. Such a policy should describe in detail the record-keeping scheme (all issues vis-a-vis compliance with section 4.1.a) apart from mentioning what information is being proactively made available and how, what is not made available and why, and steps taken for compliance with 4.1.c and 4.1.d. Public information policies of all departments should be a part of the annual report of the Information Commissions under section 25.1 and should be widely publicized.
- All information and documents covered under proactive disclosure norms as per the approved public information policy should be specifically marked as such at the time of the origin of the information/ document itself. In Australia, all such information is called as IPS (information publication scheme) information (or IPS documents). All government websites have an IPS button where all such information/ documents are made available. Similar classification, mark and website button should be used in India (A catchy term like '*CC. Citizen*' for such marking and for the website button may be employed.)
- Frequently asked questions and frequently occurring problems should be listed on the website. A glossary of frequently used terms should be displayed.

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- Some of the most useful information is very dynamic, Such information must be updated on a real term basis, preferably as an automated process. If for some reason it is not possible to do so in the real time, such information should be updated on a monthly basis, or at the most, quarterly basis. Proper standards and records for such regular updation should be maintained, and mentioned in the concerned public information policy.

2. Record keeping for digital proactive disclosure

- Proper digital proactive disclosure is contingent upon appropriate digital record keeping. 4.1.a of the RTI Act makes a clear recommendation for digitising and extensive networking of government records. This issue is also connected to the earlier made point on informational aspects of e-governance based process re-engineering. New government-wide as well as department-specific electronic record keeping norms and schemes should be developed, and a study group can be set up for this purpose. Citizen's right to information should be a key design principle for these new electronic record keeping scheme. All information and documents should have appropriate meta-data which ensures easy discovery of information. It also enables organisation and presentation of information along many different parametres as required (for instance, it would be easily possible to arrange it village-wise).

3. Form in which digital information should be presented

- Information must be presented from a user's perspective, which may require re-arranging it, simplifying it etc. However, original documents in original formats should continue to be made available because these are needed for community monitoring of government's functioning.
- Information should be easily searchable and discoverable, and therefore not just in a scanned document form. In order to search scanned documents, optical character recognition techniques are available and these should be incorporated. Information/ documents should be time-stamped with proper version-ing. Earlier versions should be archived and be publicly accessibility.
- Information should be uploaded using only open standards like ODF, PDF/A, JPG, OGG etc, so that it is neutral to the technology platform of the user. Since, the accessed information is the user's right to access and she cannot be forced to use certain technology platforms rather than others. The Department of Information Technology has come up with a policy on 'open standards in e-governance' which should be meticulously followed. Information and documents Not following open standards, and other technical standards mentioned in this section, for digital proactive disclosure

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should be considered non-compliance to the provisions of the RTI Act. All standard web accessibility guidelines, especially relating to visual disabilities should be followed.

- There is a continuum between what is generally called as information and its more granular and relatively formalised form, data. Proactive disclosure applies to government data as well, as mentioned in the draft 'data sharing and accessibility policy' being prepared by the Department of Science and Technology. Publicly funded data is citizen's right to access. Information and data should be presented in open data formats whereby it can be pulled by different Application Protocol Interfaces to be used in different fashions more appropriate to specific contexts and needs. Information/ data can, for instance, be presented in powerful visual ways using visualisation techniques. Such visual representation of information/ data can give insights that may remain largely hidden in a textual or tabular presentation of data. Open data initiatives are quite advanced in many countries of the world, and developing countries are also picking up fast (Kenya recently inaugurated an open government data portal).
- Just textual presentation of information may not be the most appropriate form in some contexts, where pictures, audio/ videos recordings etc may be more useful. There have been moves in some part of the country to video record gram sabha meetings. A picture of a NREGA worksite, for instance, may tell much more than words can. All such different media and forms should be used for proactive disclosure.
- Every PA may not have enough capacity, technical and otherwise, to arrange the information under proactive disclosure norms in effective manners. While all proactively disclosed information should be available on the concerned website of the PA under a specific 'mark' which is prominently displayed, it will be useful if all the proactively disclosed information is also pulled together in one place for every government. Such a central website dedicated to proactive disclosures has been found very useful in Mexico. The proposed 'data accessibility and sharing policy' of the Department of Science and Technology also envisages such a common across-the-government portal called *www.open.gov.in*. A specialised agency operating such a common portal makes it possible to pull all the required information for all PAs and arrange in a user-friendly ways as described above. Sections 4.1.a and 4.4 of the RTI Act suggests that all information available in the electronic form should be networked and also made available at one central point in the government. All information marked for proactive disclosure and available electronically with PAs should be able to be pulled automatically into the centralised proactive disclosure systems.

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- A common proactive disclosure website will also put competitive pressure on different departments/ PAs to comply with proactive disclosure norms. Such a website should carry the annual public information policy of every department/ PA along with its proactively disclosed information/ documents.
- Individuals/organisations should be able to register to receive alerts when proactively disclosed documents are added in specific categories that they have registered for. (Andhra Pradesh's state government portal is a good practice in this regard.) Documents, information and public comments, especially about important decision-making processes should be pro-actively circulated on civil society e-lists dedicated to the concerned subject matter, and those with a general interest in policy matters.
- The mentioned specialised agency should also build the capacity of PAs to implement digital proactive disclosure, including through training and deputing technical staff as required. An appropriate tool kit should be brought out for this purpose.

4. Proactive monitoring and enforcement

- Digital proactive disclosure enables proactive monitoring and enforcement. It is easily possible to remotely monitor adherence to the stated public information policy by nodal RTI related and performance measurement related agencies within the government, by Information Commissions as well as by the wider community. It is possible and necessary to do regular informational audit of all PAs. (Centre for Good Governance, Hyderabad, has developed a scheme for such an audit of proactive disclosure.) PA-wise reports of compliance to proactive disclosure norms and commitments should be obtained from all different sources and collated. A report on compliance should also be sought from all PAs by Information Commissions under section 25 of the RTI Act.
- The concept of information audits should be promoted, which should specifically look into how information is processed and stored in an office (record keeping) and how it is made available pro-actively, including through digital means. This can be done as a part of regular audits or as a separate specialised process anchored by the Information Commissions.
- Appropriate indicators and measures should be devised for proactive monitoring. Star marking should be given to best compliance. Poor compliance should result in appropriate recommendations under section 25.5 to the concerned PA to ensure compliance. Such adverse notice should form a part of the Information Commission's report under section 25 along with the responses, if any, of the concerned PAs. It should also include the action

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taken or the lack thereof with regard to the earlier recommendations under the referred sections. These reports should also be widely and prominently published on the Information Commission's website.

- One Information Commissioner should be dedicated to monitoring and enforcing proactive disclosure, for which purpose adequate staff and other resources should be made available for proactive monitoring. Such investments could gradually reduce the burden on the Commission of dealing with cases of refusal to provide information on demand, and could therefore even be taken as an organisational efficiency measure.
- Specific orders under section 19 and possible penalties under section 20 (including recommendations for disciplinary proceedings under the applicable service rules) can be used to enforce compliance with the all-important section 4 of the RTI Act. Non disclosure of information required to be pro-actively disclosed, especially when it is electronically held with the PA and thus has little cost for digital publishing, can be considered as obstruction of information which can be penalised under this section.
- Since compliance with proactive disclosure requirements is an across-the-department systemic issue, and not a one-off act as in case of furnishing information against request, it should be the responsibility of the concerned head of the Department/ office to ensure compliance and not merely of the Public Information Officer. However, since considerable work and internal capacity is required to comply with the requirements of digital publication under section 4 of RTI, and its continuous updation, a dedicated Assistant Public Information Officer may handle this task while the accountability for proactive disclosure compliance should remain with the head of the department/ office.
- It is important that community monitoring of proactive disclosure also takes place. For this purpose, state, district, block and *panchayat* level public information committees should be set up. In preparing their reports, the Information Commissions should take note of citizen reports on digital proactive disclosure compliance. It is very easy to check the authenticity of such reports simply by looking at the concerned official websites.
- The attitude to and compliance with RTI provisions, especially with regard to proactive disclosure, should figure in the annual performance reports of all officials. It shows their level of sensitivity to the fact that citizens are the ultimate masters in a democracy and they have a right to receive full information regularly about government's work.

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5. What are the community end (or demand side) requirements

- Making information available on the Internet is just one part of what is required under proactive disclosure. Such information must *in fact* reach all the citizens in a usable form. It must be ensured that citizens everywhere have effective access to all such information, which requires proactive assistance and facilitation at the community-end. Providing all the required means for this purpose is a part of proactive disclosure obligations of the departments/ PAs, and in general, of the governments.
- Although, often information is available department-wise for the whole state, it is difficult to access it locally, community-wise, cutting across the mandate and activities of the different departments. All public information must be digitally republished at the panchayat/ward level in a community-centric manner pulling from multiple sources of information to give a complete local picture. It is not at all difficult to do so at every panchayat/ ward level if departments/ PAs publish information as per the norms discussed in the earlier sections. Such information can then act as the basis for planning at the panchayat/ ward level, which is mandated under law.
- Most governments are coming out with some village information and service centre initiatives, the largest of them being the Common Service Centre scheme of the government of India. Normally, it may not be easy to mix service delivery with citizen-oriented informational engagements which is a complex and public service oriented activity. As long as it is only an issue of accessing a government website and looking up information over it, this can be done even at the business model based centres. However, especially in the case of information needs of the marginalised sections, a proactive approach is required to reach out and provide information in a contextually appropriate manner.
- In addition to information on the Internet, the required local information may also need to be made available in print and audio-visual manner. It is therefore useful to set up village information centres with all such facilities where the citizens can access all the required public information, especially information pertaining to their locality.
- Panchayats (and corresponding urban local governance bodies) should not only be responsible for disclosure of public information held by them but, as the government bodies closest to the citizens, be responsible for making available all public information that may be required by citizens in its jurisdiction, in a conveniently accessible and usable manner. Panchayats are

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setting up NREGA Seva Kendras with the mandate of making all development related information available to people. These Kendras can be developed as generic RTI centres, where all public information is made available in web-based, audio-visual and print formats apart from person to person oral delivery. Different interest groups like women, farmers, elderly people etc can also meet in this space and discuss their information requirements, if possible, in the presence of experts.

- There being considerable leakage in most government welfare schemes, if even one percent of the scheme budget is used for transparency, pulled together there will be enough funds for proper running of these village information centres, which can serve the transparency and community monitoring (social audit) needs of all such schemes.
- An appropriate institutional model – covering funding, ownership, cross-departmental coordination, partnerships etc – has to be devised to set up and run these village information centres. A single transversal agency with a specific information delivery mandate can run these centres, drawing (transparency) budgets from different schemes and reporting on clear accountability parameters to them. Some states already have transversal service delivery agencies, which also deliver some informational services, like Akshaya in Kerala and E-Gram in Gujarat. However, it might have to be considered if the full requirements of citizen's right to information, and to be informed proactively, can be met by business-model based systems. It may be required to have specialised agencies for RTI at village levels managed by panchayats and CBOs and funded by an agency that draws its budget from transparency related allotments of different government schemes. The possibility of expanding the NREGA Seva Kendra concept can be explored in this regard. It may be useful however to ensure that this village information centre does not become captive of one scheme (e.g NREGA) which will mean its underutilisation, or of one agency (panchayat). A broader and more diffused ownership will ensure that it becomes a space of genuinely free and open engagement by all. Directorates of Social Audits being started in some states also seem to have some role in this area. Involvement of CBOs in this respect in running such a centre is essential. The earlier mentioned public information committee can oversee this centre. (One suggestion is to call it the *Gram Sabha Seva Kendra*, to accentuate its larger ownership beyond the panchayat's executive body, which may also give some impetus to the institution of gram sabha.)
- The transversal information agency mentioned above must also set up call centres for people to be able to access the required information over phone. If some of the processes of such call centres are outsourced, it is important to

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develop and enforce strict monitoring and accountability parametres for the same.

- This information agency should also use community media – like community radio – for propagating public information pro-actively. Local language/dialects and traditional mediums of communication should also be explored. In fact, all media, from websites, mobile, PDA devices, IP based communication channels, to print and traditional media such as loud speakers, nukkad natak, puppet shows etc should be appropriately used for proactive disclosure.
- Digital information should be localised (use of local language) using UNICODE compliant systems and open fonts.
- Information and data should also be possible to be pulled from government servers through sms requests. Appropriate techniques should be used so that the user need not pay for the information she accesses in this manner under proactive disclosure provisions.

Sub Group- Formulating policy on consultation to mandate public consultations and participation in the process preceding key policy decisions and legislations

Guidelines for a Pre-Policy Consultation Process

The Right to Information Act provides a statutory mandate for transparency of all information held by the State, subject to limited and predefined exclusions. Further, Section 4 mandates proactive disclosure of information most relevant to the citizen collective, and thus provides the basis for citizen participation. In fact, the Right to Information Act 2005 mandates that every public authority shall, inter alia:

[publish] *“the particulars of any arrangement that exists for consultation with, or representation by, the members of the public in relation to the formulation of its policy or implementation thereof”* – Section 4(1)(b)(vii)

“publish all relevant facts while formulating important policies or announcing the decisions which affect public” - Section 4 (1)(c)¹

¹ Noting that “citizens must be provided with means to debate legislative and policy changes which are likely to affect public lives”, the Central Information Commission ordered the “Chief Secretary, GNCTD to develop a credible mechanism in all departments for proactive and timely disclosure of draft legislations/ policies and amendments thereto or to existing laws/ policies in the public domain, as required under Section 4(1)(c) of the RTI Act, during the process of their formulation and before finalization” (CIC/SG/C/2010/000345+000400/8440 dated July 7, 2010)

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“provide reasons for its administrative or quasi-judicial decisions to affected persons” – Section 4(1)(d)

It is evident that the government must publish all relevant information, provide platforms for public consultation and provide reasons for its administrative and quasi-judicial decisions. However, it is not clear how this is to be done. Therefore, a policy and framework for consultation needs to be formulated to ensure standardization and institutionalization.

It is difficult to frame exhaustive guidelines with actionable specificity for all the public authorities across all kinds and types of policy decisions. Therefore some key principles must be defined against which individual steps can be measures. A pre-policy consultation process must be based on three main **principles**:

1. **Transparency:** The Right to Information Act provides a statutory mandate for transparency of all information held by the State subject to limited and predefined exclusions. The policy consultative process must operate within the framework of the RTI Act, while providing institutionalized platforms for citizen participation.
2. **Inclusiveness:** The ideal of democracy mandates processes of universal inclusion either directly or through representation. The policy consultative process must balance both inclusiveness and practicality for meaningful citizen participation. The defined process must open democratic spaces for increased engagement over a longer time horizon.
3. **Equity:** Special efforts must be made to solicit and incorporate views of those groups/persons directly affected by decisions.

Guidelines and Framework

Within sixty days of notification of the pre-policy consultation policy, each public authority must organize a public meeting of selected stakeholders to define (by majority consensus) the following: the type or list of policy/programs that will need prior public consultation, the level and mode of consultation, and the information that must be disseminated. This information must be at least published online, and put out in areas of public dealing. Differences could potentially be adjudicated by the Information Commissions, or members of the Task Force.

A robust pre-policy consultative process must consider and define, amongst others, the following features:

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1. Scope: Any decision which will lead to change in:

- the particulars of its organisation, functions and duties;
- powers and duties of its officers and employees;
- the procedure followed in the decision making process, including channels of supervision and accountability;
- the norms set by it for the discharge of its functions
- the budget allocated to each of its agency, indicating the particulars of all plans, proposed expenditures and reports on disbursements made;
- the manner of execution of subsidy programmes, including the amounts allocated and the details of beneficiaries of such programmes;

and will substantially/directly impact the public will constitute change in policy/program, and should be included within the scope of the pre-policy consultation policy. It was agreed that the pre policy consultative process would bring within its policies affecting people, legislative and post-legislative (e.g., rules, notifications) business. Wider discussions are needed to define "policies which affect people" since theoretically all state business has impact on the public,

2. **Stakeholders:** In principle, all citizens of India are stakeholders. However the degree of participation and mandatory dialogue will vary according to the potential impact on those who will be impacted by the legislation.

- a. **Suggested guideline:** If there is an available list of beneficiaries (e.g., ration list, water and power connections), reasonable effort must be made to inform of proposed change

3. **Process:** What will be the stages and steps for different areas of policy and legislation?

4. **Information:** What kind and granularity of information will be disseminated? For legislation, some formulations include: the policy, principles, framework, entitlements, the draft bill and the process itself.

5. **Dissemination:** What will be the mode of dissemination of information? Internet, notifications, mass media (print, television, radio), hard copy, boards, public meetings?

- a. **Suggested guideline:** All public authorities with extensive public dealing can put highly visible notices in areas of public dealing announcing intent to change, and method of obtaining additional information

b. Information should be available in: everyday use with salient features upfront; at least two languages – English and local language; electronic format and easily searchable

c. All public authorities that provide delivery of essential services must mandatorily hold public hearings (number to vary

6. **Coverage and decentralization:** At what levels will the State be responsible for providing information and/or facilitating discussion?

7. **Channel of communication:** Which entities and/or officials will be responsible for disseminating information and/or facilitating discussion?

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- a. Suggested guideline: The Head of Department of each public authority should be designated to receive and redress complaints of violation of the consultation policy
8. **Transparency:** How will citizen input be aggregated and included for consideration?
9. **Feedback:** What will be the feedback mechanism and what will the nature of the assimilation of that information be?
10. **Operationalization:** Will the consultative process be accorded statutory status through an Act? Which ministry/department will be the nodal agency for implementation and/or enforcement?
11. **Capacity Augmentation:** What will be the infrastructural and/or human resource expansion required for effective implementation? Potential examples include training staff, operational facilitation centers in rural areas etc
- a. **Suggested guideline:** Public authorities must build capacity for dissemination of information, and take feedback (initially in the form of a template) at decentralized levels

The following is the process suggested for a transparent and participative pre policy consultative process:

Stage 1 (exploratory phase)

- The moment the first file noting on a policy decision is noted to announce the intent of a new policy or a change in existing policy, it must be placed in the public domain
- Requirements from the Government include the publication of a *Green Paper* including a statement of reasons justifying the policy decision, its mode of intervention, financial implication, impact expectations etc along with an *Announcement of Intent*.
- At this level of announcement of intent, it is desirable that there exists a platform for people to respond to policy decisions by responding with feedback. At this stage, the Government is not obligated to respond to the feedback it receives.
- The above documents, translated into the local languages, should be disseminated through websites, radio, TV channels, newspapers etc.
- Though it was felt by some people that it is desirable for the *Green Paper* to be placed in the public domain for at least a month, there was no agreement reached about the exact duration for which it should in fact be placed in the public domain. There should be adequate time between intimation of intent to change policy and actual change in policy. Depending on the scale of people affected and the estimated impact, this duration should be between one to six months

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- The Government must share the Draft Bill that it has prepared based on its initial announcement of intent, in the public domain.
- The Draft Bill must be placed in the public domain for a period of 6 months, if the policy is likely to affect peoples' well being and for a period of 3 months, if otherwise.
- Draft Legislations pertaining to Natural resources, the earning capacity of residents of the area concerned, basic services and its delivery, fundamental human rights should be sent to the level of Gram Sabha mandatorily for discussion.
- Modes of dissemination include
Newspapers, Radio, TV Channels, Block Facilitation Units which can assist with generation of electronic storage of feedback received, Collective platforms like social audits

Management of Feedback

- Each Department/Ministry to have a Policy Wing to manage feedback received
- Feedback to be collated in manageable forms to produce a reasoned response to the feedback received
- The above must accompany the Draft Bill sent to the Cabinet for approval
- The presence of a nodal Department/Ministry to monitor and enforce the implementation of the pre policy consultative process was discussed as desirable, but will need further working out of details.

Subgroup: Detailing Specific Clauses Relating to Proactive Disclosure**Guidelines and Recommendations²****Introduction:**

Section 4(1)(b) of the Right to Information Act contains a range of items on which every public authority is required to make voluntary disclosures. This set

² Prepared by Venkatesh Nayak on behalf of the Sub-Group. The Sub Group is grateful to Prof. Shekhar Singh, NCPRI and member of the civil society committee that drafted the RTI Bill in 2004, Shri J M Mauskar, Spl Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India and Shri Mahender Jethmalani of Patheya, Gujarat for providing valuable inputs during the preparation of this discussion note.

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of guidelines and recommendations deals with four clauses of Section 4(1)(b), namely:

(iii) the procedure followed in the decision-making processes including channels of supervision and accountability;

(iv) the norms set by it for the discharge of its functions;

(xi) the budget allocated to each of its agency indicating the particulars of all plans, proposed expenditures and reports on disbursements made"

(xiv) details in respect of information, available to or held by it, reduced in an electronic form

At the outset it must be emphasised that sub-clauses (i) to (v) of Section 4(1)(b) must be treated as elements of an integrated disclosure scheme. For example the functions and responsibilities of a public authority cannot be understood in isolation from the powers and functions of its employees, the norms that inform its decision making processes and the rules, instructions and manuals that are used in the discharge of its functions. Description of one element presupposes the existence of another. So every public authority must endeavour to integrate the information mentioned in these sub-clauses while preparing voluntary disclosure materials. As the mandate of the sub-group is limited to developing guidelines for only two of the five sub-clauses the remaining clauses are not being given detailed treatment. However we have tried to show the linkages between these five sub-clauses in the guidelines and recommendations given below.

Each sub-clause will be dealt with in two parts: the first part contains explanation of the intention behind including the sub-clause into the RTI Act. The second part contains recommendations and guidelines for fleshing out each of the sub-clauses.

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Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions
(Department of Personnel & Training)**Section 4(1)(b)(iii):**

"Every public authority shall... publish within one hundred and twenty days from the enactment of this Act..."

(iii) the procedure followed in the decision-making processes including channels of supervision and accountability"

Intention of the clause:

According to members of the civil society committee that drafted the RTI Bill in August 2004, this clause was included in order to overcome a specific problem citizens face in the course of their interaction with civil servants. Often citizens who approach a government office seeking some service, entitlement, license, authorisation or with a grievance are often unaware of the procedure of decision-making that must be followed by the government functionaries under the existing statutes, rules, regulations, guidelines etc. For example, if a person applies for a ration card, what elements constitute the chain of decision-making at the end of which a definitive decision as to whether the applicant ought to be given a ration card or not must be made? How many officers of which rank are required to be involved in the decision-making process? Who is responsible for making the final decision? From which table to which other table or office does the file move? Under what conditions does the relevant file move up the decision-making chain and when does it move down? What are the powers of the designated functionaries involved in this decision-making chain? If the person approaching the office for a service or entitlement has clarity about the decision-making process, he/she would be able to predict the outcome of the process to a reasonable extent. Clarity of the role and responsibilities of the officers involved in the decision-making process would reduce the scope for corruption and improve the person's capacity to seek accountability of the functionaries if he/she is aggrieved by the decision or action taken. This would also include clarity about any appeals or grievance redress process that may have been instituted in the public authority.

Guidelines for fleshing out Section 4(1)(b)(iii):

All government departments have specific duties and responsibilities under the respective Allocation of Business Rules (AOB) issued by the appropriate Government. The constitutional provisions and statutes each department is required to implement are clearly laid down in the AOB. The manner of disposal of matters assigned to each Department/Ministry is described in the Transaction of Business Rules (TOB). Additionally, every department will have

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a specific set of schemes and development programmes which they are required to implement directly or through their subordinate offices or other designated agencies. These documents contain the specific operations that every public authority is required to undertake in the course of implementing the programme or scheme. Every operation mandated under the AOB read with the TOB can be linked to a specific decision-making chain. Almost all office follow some kind of office procedure manual or the other which gives details of how representations, petitions and applications from citizens must be dealt with. Templates, formats, and basic steps of decision-making are briefly explained in such manuals. These descriptions constitute the elements of decision-making processes in general.

Additionally, in the routine work of governance, government functionaries are required to make decisions in a discretionary manner but broad guiding principles are laid down in some rule or the other. For example, the General Financial Rules lay down procedures for a variety of operations relating to government finances. How sanction must be accorded for incurring expenditure; how losses to government must be reported; how responsibility for losses may be fixed on any government servant; how budgets, demand for grants are prepared and submitted; how public works must be sanctioned and executed; how commodities and services may be procured by a public authority; are all explained in complicated legal language in this compilation which is updated from time to time. The challenge is to present a simplified version of the decision-making procedure that is of interest to any discerning member of the citizenry. The following guidelines are being proposed:

- 1) To start with every public authority may specifically identify the major outputs/ tangible results/ services/ goods that it is responsible for providing to the public.
- 2) The decision-making chain may be identified in the form of a flow chart explaining the rank/grade of the public functionaries involved in the decision-making process clarifying the specific stages in the decision-making hierarchy.
- 3) The powers of each officer including powers of supervision over subordinates involved in the chain of decision-making must also be spelt out next to the flow chart or in a simple bullet-pointed format in a text-box. The exceptional circumstances when such standards decision-making processes may be overridden and by whom must also be

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explained clearly. Where decentralisation of decision-making has occurred in order to grant greater autonomy to public authorities such procedures must also be clearly explained.

- 4) This design of representation may then be extended to cover all statutory and discretionary operations that are part of the public authority's mandate under the AOB read with the TOB. As far as internal administrative matters such as service matters of officers and employees are concerned a similar scheme may be adopted. However in specific cases where decisions have been taken the details of procedure followed may be made available to the concerned officer/employee on a request made under Section 6 of the Act.

Some examples of decision-making processes:

- 1) Sanction and issue of ration cards – BPL, Antyodaya Yojana etc.
- 2) Allocation of housing assistance under Indira Awaas Yojana etc.
- 3) Grant of environment clearance certificate for industries.
- 4) Grant of mining leases.
- 5) Purchase of assets using public funds by a public authority.
- 6) Land acquisition for public purposes.
- 7) Grant of licences, permits, authorisations, patents etc.
- 8) Selection of private entities for Public Private Partnership Projects (PPPs)
- 9) Disposal of grievance petitions submitted by people.

In the event of a public authority altering an existing decision-making process or adopting an entirely new process, such changes must be explained in simple language in order to enable people to easily understand the changes made.

Section 4(1)(b)(iv):

“Every public authority shall... publish within one hundred and twenty days from the enactment of this Act...

(iv) the norms set by it for the discharge of its functions”

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Intention of the clause:

Norms are essential if the outcomes of a decision-making process are to be made certain and predictable. They are also the standards against which accountability in the decision-making process may be demanded. In the absence of norms every action is likely to be coloured by arbitrariness. Where norms do not exist, people have the right to know what will guide the making of decisions. Norms and standards are the touchstone of all decision-making processes.

Guidelines for fleshing out Section 4(1)(b)(iv):

Norms can be qualitative or quantitative in nature. They could be temporal also- for example time limits for taking a specific action. They may be found in the Constitution, statutes, rules and regulations, decisions and judgements of High Courts and Supreme Court, citizen charters, Office Memoranda, standing orders, circulars or standard operating procedures followed by a public authority.

The statement of the norms of functioning of each public authority/ office in terms of its duties, obligations and commitments towards persons, should include but not necessarily be restricted to:³

- a. Defining the services and goods that the particular public authority/office provides directly (or indirectly through any other agency/contractor).
- b. Detailing and describing the processes by which the public can access and/or receive the goods and services that they are entitled to from the public authority/office along with the forms, if any prescribed for use by both the applicant and the service providing agency. (Give links to such forms online wherever possible).
- c. Describing the conditions, criteria and priorities under which a person becomes eligible for the goods and services, and consequently the categories of people who are entitled to receive the goods and services.

³ These essentials have been sourced from the document entitled: "Measures for Fighting Corruption and Ensuring Better Governance Note for discussion on the Public Grievance Redress Lokpal (*Shikayat Nivaran Lokpal*)" prepared for the public consultation organised by the National Campaign for People's Right to Information, the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library and Inclusive Media for Change on the Government of India's Draft Lokpal Bill held in Delhi in July 2011.

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- d. Defining the quantitative and tangible parameters, (weight, size, frequency etc.) and timelines, that are applicable to the goods and services that are accessible to the public.
- e. Defining the qualitative and quantitative outcomes that each public authority/office had undertaken to achieve through the goods and services that it was obligated to provide. (For example- level of cleanliness for sanitation services, incidence of vector based diseases for health care services etc.)
- f. Laying down individual responsibility for providing the goods and services (who is responsible for delivery/implementation and who is responsible for supervision).
- g. Describing the norms adopted for seeking and approving budgetary allocation for every public authority.
- h. Whenever norms are altered or new norms are adopted suitably updating the proactive disclosure for educating people.

Eventually these norms must be made public for all operations and decision-making processes described under Section 4(1)(b)(iii) discussed above.

Section 4(1)(b)(xi):

"Every public authority shall... publish within one hundred and twenty days from the enactment of this Act..."

(xi) the budget allocated to each of its agency indicating the particulars of all plans, proposed expenditures and reports on disbursements made"

Intention of the clause:

It is an important principle of democracy that every Rupee raised in the form of taxes or other revenue and every Rupee spent by every public authority must be made known and have the people's approval either directly or through their elected representatives in Parliament and Legislatures. However budget documents are drafted using complex terminology. While macro-level budget documents of the Government of India and the State Governments are available for every department, the detailed budgets for their agencies, field offices and other subsidiaries is not easily accessible. For example, budgets of the office of the District Collector, the local police station, the primary health centre or government school or college are rarely made public. Even panchayats have been very guarded about their budgets despite the existence of statutory requirements that their budgets must be made public. Gram panchayat budgets

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and expenditure reports are required to be read out in the gram sabha meetings. However these provisions are honoured more in the breach. This is why the civil society committee drafting the RTI Bill recommended the inclusion of budgetary transparency in all public authorities as part of their voluntary disclosure requirements.

Guidelines for Fleshing out Section 4(1)(b)(xi):

The proactive disclosure for budgets as spelt out under the RTI Act is a *post facto* requirement. Public authorities are required to disclose their budgets after they have been approved or sanctioned. An earlier law passed by Parliament requires transparency in budgets at the formulation stage itself. Section 6 of the *Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Act* (FRBM Act), 2003 places a duty on the Central Government to ensure greater transparency in all of its financial operations and as far as possible minimise secrecy in the preparation of annual budgets and demand for grants. This is a binding law requiring transparency in financial matters of all departments and public authorities under the Central Government. Section 4(1)(b)(xi) of the RTI Act must be given effect in conjunction with the requirements of the FRBM Act. Only a handful of States have enacted FRBM type laws in their jurisdiction. The Central Government may use its good offices to persuade the State Governments to pass and implement FRBM-type laws in their own jurisdiction.

Further, budgets and expenditure reports must be made available in simple and easy to understand language shorn of technical jargon. For preparing reader-friendly guides to macro-level budgets, examples from Kenya, the United Kingdom⁴, South Africa etc. are useful (See Annexures 1-3).

- 1) Simplified budgetary documents must be prepared for two kinds of readership: for citizens who would like to know how each public authority sources its revenue and on which heads it has spent money and what its spending plans are for the future. These must be linked to tangible outcomes wherever feasible.
- 2) The Outcome Budget method being observed by the Government of India needs to be used as a basis to identify the physical targets planned during a budgetary period and the actual achievement vis-à-vis those

⁴ A simplified version of the budget of the government of the United Kingdom for the year 2011 is accessible at: http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/N11/Newsroom/Budget/Budget2011/DG_WP195599 accessed on 09 August, 2011.

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targets. The Monthly Programme Implementation Calendar method of reporting being followed in Karnataka may serve as a model.⁵

- 3) Simplified versions of the budgets, but in greater detail than the version mentioned above, must be prepared and placed in the public domain to enable concerned citizens, CSOs and the mass media for the purpose of seeking accountability. This can include graphs and tables depicting monthly expenditure data. The criteria for allocating specific sums of money to specific heads of expenditure must be explained. The breakups must be provided for all non-fungible or tied heads of expenditure (both plan and non-plan type).

This will enable readers to check how much money was spent in what manner over what period of time as compared to the original plan in the budget approved by Parliament/ State Legislature. This will also enable them to advocate for alteration of allocation patterns to provide for more equitable development ensuring justice for the marginalised and the vulnerable in future budgets.

- 4) Every budget head must be explained in simple terms as to what expenses are permitted under it. Raw data on proposed plans, expenditure incurred and disbursements must be made available in easily downloadable, machine-readable manner using open standards such as XML.

This is useful for analysts and data interpreters to make their own analysis of the financial facts and figures provided by each public authority.

- 5) The public authority responsible for releasing funds must disclose on its website the release of funds to its agencies and subsidiaries every month.
- 6) All intermediary agencies which make payments further down the line of project/scheme implementation must also follow this procedure right up to the point where the beneficiary or commodity/service provider actually receives the funds in his/her account.
- 7) Budgets of subsidiary authorities may be made accessible through links from the main authority's website instead of loading them all on one website. But if a subsidiary does not have a website then the budgets and

⁵ MPIC consists of a brief report of the work done (physical and financial) compared with the targets set by every department for every month of the financial year. Every scheme that has a budget-head must have an MPIC monthly report. It also explains the cause of non-performance and poor performance. More information about MPIC is available at: <http://www.kar.nic.in/finance/mpic/planmon.htm> accessed on 09 August, 2011.

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expenditure reports may be uploaded on the website of the principal public authority.

- 8) It is also good practice for public authorities to mention the names of contractors, commodity and service providers to whom payments have been released for the performance of any contract, agreement or work.
- 9) Where special purpose vehicles are involved in the provision of a public service of the performance of a public function the fees, tolls, or other kinds of revenue they are authorised by the Government to collect must be also be proactively disclosed. All payments made to any entity using such funds must also be disclosed along with the purpose of making such payment in a periodic manner.
- 10) Delays in proactively publishing such information must be explained with cogent reasons.
- 11) Wherever required by law or executive instruction, sector specific allocations and achievements of every department or public authority (where feasible) must be highlighted. For example, gender, children, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and religious minorities must receive special focus in all budgetary allocations and developmental target setting. The sector-wise breakup of these targets and actual outcomes must be given in simplified form to enable the vulnerable segments of society to understand the budgets of public authorities better.

Section 4(1)(b)(xiv):

"Every public authority shall... publish within one hundred and twenty days from the enactment of this Act..."

(xiv) details in respect of information, available to or held by it, reduced in an electronic form"

Intention of the clause:

The placement of this clause following Section 4(1)(a) is to be taken note of. Section 4(1)(a) mandates every public authority to computerise its records, and make them easily accessible on a network so as to enable easy access for the purpose of providing information under the RTI Act. Section 4(1)(b)(xiv) serves as a means of reporting periodically about the progress made in this regard.

Guidelines for Fleshing out Section 4(1)(b)(xiv)- Electronic records 'held by' a public authority:

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Even though a large majority of public authorities continue to use hard copy formats for maintaining their files digitisation is progressing somewhat steadily. Documents and files are being stored electronically as they have a longer shelf life, consume less space physically, are cheaper and can be easily made accessible through a networked system to any corner of the country. So every public authority must annually report on the progress made regards digitising its files and documents. The example of Norwegian Government's Electronic Public Records (www.oep.no) may be used to develop a system for informing people about records held by a public authority electronically.⁶ At a minimum every public authority must place the following meta-data about the electronic records held by it on its website and update it every year:

- 1) the name of the record and any categorisation/ indexing used.
- 2) a brief description of its contents including dates of opening the file and the receipt of important correspondence and papers in relation to the subject matter of the file.
- 3) the department/ division/ section/ unit/ office where the record is normally held.
- 4) the person(s) (with designation) responsible for maintaining the record.
- 5) the exact security classification given to the record, if any (top secret, secret, confidential, restricted, etc.)

⁶ Since the 1990s the Ministry of Government Administration, Reform and Church Affairs, Government of Norway has established a website that brings the much needed transparency about records held by various public authorities. A dedicated website- www.oep.no entitled Electronic Public Records has been created for informing people about the kinds of records that are held by a ministry/department or public authority. This website is search-enabled and provides a facility for placing an order for any record listed on the website. Records may be obtained by electronically by email or in hard copy. Under Norway's *Freedom of Information Act, 1970* any person irrespective of nationality, can access government records unless covered by one or more exemptions. This web-based database also indicates which records are held by which Ministry, when they were created and whether any exemption is applicable to refuse disclosure. 72 public authorities and departments are currently participating in this facility. Earlier this website was accessible only to journalists. Since December 2010, it has been thrown open to other people. The convenor of this sub-group made an online request for five documents related to India as named on this website. The authority running the website has already sent an acknowledgement receipt for the request placed with them. The decision regarding grant of access is awaited.

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- 6) the date by which the security classification is due for review and the date by which the record is likely to be declassified.
- 7) the life span of the record, as prescribed in the relevant record retention schedule.

Public authorities in India may follow another international best practice in the disclosure of information about their electronic records. The Information Commissioner of the Republic of Slovenia has prevailed upon every public authority in the country to develop and append a document containing a harm test for every document that is exempt under its RTI law. Any officer who has the authority to accord a security classification to a document also knows the harm that the public disclosure of such a document may cause. If the harm test were to be written down, the instances of arbitrary invoking of exemptions for denying access to information can be minimized. It would provide greater clarity to the Information Commissions as well as to what issues must be taken into consideration while adjudicating upon the exemption claim or while applying the public interest test.

Guidelines for Fleshing out Section 4(1)(b)(xiv)- Electronic records 'available to' a public authority:

This portion of the clause must be read in conjunction with the last two lines of Section 2(f) which defines information. "Information" includes "...information relating to any private body which can be accessed by a public authority under any other law for the time being in force." In addition to the information held by a public authority electronically, it is required to specify what kinds of information it has the power to seek and obtain from private bodies and entities that fall under its jurisdiction. For example, the various energy regulatory commissions are empowered to collect a wealth of data and information from the power distribution companies. Unless one or more exemptions are applicable to such information, an applicant can seek and obtain such information about a private entity from the public authority that has the power to requisition such information. So the public authority must list out and briefly explain the categories of information that it can collect from private bodies under any constitutional, statutory or routine governance procedures. These kinds of information may be listed out for the benefit of the citizen so that they may become knowledgeable about the kinds of information they can seek from the public authority concerned. This will also help them avoid seeking information about private bodies that a public authority does not have the power to requisition.

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Templates for disclosures at the level of Fair Price Shops

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1. Static Information to be painted at the FPS in the local language

Template 1.1: Entitlement, scale of issue and retail issue price of essential commodities for all types of ration cards

Ration	APL		BPL		Antodyaya		Annapurna	
	Price	Quantity	Price	Quantity	Price	Quantity	Price	Quantity
Wheat								
Flour								
Rice								
Edible oil								
Sugar								
Kerosene								
Maize, Bazra/ millet								
other/salt								

Sample of all commodities to be displayed at the FPS

Template 1.2: Information about the FPS

2. Names of Villages/ Mohallas/ Areas covered by the FPS: -----					
1	Name of license holder				
	<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 60%; border: none;">License number (display copy of license)</td> <td style="border: none;">Date of issue</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: none;">Name of shop keeper</td> <td style="border: none;">Phone no</td> </tr> </table>	License number (display copy of license)	Date of issue	Name of shop keeper	Phone no
License number (display copy of license)	Date of issue				
Name of shop keeper	Phone no				
2	Time of shop opening-----				
	Time of shop closing-----				
	Days the shop remains open in a week				
3	List of records held by the FPS- Stock register, sale register, list of cardholders attached to the shop, etc.				

Template 1.3: Information about the grievance redress mechanism

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Ration cardholders can register their complaints in the complaints register available in the Fair Price Shop. Cardholders can demand inspection of the complaints register.

State-level toll free INFORMATION and GRIEVANCE REDRESS HELPLINE (details

later in the section 'Proposed new measures')

e.g. 1800-111-222-333

Name, designation and contact of the grievance redress authority

Complaints regarding the functioning of the Public Distribution System can be made to:

- Helpline number:
- At the Block level:
- At the District level
- At the State level
- Vigilance committees at all levels
- Other relevant authority

Template 1.4: Public audit of records of the FPS (details later in the section "Proposed new measures")

Records of FPS available for public audit

(based on the Delhi model)

- All records of the FPS are available for inspection to cardholders on demand
- On the last Saturday of every month, all the records of the FPS will be available for audit by the people at the FPS between 2 to 5 pm
- On the first Saturday of every alternate month, all records of the FPS will be available for audit by people at the Circle/block/panchayat level office from 2 to 5 pm

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Template 1.5: Information about the RTI Act

Right to Information Act 2005

Under the RTI Act, citizens have the right to access information from the Department of Food and Civil Supplies.

- Applications for seeking information have to be submitted in writing with the prescribed fee, to Public Information Officer (PIO) or Assistant Public Information Officer (APIO).
- RTI application fee is Rs. ____ and photocopy charges for providing copies of records is Rs. ____ per page.
- No fee for citizens below the poverty line
- Information will be provided within 30 days

Name, designation and contact details of relevant officials under the RTI Act

Public Information Officer (PIO)	Name of officer	Designation of officer	Office address &	Mobile phone no.
Assistant Public Information			Room no.	

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2. Dynamic information at the FPS to be painted / available on blackboards and made available in a file for inspection on demand in local language

Template 2.1: Stock Position (prev. month)

REQUIREMENT, STOCK AND DISTRIBUTION FOR THE MONTH -----												
Ration	APL				BPL				AAY			
	Required	Balance of prev month	Stock provided in this month	Distributed in this month	Required	Balance of prev month	Stock provided in this month	Distributed in this month	Required	Balance of prev month	Stock provided in this month	Distributed in this month
Wheat												
Flour												
Rice												
Edible oil												
Sugar												
Kerosene												
Board verified by On												

Template 2.2: Vigilance Committee FPS-level

FPS-level Ration Vigilance Committee

The last meeting of the Vigilance Committee was held on

The next meeting of the Vigilance Committee will be held on ...

Minutes of the committee meetings are available for inspection at

Members of the ration vigilance committee

Name	Designation	Phone number & address
	Chairperson	

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Number of Ration Cards (as on.....)		
	Number of cards	Total number of members
APL		
BPL		
AAY		
Annapurna		
Applications pending		
Total		

Template 2.3: List of ration cardholders

- The list of all cards (attached to the shop) must be displayed at the FPS. The print out of the list could be stuck on the wall and a register be maintained which should be available for inspection on demand.

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II. Disclosures at the block/ panchayat* level office (*or other appropriate authority for areas under the sixth schedule of the Constitution and for urban areas)

Template 1: Entitlement, scale of issue and retail issue price of essential commodities for all types of ration cards

Ration	APL		BPL		Antodyaya		Annapurnna	
	Price	Quantity	Price	Quantity	Price	Quantity	Price	Quantity
Wheat								
Flour								
Rice								
Edible oil								
Sugar								
Kerosene								
Maize, Bajra/ millet								
other/salt								
Sample of all commodities to be displayed at the FPS								

Template 2: Monthly stock position of each FPS

REQUIREMENT, STOCK AND DISTRIBUTION FOR THE MONTH -----												
FPS Name & Number: Address:												
Ration	APL				BPL				AAY			
	Required	Balance of prev month	Stock provided in this month	Distributed in this month	Required	Balance of prev month	Stock provided in this month	Distributed in this month	Required	Balance of prev month	Stock provided in this month	Distrib uted in this month
Wheat												
Flour												
Rice												
Sugar												
Kerosene												

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Template 3: Name, designation & duties of officials

S. No.	Name	Designation	Duties
1		Food Supplies Officer	-
2		Inspector	-
3			-
4			-
5			-

Template 4: Grievance redress mechanisms

Complaints Register

Ration cardholders can register their complaints in the complaints register available in the Fair Price Shop. Cardholders can demand inspection of the complaints register.

State-level toll free INFORMATION and GRIEVANCE REDRESS HELPLINE (details later
in the section 'Proposed new measures')

e.g. 1800-111-222-333

Name, designation and contact of the grievance redress authority

Complaints regarding the functioning of the Public Distribution System can be made to:

- Helpline number:
- At the Block level:
- At the District level
- At the State level
- Vigilance committees at all levels
- Other relevant authority

Template 5: Status of complaints filed

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(to be maintained in a register shown on demand/ print outs pinned on a notice board)

S. No.	Name of complainant & complaint	Date of filing complaint	Name & designation of officer who received the complaint	Current status of grievance	Name and number of FPS/KOD against whom complaint was filed

Complaints received in the last six months (Painted)

S. No.	Name and number of FPS/KOD against whom complaints were filed	Total number of complaints filed	Action taken against FPS/KOD
1			
2			

6. Public audit of records of the FPS (details later in the section “Proposed new measures”)**Records of FPS available for audit**

(Based on Delhi model)

- All records of the FPS are available for inspection to cardholders on demand
- On the last Saturday of every month, all the records of the FPS will be available for audit by the people at the FPS between 2 to 5 pm
- On the first Saturday of every alternate month, all records of the FPS will be available for audit by people at the Circle/block/panchayat level office between 2 to 5 pm

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Template 7: Vigilance Committee at Block/ Panchayat- level

Block/Panchayat-level Ration Vigilance Committee

The last meeting of the Vigilance Committee was held on

The next meeting of the Vigilance Committee will be held on ...

Minutes of the committee meetings are available for inspection at

Members of the vigilance committee

Name	Designation	Phone number & address
	Chairperson	

Template 8: List of ration cardholders

Number of Ration Cards (as on.....)		
	Number of cards	Total number of members
APL		
BPL		
AAV		
Annapurna		
Applications pending		
Total		

- The list of all cards (attached to the shop) must be displayed securely, in an accessible place at the Block/Panchayat- level office. The print out of the list could be stuck on the wall and a register be maintained which should be available for inspection on demand.
- The list should be painted in the village

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Template 9: Procedure for applying for a new APL, BPL and AAY ration card/other services and the time-frame for disposal

Procedure for applying for a new APL, BPL and AAY ration card/other services and the time-frame for disposal				
Type of Card	Eligibility	Documents required	Fee, if any	Time-frame for disposal
APL Card				
BPL Card/ AAY Card				
Modification to card				

All application should be given a unique number and people should be able to track the status of their application on the website of the department. Reasons for rejection of any application must be recorded online and should be communicated to the applicant.

Template 10: Boards displaying all relevant orders

- Board should display relevant orders by:
 - Food Department
 - Supreme Court
- Orders pertaining to closure/transfer of FPS, policy changes etc.

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Template 11: Information about the RTI Act

Right to Information Act 2005

Under the RTI Act, citizens have the right to access information from the Department of Food and Civil Supplies.

- Applications for seeking information have to be submitted in writing with prescribed fee, to Public Information Officer (PIO) or Assistant Public Information Officer (APIO).
- RTI application fee is Rs. ____ & photocopy charges for providing copies of records is Rs. ____ per page.
- No fee for citizens below the poverty line
- Information will be provided within 30 days
- If information is not provided within the stipulated time-frame, first appeal can be to the First Appellate Authority in the Department, and the Second appeal can be filed to the Information Commission
- If information is not provided in time, a penalty of Rs. 250 per day, subject to a maximum on Rs. 25000 can be levied on the PIO by the Information Commission.
- **Under Section 4 of the Act, the department is required to proactively provide information to citizens. The Section 4 publication is available in the office of the PIO in room no. ____ and can be inspected any time during office hours for free.**

Name, designation and contact details of relevant officials under the RTI Act

Public Information Officer (PIO) Assistant Public Information	Name of officer	Designation of officer	Office address & Room no.	Mobile phone no.

Template 12: Board displaying list of documents available for inspection

All documents of this office can be inspected by citizens and photocopies can be taken at actual cost

Name of document	Officer responsible for maintaining the document	Time for inspection

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III. Disclosures at the District level

Template 1: Information to be kept in a file, available for inspection on demand

- List of card-holders (FPS-wise and Block-wise)
- Monthly stock position of all FPS in the district
- Minutes of meetings/reports of FPS-level, block-level and district-level vigilance committees
- Status of complaints filed

Template 2: Board displaying list of documents available for inspection

All documents of this office can be inspected by citizens and photocopies can be taken at actual cost

Name of document	Officer responsible for maintaining the document	Time for inspection

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Template 3: Entitlement, scale of issue and retail issue price of essential commodities for all types of ration cards

Ration	APL		BPL		Antodyaya		Annapurnna	
	Price	Quantity	Price	Quantity	Price	Quantity	Price	Quantity
Wheat								
Flour								
Rice								
Edible oil								
Sugar								
Kerosene								
Maize, Bajra/ millet								
Sample of all commodities to be displayed at the FPS								

Template 4: Grievance redress mechanisms

Complaints Register

Ration cardholders can register their complaints in the complaints register available in the Fair Price Shop. Cardholders can demand inspection of the complaints register.

State-level toll free INFORMATION and GRIEVANCE REDRESS HELPLINE (details later in the section 'Proposed new measures')

e.g. 1800-111-222-333

Name, designation and contact of the grievance redress authority

Complaints regarding the functioning of the Public Distribution System can be made to:

- Helpline number:
- At the Block level:
- At the District level
- At the State level
- Vigilance committees at all levels
- Other relevant authority

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Template 5: Name, designation & duties of officials

S. No.	Name	Designation	Duties
1		Additional Commissioner	-
2		Assistant Commissioner	-
3		Food Supplies Officer	-
4		Inspector	-
5			-

Template 6: Public audit of records of the FPS**Records of FPS available for audit**

(details later in the section "Proposed new measures")

- All records of the FPS are available for inspection to cardholders on demand at the FPS
- On the last Saturday of every month, all the records of the FPS will be available for audit by the people at the FPS between 2 to 5 pm
- On the first Saturday of every alternate month, all records of the FPS will be available for audit by people at the Circle/block/panchayat level office between 2 to 5 pm

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Template 7: Vigilance Committee District- level

District-level Ration Vigilance Committee

The last meeting of the Vigilance Committee was held on

The next meeting of the Vigilance Committee will be held on ...

Minutes of the committee meetings are available for inspection at

Members of the vigilance committee

Name	Designation	Phone number & address
	Chairperson	

Template 8: List of ration cardholders

Number of Ration Cards (as on.....)		
	Number of cards	Total number of members
APL		
BPL		
AAY		
Annapurna		
Applications pending		
Total		

- The list of all cards (attached to the shop) must be displayed at the Block/Panchayat- level office and at the FPS. The print out of the list could be stuck on the wall and a register be maintained which should be available for inspection on demand.
- The list should be painted in the village

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Template 9: Procedure for applying for new card/other services and time-frame for disposal of applications

Procedure for applying for a new APL, BPL and AAY ration card/other services and the time-frame for disposal				
Type of Card	Eligibility	Documents required	Fee, if any	Time-frame for disposal
APL Card				
BPL Card/ AAY Card				
Modification to card				

All application should be given a unique number and people should be able to track the status of their application on the website of the department. Reasons for rejection of any application must be recorded online and should be communicated to the applicant.

Template 10: Boards displaying all relevant orders

- Board should display relevant orders by:
 - Food Department
 - Supreme Court
- Orders pertaining to closure/transfer of FPS, policy changes etc.

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Template 11: Information about the RTI Act

Right to Information Act 2005

Under the RTI Act, citizens have the right to access information from the Department of Food and Civil Supplies.

•Applications for seeking information have to be submitted in writing with prescribed fee, to Public Information Officer (PIO) or Assistant Public Information Officer (APIO).

•RTI application fee is Rs. _____ and photocopy charges for providing copies of records is Rs. _____ per page.

•No fee for citizens below the poverty line

•Information will be provided within 30 days

•If information is not provided within the stipulated time-frame, the first appeal can be to the First Appellate Authority in the Department, and the Second appeal can be filed to the Information Commission

•If information is not provided in time, a penalty of Rs. 250 per day, subject to a maximum on Rs. 25000 can be levied on the PIO by the Information Commission.

•Under Section 4 of the Act, the department is required to proactively provide information to citizens. The Section 4 publication is available in the office of the PIO in room no. _____ and can be inspected any time during office hours for free.

Name, designation and contact details of relevant officials under the RTI Act

Public Information Officer (PIO) Assistant Public Information Officer (APIO)	Name of officer	Designation of officer	Office address & Room no.	Mobile phone no.

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**Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions
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Note: The MIS used by Chhatisgarh and Tamil Nadu are extremely comprehensive and provide real-time information on the functioning of the PDS. While the Chhatisgarh website has free public access to the MIS (www.cg.nic.in/citizen), the Tamil Nadu MIS is only for internal use and is not accessible by the public. All the content listed out in this section is already being recorded in real-time in Chhatisgarh/Tamil Nadu. Other states can emulate the model of these 2 states.

1. Contents of website related to distribution of grain (to be updated in real-time, as far as possible)

- List of all FPS/KODs (Block-wise & District-wise)
- Entitlement, scale of issue and retail issue price of essential commodities for all types of ration cards
- Types of ration cards
- Procedure for applying for new card/other services and time-frame for disposal of applications
- List of card-holders (FPS-wise, Village-wise, Block-wise & District-wise)
- Actual disbursement made on each card (will require shop-level information to be entered into the MIS)
- Monthly stock position of all FPS
- Grievance redress mechanisms for PDS (including details of how and where to lodge a complaint using each of the mechanisms)
- Minutes of meetings/reports of FPS-level, block-level, district-level and state-level vigilance committees
- Information about the RTI Act and section 4 disclosures of the department
- Information about the mechanism for public audit of records of FPS
- Name, designation & duties of all officials of the Department
- Status of complaints filed
- Status of applications submitted
- Status of RTI applications filed
- Status of public audit reports
- ALL orders issued by the department and any other relevant orders which affect the PDS. The department should have a mechanism whereby orders can only be generated through the website and automatically uploaded in the relevant section of the website. Several states, including Andhra Pradesh, follow this mechanism wherein, the order number can only be procured if the order is generated online and is displayed on the website.
- Monthly food grains bulletin (must provide information upto block-level)

All this information should be provided in a searchable format. The website should not require any password/login to access/view this information. The MIS of the Department should be completely visible to people accessing the site.

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2. Contents of website related to procurement of grain (to be updated in real-time, as far as possible)

- MSP & Bonus for all commodities
- Names of farmers (village-wise, block-wise, district-wise)
- Quantity procured and amount paid to each farmer
- Norms for fair average quality
- List of mills (along with capacity of each mill)
- Quantity of grain given and received from each mill

Information on procurement should also be displayed at the procurement centre-level and the block-level offices and at all other offices/sites involved in procurement of grain.

V. Disclosures at the Central Level (through the website)

- All relevant content related to procurement including details of agencies involved
- All relevant content related to transportation including details of agencies involved
- All relevant content related to distribution and linking to state level MIS
- Real-time information on grain movement
- All orders issued by the ministry, Supreme Court etc. which affect the functioning of the PDS
- Monthly food grains bulletin (with information upto block-level)

VI. Information from other sources (organisations involved in procurement, transportation etc.)

All relevant information related to the PDS must be displayed on the website of the relevant organization and should be linked to the Ministry/Food Department website. Eg- Railways which is involved in transportation of food grains, should display real-time information on movement of grains on its website.

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Templates for disclosures for Panchayat

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Recommended templates for disclosure of information under Section 4 of the RTI Act
for Panchayat

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

Designation	Name	Phone No
Name and Address of Sarpanch (Village Head)		
Name and Address of Chairman of Social Justice Committee of village		
Name and address of Panchayat Secretary (Talati)		
Revenue Secretary/Patwari		
Assistant secretary		
Name and address of Panchayat's Peon		
Name and address of operator of village water works		
Gramsevak (Dev)		
Gram Seval (Agriculture)		
Any Other		

2. Details about PIO and Appellate Authorities under RTI act 2005 (Should be displayed on outside wall of the Panchayat)

Heads	Name	Designation	Phone Number	Address
PIO				
First Appellate Authority				
Second Appellate Authority				

Kindly bring to the notice of PIO if any information disclosed on the walls is misleading or wrong, or not updated. Citizen may also file complaint under section 18 of RTI ac to State information commission.

RIGHT TO INFORMATION ACT 2005

- ❖ Citizen has right to take photocopy, right to inspect the work and records, held by any public authority.
- ❖ Approach Public information Officer for information.

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- ❖ Application for information need to be submitted to public information officer with application fee ----- which can be paid by: -----
- ❖ If you need assistance in writing application, PIO is suppose to help you as per provisions of the act.
- ❖ PIO is suppose to furnish you information within 30 days. If information is not held by Panchayt, PIO may transfer your application to respective public authority.
- ❖ Any information provided after prescribed time limit will be given free of any charge.
- ❖ Citizen need not give application or application fee or wait for 30 days for inspecting any information that is disclosed on the walls.
- ❖ Citizen may also file direct complaint under section 18 of RTI act, in case she/he not getting info or getting misleading info.
- ❖ Citizen may file first appeal befoe applet authority.

3. Details of information about village population:

Type			
	Female	Male	total
Total population			
SC			
ST			
Voters			
Type of family			
Total family			
BPL Card holder			
Antyoday card holders			

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4. Details about Village Population (to be kept in File)

Type	population		
	Female	Male	Total/persons
Total Population of village (0 to 6 years children)			
Schedule Caste			
Schedule Tribe			
SEBC			
Minorities			
Others			
Total Voters			
Schedule Caste			
Schedule tribe			
SEBC			
Minorities			
Others			
Handicapped			
Farmers (Land holders)			
Schedule caste Farmers (Land holders)			
ST Farmers (Land holders) (Tribal)/Adivasi			
OBC Farmers (Land holders)			
MINORITY Farmers (Land holders)			
Type of Families			
Total families	Numbers		
BPL FAMILIES			
APL Families			
Antodiyaya families			
Ann-purnna families			
Families having Toilets at their house			
Families not having toilets at their house			
Families having electricity connection			
Families not having electricity connection			
Families having agriculture land			
Landless families			
Marginal farmers			
Families having Tap connection in their house			
Families dwelling Kucha houses			
Families having pucca houses			
Grazing land		Hecters	
Fallow Land		Hecters	
Wasteland		Hecters	
Village Revenue land			
Others			

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5.Information about animals in village (file)

Species/type	Numbers
COW	
Ox	
Buffaloes	
Goat	
Sheep	
Camel	
hen /poultry	

6. Panchayat employees' duties (functions) and authorities (information with Patwari/village secretary) (file) , Gamsevak,

Talati(Patwari)	
Panchayat secretray	
Gram Sevak	
Peon/s	
Water work operator	
Others	
Do the above mentioned employees stay /reside in the village	

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- ❖ Minimum Gram Sabha held during the year:
- ❖ Date of last Gramsabha :
- ❖ Date of next Gramsabha :
- ❖ The officials from block level to be present:

The proceedings of the Gramsabha and resolutions can be inspected from Panchayat free of any charge. The copy of which can be obtained upon paying photocopy charges.

Details of meeting held at Panchayat

Sr. No	Type of Meeting	Time span between two meetings	Where	participants	Who will chair?	Agenda
1	Ward Sabha (meeting)		Ward	10% of the voters (ward) required to be present	Ward panch	Work to be taken up at ward level & Schemes
	Gramsabha		Panchayat level	10% of the voters (from panchayat) required to be present.	Sarpanch	Work to be taken up at Panchayat level & Schemes
	Panchayat corum or Gram sachivalay		Panchayat	Ward panch and Panchayat employee	Sarpanch	Implementation of schemes, status, progress report, complaints etc.

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Details of other committees at village level:

Sr. No	Name of the committee	No of members	Meeting held	Date of last meeting	Next meeting
1	Social Justice Committee	5	Every 3 months		
2	Village Water Committee	12	Every 2 months		
3	Village Vigilance committee (MGNREGA)	7	Every 2 months		
4	Village Health committee	5	Every 2 months		
5	Vigilance committee for PDS	5	Every month		
6	School Management Committee				

The minutes of meetings are available in the Panchayat and can be inspected free of any charge. The copy can be obtained by paying photocopy charges.

Name of committee : Social Justice committee

Sr.	Name of Members	Designations	SC/ST/OBC/Others	Female/Male

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Name of committee : Vigilance committee for PDS

Sr.	Name of Members	Designations	SC/ST/OBC/Others	Female/Male

Name of committee : Village Health committee

Sr.	Name of Members	Designations	SC/ST/OBC/Others	Female/Male

Kindly prepare Information for every committee (file)

Social Justice committee	Village water and sanitation committee	Village welfare committee
Village water committee	Village Health committee	Village education committee
Monitoring committee MGNREGA	Village Ration shop monitoring committee	E-Gram Computer committee
As per panchayat ward		

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List of Records available for inspection free of charge at Panchayat Office. Copy can be obtained by paying photocopy charges.

22. Panchayati Act, Rules
23. MGNREGA Act, Guidelines, rules
24. Right to information Act and copy of rules
25. Copy of Land revenue act/code
26. Budget
27. Audit Report
28. Annual Administrative report of the panchayat (at least last five years)
29. Proceedings and resolutions of Gramsabha
30. Proceedings and resolutions of meetings held by various committees like mentioned above)
31. Report that are presented by government officials in the Gramsabha.
32. Revenue record (Register 6- A, - A etc)
33. Registers regarding MGNREGA
34. Voters list of the village
35. BPL List Card holders list
36. BPL Ration card holders List
37. Antyoday Family List.
38. Cash Book
39. Asset Register
40. Stock Register
41. Patta Register
42. Complaint Register

Details of Panchayat taxes (File)

Type of tax	Responsible person	Number
House tax		
Sanitation tax		
Light tax		
General water tax		
Profession tax		
Land revenue		
Sewerage tax		

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Diva Bati tax		
Fee: market fee		
Fee for use of well water for other purposes		
Fee for gutter cleaning		
Village choky fee		
Fee for animal keeping house		

Attach panchayat tax rules here**Panchayat Budget**

Year	Revenue of Panchayat (income of panchayat)	Grants Received **	donation received	Total income	Private (Royalty, CSR, other income)	Total expenditure	Balance
2007-08							
2008-09							
2009-10							
2010-11							
2011-12							

***grants or assistance received from MPLAD/MLA, District Planning Board, development programm, 13th finance commission's grants and others

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Type of Water body	Number	Area	Capacity of storing water
River/Dam			
Talab			
Handpump		NA	
Private wells			
Public Wells			

Schemes run by Central Government Assistance:

Sr. no	Scheme	Who is entitled?	What is the benefit?	Where to apply	Documents required for applying	Time limit of decision	Who will take the decision	Where to file appeal
	Indira Awas							

Schemes run by State Government Assistance:

Sr. no	Scheme	Who is entitled?	What is the benefit?	Where to apply	Documents required for applying	Time limit of decision	Who will take the decision	Where to file appeal
	Indira Awas							

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(Department of Personnel & Training)****Waiting list of Indira Awas Yojana:**

Name	Remark

List of Beneficiaries of various schemes of last five years:

5. Housing Scheme
6. Pension Scheme (widow, old age, differently able)
7. Allotment of land patta
8. Bankable schemes

Name of the scheme:

Name of person benefited	Year of receiving benefit

Details of village development work

	type of work	number of works	Budget	incurred expenditure	status of work complete/ incomplete
1	Roads				
2	well recharge				
3	check dams				
4	Gutter				

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5	Sanitation				
6	Anganwadi				
7	School				
8	community center hall				
9	drinking water pipeline				
10	Others				

Details of work done: Road

From --- to ---	Year	Under which scheme	Estimated cost	Total cost	Date of completion of work

Details of work: Well recharging

Following functions are done by Panchayat.

5. Birth Registration
6. Death registration
7. Valuation of house or shop

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8. Entries of land entitlements in the register.

Other facilities available in village (file)

Facility	where it is located in village /taluka	Contact	phone number
Milk cooperative society			
Agriculture cooperative society			
Bank			
Post office			
Fire brigade house			
Veterinary clinic			
seeds distribution			
Women groups			
Children groups			
Disaster mitigation and management unit			

Regarding Police station

Address of police station or outpost		
Name of PI/PSI		Ph:
Name of Police Mitra		Ph:
Social defense officer name and address		Ph:

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3. All the above information should be on the except those table where is specifically mentioned for keeping it only in the file.
4. Copy of all GRs, circulars, GOs, OMs, policies, rules, guidelines received by Panchayat, or reports, budgets, list of proposed beneficiaries, submitted by Panchayat should be marked to RTI file (pro-active disclosure file). This will a copy of the citizen.

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Templates for disclosures for MGNREGA

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2. Job Card Board in Every village (on the wall and file)
 (All the job card holders name to be displayed on this board, including those who have not applied for any work or not worked even for a day)

Name of the Job card holder	Job card Number	Year									
		2010-11		2011-12		2012-13		2013-14		2014-15	
		Days	Amount	Days	Amount	Days	Amount	Days	Amount	Days	Amount

Table showing details for development works as under

S r. No	Name of the work	Code of the work	Sanctioned amount			Amount spent			Work commenced on	Work completed on	Status of work	
			Labour	Material	total	Labour	Material	total			complete	incomplete
1												
2												

Details of material used:

Sr. No	Name of the work	Cement		Bolders		Pebbles		Sand		Bricks		Water			
		Qty	Rate	Qty	Rate	Qty	Rate	Qty	Rate	Qty	Rate	Qty	Rate	Qty	Rate

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2. List of registers to be maintained at Panchayat level for MGNREGA

List applications for registration	list of sanction works
Registration list	Payment register
List of job card issued to	Unemployment Allowance Register
Job Card Register	Employment Register
estimates of sanctioned work	Allotment of Work register
Muster roll received register	Muster roll issue register
Asset Register	Cash Book
Complaint register	

About Social Audit :

Name of Social audit team members	Date of Last meeting	Date of next meeting

3. Display board at work place

Name of work/description					
Sanction cost of work					
A-MATERIAL COST					
B-WAGES					
SKILLED					
UNSKILLED					
Date of work started					
expected date of work completion					
No of workers present	Physically challenged	Old age	pregnant	other	total

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Templates for disclosures for government schools

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Recommended templates for disclosure of information under Section 4 of the RTI Act for Government Schools

Information to be displayed at the government schools:

Sample Board 1: Details of information for Grievance Redressal

Nature of Information	Authority for redressal	Name of redressal officer	Office Address and phone number	Time lines For redressal	Public Dealing Day and time	Appellate Authority and process of appeal
Issues Related to Availability/Appointment of Teachers						
Issues related to admission						
Issues related to school infrastructure						
Issues related to corporal punishment, discrimination, child rights						
Issues related to incentive schemes						
Issues related to MDM						
Issues related to Financial allocations to school						

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Teachers' Information Month and Year

(update every month)

Sr.	Name of Teacher	Male/ Female	Date of Joining School	Class and Subject of Teacher	Salary (update every month)	Number of days taught in the month	Number of days and nature of non-instructional work (including in service trainings)
Head Teacher							

Number of Teachers on Deputation

Please make available service conditions and transfer policy of all teachers in hard copy

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Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions
(Department of Personnel & Training)**Sample Board 3: Student Enrolment Information: (Hard Copy)**

This information to be compiled and kept available for each academic year

Categories	Class I		Class II		Class III		Class IV		Class V		Class VI		Class VII		Class VIII	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Children with Special Needs																
SC																
ST																
OBC																
Minorities																
Others																
Total																

Sample Board 4: Entitlement and Incentive Information:

	Nature of Incentive/ Entitlements	Eligibility criteria	Amount to be Disbursed	Number of students eligible for the same	Number of students who have received	When disbursed [specify date]	Dated Receipt given And by whom
1	Textbooks						
2	Uniform						
3	Scholarships						
4	Any other						

Information to be provided in details in hard copy -name of beneficiary , grade, name of guardian, address and contact details of beneficiary.

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Sample Board 5: Details of budgetary expenditure: (in Hard Copy)**Detail of budget received by the school**

Name of Budget Head	Amount Received	Date of Receipt	Amount Spent	Period of Expenditure	Nature of expenditure
Teaching Learning Material (TLM)					
School Development Grant (SDG)					
Maintenance					
Additional Classrooms					
Major Repairs					
Computer Aided Learning					
Any other					
Total					

Sample Board 6: Information about School Management Committee (SMC)

Date of appointment/constitution of committee:

Sl. No.	Name of member	Designation	Male/female	Category	Name and Class of Child whose parent is a member

Date of Next Meeting of SMC _____ (to be updated monthly)

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(Department of Personnel & Training)**Sample Board 7: Details of School Management Committee: (In Hard Copy)**

Sl. No.	Date of Meeting	Number of members present	Name of Person holding meeting register
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			

Issue 8: Copy of the Three Year Long SDP, with annual sub-parts, Copy of the DISE Report Card**Sample Board 9: Details of Mid Day Meal (MDM):**

Day	Menu to be Served	Menu Served
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday		

To be made available in hard copy: copy of order of State Government on MDM as per Supreme Court order, supply register of MDM- norm of supply/delivery to include amount and date of delivery on a monthly basis, actual date of delivery and actual amount received, and payment register/record on MDM-Name of cook, payment received-date and amount of the payment received by the cook.

Sample Board 10: Details of Inspection of School: (In Hard Copy)

Sl. No.	Name of Inspector	Date of Visit	Details of officer from who Inspection report can be accessed

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Sample Board 11: Issues Inspected by the School Inspector:

Sl. No.	Items	Inspectors Comments
1.	State of Infrastructure	
a.	Classrooms	
b.	Toilets	
c.	Drinking Water	
2.	Teachers	
a.	Attendance	
3.	Quality of Teaching	
a.	State of notebooks	
b.	State of learning abilities	
4.	Children Related	
a.	Attendance	
b.	Any other	

Date of last Inspection:

Name of officer from whom the Inspection Report can be accessed

Sample Board 12: Medical Facilities available:

Medical Facility	Name/ Contact person	Address and Phone Number
Visiting Doctor		
Nurse		
Primary Health Centre		
Ambulance		
Any other		

Please also mention where the first-aid box is available in the school premise

Sample Board 13: Schemes and Programmes Implemented in School: (Hard Copy) Including under innovation fund, PPP, others and principal components of the same.

Sample Board 14. Support system for Children with Special Needs: (Hard Copy)

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Under the RTI Act, citizens have the right to access information from the school and the Department of Education.

- Applications for seeking information have to be submitted in writing with prescribed fee, to Public Information Officer (PIO) or Assistant Public Information Officer (APIO).
- RTI application fee is Rs. ____ and photocopy charges for providing copies of records is Rs. ____ per page.
- No fee for citizens below the poverty line
- Information will be provided within 30 days
- In case information is incomplete or unsatisfactory, first appeal to be made to the First Appellate Authority

Name, designation and contact details of relevant officials under the RTI Act

Official in custody of information in hard copy in school	Name of officer	Designation of officer	Room no. and Public Dealing Time	Mobile phone no.

Public Information Officer (PIO)	Name of officer	Designation of officer	Room no.	Mobile phone no.

First Appellate Authority (FAA)	Name of officer	Designation of officer	Room no.	Mobile phone no.

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Education Department****Sample Board 1: Roles and Responsibilities:**

Nature of Information	Designation/Authority level responsible	Name of the official	Office Address and Phone No.	Public Dealing Day and time	Name and designation of the Redressal Officer	Timeliness for Redressal
Issues related to availability/appointment of teachers						
Issues related to admission						
Issues related to school infrastructure						
Issues related to mental and physical harassment, discrimination and child rights						
Issues related to incentive schemes						
Issues related to Mid Day Meal						
Issues related to Financial allocations to school						
Others						
OVERALL GREVIANCE REDRESSAL STATUS:						
Number of Complaints Received This Month:						
Number of Complaints Redressed:						
Total Number of Complaints Unresolved :						
Phone number of Child Helpline						
Phone number of RTE helpline if available						

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1. Organogram
2. Copy of the Citizen's Charter
3. School wise School Development Plans (SDPs)
4. Process document of compilation of School Development Plans (SDPs)
5. Copy of Aggregated SDP
6. District Plan under SSA- Details of the planning process undertaken, including time when it is done at each stage and names of people responsible.
7. District Report Card of DISE
8. All circulars/orders/notice/notifications issued to be displayed for the period of week, summary of orders, backlog/previous orders/circulars/notice/notifications can be obtained at particular time from particular person. The name, designation, and time of availability for public viewing to be clearly displayed on board.
9. Information of all projects running in District- including government schemes, schemes functioning under Innovation Fund and those under PPP mode. Details to be included are- department running scheme, nature of input provided/service provided under partnership, quantum of funds disbursed by government, name of private partners and contribution of private partner (if applicable).

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10. District office to display/make available all information of each block-

	Block 1	Block 2
Number of Schools Overall		
Elementary Schools		
Primary		
UP		
Elementary (Class 1-8)		
Total Schools having elementary sections		
Total Schools RTE compliant on teacher availability		
Total Schools RTE compliant on infrastructure		
Total Schools RTE compliant on all indicators		
Secondary		
Higher Secondary		
Pre- Primary Education		
ICDS Centres		
Preschools		
Schools with PS section		
Specified Category Schools		
Kendriya Vidyalaya		
Sainik Schools		
Narvodaya Schools		
SC Hostels		
Tribal Ashrams		
Residential Schools		
Residential Bridge Course		
Non-Residential Bridge Course		
Seasonal Hostels		
KGBVs		
Model Schools		
Special Schools for Children with disability (will also need to be broken into multi-disability special schools, and for the individual specific disability)		
Schools imparting special training within the existing school premises and ongoing processes		

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Private Schools		
Aided		
Total seats in the incoming school		
Total seats reserved for weaker /disadvantaged section (as per aid)		
Unaided		

School wise details in Hard Copy**11. Teachers Information:**

		Total	Block 1	Block 2
	Total Number of Teachers			
	(Teachers by regular/parateachers/contract teachers/guest teachers)			
	Number of Resource Teachers for Children with Disability			
	Number of Subject teachers-Health and Physical Education			
	Number of Subject teachers-Art Education			
	Number of Subject teachers-Work Education			
	Residential Facilities and Special Training Related Information*			
	Residential Bridge Course			
	Non-Residential Bridge Course			
	Seasonal Hostels			
	Month (from-to) when Hostels run			
	Schools imparting special training within the existing school premises and ongoing processes			
	KGBVs			
	Tribal Hostels			
	SC Hostels			
	Mobile School or other means of imparting education to migrant population			

* Information about villages/schools where these are provided to made available on request.

12. Names of teachers receiving awards for meritorious work and name of awards

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13. Financial/ Budget related details

	Account Head	Allocation	Money Received	Date of Receipt	Date of Disbursal	Money Spent

**This information will need to be contextualised based on State
Both aggregate budgetary information and for individual blocks and
panchayats and schools to be provided in Hard Copy**

14. Child Population Details

			Total	Block 1	Block 2	Block 3	
6-14	Total Population	Total					
		Boys					
		Girls					
		Dalits					
		SC					
		ST					
		Minority					
		CWSN					
	Out of School	Total					
		Boys					
		Girls					
		Dalits					
		SC					
		ST					
		Minority					
		CWSN					
		Other groups defined as marginalized group in State Rules					

15. Teacher training Institutes- DIET, Private B.Ed College, BRC, etc.- Number, Courses Run, Number of Seats, Free/Paid, Institution has been granted recognition by what body.
16. Inspection reports: for both government and private schools to be made available. The data to include, name of inspector, number of schools under him/her, dates of the visits made to the schools allocated to him/her, and details of inspection undertaken. (To be compiled and made available on a monthly basis)

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S . N o	Na me	Add ress	Recog nition Status	Affili ation to which Board	Name of societ y/ mana ging body	Total No of seats (inco ming class)	No . sea ts un der 25 %	No. of applica tions receive d	No of sea ts fill ed	Con tact pers on in the scho ol	Perio d of admis sion (starti ng & closin g)	Status of RTE compli ance

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ANNEXURE-IV

**RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TASK FORCE
WHICH ARE PROPOSED TO BE ACCEPTED**

The Task Force has given recommendations covering each item of Terms of Reference. Recommendations which are proposed to be accepted along with our clarifications/remarks are contained in the following table chapter-wise. Summary of the recommendations have been highlighted. Details of recommendations are contained in the relevant chapter referred to in the table.

Recommendations of Task Force	Remarks
Chapter 2 – Prescribing additional items for suo motu disclosure under Section 4(1)(b)(xvii)	
<p>Section 4(1)(b)(xvii) lays down that government may prescribe any additional item which should also be included for suo motu disclosure. So far, no additional items have been prescribed by Central Government. The Task Force has recommended that the following items should also be included for disclosure under the suo motu disclosures scheme of Section 4(1)(b):</p> <p>(a) All information relating to procurement made by public authorities. Different limits may be fixed for different levels of public authorities for which this disclosure is to be made.</p> <p>(b) All information relating to Public-Private Partnerships entered into by public authorities.</p> <p>(c) Transfer policy for different grades/cadres of employees serving in public authority. All transfer orders should be publicized through website or in any other manner listed in Section 4(4) of the Act.</p>	<p>(1) A new set of rules will need to be framed for implementation of these recommendations.</p> <p>(2) Limits beyond which procurement related information is disclosed at different levels of public authorities will need to be fixed in consultation with Department of Expenditure.</p>

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Recommendations of Task Force	Remarks
<p>(d) Details of posts which have been classified as sensitive posts as per directions of the Central Vigilance Commission and names of the officers/officials occupying these posts.</p> <p>(e) All RTI queries and appeals received by the public authorities and responses thereto.</p> <p>(f) Details of CAG paras framed in regard to the Ministry/Department and the response of the Ministry/Department.</p> <p>(g) Citizens Charters prepared by the Ministry/Department/public authority and six monthly reports on the performance against the benchmarks set in Citizens Charter.</p> <p>(h) All discretionary/non-discretionary grants/allocations to state governments/NGOs/Grants-in-aid Institutions.</p> <p>[Chapter-2, para 2.1.1 to 2.1.8]</p>	

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Recommendations of Task Force	Remarks
Chapter 3 – Guidelines for facilitating disclosure at different levels of government – suggested templates for key areas	
<p>1. The scheme of Section 4 applies uniformly to all public authorities at different levels although at different levels of administration different level of detailing may be required. This could be facilitated by development of suitable templates which would not only improve the quality of disclosures but would also facilitate more transparency in governance. For example, in the case of Public Distribution System (PDS) disclosures at the level of Fair Price Shops (FPS) should go down to the level of ration card holder, while at the level of district/state, agencies dealing with the disclosures would need to be more broad-based.</p> <p>2. The Task Force has identified four areas for development of templates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Public Distribution System; (b) Panchayats; (c) MGNREGA; and (d) Primary and Secondary Schools. <p>3. The templates for information disclosure at various levels of service delivery in relation to the above four areas are given in a separate section of the Report.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">[Chapter-3, para 3.2]</p>	<p>Templates have been separately circulated to relevant Ministries/ Departments of Central Government for their comments. These may be accepted subject to comments of relevant Ministries/Departments. It would be helpful if adoption of these templates by relevant authorities in State Governments is also mandated by the concerned Central Ministry or Department with suitable modifications/changes, if any, required.</p>

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Recommendations of Task Force	Remarks
<p>4. The Task Force has also given some general recommendations about disclosure at various levels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) While internet may be the good medium for dissemination of information, disclosures should also be done locally in a form and manner that is easily accessible to the public. For example, through wall paintings and boards, etc. (ii) Public authorities should use documents which are given to beneficiaries in relation to these schemes for disclosing salient features of the schemes. (iii) At the Panchayat level, RTI Proactive Disclosure Files may be maintained for perusal by information seekers. <p>[Chapter-3, para 3.2.1 to 3.2.3]</p>	<p>Principles are sound and they may be circulated to all concerned for adoption.</p>
<p>5. The Task Force has also listed out few innovative practices adopted by some State Governments in regard to disposal of information particularly at field level. Task Force recommended that these may be circulated to State Governments for adoption.</p> <p>[Chapter-3, para 3.3]</p>	<p>These practices may be circulated to all State Governments for their information.</p>

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Recommendations of Task Force	Remarks
Chapter 4 – Guidelines for Digital Publication of proactive disclosures under Section 4	
<p>1. Task Force has recommended that while adhering to the standard guidelines for preparation of departmental websites as laid down by Department of Information Technology and/or Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances, the following principles may also be kept in view to ensure that disclosures through website are complete, easily accessible, technology and platform neutral and in a form which conveys the desired information in an effective and user-friendly manner.</p> <p>2. The principles/practices which may be taken up for implementation immediately are listed below:</p> <p>(a) The website should have a simple public interface and should not require any registration/login to access it or to access the MIS.</p> <p>(b) The website should have universal access i.e., it should be accessible to all, irrespective of technology, platforms, devices or disabilities of any kind.</p> <p>(c) Efforts should be made to ensure that all orders of the public authority are issued only after such orders have been uploaded on the website. Such a system exists in Andhra Pradesh and can be adopted in other governments easily.</p>	<p>Most of the recommendations made by the Task Force are useful. However, if only those recommendations have been included in this Annexure, which can be taken up for implementation immediately. In case of other recommendations more infrastructure, both machine and human resources, would be required and that is why they are proposed to be taken up for implementation at a later date.</p>

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Recommendations of Task Force	Remarks
<p>(d) Websites should have good search engine and documents uploaded should have key words assigned to them so that independent searches of the database are possible.</p> <p>(e) Website should contain all the relevant acts, rules forms and other documents which are normally accessed by citizens.</p> <p>(f) Websites should have detailed directory of key contacts, details of officials of the public authority.</p> <p>(g) Websites should not use too many technical words and, if used, they should be properly explained.</p> <p>(h) Website should be multi-lingual to remain accessible to ordinary public.</p> <p>(i) As departments reorganize their systems and processes to enable themselves for electronic service delivery, it is recommended that during process reengineering requirements of bringing due transparency as provided in the RTI Act are given due consideration at the design stage itself.</p> <p>(j) To maintain reliability of information and its real time updation, information generation in a digital work flow should be 'locked' to key work outputs, like a muster roll and salary slip (NREGA in</p>	

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Recommendations of Task Force	Remarks
<p>Andhra Pradesh) or formalization of a government order (Andhra Pradesh). Such an approach will lead to automation of proactive disclosure.</p> <p>(k) All information and documents should have appropriate meta-data which ensures easy discovery of information. It would also enable organization and presentation of information along many different parameters as required (for instance, data could be arranged village-wise).</p> <p>(l) Information must be presented from a user's perspective, which may require re-arranging it, simplifying it etc. However, original documents in original formats should continue to be made available because these are needed for community monitoring of government's functioning.</p> <p>(m) Information should be uploaded using only open standards like ODF, PDF/A, JPG, OGG etc, so that it is neutral to the technology platform of the user. Since, the accessed information is the user's right to access and she cannot be forced to use certain technology platforms rather than others. The Department of Information Technology has come up with a policy on 'Open Standards in e-governance' which should be meticulously followed. All standard web accessibility guidelines, especially relating to visual disabilities</p>	

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Recommendations of Task Force	Remarks
<p>should be followed.</p> <p>(n) Information and data should be presented in open data formats whereby it can be pulled by different Application Protocol Interfaces to be used in different fashions more appropriate to specific contexts and needs. Information/ data can, for instance, be presented in powerful visuals ways using visualization techniques. Such visual representation of information/ data can give insights that may remain largely hidden in a textual or tabular presentation of data. In some contexts, pictures and audio/videos recordings etc may be more useful. There have been moves in some part of the country to video record gram sabha meetings. A picture of a NREGA worksite, for instance, may tell much more than words can. All such different media and forms should be used for proactive disclosure.</p> <p>[Chapter-4, para 4.2]</p>	

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Recommendations of Task Force	Remarks
Chapter 5 – Guidelines for certain clauses of Section 4(1)(b) to make disclosures more effective	
<p>1. The Task Force has fleshed out detailed guidelines for four clauses of Section 4(1)(b).</p> <p>(a) Clause 4(1)(b)(iii) of the RTI Act mandates proactive disclosures regarding 'the procedure followed in the decision making process, including channels of supervision and accountability', Task Force recommends that public authorities should identify the major outputs/tangible results/services/goods that it is responsible for providing to the public and decision making process at various stages should be detailed. Gradually, this exercise may be undertaken to cover all statutory and discretionary functions that are performed by the public authorities.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">[Chapter-5, para 5.3 to 5.5]</p> <p>(b) Clause 4(1)(b)(iv) of the RTI Act mandates that 'the norms set by it for the discharge of its functions'. Primarily, the intention of this clause is that every public authority should proactively disclose the standards by which its performance should be judged, The Task Force has recommended that Citizen Charters may be prepared for each central Ministry/Department/Authority and</p>	<p>Detailed guidelines will be issued by DOPT on the basis of the recommendations of the Task Force.</p> <p>Detailed guidelines will be issued by DOPT on the basis of the recommendations of the Task Force.</p>

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Recommendations of Task Force	Remarks
<p>norms for disclosure of items of work under Citizen Charters should be proactively disclosed. At the same time, the conditions, criteria and priorities under which a person becomes eligible for goods and services should also to be disclosed. The Task Force has further recommended that public authority should annually publish their performance against the norms guaranteed under the Citizens Charter and should also periodically revise the charters to include additional items or to reframe the existing norms for improved service delivery.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">[Chapter-5, para 5.5 to 5.7]</p> <p>(c) Clause 4(1)(b)(xi) of the RTI Act mandates that 'the budget allocated to each of its agency indicating the particulars of all plans, proposed expenditures and reports on disbursements made', The Task Force has recommended that Ministries/Departments should prepare simplified versions of their budgets which can be understood easily by general public. Detailed guidelines may be prepared in consultation with Department of Expenditure and some civil society organizations which publish simplified versions of government budgets. In addition to this, the budget released to various agencies and subsidiaries should be put on the website on a monthly basis. The Task</p>	<p>Consultation with Department of Expenditure would be required to prepare simplified versions of budgets which can be easily understood by the general public. The work done by some civil organizations in this area will also be kept in view during finalization of guidelines.</p>

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Recommendations of Task Force	Remarks
<p>Force has further recommended that raw data relating to approved budgets, expenditure incurred, etc., is made available in easily downloadable, machine readable manner using open standards such as XML.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">[Chapter-5, para 5.3 to 5.5]</p>	
Recommendations of Task Force	Remarks
<p>Chapter 8 – Compliance with provisions of suo motu (proactive disclosure) under the RTI Act</p>	
<p>1. The Task Force is of the view that both the public authorities and Information Commissions should share the responsibility to monitor and enforce compliance with suo motu disclosure provisions. At the level of public authority, responsibility should be given at senior levels for ensuring that information is proactively disclosed and regularly updated as per the provisions of the Act. Information Commissions would need to develop mechanisms to monitor whether action is being taken as per the provisions of the Act and, if weaknesses are found, they are already authorized to issue directions to public authorities under Section 25(5) of the Act. Keeping the above in view, the Task Force has made the following recommendations for improving compliance with the provisions of the RTI Act regarding proactive disclosures.</p> <p>(a) Proactive disclosures scheme should be prepared by each Department/Ministry on an annual basis and should be submitted to Central Information</p>	

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Recommendations of Task Force	Remarks
<p>Commission;</p> <p>(b) Compliance with this scheme should be reported in the annual reports of the Ministry/Department to be placed before the Parliament;</p> <p>(c) Each Central Ministry/Department should appoint a senior officer not below the rank of a Joint Secretary and not below rank of Additional HOD in case of attached offices for ensuring compliance with the provisions relating to proactive disclosures;</p> <p>(d) Task Force has endorsed the suggestions made by DOPT to the Performance Management Division to include compliance with provision of suo motu disclosure as one of the mandatory actions in the Results Framework Document for Departments.</p> <p>(e) Task Force has recommended that at a later date Information Commissioners may strengthen their infrastructure and undertake sample audits of compliance of proactive disclosures by Ministries/Departments.</p> <p>[Chapter-8, para 8.2.1 to 8.2.6]</p>	

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ANNEXURE-V

**RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TASK FORCE
WHICH ARE PROPOSED TO BE PROCESSED AT A LATER DATE**

Recommendations of Task Force	Remarks
Chapter 3 – Guidelines for facilitating disclosure at different levels of government – suggested templates for key areas	
<p>Task Force has recommended use of SMS, Call Centers/IVR/Information helpline for wide dissemination of information. It has also recommended that information centers should be set up at block level and that all schools and local bodies which have maximum interface with citizens should make available records for inspection by community, may be, on a fixed day.</p> <p align="center">[Chapter 3, para 3.2.4 to 3.2.7]</p>	<p>As implementation of these recommendations would require suitable technical infrastructure, it is recommended that we may process this recommendation at a later date.</p>
Chapter 4 – Guidelines for Digital Publication of proactive disclosures under Section 4	
<p>1. The Task Force while recommending guidelines under Section 4 has, inter alia, made the following suggestions:</p> <p>(a) It should be the endeavor of all public authorities that all entitlements to citizens and all transactions between the citizen and government are gradually made available through computer based interface. It was noted that 'Electronic Service Delivery Bill' under formulation in Government of India would provide the</p>	<p>As implementation of these recommendations would require investment in infrastructure, it is recommended that these recommendations may be processed at a later date. This Department is</p>

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Recommendations of Task Force	Remarks
<p>necessary impetus.</p> <p>(b) Websites should contain detailed information from the point of origin to the point of delivery of entitlements/services provided by the public authorities to citizens.</p> <p>(c) It is obligatory under Section 4(1)(b)(xiv) of the RTI Act for every public authority to proactively disclose 'details in respect of the information, available to or held by it, reduced in an electronic form'. In such a listing required under this section, it should also be required to indicate which digitally held information is made available publicly over the internet and which not.</p> <p>(d) Proper digital proactive disclosure is contingent upon appropriate digital record keeping. Section 4(1)(a) of the RTI Act makes a clear recommendation for digitizing and extensive networking of government records. This issue is also connected to the issue of informational aspects of e-governance based process re-engineering. New government-wide as well as department-specific electronic record keeping norms and schemes should be developed, and a study group can be set up for this purpose. Citizen's right to information should be a key design principle for these new electronic record keeping schemes.</p> <p>(e) Information should be easily searchable and discoverable, and therefore not just in</p>	<p>aware that Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances is developing a Manual of Procedure for e-office, which would take care of many of the recommendations relating to digital record keeping.</p>

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Recommendations of Task Force	Remarks
<p>a scanned document form. In order to search scanned documents, optical character recognition techniques are available and these should be incorporated as far as possible. Information/ documents should be time-stamped with proper versioning. Earlier versions should be archived and be publicly accessibility.</p> <p>(f) Department of Science & Technology is working on a 'Data Sharing and Accessibility Policy' which is based on the principle that all publicly funded information should be readily available. Once such policy is approved this should be strictly adhered to.</p> <p>(g) In the long run, government may consider setting up one website where proactive disclosures of all public authorities are available at one place. Such experiments are already on in some other countries such as USA and this would facilitate public access to government information.</p> <p>(h) Government may consider utilizing large infrastructure which is being created as common service centers to provide information to public through these CSCs. Task Force also recommends that practices being adopted in Mexico and Kenya in this regard, may also be considered.</p> <p align="center">[Chapter 4, para 4.2]</p>	

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Recommendations of Task Force	Remarks
Chapter 5 – Guidelines for certain clauses of Section 4(1)(b) to make disclosures more effective	
<p>Clause 4(1)(b)(xiv) of the Act mandates that 'details in respect of information, available to or held by it, reduced in an electronic form'. The Task Force has recommended that keeping in view the varied levels of computerization of records and documents in public authorities, data about records that have been digitized may be proactively disclosed on the respective websites, excluding those records/files/information that is exempted under Section 8.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">[Chapter 5, para 5.9 & 5.10]</p>	<p>This recommendation needs more scrutiny. Compilation of information which has not been digitized would require substantial efforts and it needs to be examined whether benefits would outweigh the costs.</p>
Chapter 6 – Steps to be taken in matters relating to threat to RTI activists	

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Recommendations of Task Force	Remarks
<p>The Task Force discussed this issue and felt that this would require more detailed discussions especially with law enforcement agencies. However, Task Force has recommended that pending such consultation, National Human Rights Commission's powers to interfere in cases of human rights violation may be invoked by including RTI activists under the definition of human rights defender. The Task Force also recommended that proactive steps taken by State Information Commission of Gujarat in such matters may be circulated to other states for adoption.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">[Chapter-6, para 6.1 to 6.2]</p>	<p>The recommendations of the Task Force are very generic in nature. Central Government may issue advisories to State Governments in this regard. However, as noted by the Task Force more detailed deliberations are required with law enforcing agencies to work out better arrangements.</p>
<p>Chapter 7 – Guidelines for consultation with public in relation to the formulation of policies and implementation thereof</p>	
<p>3.10 Section 4(1)(b)(vii) requires that public authorities should publish the particulars of any arrangement that exists for consultation with or representation by the members of the public in relation to the formulation of its policy or implementation thereof. In addition, Section 4(c) requires that public authorities should publish all relevant facts while formulating important policies or announcing decisions which affect people.</p> <p>3.11 The Task Force noted that so far public authorities have not complied with this provision. The Task force further noted that each public</p>	<p>A detailed policy in this regard would be framed based upon the recommendations.</p>

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Recommendations of Task Force	Remarks
<p>authority cannot have a different policy on such important issue as policy for consultations has to be laid down by the respective government, which should then be adhered to by various Ministries/Departments/Attached Offices. Therefore, a policy and a framework for consultation need to be formulated to ensure standardization and institutionalization.</p> <p>3.12 Considering the above, Task Force has recommended that government should lay down a policy for public consultations in case of legislations, rules, regulations, etc., and whenever a major national policy is being framed. Procedure for such consultation has also been detailed in relevant chapter.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">[Chapter-7, para 7.4 to 7.6]</p>	

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Government of India
Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions
(Department of Personnel & Training)

Annexure VI

No.1/6/2011-IR
Government of India
Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions
Department of Personnel & Training

North Block, New Delhi
Dated the _____, 2012

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Subject: Implementation of Suo – Moto disclosure under Section 4 (1)(b) of RTI Act, 2005 – Issue of guidelines regarding:

Section 4(1)(b) of the RTI Act lays down the information which should be disclosed by Public Authorities on a suo motu or proactive basis. Section 4(2) and Section 4(3) prescribe the method of dissemination of this information. The purpose of suo motu disclosures under Section 4 is to place large amount of information in public domain on a proactive basis to make the functioning of the Public Authorities more transparent and also to reduce the need for filing individual RTI applications.

2. Since the promulgation of the Act in 2005, large amount of information relating to functioning of the government is being put in public domain. However, the quality and quantity of proactive disclosures are not up to the desired level and in relation to certain clauses of Section 4(1)(b) and 4(1)(c), sufficient disclosures are not being made due to lack of clear guidelines. Central as well as State Information Commissions have also highlighted this issue.

3. The issue has engaged the attention of the Government of India also and it was felt that the weak implementation of the Section 4 of the RTI Act is partly due to the fact that certain provisions of this Section have not been fully detailed and, in case of certain other provisions there is need for laying down

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detailed guidelines. Further there is need to set up a compliance mechanism to ensure that requirements under section 4 of the RTI Act are met.

4. In order to address the above Government of India constituted a Task Force on *Suo Motu* disclosures under the RTI Act, 2005 in May 2011 which included representatives of civil society organizations active in the field of Right to Information, for strengthening compliance with provisions for *suo - motu* or proactive disclosures as given in Section 4 of the RTI Act, 2005. The Task Force gave its report on 30th August, 2011. Based on the report of the Task Force the Government have decided to issue guidelines for *suo-motu* disclosures under section 4(1)(b) of the RTI Act.

5. Guidelines for Central Government Ministries/Departments are on:

- vi. Prescribing additional items for *suo moto* disclosure under Section 4(1)(b)(xvii)
- vii. Guidelines for digital Publication of proactive disclosures under Section 4.
- viii. Detailing of Section 4(1)(b)(iii), 4(1)(b)(iv), 4(1)(b)(ix) and 4(1)(b)(xiv)
- ix. Compliance mechanism for *Suo-Motu* disclosures (Proactive disclosure) under the RTI Act, 2005.

6. The guidelines framed for the State Governments include templates suggested for key areas - guidelines for facilitating disclosure at different levels of government. These are in addition to the guidelines prescribed for the Central Government Ministries and Departments.

7. The above two sets of detailed guidelines on the above are enclosed, however it maybe kept in mind that proactive disclosures should be done in the local language so that it remains accessible to public. It should be presented in a form that is easily understood and if technical words are used they should be carefully explained. As provided in 4(1)(b), disclosures should be made in as many mediums as feasible and disclosures should be kept up to date. The

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disclosure of Information may be made keeping in mind the provisions of Section 8 to 11 of the RTI Act.

8. Central Government Ministries/ Departments should undertake suo-motu disclosure based on these guidelines. State Governments may take the guidelines as an illustration and issue similar guidelines.

9. Enclosed guidelines are issued with the approval of _____. These maybe brought to the notice of all for compliance.

(_____)

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Guidelines for Central Ministries/Departments

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1.0 Prescribing Additional items for suo motu disclosure under Section 4(1)(b)(xvii)

Section 4(1)(b)(xvii) lays down that government may prescribe any additional item which should also be included for suo motu disclosure. The following items are should be disclosed under the *Suo motu* disclosure Scheme of Section 4(1)(b):

1.1 Information related to Procurement

1.1.1 Information relating to procurement over Rs. 10.00 lakhs made by Public Authorities relating to the publication of notice/tender enquiries, corrigenda thereon, and details of bid awards detailing the name of the supplier of goods/services being procured and the rate and total amount at which such procurement is to be done should be disclosed. All information disclosable as per Ministry of Finance, Department of Expenditure's O.M. No 10/1/2011-PPC dated 30th November, 2011 on Mandatory Publication of Tender Enquiries on the Central Public Procurement Portal and O.M. No. 10/3/2012- PPC dated 30th March, 2012 on Implementation of comprehensive end-to-end e-procurement should be disclosed under Section 4(1)(b)(xvii). At present the limit is fixed at Rs. 10.00 lakhs which may change subsequently. In case of procurements made through DGS&D Rate Contracts or through Kendriya Bhandar/ NCCF, only award details need to be published. However information about procurement which would fall within the purview of Section 8 of the RTI Act would still be exempt.

1.2 Public Private Partnerships

1.2.1 If Public services are proposed to be provided through a Public Private Partnership (PPP), all information relating to the PPPs must be disclosed in the public domain by the Public Authority entering into the PPP contract/concession agreement. This may include details of the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV), if any set up, detailed project reports, concession

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agreements, operation and maintenance manuals and other documents generated as part of the implementation of the PPP project. The documents under the ambit of the exemption from disclosure of information under section 8(1)(d) and 8(1)(j) of the RTI Act will not be disclosed suo-motu. Further, information about fees, tolls, or other kinds of revenue that may be collected under authorization from the Government, information in respect of outputs and outcomes, process of selection of the private sector party may also be proactively disclosed. All payments made under the PPP project may also be disclosed in a periodic manner along with the purpose of making such payment.

1.3 Transfer Policy and Transfer Orders

1.3.1 Transfer policy for different grades/cadres of employees serving in Public Authority should be proactively disclosed. All transfer orders should be publicized through the website or in any other manner listed in Section 4(4) of the Act. These guidelines will not be applicable in cases of transfers made keeping in view sovereignty, integrity, security, strategic, scientific or economic interests of the State and the information covered under Section 8(1)(a). These instructions would not apply to security and intelligence organizations under the second schedule of the RTI Act.

1.4 Sensitive Posts

1.4.1 The Central Vigilance Commission had vide circular no. 98/VGL/60 dated 15th April, 1999, and 2nd November, 2001 directed that a list of sensitive posts in various Departments/ Organisations should be identified by the Chief Vigilance Officer of the Department/ Organisation. The circular further directed that CVOs in consultation with the Chief Executives would ensure that officials posted on sensitive posts are rotated every two/three years to avoid developing vested interest. Public Authorities shall proactively disclose posts identified as sensitive and details of the officers/officials occupying those posts including the

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date since when they are holding the posts. (CVC- letter 98/VGL/60 Dated the 15th April 1999 and No.004/VGL/90 dated the 1st May, 2008)

1.5 RTI Queries

1.5.1 All Public Authorities shall proactively disclose RTI queries and appeals received and their responses, on the websites maintained by Public Authorities with search facility based on key words. RTI queries and appeals received and their responses relating to the personnel information of an individual may not be disclosed as they do not serve any public interest.

1.6 CAG & PAC paras

1.6.1 Public Authorities shall proactively disclose the CAG paras framed in regard to their Ministry/Department and the response of the Ministry/Department to those paragraphs. In addition, a tabular statement should be given regarding pendency of CAG paras.

1.7 Citizens Charter

1.7.1 Citizens Charter prepared by the Ministry/Department, a part of the Result framework Document of the department/organization should be proactively disclosed and six monthly report on the performance against the benchmarks set in Citizens Charter should also be displayed on the website of public authorities.

1.8 Discretionary and Non-discretionary grants

1.8.1 All discretionary /non-discretionary grants/ allocations to state governments/ NGOs/Other institutions by Ministry/Department should be placed on the website of the Ministry/Department concerned. Annual Accounts of all legal entities who are provided grants by Public Authorities should be made available through publication, directly or indirectly on the Public Authority's website. *Such publication of Annual Accounts of any legal entity receiving grant should be made a mandatory condition to receive the grant.*

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(Department of Personnel & Training)****1.9 Foreign Tours of PM/Ministers**

1.9.1 A large number of RTI queries are being filed on official tours undertaken by Ministers or officials of various Government Ministries/Departments. Information regarding the nature, place and period of foreign and domestic tours of Prime Minister are already disclosed on the PMO's website.

1.9.2 As per DoPT's OM No. 1/8/2012-IR dated _____, 2012 Public Authorities shall proactively disclose the details of official tours undertaken by Minister(s) and officials since 1st January, 2012. The disclosures may be updated once every quarter starting from 1st July, 2012. Public authorities shall disclose information about all official foreign tours undertaken by the Minister(s) and officials; and information about official domestic tours undertaken by Minister(s) and officers of the rank of Joint Secretaries to the Government of India and above and Heads of Departments.

1.9.3. Information to be disclosed proactively should contain nature of the official tour, places visited, the period, number of people included in the official delegation and total cost of such travel undertaken. Exemptions under Section 8 of the RTI Act, 2005 may be taken in view while disclosing the information. These instructions would not apply to security and intelligence organisations under the second schedule of the RTI Act, 2005 and CVOs of public authorities.

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2.0 Guidelines for Digital Publication of proactive disclosures under Section 4

2.1 Section 4 lays down that information should be provided through many mediums depending upon the level of public authority and the recipient of information (for example, in case of Panchayat wall painting may be more effective means of dissemination of information), more and more proactive disclosure would gradually be made through Internet. There is need for more clear guidelines for web-based publication of information for information disclosure.

2.2 The Department of Information Technology has been working on setting of technical standards for government websites and the Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances has published guidelines for websites of Government Departments. These guidelines prescribe the manner in which websites need to be designed and how information should be disclosed. While adhering to the standards of government guidelines as laid down by Department of Information Technology and Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances the following principles additionally should also be kept in view to ensure that websites' disclosures are complete, easily accessible, technology and platform neutral and in a form which conveys the desired information in an effective and user-friendly manner.

- a) It should be the endeavor of all public authorities that all entitlements to citizens and all transactions between the citizen and government are gradually made available through computer based interface. The 'Electronic Service Delivery Bill' under formulation in Government of India would provide the necessary impetus.

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- b) Websites should contain detailed information from the point of origin to the point of delivery of entitlements/services provided by the Public Authorities to citizens.
- c) Orders of the public authority should be issued only after such orders have been uploaded on the website. Such a system exists in Andhra Pradesh and could be adopted in other governments easily.
- d) Website should contain all the relevant Acts, Rules, forms and other documents which are normally accessed by citizens.
- e) Websites should have detailed directory of key contacts, details of officials of the Public Authority.
- f) It is obligatory under Section 4(1)(b)(xiv) of the RTI Act for every Public Authority to proactively disclose 'details in respect of the information, available to or held by it, reduced in an electronic form'. In such a listing required under this section, indicate which digitally held information is made available publicly over the internet and which not.
- g) As departments reorganize their systems and processes to enable themselves for electronic service delivery, it is recommended that during process reengineering the requirement of bringing due transparency as provided in the RTI Act are given due consideration at the design stage itself.
- h) To maintain reliability of information and its real time updation, information generation in a digital work flow should be 'locked' to key work outputs, like a muster roll and salary slip (NREGA in Andhra Pradesh) or formalization of a government order (Andhra Pradesh). Such an approach will lead to automation of proactive disclosure.

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- i) Information must be presented from a user's perspective, which may require re-arranging it, simplifying it etc. However, original documents in original formats should continue to be made available because these are needed for community monitoring of government's functioning.
- j) The 'National Data Sharing and Accessibility Policy' by the Department of Science and Technology is based on the principle that all publicly funded information should be readily available and works on the principle of open and restricted access to data. The policy is to be implemented by August 2012 and the schedule should be strictly adhered to.
- k) Information and data should be presented in open data formats whereby it can be pulled by different Application Protocol Interfaces to be used in different fashions more appropriate to specific contexts and needs. Information/ data can, for instance, be presented in powerful visual ways using visualisation techniques. Such visual representation of information/ data can give insights that may remain largely hidden in a textual or tabular presentation of data. In some contexts, pictures and audio/videos recordings etc may be more useful. There have been moves in some part of the country to video record Gram Sabha meetings. A picture of a NREGA worksite, for instance, may tell much more than words can. All such different media and forms should be used for proactive disclosure.

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3.0 Guidelines for certain clauses of Section 4(1)(b) to make disclosures more effective

3.1 The various sub-clauses of Section 4(1)(b) must be treated as elements of an integrated disclosure scheme. For example, the functions and responsibilities of a public authority cannot be understood in isolation from the powers and functions of its employees, the norms that inform its decision making processes and the rules, instructions and manuals that are used in the discharge of its functions. Description of one element presupposes the existence of another. So every public authority must endeavour to integrate the information mentioned in these sub-clauses while preparing voluntary disclosure materials.

3.2 Considering that disclosures in regard to certain clauses have been relatively weak, detailed guidelines for four clauses are given below:

3.3 Guidelines for section 4(1)(b)(iii) - "the procedure followed in the decision-making processes including channels of supervision and accountability".

3.3.1 All government departments have specific duties and responsibilities under the respective Allocation of Business Rules (AOB) issued by the appropriate Government. The constitutional provisions and statutes each department is required to implement are clearly laid down in the AOB. The manner of disposal of matters assigned to each Department/Ministry is described in the Transaction of Business Rules (TOB). Additionally, every department would have a specific set of schemes and development programmes which they are required to implement directly or through their subordinate offices or other designated agencies. These documents contain the specific operations that every Public Authority is required to undertake in the course of implementing the programme or scheme. Every operation mandated under the

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AOB read with the TOB would be linked to a specific decision-making chain. All government officers have to follow laid down office procedure manual or the other rules which gives details of how representations, petitions and applications from citizens must be dealt with. Templates, formats, and basic steps of decision-making are briefly explained in such manuals. These descriptions constitute the elements of decision-making processes in general.

3.3.2 Additionally, in the routine work of governance, government functionaries are required to make decisions in a discretionary manner but broad guiding principles are laid down in some rule or the other. For example, the General Financial Rules lay down procedures for a variety of operations relating to government finances. How sanction must be accorded for incurring expenditure; how losses to government must be reported; how responsibility for losses may be fixed on any government servant; how budgets, demand for grants are prepared and submitted; how public works must be sanctioned and executed; how commodities and services may be procured by a public authority; are all explained in these manuals which are updated from time to time. The challenge is to present a simplified version of the decision-making procedure that is of interest to a common citizen.

3.3.3 In view of the above, the following guidelines for detailing the decision making processes are as follows:

- (a) Every public authority may specifically identify the major outputs/ tangible results/ services/ goods that it is responsible for providing to the public or to whosoever is the client of the public authority.
- (b) The decision-making chain may be identified in the form of a flow chart explaining the rank/grade of the public functionaries involved in the decision-making process clarifying the specific stages in the decision-making hierarchy.

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- (c) The powers of each officer including powers of supervision over subordinates involved in the chain of decision-making must also be spelt out next to the flow chart or in a simple bullet-pointed format in a text-box. The exceptional circumstances when such standards decision-making processes may be overridden and by whom should also be explained clearly. Where decentralization of decision-making has occurred in order to grant greater autonomy to public authorities, such procedures must also be clearly explained.
- (d) This design of representation may then be extended to cover all statutory and discretionary operations that are part of the public authority's mandate under the AOB read with the TOB.
- (e) In the event of a public authority altering an existing decision-making process or adopting an entirely new process, such changes must be explained in simple language in order to enable people to easily understand the changes made.

3.4 Guidelines for Section 4(1)(b)(iv) - "the norms set by it for the discharge of its functions".

3.4.1 Primarily, the intention of this clause is that every public authority should proactively disclose the standards by which its performance should be judged. Norms may be qualitative or quantitative in nature, or temporal or statutory norms. In order to ensure compliance with this clause, public authorities would need to develop norms for major functions that are being performed, if they do not already exist.

3.4.2 Citizen Charters, which are mandatory, for each central Ministry/Department/Authority, are good examples of vehicles created for laying down norms of performance for major functions and for monitoring achievements against those standards.

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3.4.3 Wherever norms have been specified for the discharge of its functions by any statute or government orders, they should be proactively disclosed, particularly linking them with the decision making processes as detailed earlier. All Public Authorities should proactively disclose the following:

- a) Defining the services and goods that the particular public authority/office provides directly (or indirectly through any other agency/contractor).
- b) Detailing and describing the processes by which the public can access and/or receive the goods and services that they are entitled to, from the public authority/office along with the forms, if any prescribed, for use by both the applicant and the service providing agency. Links to such forms (online), wherever available, should be given.
- c) Describing the conditions, criteria and priorities under which a person becomes eligible for the goods and services, and consequently the categories of people who are entitled to receive the goods and services.
- d) Defining the quantitative and tangible parameters, (weight, size, frequency etc,) and timelines, that are applicable to the goods and services that are accessible to the public.
- e) Defining the qualitative and quantitative outcomes that each public authority/office plans to achieve through the goods and services that it was obligated to provide.
- f) Laying down individual responsibility for providing the goods and services (who is responsible for delivery/implementation and who is responsible for supervision).

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3.5 Guidelines for Section 4(1)(b)(xi)- "the budget allocated to each of its agency indicating the particulars of all plans, proposed expenditures and reports on disbursements made".

3.6 It is recommended that:

- (a) Keeping in view of the technical nature of the government budgets, it is essential that Ministries/Departments prepare simplified versions of their budgets which can be understood easily by general public and keep them also in public domain. Presentation of budgets and their periodic monitoring reports may also be presented in a more user-friendly manner through graphs and tables, etc.
- (b) Outcome budget being prepared by Ministries/Departments of Government of India should be prominently displayed and be used as a basis to identify physical targets planned during the budgetary period and the actual achievement vis-à-vis those targets. A monthly programme implementation calendar method of reporting being followed in Karnataka is a useful model.
- (c) Funds released to various autonomous organizations/ statutory organizations/ attached offices/ Public Sector Enterprises/ Societies/ NGOs/ Corporations etc. should be put on the website on a quarterly basis and budgets of such authorities may be made accessible through links from the website of the Ministry/Department. If a subsidiary does not have a website then the budgets and expenditure reports of such subsidiary authority may be uploaded on the website of the principal Public Authority.
- (d) Wherever required by law or executive instruction, sector specific allocations and achievements of every department or public authority

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(where feasible) must be highlighted. For example, budget allocation and target focusing on gender, children, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and religious minorities should be specially highlighted. The sector-wise breakup of these targets and actual outcomes must be given in simplified form to enable the vulnerable segments of society to understand the budgets of public authorities better.

3.6 Guidelines for Section 4(1)(b)(xiv) - details of the kinds of information that they themselves hold or information that is available to them, which is reduced in an electronic form.

3.6.1 On the one hand, this clause serves as a means of proactively disclosing the progress made in computerizing information under Section 4(1)(a) of the RTI Act in a periodic manner. On the other, it provides people with clarity about the kinds of electronic information that, although not held by the public authority, is available to them, for example the stocks of ration available with individual fair price shop may not be available with the District Civil Supplies office, but may be available at a subordinate formation.

3.6.2 Keeping in view the varied levels of computerization of records and documents in public authorities, data about records that have been digitized may be proactively disclosed on the respective websites, excluding those records /files /information that are exempted under Section 8. The data about digitized record may include the name of the record and any categorization or indexing used; the subject matter and any other information that is required to be compiled in relation to a file as prescribed by Manual of Office Procedure (and to be prescribed by MOP for electronic records that is under finalization by DARPG), the division/ section/ unit/ office where the record is normally held; the person, with designation, responsible for maintaining the record; and the life span of the record, as prescribed in the relevant record retention schedule.

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4.0 Compliance with provisions of suo motu (Proactive Disclosure) under the RTI Act.

4.1 In order to monitor and enforce compliance with suo motu disclosure provisions both the public authorities and Information Commissions should share the responsibility. At the level of public authority responsibility should be given at senior levels for ensuring that information is proactively disclosed and regularly updated as per the provisions of the Act. Information Commissions would need to develop mechanisms to monitor whether action is being taken as per the provisions of the Act and, if weaknesses are found, they are already authorized to issue recommendations to public authorities under Section 25(5) of the Act. The following guidelines are for improving compliance with the provisions of the RTI Act regarding proactive disclosures.

4.2.1 Proactive Disclosure Scheme

4.2.1 Each Ministry/Department of Government should prepare a proactive disclosure scheme for their Ministry/Department which should also include the proactive disclosures to be made by attached and subordinate offices of that Ministry/Department. This is necessitated as many of the clauses of Section 4(1)(b) would need to be specifically detailed for a specific Ministry/Department and their offices. For example, under Section 4(1)(b)(iii) the procedure followed in the decision making process needs to be detailed and it needs to be decided as to which decisions should be covered for proactive disclosures for this purpose. This would be different for different Ministry and should be carefully detailed in the scheme specific to that Ministry. Similarly, how the budgets of the Ministry/Department are to be put up in the user-friendly manner as recommended elsewhere in these guidelines would be different for different Ministries/ Departments. The norms set by public authority for discharge of its functions would also be specifically detailed for each public authority/Ministry/Department. It is in this context that need for a

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Ministry/Department specific proactive disclosure scheme which conforms to the provisions of RTI Act is felt.

4.2.2 The following steps should be taken by each Ministry/Public Authority under the Proactive Disclosure Scheme.

- a) Each Ministry/ Public Authority, within a period of 6 months from the date of issue of these guidelines, should prepare a list of items they would be disclosing under PDS alongwith the time period over which this exercise would be carried out. Each Ministry/ Public Authority should list out the items they would disclose under the scheme within one year, within two years and in three years time. Such detailed planning is essential as a lot of information may need to be piloted and digitized for disclosure.
- b) The above scheme for disclosure should be sent to the Central Information Commission and should also be included in the Public Authority's RFD and disclosed on the web-site.
- c) Each Ministry/ Public Authority should get its Proactive Disclosure Scheme audited by third party every year. The audit should cover compliance with the Proactive Disclosure Scheme as well as adequacy of the items included in the scheme. The audit should examine whether there are any other type of information which is feasible within the sources to be proactively disclosed. Such audit should be done annually and should be communicated to the Central Information Commission annually.
- d) Central Information Commission should carry out sample audit and of few of the Ministries/ Public Authority with regard to adequacy of items included and their schedule for Proactive Disclosure Scheme as well as compliance of the Ministry/ Public Authority with the scheme. The Central Information Commission, for other Ministries/ Public Authority

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should examine the third-party audit reports for each Ministries/organization and offer their advice/recommendation on compliance with the Proactive Disclosure Scheme to the concerned Ministries/organization.

- e) Preparation of Proactive Disclosure Scheme, its audit by third party, its communication to the Central Information Commission and the detailed and quality of disclosure should be included as RFD target.
- f) Proactive Disclosure Scheme would require collating a large quantum of information and digitizing it. Therefore, Ministries/organization for this purpose, may engage consultants or outsource such an additional efforts to expeditiously comply with the Proactive Disclosure Scheme and for this purpose utilize the plans/non-plan funds of that department.
- g) For carrying out third part audit through outside consultants also Ministries/ Public Authority should utilize their plans/non-plans

4.3 Nodal Officer

4.3.1 Each Central Ministry/Department would appoint a senior officer not below the rank of a Joint Secretary and not below rank of Additional HOD in case of attached offices for ensuring compliance with the proactive disclosure scheme. Officers of similar seniority should be appointed in State Government. Nodal Officer would work under the supervision of the Secretary of the Ministry/Department or the HOD of the attached office as the case may be. Nodal Officers of Ministry/Department and HOD separately would also ensure that the formations below the Ministry/Department/Attached Office also disclose the information as per the proactive disclosure scheme.

4.3 Annual Report to CIC

4.4.1 All Ministries/Departments/Attached Offices would submit an annual report to CIC within three months of the close of the year detailing compliance

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made with the suo-motu scheme and also list out any changes in the scheme which are deemed to be appropriate.

4.4 Annual Reports to Parliament/Legislatures

4.5.1 Government has issued directions to all Ministries/Departments to include a chapter on RTI Act in their Annual Reports submitted to the Parliament. Details about compliance with proactive disclosure scheme should mandatorily be included in the relevant chapter in Annual Report of Ministry/Department.

4.5 Inclusion in RFDs

4.5.1 Proactive disclosure has been included in the RFDs as a mandatory indicator. This may be strictly adhered to.

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Guidelines for State Governments

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1.0 Prescribing Additional items for suo motu disclosure under Section 4(1)(b)(xvii)

Section 4(1)(b)(xvii) lays down that government may prescribe any additional item which should also be included for suo motu disclosure. The following items are should be disclosed under the *Suo motu* disclosure Scheme of Section 4(1)(b):

1.1 Information related to Procurement

1.1.1 Information relating to procurement over Rs. 10.00 lakhs made by Public Authorities relating to the publication of notice/tender enquiries, corrigenda thereon, and details of bid awards detailing the name of the supplier of goods/services being procured and the rate and total amount at which such procurement is to be done should be disclosed. All information disclosable as per Ministry of Finance, Department of Expenditure's O.M. No 10/1/2011-PPC dated 30th November, 2011 on Mandatory Publication of Tender Enquiries on the Central Public Procurement Portal and O.M. No. 10/3/2012- PPC dated 30th March, 2012 on Implementation of comprehensive end-to-end e-procurement should be disclosed under Section 4(1)(b)(xvii). At present the limit is fixed at Rs. 10.00 lakhs which may change subsequently. In case of procurements made through DGS&D Rate Contracts or through Kendriya Bhandar/ NCCF, only award details need to be published. However information about procurement which would fall within the purview of Section 8 of the RTI Act would still be exempt.

1.2 Public Private Partnerships

1.2.1 If Public services are proposed to be provided through a Public Private Partnership (PPP), all information relating to the PPPs must be disclosed in the public domain by the Public Authority entering into the PPP contract/concession agreement. This may include details of the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV), if any set up, detailed project reports, concession

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agreements, operation and maintenance manuals and other documents generated as part of the implementation of the PPP project. The documents under the ambit of the exemption from disclosure of information under section 8(1)(d) and 8(1)(j) of the RTI Act will not be disclosed suo-motu. Further, information about fees, tolls, or other kinds of revenue that may be collected under authorization from the Government, information in respect of outputs and outcomes, process of selection of the private sector party may also be proactively disclosed. All payments made under the PPP project may also be disclosed in a periodic manner along with the purpose of making such payment.

1.3 Transfer Policy and Transfer Orders

1.3.1 Transfer policy for different grades/cadres of employees serving in Public Authority should be proactively disclosed. All transfer orders should be publicized through the website or in any other manner listed in Section 4(4) of the Act. These guidelines will not be applicable in cases of transfers made keeping in view sovereignty, integrity, security, strategic, scientific or economic interests of the State and the information covered under Section 8(1)(a). These instructions would not apply to security and intelligence organizations under the second schedule of the RTI Act.

1.4 Sensitive Posts

1.4.1 The Central Vigilance Commission had vide circular no. 98/VGL/60 dated 15th April, 1999, and 2nd November, 2001 directed that a list of sensitive posts in various Departments/ Organisations should be identified by the Chief Vigilance Officer of the Department/ Organisation. The circular further directed that CVOs in consultation with the Chief Executives would ensure that officials posted on sensitive posts are rotated every two/three years to avoid developing vested interest. Public Authorities shall proactively disclose posts identified as sensitive and details of the officers/officials occupying those posts including the

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date since when they are holding the posts. (CVC- letter 98/VGL/60 Dated the 15th April 1999 and No.004/VGL/90 dated the 1st May, 2008)

1.5 RTI Queries

1.5.1 All Public Authorities shall proactively disclose RTI queries and appeals received and their responses, on the websites maintained by Public Authorities with search facility based on key words. RTI queries and appeals received and their responses relating to the personnel information of an individual may not be disclosed as they do not serve any public interest.

1.6 CAG & PAC paras

1.6.1 Public Authorities shall proactively disclose the CAG paras framed in regard to their Ministry/Department and the response of the Ministry/Department to those paragraphs. In addition, a tabular statement should be given regarding pendency of CAG paras.

1.7 Citizens Charter

1.7.1 Citizens Charter prepared by the Ministry/Department, a part of the Result framework Document of the department/organization should be proactively disclosed and six monthly report on the performance against the benchmarks set in Citizens Charter should also be displayed on the website of public authorities.

1.8 Discretionary and Non-discretionary grants

1.8.1 All discretionary /non-discretionary grants/ allocations to state governments/ NGOs/Other institutions by Ministry/Department should be placed on the website of the Ministry/Department concerned. Annual Accounts of all legal entities who are provided grants by Public Authorities should be made available through publication, directly or indirectly on the Public Authority's website.

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1.9 Foreign Tours of PM/Ministers

1.9.1 A large number of RTI queries are being filed on official tours undertaken by Ministers or officials of various Government Ministries/Departments. Information regarding the nature, place and period of foreign and domestic tours of Prime Minister are already disclosed on the PMO's website.

1.9.2 As per DoPT's OM No. 1/8/2012-IR dated _____, 2012 Public Authorities shall proactively disclose the details of official tours undertaken by Minister(s) and officials since 1st January, 2012. The disclosures may be updated once every quarter starting from 1st July, 2012. Public authorities shall disclose information about all official foreign tours undertaken by the Minister(s) and officials; and information about official domestic tours undertaken by Minister(s) and officers of the rank of Joint Secretaries to the Government of India and above and Heads of Departments.

1.9.3. Information to be disclosed proactively should contain nature of the official tour, places visited, the period, number of people included in the official delegation and total cost of such travel undertaken. Exemptions under Section 8 of the RTI Act, 2005 may be taken in view while disclosing the information. These instructions would not apply to security and intelligence organisations under the second schedule of the RTI Act, 2005 and CVOs of public authorities.

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2.0 Guidelines for facilitating disclosure at different levels of government – Suggested templates for key areas

2.1 The scheme of Section 4 applies uniformly to all public authorities even though they may be constituted at different levels. It is felt that at different levels of administration different level of detailing is required and if that could be facilitated by development of suitable templates it would not only improve the quality of disclosures but would also facilitate more transparency in governance. For example, in the case of Public Distribution System (PDS) disclosures at the level of Fair Price Shops (FPS) should go down to the level of ration card holder, while at the level of district/state, agencies dealing with the disclosures would need to be more broad-based. Keeping this in view four areas were identified for development of templates.

- (a) *Public Distribution System;*
- (b) Panchayats;
- (c) MGNREGA; and
- (d) Primary and Secondary Schools.

These four areas have been selected on the ground that they constitute some of the most significant services being provided at the ground level. However, it is recommended that similar templates need to be worked out for other important areas such as health services, services relating to social benefits, etc.

2.2 Templates for Information Disclosure

The templates of information disclosure at various levels of service delivery in relation to the above four areas are **enclosed** at the end of the guidelines. The general principles which should be adopted for disclosure at various levels are given below:

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2.3 *Use of Information boards/walls*

Section 4(4) of the RTI Act states that information should be disseminated taking into consideration 'the most effective method of communication in that local area and the information should be easily accessible'. Given the limited reach and accessibility of the internet in India, information disclosures, as far as practically possible, must also be done locally in a form and manner that is easily accessible to people. It is recommended that at village / block level relevant information should be painted on walls and provided on boards in the local language at prominent public places.

2.4 *Information disclosure through any document/proof of delivery that is available to beneficiaries*

Any document relating to a scheme/program of the department that is held by a citizen (eg. ration card, school books etc.) should be used as a mode of disclosure. Information in the local language can be printed on such documents. Stickers can be used to update/change the information, if required.

2.5 *RTI Proactive Disclosure File*

Panchayat is the first public authority or unit which has an interface with citizens. In their case many of the information can be painted on the walls. However, all the information that is painted on the walls should also be kept ready for perusal in a "RTI Proactive Disclosure File". This file should also contain details of all the moneys received and all the guidelines which are sent to Panchayats by various government authorities for implementation of schemes.

2.6 **'Good' and 'Innovative' practices adopted by State Governments**

2.6.1 State governments may adopt innovative practices to disseminate information at local level. Some of these practices are listed below:

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- Read out all information about benefits of schemes, budgets, expenditure, MGNREGA works, payments etc in the Gramsabha. Example - Yakubbbhai Kothariya works as a Gram Panchayat Secretary and a PIO in Gujarat. Even before the RTI Act was in place, Yakubbbhai was fond of using folk lyrics as a medium of disseminating information. In his Gram Sabha, he talks about various scheme by connecting it with incidents in the village and sings a folk song marking the specific characteristics of a scheme. His Gram Sabhas are frequented by large numbers of residents on a regular basis.
- Disseminate information about schemes and programmes by setting up a desk whilst organizing the 'Village Mela (fair)' or any Folk Fair that is conducted in the region. This can also be done in collaboration with village youth mandal, or SHG or any Community bases organization.
- Organization of "Information Mela (fair)" at the village school on important days like Independence Day, Republic Day". This works very effectively in the villages, and people feel connected with village school.
- Community radio can become another media of dissemination of info. This proves very effective.
- In Panchmahal district, Gujarat, during the RTI campaign for pro-active disclosures it was observed that the multi-media vehicle used for dissemination of information was widely accepted. The pamphlets, guidelines of various schemes, including forms were disseminated by "**RTI on Wheels**" a multimedia vehicle. The films and case stories of use of information for achieving transparency in governance were screened.
- In Goa, it's a regular practice that details of the gramsabha are reported in local newspapers.
- Other media like street plays, puppet shows can also be used for information dissemination.

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- If there are any specific programmes or schemes meant specifically for the region or village then in such cases, pro-active disclosure should be prepared in the form of charts giving details of such schemes/programme.

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3.0 Guidelines for Digital Publication of proactive disclosures under Section 4

3.1 Section 4 lays down that information should be provided through many mediums depending upon the level of public authority and the recipient of information (for example, in case of Panchayat wall painting may be more effective means of dissemination of information), more and more proactive disclosure would gradually be made through Internet. There is need for more clear guidelines for web-based publication of information for information disclosure.

3.2 The Department of Information Technology has been working on setting of technical standards for government websites and the Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances has published guidelines for websites of Government Departments. These guidelines prescribe the manner in which websites need to be designed and how information should be disclosed. While adhering to the standards of government guidelines as laid down by Department of Information Technology and Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances the following principles additionally should also be kept in view to ensure that websites' disclosures are complete, easily accessible, technology and platform neutral and in a form which conveys the desired information in an effective and user-friendly manner.

- a) It should be the endeavor of all public authorities that all entitlements to citizens and all transactions between the citizen and government are gradually made available through computer based interface. The 'Electronic Service Delivery Bill' under formulation in Government of India would provide the necessary impetus.

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- b) Websites should contain detailed information from the point of origin to the point of delivery of entitlements/services provided by the Public Authorities to citizens.
- c) Orders of the public authority should be issued only after such orders have been uploaded on the website. Such a system exists in Andhra Pradesh and could be adopted in other governments easily.
- d) Website should contain all the relevant Acts, Rules, forms and other documents which are normally accessed by citizens.
- e) Websites should have detailed directory of key contacts, details of officials of the Public Authority.
- f) It is obligatory under Section 4(1)(b)(xiv) of the RTI Act for every Public Authority to proactively disclose 'details in respect of the information, available to or held by it, reduced in an electronic form'. In such a listing required under this section, indicate which digitally held information is made available publicly over the internet and which not.
- g) As departments reorganize their systems and processes to enable themselves for electronic service delivery, it is recommended that during process reengineering the requirement of bringing due transparency as provided in the RTI Act are given due consideration at the design stage itself.
- h) To maintain reliability of information and its real time updation, information generation in a digital work flow should be 'locked' to key work outputs, like a muster roll and salary slip (NREGA in Andhra Pradesh) or formalization of a government order (Andhra

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Pradesh). Such an approach will lead to automation of proactive disclosure.

- i) Information must be presented from a user's perspective, which may require re-arranging it, simplifying it etc. However, original documents in original formats should continue to be made available because these are needed for community monitoring of government's functioning.
- j) The 'National Data Sharing and Accessibility Policy' by the Department of Science and Technology is based on the principle that all publicly funded information should be readily available and works on the principle of open and restricted access to data. The policy is to be implemented by August 2012 and the schedule should be strictly adhered to.
- k) Information and data should be presented in open data formats whereby it can be pulled by different Application Protocol Interfaces to be used in different fashions more appropriate to specific contexts and needs. Information/ data can, for instance, be presented in powerful visual ways using visualisation techniques. Such visual representation of information/ data can give insights that may remain largely hidden in a textual or tabular presentation of data. In some contexts, pictures and audio/videos recordings etc may be more useful. There have been moves in some part of the country to video record Gram Sabha meetings. A picture of a NREGA worksite, for instance, may tell much more than words can. All such different media and forms should be used for proactive disclosure.

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4.0 Guidelines for certain clauses of Section 4(1)(b) to make disclosures more effective

4.1 The various sub-clauses of Section 4(1)(b) must be treated as elements of an integrated disclosure scheme. For example, the functions and responsibilities of a public authority cannot be understood in isolation from the powers and functions of its employees, the norms that inform its decision making processes and the rules, instructions and manuals that are used in the discharge of its functions. Description of one element presupposes the existence of another. So every public authority must endeavour to integrate the information mentioned in these sub-clauses while preparing voluntary disclosure materials.

4.2 Considering that disclosures in regard to certain clauses have been relatively weak, detailed guidelines for four clauses are given below:

4.3 Guidelines for section 4(1)(b)(iii) - "the procedure followed in the decision-making processes including channels of supervision and accountability".

4.3.1 All government departments have specific duties and responsibilities under the respective Allocation of Business Rules (AOB) issued by the appropriate Government. The constitutional provisions and statutes each department is required to implement are clearly laid down in the AOB. The manner of disposal of matters assigned to each Department/Ministry is described in the Transaction of Business Rules (TOB). Additionally, every department would have a specific set of schemes and development programmes which they are required to implement directly or through their subordinate offices or other designated agencies. These documents contain the specific operations that every Public Authority is required to undertake in the course of implementing the programme or scheme. Every operation mandated under the

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AOB read with the TOB would be linked to a specific decision-making chain. All government officers have to follow laid down office procedure manual or the other rules which gives details of how representations, petitions and applications from citizens must be dealt with. Templates, formats, and basic steps of decision-making are briefly explained in such manuals. These descriptions constitute the elements of decision-making processes in general.

4.3.2 Additionally, in the routine work of governance, government functionaries are required to make decisions in a discretionary manner but broad guiding principles are laid down in some rule or the other. For example, the General Financial Rules lay down procedures for a variety of operations relating to government finances. How sanction must be accorded for incurring expenditure; how losses to government must be reported; how responsibility for losses may be fixed on any government servant; how budgets, demand for grants are prepared and submitted; how public works must be sanctioned and executed; how commodities and services may be procured by a public authority; are all explained in these manuals which are updated from time to time. The challenge is to present a simplified version of the decision-making procedure that is of interest to a common citizen.

4.3.3 In view of the above, the following guidelines for detailing the decision making processes are as follows:

- (a) Every public authority may specifically identify the major outputs/ tangible results/ services/ goods that it is responsible for providing to the public or to whosoever is the client of the public authority.
- (b) The decision-making chain may be identified in the form of a flow chart explaining the rank/grade of the public functionaries involved in the decision-making process clarifying the specific stages in the decision-making hierarchy.

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- (c) The powers of each officer including powers of supervision over subordinates involved in the chain of decision-making must also be spelt out next to the flow chart or in a simple bullet-pointed format in a text-box. The exceptional circumstances when such standards decision-making processes may be overridden and by whom should also be explained clearly. Where decentralization of decision-making has occurred in order to grant greater autonomy to public authorities, such procedures must also be clearly explained.
- (d) This design of representation may then be extended to cover all statutory and discretionary operations that are part of the public authority's mandate under the AOB read with the TOB.
- (e) In the event of a public authority altering an existing decision-making process or adopting an entirely new process, such changes must be explained in simple language in order to enable people to easily understand the changes made.

4.4 Guidelines for Section 4(1)(b)(iv) - "the norms set by it for the discharge of its functions".

4.4.1 Primarily, the intention of this clause is that every public authority should proactively disclose the standards by which its performance should be judged. Norms may be qualitative or quantitative in nature, or temporal or statutory norms. In order to ensure compliance with this clause, public authorities would need to develop norms for major functions that are being performed, if they do not already exist.

4.4.2 Citizen Charters, which are mandatory, for each central Ministry/Department/Authority, are good examples of vehicles created for laying down norms of performance for major functions and for monitoring achievements against those standards.

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4.4.3 Wherever norms have been specified for the discharge of its functions by any statute or government orders, they should be proactively disclosed, particularly linking them with the decision making processes as detailed earlier. All Public Authorities should proactively disclose the following:

- a) Defining the services and goods that the particular public authority/office provides directly (or indirectly through any other agency/contractor).
- b) Detailing and describing the processes by which the public can access and/or receive the goods and services that they are entitled to, from the public authority/office along with the forms, if any prescribed, for use by both the applicant and the service providing agency. Links to such forms (online), wherever available, should be given.
- c) Describing the conditions, criteria and priorities under which a person becomes eligible for the goods and services, and consequently the categories of people who are entitled to receive the goods and services.
- d) Defining the quantitative and tangible parameters, (weight, size, frequency etc.) and timelines, that are applicable to the goods and services that are accessible to the public.
- e) Defining the qualitative and quantitative outcomes that each public authority/office plans to achieve through the goods and services that it was obligated to provide.
- f) Laying down individual responsibility for providing the goods and services (who is responsible for delivery/implementation and who is responsible for supervision).

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4.5 Guidelines for Section 4(1)(b)(xi)- "the budget allocated to each of its agency indicating the particulars of all plans, proposed expenditures and reports on disbursements made".

4.5.1 It is recommended that:

- a) Keeping in view of the technical nature of the government budgets, it is essential that Ministries/Departments prepare simplified versions of their budgets which can be understood easily by general public and keep them also in public domain. Presentation of budgets and their periodic monitoring reports may also be presented in a more user-friendly manner through graphs and tables, etc.
- b) Outcome budget being prepared by Ministries/Departments of Government of India should be prominently displayed and be used as a basis to identify physical targets planned during the budgetary period and the actual achievement vis-à-vis those targets. A monthly programme implementation calendar method of reporting being followed in Karnataka is a useful model.
- c) Funds released to various autonomous organizations/ statutory organizations/ attached offices/ Public Sector Enterprises/ Societies/ NGOs/ Corporations etc. should be put on the website on a quarterly basis and budgets of such authorities may be made accessible through links from the website of the Ministry/Department. If a subsidiary does not have a website then the budgets and expenditure reports of such subsidiary authority may be uploaded on the website of the principal Public Authority.
- d) Wherever required by law or executive instruction, sector specific allocations and achievements of every department or public authority

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(where feasible) must be highlighted. For example, budget allocation and target focusing on gender, children, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and religious minorities should be specially highlighted. The sector-wise breakup of these targets and actual outcomes must be given in simplified form to enable the vulnerable segments of society to understand the budgets of public authorities better.

4.6 Guidelines for Section 4(1)(b)(xiv) - details of the kinds of information that they themselves hold or information that is available to them, which is reduced in an electronic form.

4.6.1 On the one hand, this clause serves as a means of proactively disclosing the progress made in computerizing information under Section 4(1)(a) of the RTI Act in a periodic manner. On the other, it provides people with clarity about the kinds of electronic information that, although not held by the public authority, is available to them, for example the stocks of ration available with individual fair price shop may not be available with the District Civil Supplies office, but may be available at a subordinate formation.

4.6.2 Keeping in view the varied levels of computerization of records and documents in public authorities, data about records that have been digitized may be proactively disclosed on the respective websites, excluding those records /files /information that are exempted under Section 8. The data about digitized record may include the name of the record and any categorization or indexing used; the subject matter and any other information that is required to be compiled in relation to a file as prescribed by Manual of Office Procedure (and to be prescribed by MOP for electronic records that is under finalization by DARPG), the division/ section/ unit/ office where the record is normally held; the person, with designation, responsible for maintaining the record; and the life span of the record, as prescribed in the relevant record retention schedule.

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5.0 Compliance with provisions of suo motu (Proactive Disclosure) under the RTI Act.

5.1 In order to monitor and enforce compliance with suo motu disclosure provisions both the public authorities and Information Commissions should share the responsibility. At the level of public authority responsibility should be given at senior levels for ensuring that information is proactively disclosed and regularly updated as per the provisions of the Act. Information Commissions would need to develop mechanisms to monitor whether action is being taken as per the provisions of the Act and, if weaknesses are found, they are already authorized to issue recommendations to public authorities under Section 25(5) of the Act. The following guidelines are for improving compliance with the provisions of the RTI Act regarding proactive disclosures.

5.2.1 Proactive Disclosure Scheme

5.2.1 Each Ministry/Department of Government should prepare a proactive disclosure scheme for their Ministry/Department which should also include the proactive disclosures to be made by attached and subordinate offices of that Ministry/Department. This is necessitated as many of the clauses of Section 4(1)(b) would need to be specifically detailed for a specific Ministry/Department and their offices. For example, under Section 4(1)(b)(iii) the procedure followed in the decision making process needs to be detailed and it needs to be decided as to which decisions should be covered for proactive disclosures for this purpose. This would be different for different Ministry and should be carefully detailed in the scheme specific to that Ministry. Similarly, how the budgets of the Ministry/Department are to be put up in the user-friendly manner as recommended elsewhere in these guidelines would be different for different Ministries/ Departments. The norms set by public authority for discharge of its functions would also be specifically detailed for each public authority/Ministry/Department. It is in this context that need for a

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Ministry/Department specific proactive disclosure scheme which conforms to the provisions of RTI Act is felt.

5.2.2 The following steps should be taken by each Ministry/Public Authority under the Proactive Disclosure Scheme.

- a) Each Ministry/ Public Authority, within a period of 6 months from the date of issue of these guidelines, should prepare a list of items they would be disclosing under PDS alongwith the time period over which this exercise would be carried out. Each Ministry/ Public Authority should list out the items they would disclose under the scheme within one year, within two years and in three years time. Such detailed planning is essential as a lot of information may need to be piloted and digitized for disclosure.
- b) The above scheme for disclosure should be sent to the Central Information Commission and should also be included in the Public Authority's RFD and disclosed on the web-site.
- c) Each Ministry/ Public Authority should get its Proactive Disclosure Scheme audited by third party every year. The audit should cover compliance with the Proactive Disclosure Scheme as well as adequacy of the items included in the scheme. The audit should examine whether there are any other type of information which is feasible within the sources to be proactively disclosed. Such audit should be done annually and should be communicated to the Central Information Commission annually.
- d) Central Information Commission should carry out sample audit and of few of the Ministries/ Public Authority with regard to adequacy of items included and their schedule for Proactive Disclosure Scheme as well as compliance of the Ministry/ Public Authority with the scheme. The Central Information Commission, for other Ministries/ Public Authority

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should examine the third-party audit reports for each Ministries/organization and offer their advice/recommendation on compliance with the Proactive Disclosure Scheme to the concerned Ministries/organization.

- e) Preparation of Proactive Disclosure Scheme, its audit by third party, its communication to the Central Information Commission and the detailed and quality of disclosure should be included as RFD target.
- f) Proactive Disclosure Scheme would require collating a large quantum of information and digitizing it. Therefore, Ministries/organization for this purpose, may engage consultants or outsource such an additional efforts to expeditiously comply with the Proactive Disclosure Scheme and for this purpose utilize the plans/non-plan funds of that department.
- g) For carrying out third part audit through outside consultants also Ministries/ Public Authority should utilize their plans/non-plans

5.3 Nodal Officer

5.3.1 Each Central Ministry/Department would appoint a senior officer not below the rank of a Joint Secretary and not below rank of Additional HOD in case of attached offices for ensuring compliance with the proactive disclosure scheme. Officers of similar seniority should be appointed in State Government. Nodal Officer would work under the supervision of the Secretary of the Ministry/Department or the HOD of the attached office as the case may be. Nodal Officers of Ministry/Department and HOD separately would also ensure that the formations below the Ministry/Department/Attached Office also disclose the information as per the proactive disclosure scheme.

5.4 Annual Report to CIC

5.4.1 All Ministries/Departments/Attached Offices would submit an annual report to CIC within three months of the close of the year detailing compliance

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made with the suo-motu scheme and also list out any changes in the scheme which are deemed to be appropriate.

5.5 Annual Reports to Parliament/Legislatures

5.5.1 Government has issued directions to all Ministries/Departments to include a chapter on RTI Act in their Annual Reports submitted to the Parliament. Details about compliance with proactive disclosure scheme should mandatorily be included in the relevant chapter in Annual Report of Ministry/Department.

5.6 Inclusion in RFDs

5.6.1 Proactive disclosure has been included in the RFDs as a mandatory indicator. This maybe strictly adhered to.

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Enclosure

**Templates for disclosures at the level
of Fair Price Shops**

Template 1.1: Entitlement, scale of issue and retail issue price of essential commodities for all types of ration cards

Sample of all commodities to be displayed at the FPS

3. Names of Villages/ Mohallas/ Areas covered by the FPS: -----		
1	Name of license holder	
	License number (display copy of license)	Date of issue
	Name of shop keeper	Phone no
2	Time of shop opening-----	
	Time of shop closing-----	
	Days the shop remains open in a week	
3	List of records held by the FPS- Stock register, sale register, list of cardholders attached to the shop, etc.	

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Complaints Register

Ration cardholders can register their complaints in the complaints register available in the Fair Price Shop. Cardholders can demand inspection of the complaints register.

State-level toll free INFORMATION and GRIEVANCE REDRESS HELPLINE (details

later in the section 'Proposed new measures')

e.g. 1800-111-222-333

Name, designation and contact of the grievance redress authority

Complaints regarding the functioning of the Public Distribution System can be made to:

- Helpline number:
- At the Block level:
- At the District level
- At the State level
- Vigilance committees at all levels
- Other relevant authority

Template 1.4: Public audit of records of the FPS (details later in the section
 "Proposed new measures")

Records of FPS available for public audit

(based on the Delhi model)

- All records of the FPS are available for inspection to cardholders on demand
- On the last Saturday of every month, all the records of the FPS will be available for audit by the people at the FPS between 2 to 5 pm
- On the first Saturday of every alternate month, all records of the FPS will be available for audit by people at the Circle/block/panchayat level office from 2 to 5 pm

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Template 1.5: Information about the RTI Act

Right to Information Act 2005

Under the RTI Act, citizens have the right to access information from the Department of Food and Civil Supplies.

- Applications for seeking information have to be submitted in writing with the prescribed fee, to Public Information Officer (PIO) or Assistant Public Information Officer (APIO).
- RTI application fee is Rs. ____ and photocopy charges for providing copies of records is Rs. ____ per page.
- No fee for citizens below the poverty line
- Information will be provided within 30 days

Name, designation and contact details of relevant officials under the RTI Act

Public Information Officer (PIO)	Name of officer	Designation of officer	Office address & Room no.	Mobile phone no.
Assistant Public Information				

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2. Dynamic information at the FPS to be painted / available on blackboards and made available in a file for inspection on demand in local language

Template 2.1: Stock Position (prev. month)

REQUIREMENT, STOCK AND DISTRIBUTION FOR THE MONTH -----												
Ration	APL				BPL				AAY			
	Required	Balance of prev month	Stock provided in this month	Distributed in this month	Required	Balance of prev month	Stock provided in this month	Distributed in this month	Required	Balance of prev month	Stock provided in this month	Distributed in this month
Wheat												
Flour												
Rice												
Edible oil												
Sugar												
Kerosene												
Board verified by On												

Template 2.2: Vigilance Committee FPS-level

FPS-level Ration Vigilance Committee

The last meeting of the Vigilance Committee was held on

The next meeting of the Vigilance Committee will be held on ...

Minutes of the committee meetings are available for inspection at

Members of the ration vigilance committee

Name	Designation	Phone number & address
	Chairperson	

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Number of Ration Cards (as on.....)		
	Number of cards	Total number of members
APL		
BPL		
AAY		
Annapurna		
Applications pending		
Total		

Template 2.3: List of ration cardholders

- The list of all cards (attached to the shop) must be displayed at the FPS. The print out of the list could be stuck on the wall and a register be maintained which should be available for inspection on demand.

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II. Disclosures at the block/ panchayat* level office (*or other appropriate authority for areas under the sixth schedule of the Constitution and for urban areas)

Template 1: Entitlement, scale of issue and retail issue price of essential commodities for all types of ration cards

Ration	APL		BPL		Antodyaya		Annapurnna	
	Price	Quantity	Price	Quantity	Price	Quantity	Price	Quantity
Wheat								
Flour								
Rice								
Edible oil								
Sugar								
Kerosene								
Maize, Bajra/ millet								
other/salt								
Sample of all commodities to be displayed at the FPS								

Template 2: Monthly stock position of each FPS

REQUIREMENT, STOCK AND DISTRIBUTION FOR THE MONTH -----												
FPS Name & Number: Address:												
Ration	APL				BPL				AAY			
	Required	Balance of prev month	Stock provided in this month	Distributed in this month	Required	Balance of prev month	Stock provided in this month	Distributed in this month	Required	Balance of prev month	Stock provided in this month	Distributed in this month
Wheat												
Flour												
Rice												
Sugar												
Kerosene												

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Template 3: Name, designation & duties of officials

S. No.	Name	Designation	Duties
1		Food Supplies Officer	-
2		Inspector	-
3			-
4			-
5			-

Template 4: Grievance redress mechanisms

Complaints Register

Ration cardholders can register their complaints in the complaints register available in the Fair Price Shop. Cardholders can demand inspection of the complaints register.

State-level toll free INFORMATION and GRIEVANCE REDRESS HELPLINE (details later
in the section 'Proposed new measures')

e.g. 1800-111-222-333

Name, designation and contact of the grievance redress authority

Complaints regarding the functioning of the Public Distribution System can be made to:

- Helpline number:
- At the Block level:
- At the District level
- At the State level
- Vigilance committees at all levels
- Other relevant authority

Template 5: Status of complaints filed

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Status of Complaints filed (to be maintained in a register shown on demand/ print outs pinned on a notice board)					
S. No.	Name of complainant & complaint	Date of filing complaint	Name & designation of officer who received the complaint	Current status of grievance	Name and number of FPS/KOD against whom complaint was filed

Complaints received in the last six months (Painted)			
S. No.	Name and number of FPS/KOD against whom complaints were filed	Total number of complaints filed	Action taken against FPS/KOD
1			
2			

6. Public audit of records of the FPS (details later in the section “Proposed new measures”)

Records of FPS available for audit

(Based on Delhi model)

- All records of the FPS are available for inspection to cardholders on demand
- On the last Saturday of every month, all the records of the FPS will be available for audit by the people at the FPS between 2 to 5 pm
- On the first Saturday of every alternate month, all records of the FPS will be available for audit by people at the Circle/block/panchayat level office between 2 to 5 pm

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Template 7: Vigilance Committee at Block/ Panchayat- level

Block/Panchayat-level Ration Vigilance Committee

The last meeting of the Vigilance Committee was held on
 The next meeting of the Vigilance Committee will be held on ...
 Minutes of the committee meetings are available for inspection at ...

Members of the vigilance committee

Name	Designation	Phone number & address
	Chairperson	

Template 8: List of ration cardholders

Number of Ration Cards (as on.....)		
	Number of cards	Total number of members
APL		
BPL		
AAY		
Annapurna		
Applications pending		
Total		

- The list of all cards (attached to the shop) must be displayed securely, in an accessible place at the Block/Panchayat- level office. The print out of the list could be stuck on the wall and a register be maintained which should be available for inspection on demand.
- The list should be painted in the village

SECRET**F.No.1/6/2011-IR****Government of India****Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions
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Procedure for applying for a new APL, BPL and AAY ration card/other services and the time-frame for disposal				
Type of Card	Eligibility	Documents required	Fee, if any	Time-frame for disposal
APL Card				
BPL Card/ AAY Card				
Modification to card				

All application should be given a unique number and people should be able to track the status of their application on the website of the department. Reasons for rejection of any application must be recorded online and should be communicated to the applicant.

Template 10: Boards displaying all relevant orders

- Board should display relevant orders by:
 - Food Department
 - Supreme Court
- Orders pertaining to closure/transfer of FPS, policy changes etc.

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Template 11: Information about the RTI Act

Right to Information Act 2005

Under the RTI Act, citizens have the right to access information from the Department of Food and Civil Supplies.

- Applications for seeking information have to be submitted in writing with prescribed fee, to Public Information Officer (PIO) or Assistant Public Information Officer (APIO).
- RTI application fee is Rs. ____ & photocopy charges for providing copies of records is Rs. ____ per page.
- No fee for citizens below the poverty line
- Information will be provided within 30 days
- If information is not provided within the stipulated time-frame, first appeal can be to the First Appellate Authority in the Department, and the Second appeal can be filed to the Information Commission
- If information is not provided in time, a penalty of Rs. 250 per day, subject to a maximum on Rs. 25000 can be levied on the PIO by the Information Commission.
- Under Section 4 of the Act, the department is required to proactively provide information to citizens. The Section 4 publication is available in the office of the PIO in room no. ____ and can be inspected any time during office hours for free.

Name, designation and contact details of relevant officials under the RTI Act

Public Information Officer (PIO) Assistant Public Information	Name of officer	Designation of officer	Office address & Room no.	Mobile phone no.

Template 12: Board displaying list of documents available for inspection

All documents of this office can be inspected by citizens and photocopies can be taken at actual cost

Name of document	Officer responsible for maintaining the document	Time for inspection

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III. Disclosures at the District level

Template 1: Information to be kept in a file, available for inspection on demand

- List of card-holders (FPS-wise and Block-wise)
- Monthly stock position of all FPS in the district
- Minutes of meetings/reports of FPS-level, block-level and district-level vigilance committees
- Status of complaints filed

Template 2: Board displaying list of documents available for inspection

All documents of this office can be inspected by citizens and photocopies can be taken at actual cost

Name of document	Officer responsible for maintaining the document	Time for inspection

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Template 3: Entitlement, scale of issue and retail issue price of essential commodities for all types of ration cards

Ration	APL		BPL		Antodyaya		Annapurnna	
	Price	Quantity	Price	Quantity	Price	Quantity	Price	Quantity
Wheat								
Flour								
Rice								
Edible oil								
Sugar								
Kerosene								
Maize, Bajra/ millet								
Sample of all commodities to be displayed at the FPS								

Template 4: Grievance redress mechanisms

Complaints Register

Ration cardholders can register their complaints in the complaints register available in the Fair Price Shop. Cardholders can demand inspection of the complaints register.

State-level toll free INFORMATION and GRIEVANCE REDRESS HELPLINE (details later in the section 'Proposed new measures')

e.g. 1800-111-222-333

Name, designation and contact of the grievance redress authority

Complaints regarding the functioning of the Public Distribution System can be made to:

- Helpline number:
- At the Block level:
- At the District level
- At the State level
- Vigilance committees at all levels
- Other relevant authority

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Template 5: Name, designation & duties of officials

S. No.	Name	Designation	Duties
1		Additional Commissioner	
2		Assistant Commissioner	
3		Food Supplies Officer	
4		Inspector	
5			

Template 6: Public audit of records of the FPS

Records of FPS available for audit

(details later in the section "Proposed new measures")

- All records of the FPS are available for inspection to cardholders on demand at the FPS
- On the last Saturday of every month, all the records of the FPS will be available for audit by the people at the FPS between 2 to 5 pm
- On the first Saturday of every alternate month, all records of the FPS will be available for audit by people at the Circle/block/panchayat level office between 2 to 5 pm

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Template 7: Vigilance Committee District- level

District-level Ration Vigilance Committee

The last meeting of the Vigilance Committee was held on
 The next meeting of the Vigilance Committee will be held on ...
 Minutes of the committee meetings are available for inspection at

Members of the vigilance committee

Name	Designation	Phone number & address
	Chairperson	

Template 8: List of ration cardholders

Number of Ration Cards (as on.....)		
	Number of cards	Total number of members
APL		
BPL		
AAY		
Annapurna		
Applications pending		
Total		

- The list of all cards (attached to the shop) must be displayed at the Block/Panchayat- level office and at the FPS. The print out of the list could be stuck on the wall and a register be maintained which should be available for inspection on demand.
- The list should be painted in the village

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Template 9: Procedure for applying for new card/other services and time-frame for disposal of applications

Procedure for applying for a new APL, BPL and AAY ration card/other services and the time-frame for disposal				
Type of Card	Eligibility	Documents required	Fee, if any	Time-frame for disposal
APL Card				
BPL Card/ AAY Card				
Modification to card				

All application should be given a unique number and people should be able to track the status of their application on the website of the department. Reasons for rejection of any application must be recorded online and should be communicated to the applicant.

Template 10: Boards displaying all relevant orders

- Board should display relevant orders by:
 - Food Department
 - Supreme Court
- Orders pertaining to closure/transfer of FPS, policy changes etc.

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Template 11: Information about the RTI Act

Right to Information Act 2005

Under the RTI Act, citizens have the right to access information from the Department of Food and Civil Supplies.

•Applications for seeking information have to be submitted in writing with prescribed fee, to Public Information Officer (PIO) or Assistant Public Information Officer (APIO).

•RTI application fee is Rs. _____ and photocopy charges for providing copies of records is Rs. _____ per page.

•No fee for citizens below the poverty line

•Information will be provided within 30 days

•If information is not provided within the stipulated time-frame, the first appeal can be to the First Appellate Authority in the Department, and the Second appeal can be filed to the Information Commission

•If information is not provided in time, a penalty of Rs. 250 per day, subject to a maximum on Rs. 25000 can be levied on the PIO by the Information Commission.

•Under Section 4 of the Act, the department is required to proactively provide information to citizens. The Section 4 publication is available in the office of the PIO in room no. _____ and can be inspected any time during office hours for free.

Name, designation and contact details of relevant officials under the RTI Act

Public Information Officer (PIO) Assistant Public Information Officer (APIO)	Name of officer	Designation of officer	Office address & Room no.	Mobile phone no.

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IV. Disclosures at the State-level through the Department website

Note: The MIS used by Chhatisgarh and Tamil Nadu are extremely comprehensive and provide real-time information on the functioning of the PDS. While the Chhatisgarh website has free public access to the MIS (www.cg.nic.in/citizen), the Tamil Nadu MIS is only for internal use and is not accessible by the public. All the content listed out in this section is already being recorded in real-time in Chhatisgarh/Tamil Nadu. Other states can emulate the model of these 2 states.

1. Contents of website related to distribution of grain (to be updated in real-time, as far as possible)

- List of all FPS/KODs (Block-wise & District-wise)
- Entitlement, scale of issue and retail issue price of essential commodities for all types of ration cards
- Types of ration cards
- Procedure for applying for new card/other services and time-frame for disposal of applications
- List of card-holders (FPS-wise, Village-wise, Block-wise & District-wise)
- Actual disbursement made on each card (will require shop-level information to be entered into the MIS)
- Monthly stock position of all FPS
- Grievance redress mechanisms for PDS (including details of how and where to lodge a complaint using each of the mechanisms)
- Minutes of meetings/reports of FPS-level, block-level, district-level and state-level vigilance committees
- Information about the RTI Act and section 4 disclosures of the department
- Information about the mechanism for public audit of records of FPS
- Name, designation & duties of all officials of the Department
- Status of complaints filed
- Status of applications submitted
- Status of RTI applications filed
- Status of public audit reports
- ALL orders issued by the department and any other relevant orders which affect the PDS. The department should have a mechanism whereby orders can only be generated through the website and automatically uploaded in the relevant section of the website. Several states, including Andhra Pradesh, follow this mechanism wherein, the order number can only be procured if the order is generated online and is displayed on the website.
- Monthly food grains bulletin (must provide information upto block-level)

All this information should be provided in a searchable format. The website should not require any password/login to access/view this information. The MIS of the Department should be completely visible to people accessing the site.

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2. Contents of website related to procurement of grain (to be updated in real-time, as far as possible)

- MSP & Bonus for all commodities
- Names of farmers (village-wise, block-wise, district-wise)
- Quantity procured and amount paid to each farmer
- Norms for fair average quality
- List of mills (along with capacity of each mill)
- Quantity of grain given and received from each mill

Information on procurement should also be displayed at the procurement centre-level and the block-level offices and at all other offices/sites involved in procurement of grain.

V. Disclosures at the Central Level (through the website)

- All relevant content related to procurement including details of agencies involved
- All relevant content related to transportation including details of agencies involved
- All relevant content related to distribution and linking to state level MIS
- Real-time information on grain movement
- All orders issued by the ministry, Supreme Court etc. which affect the functioning of the PDS
- Monthly food grains bulletin (with information upto block-level)

VI. Information from other sources (organisations involved in procurement, transportation etc.)

All relevant information related to the PDS must be displayed on the website of the relevant organization and should be linked to the Ministry/Food Department website. Eg- Railways which is involved in transportation of food grains, should display real-time information on movement of grains on its website.

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Templates for disclosures for Panchayat

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Recommended templates for disclosure of information under Section 4 of the RTI Act for Panchayat

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

Designation	Name	Phone No
Name and Address of Sarpanch (Village Head)		
Name and Address of Chairman of Social Justice Committee of village		
Name and address of Panchayat Secretary (Talati)		
Revenue Secretary/Patwari		
Assistant secretary		
Name and address of Panchayat's Peon		
Name and address of operator of village water works		
Gramsevak (Dev)		
Gram Seval (Agriculture)		
Any Other		

2. Details about PIO and Appellate Authorities under RTI act 2005 (Should be displayed on outside wall of the Panchayat)

Heads	Name	Designation	Phone Number	Address
PIO				
First Appellate Authority				
Second Appellate Authority				

Kindly bring to the notice of PIO if any information disclosed on the walls is misleading or wrong, or not updated. Citizen may also file complaint under section 18 of RTI ac to State information commission.

RIGHT TO INFORMATION ACT 2005

- ❖ Citizen has right to take photocopy, right to inspect the work and records, held by any public authority.
- ❖ Approach Public information Officer for information.

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- ❖ Application for information need to be submitted to public information officer with application fee ----- which can be paid by: -----
- ❖ If you need assistance in writing application, PIO is suppose to help you as per provisions of the act.
- ❖ PIO is suppose to furnish you information within 30 days. If information is not held by Panchayt, PIO may transfer your application to respective public authority.
- ❖ Any information provided after prescribed time limit will be given free of any charge.
- ❖ Citizen need not give application or application fee or wait for 30 days for inspecting any information that is disclosed on the walls.
- ❖ Citizen may also file direct complaint under section 18 of RTI act, in case she/he not getting info or getting misleading info.
- ❖ Citizen may file first appeal befoe applet authority.

3. Details of information about village population:

Type			
	Female	Male	total
Total population			
SC			
ST			
Voters			
Type of family			
Total family			
BPL Card holder			
Antyoday card holders			

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4. Details about Village Population (to be kept in File)

Type	population		
	Female	Male	Total/persons
Total Population of village (0 to 6 years children)			
Schedule Caste			
Schedule Tribe			
SEBC			
Minorities			
Others			
Total Voters			
Schedule Caste			
Schedule tribe			
SEBC			
Minorities			
Others			
Handicapped			
Farmers (Land holders)			
Schedule caste Farmers (Land holders)			
ST Farmers (Land holders) (Tribal)/Adivasi			
OBC Farmers (Land holders)			
MINORITY Farmers (Land holders)			
Type of Families			
Total families	Numbers		
BPL FAMILIES			
APL Families			
Antodiyaya families			
Ann-purnna families			
Families having Toilets at their house			
Families not having toilets at their house			
Families having electricity connection			
Families not having electricity connection			
Families having agriculture land			
Landless families			
Marginal farmers			
Families having Tap connection in their house			
Families dwelling Kucha houses			
Families having pucca houses			
Grazing land		Hecters	
Fallow Land		Hecters	
Wasteland		Hecters	
Village Revenue land			
Others			

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5.Information about animals in village (file)

Species/type	Numbers
COW	
Ox	
Buffaloes	
Goat	
Sheep	
Camel	
hen /poultry	

6. Panchayat employees' duties (functions) and authorities (information with Patwari/village secretary) (file) , Gamsevak,

Talati(Patwari)	
Panchayat secretary	
Gram Sevak	
Peon/s	
Water work operator	
Others	
Do the above mentioned employees stay /reside in the village	

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Gram Sabha Details: table 4

- ❖ Minimum Gram Sabha held during the year:
- ❖ Date of last Gramsabha :
- ❖ Date of next Gramsabha :
- ❖ The officials from block level to be present:

The proceedings of the Gramsabha and resolutions can be inspected from Panchayat free of any charge. The copy of which can be obtained upon paying photocopy charges.

Details of meeting held at Panchayat

Sr. No	Type of Meeting	Time span between two meetings	Where	participants	Who will chair?	Agenda
1	Ward Sabha (meeting)		Ward	10% of the voters (ward) required to be present	Ward panch	Work to be taken up at ward level & Schemes
	Gramsabha		Panchayat level	10% of the voters (from panchayat) required to be present.	Sarpanch	Work to be taken up at Panchayat level & Schemes
	Panchayat corum or Gram sachivalay		Panchayat	Ward panch and Panchayat employee	Sarpanch	Implementation of schemes, status, progress report, complaints etc.

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Details of other committees at village level:

Sr. No	Name of the committee	No of members	Meeting held	Date of last meeting	Next meeting
1	Social Justice Committee	5	Every 3 months		
2	Village Water Committee	12	Every 2 months		
3	Village Vigilance committee (MGNREGA)	7	Every 2 months		
4	Village Health committee	5	Every 2 months		
5	Vigilance committee for PDS	5	Every month		
6	School Management Committee				

The minutes of meetings are available in the Panchayat and can be inspected free of any charge. The copy can be obtained by paying photocopy charges.

Name of committee : Social Justice committee

Sr.	Name of Members	Designations	SC/ST/OBC/Others	Female/Male

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Name of committee : Vigilance committee for PDS

Sr.	Name of Members	Designations	SC/ST/OBC/Others	Female/Male

Name of committee : Village Health committee

Sr.	Name of Members	Designations	SC/ST/OBC/Others	Female/Male

Kindly prepare Information for every committee (file)

Social Justice committee	Village water and sanitation committee	Village welfare committee
Village water committee	Village Health committee	Village education committee
Monitoring committee MGNREGA As per panchayat ward	Village Ration shop monitoring committee	E-Gram Computer committee

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List of Records available for inspection free of charge at Panchayat Office. Copy can be obtained by paying photocopy charges.

43. Panchayati Act, Rules
44. MGNREGA Act, Guidelines, rules
45. Right to information Act and copy of rules
46. Copy of Land revenue act/code
47. Budget
48. Audit Report
49. Annual Administrative report of the panchayat (at least last five years)
50. Proceedings and resolutions of Gramsabha
51. Proceedings and resolutions of meetings held by various committees like mentioned above)
52. Report that are presented by government officials in the Gramsabha.
53. Revenue record (Register 6- A, - A etc)
54. Registers regarding MGNREGA
55. Voters list of the village
56. BPL List Card holders list
57. BPL Ration card holders List
58. Antyoday Family List.
59. Cash Book
60. Asset Register
61. Stock Register
62. Patta Register
63. Complaint Register

Details of Panchayat taxes (File)

Type of tax	Responsible person	Number
House tax		
Sanitation tax		
Light tax		
General water tax		
Profession tax		
Land revenue		
Sewerage tax		

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Divya Bati tax		
Fee: market fee		
Fee for use of well water for other purposes		
Fee for gutter cleaning		
Village choky fee		
Fee for animal keeping house		

Attach panchayat tax rules here

Panchayat Budget

Year	Revenue of Panchayat (income of panchayat)	Grants Received **	donation received	Total income	Private (Royalty, CSR, other income)	Total expenditure	Balance
2007-08							
2008-09							
2009-10							
2010-11							
2011-12							

***grants or assistance received from MPLAD/MLA, District Planning Board, development programm, 13th finance commission's grants and others

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Type of Water body	Number	Area	Capacity of storing water
River/Dam			
Talab			
Handpump		NA	
Private wells			
Public Wells			

Schemes run by Central Government Assistance:

Sr. no	Scheme	Who is entitled?	What is the benefit?	Where to apply	Documents required for applying	Time limit of decision	Who will take the decision	Where to file appeal
	Indira Awas							

Schemes run by State Government Assistance:

Sr. no	Scheme	Who is entitled?	What is the benefit?	Where to apply	Documents required for applying	Time limit of decision	Who will take the decision	Where to file appeal
	Indira Awas							

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Waiting list of Indira Awas Yojana:

Name	Remark

List of Beneficiaries of various schemes of last five years:

- 9. Housing Scheme
- 10. Pension Scheme (widow, old age, differently able)
- 11. Allotment of land patta
- 12. Bankable schemes

Name of the scheme:

Name of person benefited	Year of receiving benefit

Details of village development work

	type of work	number of works	Budget	incurred expenditure	status of work complete/ incomplete
1	Roads				
2	well recharge				
3	check dams				
4	Gutter				

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5	Sanitation				
6	Anganwadi				
7	School				
8	community center hall				
9	drinking water pipeline				
10	Others				

Details of work done: Road

From --- to ---	Year	Under which scheme	Estimated cost	Total cost	Date of completion of work

Details of work: Well recharging

Following functions are done by Panchayat.

- 9. Birth Registration
- 10. Death registration
- 11. Valuation of house or shop

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12. Entries of land entitlements in the register.

Other facilities available in village (file)

Facility	where it is located in village /taluka	Contact	phone number
Milk cooperative society			
Agriculture cooperative society			
Bank			
Post office			
Fire brigade house			
Veterinary clinic			
seeds distribution			
Women groups			
Children groups			
Disaster mitigation and management unit			

Regarding Police station

Address of police station or outpost		
Name of PI/PSI		Ph:
Name of Police Mitra		Ph:
Social defense officer name and address		Ph:

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Instructions:

5. All the above information should be on the except those table where is specifically mentioned for keeping it only in the file.
6. Copy of all GRs, circulars, GOs, OMs, policies, rules, guidelines received by Panchayat, or reports, budgets, list of proposed beneficiaries, submitted by Panchayat should be marked to RTI file (pro-active disclosure file). This will a copy of the citizen.

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Templates for disclosures for
MGNREGA

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2. Job Card Board in Every village (on the wall and file)

(All the job card holders name to be displayed on this board, including those who have not applied for any work or not worked even for a day)

Name of the Job card holder	Job card Number	Year									
		2010-11		2011-12		2012-13		2013-14		2014-15	
		Da ys	Amo unt	Da ys	Amo unt	Da ys	Amo unt	Da ys	Amo unt	Da ys	Amo unt

Table showing details for development works as under

S r. N o	Na me of the wor k	Co de of the wo rk	Sanctioned amount			Amount spent			Work commenced on	Work completed on	Status of work	
			Lab our	Mate rial	tot al	Lab our	Mate rial	tot al			compl ete	incomp lete
1												
2												

Details of material used:

Sr . N o	Nam e of the wor k	Cement		Bolders		Pebbles		Sand		Bricks		Water			
		Qt y	Rat e	Qt y	Rat e	Qt y	Rat e	Qt y	Rat e	Qt y	Rat e	Qt y	Rat e	Qt y	Rat e

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2. List of registers to be maintained at Panchayat level for MGNREGA

List applications for registration	list of sanction works
Registration list	Payment register
List of job card issued to	Unemployment Allowance Register
Job Card Register	Employment Register
estimates of sanctioned work	Allotment of Work register
Muster roll received register	Muster roll issue register
Asset Register	Cash Book
Complaint register	

About Social Audit :

Name of Social audit team members	Date of Last meeting	Date of next meeting

3. Display board at work place

Name of work/description					
Sanction cost of work					
A-MATERIAL COST					
B-WAGES					
SKILLED					
UNSKILLED					
Date of work started					
expected date of work completion					
No of workers present	Physically challenged	Old age	pregnant	other	total

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Templates for disclosures for government schools

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Recommended templates for disclosure of information under Section 4 of the RTI Act for Government Schools

Information to be displayed at the government schools:

Sample Board 1: Details of information for Grievance Redressal

Nature of Information	Authorit y for redressa l	Name of redress al officer	Office Addres s and phone numbe r	Time lines For redress al	Public Dealin g Day and time	Appellat e Authorit y and process of appeal
Issues Related to Availability/Appointm ent of Teachers						
Issues related to admission						
Issues related to school infrastructure						
Issues related to corporal punishment, discrimination, child rights						
Issues related to incentive schemes						
Issues related to MDM						
Issues related to Financial allocations to school						

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Sample Board 2: Teacher information:

Teachers' Information Month and Year

(update every month)

Sr.	Name of Teacher	Male/ Female	Date of Joining School	Class and Subject of Teacher	Salary	Number of days taught in the month	Number of days and nature of non-instructional work (including in service trainings)
Head Teacher							

Number of Sanctioned Posts _____

Number of Vacant Posts _____

Number of Teachers on Deputation _____

Please make available service conditions and transfer policy of all teachers in hard copy

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Sample Board 3: Student Enrolment Information: (Hard Copy)

This information to be compiled and kept available for each academic year

Categories	Class I		Class II		Class III		Class IV		Class V		Class VI		Class VII		Class VIII	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Children with Special Needs																
SC																
ST																
OBC																
Minorities																
Others																
Total																

Sample Board 4: Entitlement and Incentive Information:

	Nature of Incentive/ Entitlements	Eligibility criteria	Amount to be Disbursed	Number of students eligible for the same	Number of students who have received	When disbursed [specify date]	Dated Receipt given And by whom
1	Textbooks						
2	Uniform						
3	Scholarships						
4	Any other						

Information to be provided in details in hard copy -name of beneficiary , grade, name of guardian, address and contact details of beneficiary.

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Sample Board 5: Details of budgetary expenditure: (in Hard Copy)**Detail of budget received by the school**

Name of Budget Head	Amount Received	Date of Receipt	Amount Spent	Period of Expenditure	Nature of expenditure
Teaching Learning Material (TLM)					
School Development Grant (SDG)					
Maintenance					
Additional Classrooms					
Major Repairs					
Computer Aided Learning					
Any other					
Total					

Sample Board 6: Information about School Management Committee (SMC)

Date of appointment/constitution of committee:

Sl. No.	Name of member	Designation	Male/female	Category	Name and Class of Child whose parent is a member

Date of Next Meeting of SMC _____ (to be updated monthly)

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Sample Board 7: Details of School Management Committee: (In Hard Copy)

Sl. No.	Date of Meeting	Number of members present	Name of Person holding meeting register
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			

Issue 8: Copy of the Three Year Long SDP, with annual sub-parts, Copy of the DISE Report Card

Sample Board 9: Details of Mid Day Meal (MDM):

Day	Menu to be Served	Menu Served
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday		

To be made available in hard copy: copy of order of State Government on MDM as per Supreme Court order, supply register of MDM- norm of supply/delivery to include amount and date of delivery on a monthly basis, actual date of delivery and actual amount received, and payment register/record on MDM-Name of cook, payment received-date and amount of the payment received by the cook.

Sample Board 10: Details of Inspection of School: (In Hard Copy)

Sl. No.	Name of Inspector	Date of Visit	Details of officer from who Inspection report can be accessed

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Sl. No.	Items	Inspectors Comments
1.	State of Infrastructure	
a.	Classrooms	
b.	Toilets	
c.	Drinking Water	
2.	Teachers	
a.	Attendance	
3.	Quality of Teaching	
a.	State of notebooks	
b.	State of learning abilities	
4.	Children Related	
a.	Attendance	
b.	Any other	

Date of last Inspection:**Name of officer from whom the Inspection Report can be accessed****Sample Board 12: Medical Facilities available:**

Medical Facility	Name/ Contact person	Address and Phone Number
Visiting Doctor		
Nurse		
Primary Health Centre		
Ambulance		
Any other		

**Please also mention where the first-aid box is available in the school
premise _____****Sample Board 13: Schemes and Programmes Implemented in School: (Hard
Copy) Including under innovation fund, PPP, others and principal components of the
same.****Sample Board 14. Support system for Children with Special Needs: (Hard
Copy)**

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Sample Board 15: Public Notice on Right to Information Act:

Public Notice on Right to Information Act

Right to Information Act 2005

Under the RTI Act, citizens have the right to access information from the school and the Department of Education.

- Applications for seeking information have to be submitted in writing with prescribed fee, to Public Information Officer (PIO) or Assistant Public Information Officer (APIO).
- RTI application fee is Rs. ____ and photocopy charges for providing copies of records is Rs. ____ per page.
- No fee for citizens below the poverty line
- Information will be provided within 30 days
- In case information is incomplete or unsatisfactory, first appeal to be made to the First Appellate Authority

Name, designation and contact details of relevant officials under the RTI Act

Official in custody of information in hard copy in school	Name of officer	Designation of officer	Room no. and Public Dealing Time	Mobile phone no.

Public Information Officer (PIO)	Name of officer	Designation of officer	Room no.	Mobile phone no.

First Appellate Authority (FAA)	Name of officer	Designation of officer	Room no.	Mobile phone no.

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List of Information that needs to be made available at Zonal /District Office of Education Department

Sample Board 1: Roles and Responsibilities:

Nature of Information	Designation/Aut hority level responsible	Nam e of the offici al	Office Addre ss and Phone No.	Publi c Deali ng Day and time	Name and designati on of the Redressa l Officer	Timeli ne for Redres sal
Issues related to availability/appoin tment of teachers						
Issues related to admission						
Issues related to school infrastructure						
Issues related to mental and physical harassment, discrimination and child rights						
Issues related to incentive schemes						
Issues related to Mid Day Meal						
Issues related to Financial allocations to school						
Others						
OVERALL GREVIANCE REDRESSAL STATUS:						
Number of Complaints Received This Month: Number of Complaints Redressed: Total Number of Complaints Unresolved : Phone number of Child Helpline Phone number of RTE helpline if available						

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18. Organogram
19. Copy of the Citizen's Charter
20. School wise School Development Plans (SDPs)
21. Process document of compilation of School Development Plans (SDPs)
22. Copy of Aggregated SDP
23. District Plan under SSA- Details of the planning process undertaken, including time when it is done at each stage and names of people responsible.
24. District Report Card of DISE
25. All circulars/orders/notice/notifications issued to be displayed for the period of week, summary of orders, backlog/previous orders/circulars/notice/notifications can be obtained at particular time from particular person. The name, designation, and time of availability for public viewing to be clearly displayed on board.
26. Information of all projects running in District- including government schemes, schemes functioning under Innovation Fund and those under PPP mode. Details to be included are- department running scheme, nature of input provided/service provided under partnership, quantum of funds disbursed by government, name of private partners and contribution of private partner (if applicable).

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	Block 1	Block 2
Number of Schools Overall		
Elementary Schools		
Primary		
UP		
Elementary (Class 1-8)		
Total Schools having elementary sections		
Total Schools RTE compliant on teacher availability		
Total Schools RTE compliant on infrastructure		
Total Schools RTE compliant on all indicators		
Secondary		
Higher Secondary		
Pre- Primary Education		
ICDS Centres		
Preschools		
Schools with PS section		
Specified Category Schools		
Kendriya Vidyalaya		
Sainik Schools		
Narvodaya Schools		
SC Hostels		
Tribal Ashrams		
Residential Schools		
Residential Bridge Course		
Non-Residential Bridge Course		
Seasonal Hostels		
KGBVs		
Model Schools		
Special Schools for Children with disability (will also need to be broken into multi-disability special schools, and for the individual specific disability)		
Schools imparting special training within the existing school premises and ongoing processes		

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Private Schools		
Aided		
Total seats in the incoming school		
Total seats reserved for weaker /disadvantaged section (as per aid)		
Unaided		

School wise details in Hard Copy

28. Teachers Information:

		Total	Block 1	Block 2
	Total Number of Teachers			
	(Teachers by regular/parateachers/contract teachers/guest teachers)			
	Number of Resource Teachers for Children with Disability			
	Number of Subject teachers-Health and Physical Education			
	Number of Subject teachers-Art Education			
	Number of Subject teachers-Work Education			
	Residential Facilities and Special Training Related Information*			
	Residential Bridge Course			
	Non-Residential Bridge Course			
	Seasonal Hostels			
	Month (from-to) when Hostels run			
	Schools imparting special training within the existing school premises and ongoing processes			
	KGBVs			
	Tribal Hostels			
	SC Hostels			
	Mobile School or other means of imparting education to migrant population			

* Information about villages/schools where these are provided to made available on request.

29. Names of teachers receiving awards for meritorious work and name of awards

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30. Financial/ Budget related details

	Account Head	Allocation	Money Received	Date of Receipt	Date of Disbursal	Money Spent

This information will need to be contextualised based on State
Both aggregate budgetary information and for individual blocks and panchayats and schools to be provided in Hard Copy

31. Child Population Details

			Total	Block 1	Block 2	Block 3	
6-14	Total Population	Total					
		Boys					
		Girls					
		Dalits					
		SC					
		ST					
		Minority					
		CWSN					
	Out of School	Total					
		Boys					
		Girls					
		Dalits					
		SC					
		ST					
		Minority					
		CWSN					
		Other groups defined as marginalized group in State Rules					

32. Teacher training Institutes- DIET, Private B.Ed College, BRC, etc.- Number, Courses Run, Number of Seats, Free/Paid, Institution has been granted recognition by what body.
33. Inspection reports: for both government and private schools to be made available. The data to include, name of inspector, number of schools under him/her, dates of the visits made to the schools allocated to him/her, and details of inspection undertaken. (To be compiled and made available on a monthly basis)

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S . N o	Na me	Add ress	Recog nition Status	Affili ation to which Board	Name of societ y/ mana ging body	Total No of seats (inco ming class)	No . sea ts un der 25 %	No. of applica tions receiv ed	No of sea ts fill ed	Con tact pers on in the scho ol	Perio d of admis sion (starti ng & closin g)	Status of RTE compli ance

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ANNEXURE VII

**Comments of the Ministries/Departments received on the
Report of the Task Force on Suo-Motu Disclosures under the
RTI Act, 2005**

Sl. No	Ministry /Department	Comments	Comments by DoPT
1.	Ministry of Commerce & Industry	Department of Commerce agrees with the Report of the Task Force on Suo Motu Disclosures under the RTI Act, 2005.	No Comments
2.	Ministry of Heavy Industry & Public Enterprises	Department has no comments to offer.	No Comments
3.	Ministry of Health & Family Welfare	The Report of the Task Force appears to be comprehensive enough to help implement the provision of the RTI Act, 2005 more effectively.	No Comments
4.	Ministry of Earth Sciences	Ministry has nothing to add to the report.	No Comments
5.	Ministry of Agriculture (Deptt. of Animal Husbandry, Dairying & Fisheries)	Department agrees with the recommendations of the Task Force.	No Comments
6.	Department of Space	Department is of the view that the transfer policy is purely a	Incorporated in the guidelines by

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Sl. No	Ministry /Department	Comments	Comments by DoPT
		service matter no connected with any public authority, and therefore, the same need not be brought under the purview of the RTI Act.	providing exception in cases of transfers made keeping in view sovereignty, integrity, security, strategic scientific or economic interests of the state.
7.	Ministry of Communications & IT (Department of Telecommunications)	Department has no comments to offer.	No Comments
8.	Ministry of Environment & Forests	No comments to offer. However, DOPT may prepare suitable common format/templates for proactive disclosures.	No Comments
9.	Department of Expenditure	Department has no comments to offer, in particular. However, instructions issued by DOPT from time to time are being followed and any instruction/circulars issued by respective Branches are posted on the website of that Department's suo-motu. As far as procurement related information is concerned a Central Public Procurement	Incorporated in the guidelines <i>Information on Central Public Procurement Portal include.</i>

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Sl. No	Ministry /Department	Comments	Comments by DoPT
		Portal has already been set up for all Ministries to post their tender and award related detail	
10.	Department of Economic Affairs	<p>Department suggested to reformulate the para 2.1.2 i.e. 'Public Private Partnership' –</p> <p>If Public services are proposed to be provided through a Public Private Partnership (PPP), all information relating to the PPPs must be disclosed in the public domain <u>by the public authority entering into the PPP contract/concession agreement.</u> This may include details of the special purpose vehicle, if any set up, concession agreements, operation and maintenance manuals and other documents generated as part of the implementation of the PPP project. <u>The documents under the ambit of the exemption from disclosure of information under section 8(i)(d) and 8(1)(j) of the RTI Act, 2005 will not be disclosed, without the concurrence of the concessionaire/third party viz.</u></p>	Incorporated in the guidelines.

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Sl. No	Ministry /Department	Comments	Comments by DoPT
		<i>financing details, details about personnel & activities of the SPV which affect trade secrets/competitive advantage of the concessionaire. Further, information about fees, toll, or other kinds of revenue that may be collected under authorization from the Government may also be proactively disclosed by the public authority. Information in respect of outputs and outcomes, process of selection of private sector party can be sought from the public authority. All payment made by the authority in respect of the PPP project may also be disclosed in on periodic manner along with the purpose of making payment.</i>	
11.	Ministry of Textiles	No comments	No Comments
12.	Ministry of Mines	No comments	No Comments
13.	Department of Chemicals & Fertilizers	The Department has no objection to the recommendation made by the Task Force, in general, and extends its full support to it.	No Comments
14.	Department of	No specific comments to offer.	No Comments

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Sl. No	Ministry /Department	Comments	Comments by DoPT
	Pension & Pensioners' Welfare		
15.	Department of Atomic Energy	The Department handles inter-alia matters of sensitive and strategic nature. For this purpose procurement of various stores and equipments are also made. Disclosure of procurement of this nature will be against the interest of the Government. Though these procurements are subject to C&AG audit, but the audit reports are dealt with due sensitivity by the office of the C&AG. Therefore, special consideration while creating any general provisions for proactive disclosure/uploading of such issues on website is desirable.	Incorporated in the guidelines by providing exception in cases of transfers made keeping in view sovereignty, integrity, security, strategic scientific or economic interests of the state.
16.	Department of Revenue	No comments/suggestions to offer	No Comments
17.	Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs	No comments	No Comments
18.	Ministry of Urban Development	The Department is in agreement of the recommendations of the Task Force.	No comments
19.	Department of	(a) As per the	No comments

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Sl. No	Ministry /Department	Comments	Comments by DoPT
	Information Technology	<p>recommendation, use of SMS telephony, Call Centers, IVRS, information Centers are included in recommendations which are dependent on provision of necessary infrastructure and hence are not time bound. Further Common Services Centers have been proposed to be included as centers for dissemination of information.</p> <p>(b) Chapter 4 relates to guidelines for Digital Publication of Proactive Disclosure. These guidelines relate to setting up of technical standards for Government website by the DIT.</p> <p>The DIT agrees with these recommendations of the DOPT.</p>	
20.	D/o Administrative Reforms	The Department is in the agreement with the	No comments

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Sl. No	Ministry /Department	Comments	Comments by DoPT
		recommendations of the Task Force and has no further suggestions to offer in the matter.	
21.	Ministry of Home Affairs	<p>All the items as recommended for inclusion in the list of claims for voluntary disclosures under Section 4(1)(b)(xvi) except for the following items:</p> <p>(a) Transfer Policy and Orders relating to transfers: The transfer policy and transfer orders made in that regard are as per exigencies of work perceived from time to time and are part of internal administration. All transfers can not be by operation of some hard and fast norms and therefore, does not seem practical to put in place a hard and fast mechanism for putting such information on website.</p> <p>(b) CAG/PAC Paras: CAG/PAC paras intermediate processes in resolution of issue coming</p>	<p>Incorporated in the guidelines by providing exception in cases of transfers made keeping in view sovereignty, integrity, security, strategic scientific or economic interests of the state.</p> <p><i>Handwritten:</i> All the items suggested above proposed to be agreed to CAG/PAC Paras are prepared after consultations with</p>

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Sl. No	Ministry /Department	Comments	Comments by DoPT
		<p>up in Audit. These are in yet to be resolved by the respective Ministries/Departments. Putting up such paras in public domain will present a very one sided view.</p> <p>(c) Discretionary/Non-discretionary Grants: Putting up all grant related information in public domain will be difficult as this is a continuous process and not a one time affair. Keeping this information upto date will be a huge drain on human resources.</p>	<p>the Ministries/ Departments. Replies to these paras form a part of the mandatory indicators under the RFD.</p> <p>These need to be updated only once every year as per the Act.</p>
		<p>All the recommendations deal with disclosure of information by State Government and local bodies under State Governments: Although the recommendations are in right earnest, they will require creation of substantial infrastructure by the respective State Governments/local bodies. While issuing guidelines, this, therefore, may</p>	<p>These guidelines are only illustrative in nature</p>

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Sl. No	Ministry /Department	Comments	Comments by DoPT
		be kept in mind.	
		Although the Task Force has made detailed guidelines relating to creation of website by various public authorities, these cannot be followed uniformly and comprehensively by all PAs. While issuing guidelines in this regard DOPT may make these as guiding principles for creation of websites instead of comprehensive instructions.	Comprehensive guidelines have been issued by Department of Information Technology already
		The recommendation may be accepted, but again as a set of guiding principles for ensuring effective disclosure under the respective sections and not as instructions to be followed uniformly by all PAs because Ministries/ Departments of the Government of India are more concerned with policy making, regulation facilitation and less with direct delivery of public services. Therefore, precise identification of tangible outputs, services, goods- defining the decision making process is not possible in all	No comments

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Sl. No	Ministry /Department	Comments	Comments by DoPT
		cases. The recommendations of the Task Force, therefore, may be accepted keeping in mind for functioning of Ministries/Departments.	
		Although there is an existing practice and mechanism for consultations with public and formulation of complaint rules/laws etc. there is a need to go further than to seek the comments from members of public in such matters. The expertise available with the individuals/organizations may be utilised. But there is a need for defining the extent of such consultations and also the areas where such consultation are to be mandatorily resorted to	This recommendation will be taken up later.
		Now that the use of IT is increasing there is a need for uniform and consistent policy on proactive disclosure through websites by Ministries/Departments. Formulation of model scheme and identification of common parameters will set the ball	No comments

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Sl. No	Ministry /Department	Comments	Comments by DoPT
		rolling for such proactive disclosure by Ministries/ Departments.	
	Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment	The suggestion/ recommendation of the Task Force at Section 2.1.5 appears to be unnecessary and will not enrich the information content of the website of the Public Authority and hence, public will not benefit from such information which may be relevant only for the specific purpose of those seeking it. Therefore, this recommendation needs to be moderated the extent that PAs may be advised to list only important, informative queries and appeals on its website. This will prevent the website of the PA from being clogged with irrelevant information.	The suggestion for disclosing RTI queries and replies is to avoid duplicate requests for information
		The recommendation of the Task Force in Section 3.2.1 is for implementation by the State Governments/Local bodies. Although the task force has qualified its suggestion by saying 'as far as practicably	The guidelines are only illustrative for the State Government departments.

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Government of India
Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions
(Department of Personnel & Training)

Sl. No	Ministry /Department	Comments	Comments by DoPT
		possible', it still remains difficult to implement and monitor at Central Government level. Therefore, professionally accepted norms and methods for dissemination of information may be used as per specific need of the public authority for a specific purpose or campaign	

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No.1/6/2011-IR

Government of India

Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions

Department of Personnel & Training

North Block, New Delhi

Dated the March, 2012

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

**Subject: Implementation of Suo – Moto disclosure under Section 4 (1)(b) of RTI Act, 2005 –
Issue of guidelines regarding:**

Section 4(1)(b) of the RTI Act lays down the information which should be disclosed by Public Authorities on a suo motu or proactive basis. Section 4(2) and Section 4(3) prescribe the method of dissemination of this information. The purpose of suo motu disclosures under Section 4 is to place large amount of information in public domain on a proactive basis to make functioning of the Public Authorities more transparent and also to reduce the need for filing individual RTI applications.

2. Since the promulgation of the Act in 2005, large amount of information relating to functioning of the government is being put in public domain. However, still the quality and quantity of proactive disclosures are not up to the desired level and in relation to certain clauses of Section 4(1)(b) and 4(1)(c), sufficient disclosures are not being made due to lack of clear guidelines. Central as well as State Information Commissions have also highlighted this issue.

3. The issue has engaged the attention of the Government of India also and it was felt that the weak implementation of the Section 4 of the RTI Act is partly due to the fact that certain provisions of this Section have not been fully detailed and, in case of certain other provisions there is need for laying down detailed guidelines. Further there is need to set up a compliance mechanism to ensure that requirements under section 4 of the RTI Act are met.

4. In order to address the above this Department constituted a Task Force on *Suo Motu* disclosures under the RTI Act, 2005 in May 2011 which included representatives of civil society organizations active in the field of Right to Information as well, for strengthening compliance with provisions for *suo – motu* or proactive disclosures as given in Section 4 of the RTI Act, 2005.

5. The report of the Task Force was circulated for comments to all Ministries/ Departments in Government of India. Guidelines on the same have been formulated keeping in view the comments received from the various Ministries/ Departments. The detailed guidelines on the recommendations which may be implemented immediately have been formulated. The guidelines have been divided into recommendations relating to Central ministries and departments and recommendations relating to implementation by State governments. The recommendations of the Task Force were made in the following areas:

- i. Prescribing additional items for suo moto disclosure under Section 4(1)(b)(xvii)
- ii. Guidelines for facilitating disclosure at different levels of government- suggested templates for key areas.
- iii. Guidelines for digital Publication of proactive disclosures under Section 4.
- iv. Detailing of Section 4(1)(b)(iii), 4(1)(b)(iv), 4(1)(b)(ix) and 4(1)(b)(xiv).
- v. Steps to be taken in matters relating to threat to RTI activists
- vi. Guidelines for consultation with public in relation to the formulation of policies and implementation thereof
- vii. Compliance with provisions of *Suo Motu* (Proactive Disclosure) under the RTI Act, 2005.

6. The guidelines for Central Government Ministries/Departments are based on recommendations given on

- i. Prescribing additional items for suo moto disclosure under Section 4(1)(b)(xvii)
- ii. Guidelines for digital Publication of proactive disclosures under Section 4.
- iii. Detailing of Section 4(1)(b)(iii), 4(1)(b)(iv), 4(1)(b)(ix) and 4(1)(b)(xiv)
- iv. Compliance with provisions of *Suo Motu* (Proactive disclosure) under the RTI Act, 2005.

7. The guidelines framed for the State Governments include templates suggested for key areas - guidelines for facilitating disclosure at different levels of government. These are in addition to the guidelines prescribed for the Central Government Ministries and Departments.

8. The above two sets of detailed guidelines on the above are enclosed, however it maybe kept in mind that proactive disclosures should be done in the local language so that it remains accessible to public. It should be presented in a form that is easily understood and if technical words are used they should be carefully explained. As provided in 4(1)(b), disclosures should be made in as many mediums as feasible and disclosures should be kept up to date.

9. Enclosed guidelines are issued with the approval of _____. These maybe brought to the notice of all for compliance.

(Anuradha S. Chagti)

Director (IR)

**Guidelines on Strengthening *Suo-motu*
(Proactive Disclosure)
under Section 4 of the RTI Act
for Ministries/ Departments of Government of India**

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1.0 Prescribing Additional items for suo motu disclosure under Section 4(1)(b)(xvii)

Section 4(1)(b)(xvii) lays down that government may prescribe any additional item which should also be included for suo motu disclosure. The following items are recommended for disclosure under the Suo motu Disclosure Scheme of Section 4(1)(b).

1.1 Information related to Procurement

1.1.1 All information relating to procurement made by Public Authorities beginning with the publication of notice/tender and up to the stage of final purchase order detailing the name of the supplier of goods/services being procured and the rate at which such procurement is to be done should be disclosed. All information disclosable as per Ministry of Finance, Department of Expenditure's O.M. No 10/1/2011-PPC dated 30th November, 2011 on Mandatory Publication of Tender Enquiries on the Central Public Procurement Portal maybe disclosed under Section 4(1)(b)(xvii). However information about procurement which would fall within the purview of Section 8 of the RTI Act would still be exempt (DoE and atomic Energy)

1.2 Public Private Partnerships

1.2.1 If Public services are proposed to be provided through a Public Private Partnership (PPP), all information relating to the PPPs must be disclosed in the public domain by the Public Authority entering into the PPP contract/concession agreement. This may include details of the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV), if any set up, concession agreements, operation and maintenance manuals and other documents generated as part of the implementation of the PPP project. The documents under the ambit of the exemption from disclosure of information under section 8(1)(d) and 8(1)(j) of the RTI Act will not be disclosed suo-motu. Further, information about fees, tolls, or other kinds of revenue that may be collected under authorization from the Government, information in respect of outputs and outcomes, process of selection of the private sector party may also be proactively disclosed. All payments made under the PPP project may also be disclosed in a periodic manner along with the purpose of making such payment. (DEA)

L. Up to 80% of the cost of the project should be disclosed in the public domain. Further, the details of the project should be disclosed in the public domain.

1.3 Transfer Policy and Transfer Orders

1.3.1 Transfer policy for different grades/cadres of employees serving in Public Authority shall be proactively disclosed. All transfer orders may be publicized through the website or in any other manner listed in Section 4(4) of the Act. Where a transfer is effected without adhering to the norms laid down in the transfer policy or cases where an employee has not been transferred even though he/she has completed maximum tenure specified for that position this information should also be disclosed. These guidelines will not be applicable in cases of transfers made keeping in view sovereignty, integrity, security, strategic, scientific or economic interests of the State. (Space)

1.4 Sensitive Posts

1.4.1 The Central Vigilance Commission had vide circular no. 98/VGL/60 dated 15th April, 1999, and 2nd November, 2001 directed that a list of sensitive posts in various Departments/Organisations should be identified by the Chief Vigilance Officer of the Department/Organisation. The circular further directed that CVOs in consultation with the Chief Executives would ensure that officials posted on sensitive posts are rotated every two/three years to avoid developing vested interest. (The sensitive posts themselves have not been advertised in the public domain.) Public Authorities shall proactively disclose posts identified as sensitive and details of the officers/officials occupying those posts including the date since when they are holding the posts. (DoPT-AVD)

1.5 RTI Queries

1.5.1 All Public Authorities shall proactively disclose RTI queries and appeals received and their responses, on the websites maintained by Public Authorities. However RTI queries and appeals received and their responses relating to the personnel information of an individual may not be disclosed as they do not serve any public interest. (DoPT)

1.6 CAG & PAC paras

1.6.1 Public Authorities shall proactively disclose the CAG paras framed in regard to their Ministry/Department and the response of the Ministry/Department to those paragraphs. In addition, a tabular statement should be given regarding pendency of CAG paras. (MHA's Objection)

1.7 Citizens Charter

1.7.1 Citizens Charter prepared by the Ministry/Department, a part of the Result framework Document of the department/organization should be proactively disclosed and six monthly report on the performance against the benchmarks set in Citizens Charter should also be displayed on the website of public authorities.

1.8 Discretionary and Non-discretionary grants

1.8.1 All discretionary /non-discretionary grants/ allocations to state governments/ NGOs/Other institutions by Ministry/Department should be placed on the website of the Ministry/Department concerned.

1.9 Foreign Tours of PM/Ministers

1.9.1 A large number of RTI queries are being filed on officials tours undertaken Ministers or officials of various Government Ministeries/Departments. Information regarding the nature, place and period of foreign and domestic tours are already disclosed on the PMOs website.

Ministries/departments and their subordinate offices shall display on their websites information regarding exact nature of the official tours, the places visited, the period, the number of people included in the official delegation and the total cost of such travel. The information for official tours undertaken since 1st January, 2012 may be uploaded. (PMO, CIC) (section 8(i))

2.0 Guidelines for Digital Publication of proactive disclosures under Section 4

2.1 Internet has become a powerful medium for quick, easy and widespread dissemination of information. It will assume even more importance in the future as more and more documents are generated in digital format. Although, Section 4 correctly lays down that information should be provided through many mediums depending upon the level of public authority and the recipient of information (for example, in case of Panchayat wall painting may be more effective means of dissemination of information), more and more proactive disclosure would gradually be made through Internet. There is need for more clear guidelines for web-based publication of information for information disclosure.

4.2 The Department of Information Technology has been working on setting of technical standards for government websites and the Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances has published guidelines for websites of Government Departments. These guidelines would prescribe the manner in which websites need to be designed and how information should be disclosed. While adhering to the standards of government guidelines as laid down by Department of Information Technology and Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances the following principles should also be kept in view to ensure that websites' disclosures are complete, easily accessible, technology and platform neutral and in a form which conveys the desired information in an effective and user-friendly manner.



- (a) The website should have a simple public interface and should not require any registration/login to access it or to access the MIS. ✕
- (b) The website should have universal access i.e., it should be accessible to all, irrespective of technology, platforms, devices or disabilities of any kind. ✕
- (c) It should be the endeavor of all public authorities that all entitlements to citizens and all transactions between the citizen and government are gradually made

available through computer based interface. The 'Electronic Service Delivery Bill' under formulation in Government of India would provide the necessary impetus.

- (d) Websites should contain detailed information from the point of origin to the point of delivery of entitlements/services provided by the Public Authorities to citizens.
- (e) All orders of the public authority should be issued only after such orders have been uploaded on the website. Such a system exists in Andhra Pradesh and can be adopted in other governments easily.
- (f) Website should have good search engine and documents uploaded should have key words assigned to them so that independent searches of the database are possible.
- (g) Website should contain all the relevant Acts, Rules, forms and other documents which are normally accessed by citizens.
- (h) Websites should have detailed directory of key contacts, details of officials of the Public Authority.
- (i) Websites should not use too many technical words and, if used, they should be properly explained.
- (j) Website should be multi-lingual to remain accessible to ordinary public.
- (k) It is obligatory under Section 4(1)(b)(xiv) of the RTI Act for every Public Authority to proactively disclose 'details in respect of the information, available to or held by it, reduced in an electronic form'. In such a listing required under this section, indicate which digitally held information is made available publicly over the internet and which not.
- (l) As departments reorganize their systems and processes to enable themselves for electronic service delivery, it is recommended that during process reengineering the

requirement of bringing due transparency as provided in the RTI Act are given due consideration at the design stage itself. ✓

- (m) To maintain reliability of information and its real time updation, information generation in a digital work flow should be 'locked' to key work outputs, like a muster roll and salary slip (NREGA in Andhra Pradesh) or formalization of a government order (Andhra Pradesh). Such an approach will lead to automation of proactive disclosure. ✓
- (n) All information and documents should have appropriate meta-data which ensures easy discovery of information. It would also enable organisation and presentation of information along many different parameters as required (for instance, data could be arranged village-wise). ✗
- (o) Information must be presented from a user's perspective, which may require re-arranging it, simplifying it etc. However, original documents in original formats should continue to be made available because these are needed for community monitoring of government's functioning. ✓
- (p) Information should be easily searchable and discoverable, and therefore not just in a scanned document form. In order to search scanned documents, optical character recognition techniques are available and these should be incorporated as far as possible. Information/ documents should be time-stamped with proper versioning. Earlier versions should be archived and be publicly accessible. ✗
- (q) Information should be uploaded using only open standards like ODF, PDF/A, JPG, OGG etc, so that it is neutral to the technology platform of the user. Since, the accessed information is the user's right to access and he/she cannot be forced to use certain technology platforms rather than others. The Department of Information Technology has come up with a policy on 'Open Standards in e-governance' which should be meticulously followed. All standard web accessibility guidelines, especially relating to visual disabilities should be followed. ✗

- (r) The 'National Data Sharing and Accessibility Policy' by the Department of Science and Technology is based on the principle that all publicly funded information should be readily available and works on the principle of open and restricted access to data. The policy is to be implemented by August 2012 and the schedule is to be strictly adhered to. 
- (s) Information and data should be presented in open data formats whereby it can be pulled by different Application Protocol Interfaces to be used in different fashions more appropriate to specific contexts and needs. Information/ data can, for instance, be presented in powerful visual ways using visualisation techniques. Such visual representation of information/ data can give insights that may remain largely hidden in a textual or tabular presentation of data. In some contexts, pictures and audio/videos recordings etc may be more useful. There have been moves in some part of the country to video record Gram Sabha meetings. A picture of a NREGA worksite, for instance, may tell much more than words can. All such different media and forms should be used for proactive disclosure. 

3.0 Guidelines for certain clauses of Section 4(1)(b) to make disclosures more effective

3.1 The various sub-clauses of Section 4(1)(b) must be treated as elements of an integrated disclosure scheme. For example the functions and responsibilities of a public authority cannot be understood in isolation from the powers and functions of its employees, the norms that inform its decision making processes and the rules, instructions and manuals that are used in the discharge of its functions. Description of one element presupposes the existence of another. So every public authority must endeavour to integrate the information mentioned in these sub-clauses while preparing voluntary disclosure materials.

3.2 Considering that disclosures in regard to certain clauses have been relatively weak, detailed guidelines for four clauses are given below:

3.3 Guidelines for section 4(1)(b)(iii) - "the procedure followed in the decision-making processes including channels of supervision and accountability".

3.3.1 All government departments have specific duties and responsibilities under the respective Allocation of Business Rules (AOB) issued by the appropriate Government. The constitutional provisions and statutes each department is required to implement are clearly laid down in the AOB. The manner of disposal of matters assigned to each Department/Ministry is described in the Transaction of Business Rules (TOB). Additionally, every department will have a specific set of schemes and development programmes which they are required to implement directly or through their subordinate offices or other designated agencies. These documents contain the specific operations that every Public Authority is required to undertake in the course of implementing the programme or scheme. Every operation mandated under the AOB read with the TOB can be linked to a specific decision-making chain. All government officers have to follow laid down office procedure manual or the other rules which gives details of how representations, petitions and applications from citizens must be dealt with. Templates,

formats, and basic steps of decision-making are briefly explained in such manuals. These descriptions constitute the elements of decision-making processes in general.

3.3.2 Additionally, in the routine work of governance, government functionaries are required to make decisions in a discretionary manner but broad guiding principles are laid down in some rule or the other. For example, the General Financial Rules lay down procedures for a variety of operations relating to government finances. How sanction must be accorded for incurring expenditure; how losses to government must be reported; how responsibility for losses may be fixed on any government servant; how budgets, demand for grants are prepared and submitted; how public works must be sanctioned and executed; how commodities and services may be procured by a public authority; are all explained in these manuals which is updated from time to time. The challenge is to present a simplified version of the decision-making procedure that is of interest to a common member of the citizenry.

3.3.3 In view of the above, the following guidelines for detailing the decision making processes are as follows:

- (a) Every public authority may specifically identify the major outputs/ tangible results/ services/ goods that it is responsible for providing to the public or to whosoever is the client of the public authority.
- (b) The decision-making chain may be identified in the form of a flow chart explaining the rank/grade of the public functionaries involved in the decision-making process clarifying the specific stages in the decision-making hierarchy.
- (c) The powers of each officer including powers of supervision over subordinates involved in the chain of decision-making must also be spelt out next to the flow chart or in a simple bullet-pointed format in a text-box. The exceptional circumstances when such standards decision-making processes may be overridden and by whom should also be explained clearly. Where decentralization of decision-making has occurred in order to grant greater autonomy to public authorities such procedures must also be clearly explained.

- (d) This design of representation may then be extended to cover all statutory and discretionary operations that are part of the public authority's mandate under the AOB read with the TOB.
- (e) In the event of a public authority altering an existing decision-making process or adopting an entirely new process, such changes must be explained in simple language in order to enable people to easily understand the changes made.

3.4 Guidelines for Section 4(1)(b)(iv) - "the norms set by it for the discharge of its functions".

3.4.1 Primarily, the intention of this clause is that every public authority should proactively disclose the standards by which its performance should be judged. The Task Force noted that these are standards against which accountability in the decision making process may be demanded. Norms can be qualitative and quantitative in nature. They could be temporal also, for example, time limits may be specified for taking specific actions. They could be statutory norms which are to be followed while taking certain actions or performing certain duties by public authorities. In order to ensure compliance with this clause, public authorities would need to develop norms for major functions that are being performed, if they do not already exist.

3.4.2 Citizen Charters, which are mandatory, to be prepared for each central Ministry/Department/Authority, are good examples of vehicles created for laying down norms of performance for major functions and for monitoring achievements against those standards.

It is therefore recommended that:

- (a) Wherever norms have been specified for the discharge of its functions by any statute or government orders they should be proactively disclosed, particularly linking them with the decision making processes as detailed earlier.
- (b) All Public Authorities should ~~publish their Citizens Charters and~~ proactively disclose the following:

- a) Defining the services and goods that the particular public authority/office provides directly (or indirectly through any other agency/contractor).
- b) Detailing and describing the processes by which the public can access and/or receive the goods and services that they are entitled to, from the public authority/office along with the forms, if any prescribed, for use by both the applicant and the service providing agency. Links to such forms (online), wherever available, should be given.
- c) Describing the conditions, criteria and priorities under which a person becomes eligible for the goods and services, and consequently the categories of people who are entitled to receive the goods and services.
- d) Defining the quantitative and tangible parameters, (weight, size, frequency etc,) and timelines, that are applicable to the goods and services that are accessible to the public.
- e) Defining the qualitative and quantitative outcomes that each public authority/office plans to achieve through the goods and services that it was obligated to provide.
- f) Laying down individual responsibility for providing the goods and services (who is responsible for delivery/implementation and who is responsible for supervision).

3.4.3 Public authorities should annually publish their performance against the norms guaranteed under the Citizen Charter and should also undertake periodic revision of Charters to include additional items or to reframe the existing norms for improved service delivery.

3.5 Guidelines for Section 4(1)(b)(xi)- “the budget allocated to each of its agency indicating the particulars of all plans, proposed expenditures and reports on disbursements made”.

3.6 With regard to the above it is recommended that:

- (a) Keeping in view of the technical nature of the government budgets it is essential that Ministries/Departments prepare simplified versions of their budgets which can be understood easily by general public and keep them also in public domain. Presentation of budgets and their periodic monitoring reports may also be presented in a more user-friendly manner through graphs and tables, etc.
- (b) Outcome budget being prepared by Ministries/Departments of Government of India should be prominently displayed and be used as a basis to identify physical targets planned during the budgetary period and the actual achievement vis-à-vis those targets. A monthly programme implementation calendar method of reporting being followed in Karnataka is a useful model.
- (c) The budget released to various agencies and subsidiaries should be put on the website on a monthly basis and budgets of subsidiary authorities may be made accessible through links from the website of the Ministry/Department. If a subsidiary does not have a website then the budgets and expenditure reports of such subsidiary authority may be uploaded on the website of the principal Public Authority. .
- (d) Efforts should be made that raw data relating to approved budgets, expenditure incurred, etc., is made available in easily downloadable, machine readable manner using open standards such as XML.
- (e) Wherever required by law or executive instruction, sector specific allocations and achievements of every department or public authority (where feasible) must be highlighted. For example, gender, children, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and religious minorities must receive special focus in all budgetary allocations and

developmental target setting. The sector-wise breakup of these targets and actual outcomes must be given in simplified form to enable the vulnerable segments of society to understand the budgets of public authorities better.

3.6 Guidelines for Section 4(1)(b)(xiv) - details of the kinds of information that they themselves hold or information that is available to them, which is reduced in an electronic form.

3.6.1 On the one hand, this clause serves as a means of proactively disclosing the progress made in computerizing information under Section 4(1)(a) of the RTI Act in a periodic manner. On the other, it provides people with clarity about the kinds of electronic information that, although not held by the public authority, is available to them.

3.6.2 Keeping in view the varied levels of computerization of records and documents in public authorities, data about records that have been digitized may be proactively disclosed on the respective websites, excluding those records /files /information that are exempted under Section 8. The data about digitized record may include the name of the record and any categorization or indexing used; the subject matter and any other information that is required to be compiled in relation to a file as prescribed by Manual of Office Procedure (and to be prescribed by MOP for electronic records that is under finalization by DARPG), the division/ section/ unit/ office where the record is normally held; the person, with designation, responsible for maintaining the record; and the life span of the record, as prescribed in the relevant record retention schedule.

4.0 Compliance with provisions of suo motu (Proactive Disclosure) under the RTI Act.

4.1 In order to ensure monitor and enforce compliance with suo motu disclosure provisions both the public authorities and Information Commissions should share the responsibility. At the level of public authority responsibility should be given at senior levels for ensuring that information is proactively disclosed and regularly updated as per the provisions of the Act. Information Commissions would need to develop mechanisms to monitor whether action is being taken as per the provisions of the Act and, if weaknesses are found, they are already authorized to issue directions to public authorities under Section 25(5) of the Act. The following guidelines are for improving compliance with the provisions of the RTI Act regarding proactive disclosures.

4.2.1 Proactive Disclosure Scheme

4.2.1 Each Ministry/Department of government should prepare a proactive disclosure scheme for their Ministry/Department which should also include the proactive disclosures to be made by attached and subordinate offices of that Ministry/Department. This is necessitated as many of the clauses of Section 4(1)(b) would need to be specifically detailed for a specific Ministry/Department and their offices. For example, under Section 4(1)(b)(iii) the procedure followed in the decision making process needs to be detailed and which decisions should be covered for proactive disclosures. This would be different for different Ministry and should be carefully detailed in the scheme specific to that Ministry. Similarly, how the budgets of the Ministry/Department are to be put up in the user-friendly manner as recommended elsewhere in these guidelines would be different for different Ministries/ Departments. The norms set by public authority for discharge of its functions would also be specifically detailed for each public authority/Ministry/Department. It is in this context that need for a Ministry/Department specific proactive disclosure scheme which conforms to the provisions of RTI Act is felt.

4.2.2 It is recommended that this scheme would be prepared by all Ministries/Departments first time and filed to the Central Information Commission by 30th September 2012. This would also be in consonance with the implementation of the national data Sharing and Accessibility

Policy. Subsequently, while preparing the annual compliance report Ministry/Department would be expected to review the scheme itself on an annual basis and make appropriate changes. That may become necessary with time. This proactive disclosure scheme would become the bench mark for evaluating compliance with the requirements of the Act. It is also expected that Information Commissions would be authorized to review the scheme and to comment on its completeness. In case there are gaps it would send appropriate recommendations to Ministry/Department for revisions which would need to be complied with as per the provisions of the Act.

4.3 Nodal Officer

4.3.1 Each Central Ministry/Department would appoint a senior officer not below the rank of a Joint Secretary and not below rank of Additional HOD in case of attached offices for ensuring compliance with the proactive disclosure scheme. Officers of similar seniority should be appointed in State Government. Nodal Officer would work under the supervision of the Secretary of the Ministry/Department or the HOD of the attached office as the case may be. Nodal Officers of Ministry/Department and HOD separately would also ensure that the formations below the Ministry/Department/Attached Office also disclose the information as per the proactive disclosure scheme. The Task Force recommends that once the above recommendation is accepted capacity building programmes for the nodal officers be organized by DOPT to sensitize them with the provision of the Act and also to facilitate their working.

4.4 Annual Report to CIC

4.4.1 All Ministries/Departments/Attached Offices would submit an annual report to CIC within three months of the close of the year detailing compliance made with the approved proactive disclosure scheme and also list out any changes in the scheme which are deemed to be appropriate.

4.5 Annual Reports to Parliament/Legislatures

4.5.1 Government has recently issued directions to all Ministries/Departments to include a chapter on RTI Act in their Annual Reports submitted to the Parliament. Details about

compliance with proactive disclosure scheme should mandatorily be included in the relevant chapter in Annual Report of Ministry/Department.

4.6 Inclusion in RFDs

4.6.1 Proactive disclosure has been included in the RFDs as a mandatory indicator. This maybe strictly adhered to.

* * *

**Guidelines on Strengthening *Suo-motu*
(Proactive Disclosure)
under Section 4 of the RTI Act
for State Government**

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1.0 Prescribing Additional items for suo motu disclosure under Section 4(1)(b)(xvii)

Section 4(1)(b)(xvii) lays down that government may prescribe any additional item which should also be included for suo motu disclosure. The following items are recommended for disclosure under the Suo motu Disclosure Scheme of Section 4(1)(b).

1.1 Information related to Procurement

1.1.1 All information relating to procurement made by Public Authorities beginning with the publication of notice/tender and up to the stage of final purchase order detailing the name of the supplier of goods/services being procured and the rate at which such procurement is to be done should be disclosed. All information disclosable as per Ministry of Finance, Department of Expenditure's O.M. No 10/1/2011-PPC dated 30th November, 2011 on Mandatory Publication of Tender Enquiries on the Central Public Procurement Portal maybe disclosed under Section 4(1)(b)(xvii). However information about procurement which would fall within the purview of Section 8 of the RTI Act would still be exempt (DoE and atomic Energy)

1.2 Public Private Partnerships

1.2.1 If Public services are proposed to be provided through a Public Private Partnership (PPP), all information relating to the PPPs must be disclosed in the public domain by the Public Authority entering into the PPP contract/concession agreement. This may include details of the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV), if any set up, concession agreements, operation and maintenance manuals and other documents generated as part of the implementation of the PPP project. The documents under the ambit of the exemption from disclosure of information under section 8(1)(d) and 8(1)(j) of the RTI Act will not be disclosed suo-motu. Further, information about fees, tolls, or other kinds of revenue that may be collected under authorization from the Government, information in respect of outputs and outcomes, process of selection of the private sector party may also be proactively disclosed. All payments made under the PPP project may also be disclosed in a periodic manner along with the purpose of making such payment. (DEA)

1.3 Transfer Policy and Transfer Orders

1.3.1 Transfer policy for different grades/cadres of employees serving in Public Authority shall be proactively disclosed. All transfer orders may be publicized through the website or in any other manner listed in Section 4(4) of the Act. Where a transfer is effected without adhering to the norms laid down in the transfer policy or cases where an employee has not been transferred even though he/she has completed maximum tenure specified for that position this information should also be disclosed. These guidelines will not be applicable in cases of transfers made keeping in view sovereignty, integrity, security, strategic, scientific or economic interests of the State. (Space)

1.4 Sensitive Posts

1.4.1 The Central Vigilance Commission had vide circular no. 98/VGL/60 dated 15th April, 1999, and 2nd November, 2001 directed that a list of sensitive posts in various Departments/ Organisations should be identified by the Chief Vigilance Officer of the Department/Organisation. The circular further directed that CVOs in consultation with the Chief Executives would ensure that officials posted on sensitive posts are rotated every two/three years to avoid developing vested interest. The sensitive posts themselves have not been advertised in the public domain. Public Authorities shall proactively disclose posts identified as sensitive and details of the officers/officials occupying those posts including the date since when they are holding the posts. (DoPT-AVD)

1.5 RTI Queries

1.5.1 All Public Authorities shall proactively disclose RTI queries and appeals received and their responses, on the websites maintained by Public Authorities. However RTI queries and appeals received and their responses relating to the personnel information of an individual may not be disclosed as they do not serve any public interest. (DoPT)

1.6 CAG & PAC paras

1.6.1 Public Authorities shall proactively disclose the CAG paras framed in regard to their Ministry/Department and the response of the Ministry/Department to those paragraphs. In

addition, a tabular statement should be given regarding pendency of CAG paras. (MHA's Objection)

1.7 Citizens Charter

1.7.1 Citizens Charter prepared by the Ministry/Department, a part of the Result framework Document of the department/organization should be proactively disclosed and six monthly report on the performance against the benchmarks set in Citizens Charter should also be displayed on the website of public authorities.

1.8 Discretionary and Non-discretionary grants

1.8.1 All discretionary /non-discretionary grants/ allocations to state governments/ NGOs/Other institutions by Ministry/Department should be placed on the website of the Ministry/Department concerned.

1.9 Foreign Tours of PM/Ministers

1.9.1 A large number of RTI queries are being filed on officials tours undertaken Ministers or officials of various Government Ministries/Departments. Information regarding the nature, place and period of foreign and domestic tours are already disclosed on the PMOs website.

Ministries/departments and their subordinate offices shall display on their websites information regarding exact nature of the official tours, the places visited, the period, the number of people included in the official delegation and the total cost of such travel. The information for official tours undertaken since 1st January, 2012 may be uploaded. (PMO, CIC) (section 8(i))

2.0 Guidelines for facilitating disclosure at different levels of government – Suggested templates for key areas

2.1 The scheme of Section 4 applies uniformly to all public authorities even though they may be constituted at different levels. It is felt that at different levels of administration different level of detailing is required and if that could be facilitated by development of suitable templates it would not only improve the quality of disclosures but would also facilitate more transparency in governance. For example, in the case of Public Distribution System (PDS) disclosures at the level of Fair Price Shops (FPS) should go down to the level of ration card holder, while at the level of district/state, agencies dealing with the disclosures would need to be more broad-based. Keeping this in view four areas were identified for development of templates.

- (a) *Public Distribution System;*
- (b) Panchayats;
- (c) MGNREGA; and
- (d) Primary and Secondary Schools.

These four areas have been selected on the ground that they constitute some of the most significant services being provided at the ground level. However, it is recommended that similar templates need to be worked out for other important areas such as health services, services relating to social benefits, etc.

2.2 Templates for Information Disclosure

The templates of information disclosure at various levels of service delivery in relation to the above four areas are enclosed at the end of the guidelines. The general principles which should be adopted for disclosure at various levels are given below:

2.3 Use of Information boards/walls

Section 4(4) of the RTI Act states that information should be disseminated taking into consideration 'the most effective method of communication in that local area and the information should be easily accessible'. Given the limited reach and accessibility of the internet in India, information disclosures, as far as practically possible, must also be done locally in a form and manner that is easily accessible to people. It is recommended that at village / block level relevant information should be painted on walls and provided on boards in the local language at prominent public places.

2.4 Information disclosure through any document/proof of delivery that is available to beneficiaries

Any document relating to a scheme/program of the department that is held by a citizen (eg. ration card, school books etc.) should be used as a mode of disclosure.

Information in the local language can be printed on such documents. Stickers can be used to update/change the information, if required.

2.5 RTI Proactive Disclosure File

Panchayat is the first public authority or unit which has an interface with citizens. In their case many of the information can be painted on the walls. However, all the information that is painted on the walls should also be kept ready for perusal in a "RTI Proactive Disclosure File". This file should also contain details of all the moneys received and all the guidelines which are sent to Panchayats by various government authorities for implementation of schemes.

2.6 'Good' and 'Innovative' practices adopted by State Governments

3.3 State governments may adopt innovative practices to disseminate information at local level. Some of these practices are listed below:

- Read out all information about benefits of schemes, budgets, expenditure, MGNREGA works, payments etc in the Gramsabha. Example - Yakubbbhai Kothariya works as a Gram Panchayat Secretary and a PIO in Gujarat. Even before the RTI Act was in place, Yakubbbhai was fond of using folk lyrics as a medium of disseminating information. In his Gram Sabha, he talks about various scheme by connecting it with incidents in the village and sings a folk song marking the specific characteristics of a scheme. His Gram Sabhas are frequented by large numbers of residents on a regular basis.
- Disseminate information about schemes and programmes by setting up a desk whilst organizing the 'Village Mela (fair)' or any Folk Fair that is conducted in the region. This can also be done in collaboration with village youth mandal, or SHG or any Community bases organization.
- Organization of "Information Mela (fair)" at the village school on important days like Independence Day, Republic Day". This works very effectively in the villages, and people feel connected with village school.
- Community radio can become another media of dissemination of info. This proves very effective.
- In Panchmahal district, Gujarat, during the RTI campaign for pro-active disclosures it was observed that the multi-media vehicle used for dissemination of information was widely accepted. The pamphlets, guidelines of various schemes, including forms were disseminated by "**RTI on Wheels**" a multimedia vehicle. The films and case stories of use of information for achieving transparency in governance were screened.

- In Goa, it's a regular practice that details of the Gramsabha are reported in local newspapers.
- Other media like street plays, puppet shows can also be used for information dissemination.
- If there are any specific programmes or schemes meant specifically for the region or village then in such cases, pro-active disclosure should be prepared in the form of charts giving details of such schemes/programme.

3.0 Guidelines for Digital Publication of proactive disclosures under Section 4

3.1 Internet has become a powerful medium for quick, easy and widespread dissemination of information. It will assume even more importance in the future as more and more documents are generated in digital format. Although, Section 4 correctly lays down that information should be provided through many mediums depending upon the level of public authority and the recipient of information (for example, in case of Panchayat wall painting may be more effective means of dissemination of information), more and more proactive disclosure would gradually be made through Internet. There is need for more clear guidelines for web-based publication of information for information disclosure.

3.2 The Department of Information Technology has been working on setting of technical standards for government websites and the Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances has published guidelines for websites of Government Departments. These guidelines would prescribe the manner in which websites need to be designed and how information should be disclosed. While adhering to the standards of government guidelines as laid down by Department of Information Technology and Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances the following principles should also be kept in view to ensure that websites' disclosures are complete, easily accessible, technology and platform neutral and in a form which conveys the desired information in an effective and user-friendly manner.

- (a) The website should have a simple public interface and should not require any registration/login to access it or to access the MIS.

- (b) The website should have universal access i.e., it should be accessible to all, irrespective of technology, platforms, devices or disabilities of any kind.
- (c) It should be the endeavor of all public authorities that all entitlements to citizens and all transactions between the citizen and government are gradually made available through computer based interface. The 'Electronic Service Delivery Bill' under formulation in Government of India would provide the necessary impetus.
- (d) Websites should contain detailed information from the point of origin to the point of delivery of entitlements/services provided by the Public Authorities to citizens.
- (e) All orders of the public authority should be issued only after such orders have been uploaded on the website. Such a system exists in Andhra Pradesh and can be adopted in other governments easily.
- (f) Website should have good search engine and documents uploaded should have key words assigned to them so that independent searches of the database are possible.
- (g) Website should contain all the relevant Acts, Rules, forms and other documents which are normally accessed by citizens.
- (h) Websites should have detailed directory of key contacts, details of officials of the Public Authority.
- (i) Websites should not use too many technical words and, if used, they should be properly explained.
- (j) Website should be multi-lingual to remain accessible to ordinary public.
- (k) It is obligatory under Section 4(1)(b)(xiv) of the RTI Act for every Public Authority to proactively disclose 'details in respect of the information, available to or held by it, reduced in an electronic form'. In such a listing required under this section, indicate which digitally held information is made available publicly over the internet and which not.
- (l) As departments reorganize their systems and processes to enable themselves for electronic service delivery, it is recommended that during process reengineering the requirement of bringing due transparency as provided in the RTI Act are given due consideration at the design stage itself.

- (m) To maintain reliability of information and its real time updation, information generation in a digital work flow should be 'locked' to key work outputs, like a muster roll and salary slip (NREGA in Andhra Pradesh) or formalization of a government order (Andhra Pradesh). Such an approach will lead to automation of proactive disclosure.
- (n) All information and documents should have appropriate meta-data which ensures easy discovery of information. It would also enable organisation and presentation of information along many different parameters as required (for instance, data could be arranged village-wise).
- (o) Information must be presented from a user's perspective, which may require re-arranging it, simplifying it etc. However, original documents in original formats should continue to be made available because these are needed for community monitoring of government's functioning.
- (p) Information should be easily searchable and discoverable, and therefore not just in a scanned document form. In order to search scanned documents, optical character recognition techniques are available and these should be incorporated as far as possible. Information/ documents should be time-stamped with proper versioning. Earlier versions should be archived and be publicly accessible.
- (q) Information should be uploaded using only open standards like ODF, PDF/A, JPG, OGG etc, so that it is neutral to the technology platform of the user. Since, the accessed information is the user's right to access and he/she cannot be forced to use certain technology platforms rather than others. The Department of Information Technology has come up with a policy on 'Open Standards in e-governance' which should be meticulously followed. All standard web accessibility guidelines, especially relating to visual disabilities should be followed.
- (r) The 'National Data Sharing and Accessibility Policy' by the Department of Science and Technology is based on the principle that all publicly funded information should be readily available and works on the principle of open and restricted access to data. The policy is to be implemented by August 2012 and the schedule is to be strictly adhered to.

- (s) Information and data should be presented in open data formats whereby it can be pulled by different Application Protocol Interfaces to be used in different fashions more appropriate to specific contexts and needs. Information/ data can, for instance, be presented in powerful visual ways using visualisation techniques. Such visual representation of information/ data can give insights that may remain largely hidden in a textual or tabular presentation of data. In some contexts, pictures and audio/videos recordings etc may be more useful. There have been moves in some part of the country to video record Gram Sabha meetings. A picture of a NREGA worksite, for instance, may tell much more than words can. All such different media and forms should be used for proactive disclosure.

4.0 Guidelines for certain clauses of Section 4(1)(b) to make disclosures more effective

4.1 The various sub-clauses of Section 4(1)(b) must be treated as elements of an integrated disclosure scheme. For example the functions and responsibilities of a public authority cannot be understood in isolation from the powers and functions of its employees, the norms that inform its decision making processes and the rules, instructions and manuals that are used in the discharge of its functions. Description of one element presupposes the existence of another. So every public authority must endeavour to integrate the information mentioned in these sub-clauses while preparing voluntary disclosure materials.

4.2 Considering that disclosures in regard to certain clauses have been relatively weak, detailed guidelines for four clauses are given below:

4.3 Guidelines for section 4(1)(b)(iii) - "the procedure followed in the decision-making processes including channels of supervision and accountability".

4.3.1 All government departments have specific duties and responsibilities under the respective Allocation of Business Rules (AOB) issued by the appropriate Government. The constitutional provisions and statutes each department is required to implement are clearly laid down in the AOB. The manner of disposal of matters assigned to each

Department/Ministry is described in the Transaction of Business Rules (TOB). Additionally, every department will have a specific set of schemes and development programmes which they are required to implement directly or through their subordinate offices or other designated agencies. These documents contain the specific operations that every Public Authority is required to undertake in the course of implementing the programme or scheme. Every operation mandated under the AOB read with the TOB can be linked to a specific decision-making chain. All government officers have to follow laid down office procedure manual or the other rules which gives details of how representations, petitions and applications from citizens must be dealt with. Templates, formats, and basic steps of decision-making are briefly explained in such manuals. These descriptions constitute the elements of decision-making processes in general.

4.3.2 Additionally, in the routine work of governance, government functionaries are required to make decisions in a discretionary manner but broad guiding principles are laid down in some rule or the other. For example, the General Financial Rules lay down procedures for a variety of operations relating to government finances. How sanction must be accorded for incurring expenditure; how losses to government must be reported; how responsibility for losses may be fixed on any government servant; how budgets, demand for grants are prepared and submitted; how public works must be sanctioned and executed; how commodities and services may be procured by a public authority; are all explained in these manuals which is updated from time to time. The challenge is to present a simplified version of the decision-making procedure that is of interest to a common member of the citizenry.

4.3.3 In view of the above, the following guidelines for detailing the decision making processes are as follows:

- (a) Every public authority may specifically identify the major outputs/ tangible results/ services/ goods that it is responsible for providing to the public or to whosoever is the client of the public authority.
- (b) The decision-making chain may be identified in the form of a flow chart explaining the rank/grade of the public functionaries involved in the decision-making process clarifying the specific stages in the decision-making hierarchy.

- (c) The powers of each officer including powers of supervision over subordinates involved in the chain of decision-making must also be spelt out next to the flow chart or in a simple bullet-pointed format in a text-box. The exceptional circumstances when such standards decision-making processes may be overridden and by whom should also be explained clearly. Where decentralization of decision-making has occurred in order to grant greater autonomy to public authorities such procedures must also be clearly explained.
- (d) This design of representation may then be extended to cover all statutory and discretionary operations that are part of the public authority's mandate under the AOB read with the TOB.
- (e) In the event of a public authority altering an existing decision-making process or adopting an entirely new process, such changes must be explained in simple language in order to enable people to easily understand the changes made.

4.4 Guidelines for Section 4(1)(b)(iv) - "the norms set by it for the discharge of its functions".

3.4.1 Primarily, the intention of this clause is that every public authority should proactively disclose the standards by which its performance should be judged. The Task Force noted that these are standards against which accountability in the decision making process may be demanded. Norms can be qualitative and quantitative in nature. They could be temporal also, for example, time limits may be specified for taking specific actions. They could be statutory norms which are to be followed while taking certain actions or performing certain duties by public authorities. In order to ensure compliance with this clause, public authorities would need to develop norms for major functions that are being performed, if they do not already exist.

4.4.2 Citizen Charters, which are mandatory, to be prepared for each central Ministry/Department/Authority, are good examples of vehicles created for laying down norms of performance for major functions and for monitoring achievements against those standards. It is therefore recommended that:

- (a) Wherever norms have been specified for the discharge of its functions by any statute or government orders they should be proactively disclosed, particularly linking them with the decision making processes as detailed earlier.
- (b) All Public Authorities should publish their Citizens Charters and proactively disclose the following:
 - a) Defining the services and goods that the particular public authority/office provides directly (or indirectly through any other agency/contractor).
 - b) Detailing and describing the processes by which the public can access and/or receive the goods and services that they are entitled to, from the public authority/office along with the forms, if any prescribed, for use by both the applicant and the service providing agency. Links to such forms (online), wherever available, should be given.
 - c) Describing the conditions, criteria and priorities under which a person becomes eligible for the goods and services, and consequently the categories of people who are entitled to receive the goods and services.
 - d) Defining the quantitative and tangible parameters, (weight, size, frequency etc,) and timelines, that are applicable to the goods and services that are accessible to the public.
 - e) Defining the qualitative and quantitative outcomes that each public authority/office plans to achieve through the goods and services that it was obligated to provide.
 - f) Laying down individual responsibility for providing the goods and services (who is responsible for delivery/implementation and who is responsible for supervision).

4.4.3 Public authorities should annually publish their performance against the norms guaranteed under the Citizen Charter and should also undertake periodic revision of Charters to include additional items or to reframe the existing norms for improved service delivery.

4.5 Guidelines for Section 4(1)(b)(xi)- “the budget allocated to each of its agency indicating the particulars of all plans, proposed expenditures and reports on disbursements made”.

4.6 With regard to the above it is recommended that:

- (a) Keeping in view of the technical nature of the government budgets it is essential that Ministries/Departments prepare simplified versions of their budgets which can be understood easily by general public and keep them also in public domain. Presentation of budgets and their periodic monitoring reports may also be presented in a more user-friendly manner through graphs and tables, etc.
- (b) Outcome budget being prepared by Ministries/Departments of Government of India should be prominently displayed and be used as a basis to identify physical targets planned during the budgetary period and the actual achievement vis-à-vis those targets. A monthly programme implementation calendar method of reporting being followed in Karnataka is a useful model.
- (c) The budget released to various agencies and subsidiaries should be put on the website on a monthly basis and budgets of subsidiary authorities may be made accessible through links from the website of the Ministry/Department. If a subsidiary does not have a website then the budgets and expenditure reports of such subsidiary authority may be uploaded on the website of the principal Public Authority.
- (d) Efforts should be made that raw data relating to approved budgets, expenditure incurred, etc., is made available in easily downloadable, machine readable manner using open standards such as XML.
- (e) Wherever required by law or executive instruction, sector specific allocations and achievements of every department or public authority (where feasible) must be highlighted. For example, gender, children, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and religious minorities must receive special focus in all budgetary allocations and developmental target setting. The sector-wise breakup of these targets and actual outcomes must be given in simplified form to enable the vulnerable segments of society to understand the budgets of public authorities better.

4.6 Guidelines for Section 4(1)(b)(xiv) - details of the kinds of information that they themselves hold or information that is available to them, which is reduced in an electronic form.

4.6.1 On the one hand, this clause serves as a means of proactively disclosing the progress made in computerizing information under Section 4(1)(a) of the RTI Act in a periodic manner. On the other, it provides people with clarity about the kinds of electronic information that, although not held by the public authority, is available to them.

4.6.2 Keeping in view the varied levels of computerization of records and documents in public authorities, data about records that have been digitized may be proactively disclosed on the respective websites, excluding those records /files /information that are exempted under Section 8. The data about digitized record may include the name of the record and any categorization or indexing used; the subject matter and any other information that is required to be compiled in relation to a file as prescribed by Manual of Office Procedure (and to be prescribed by MOP for electronic records that is under finalization by DARPG), the division/ section/ unit/ office where the record is normally held; the person, with designation, responsible for maintaining the record; and the life span of the record, as prescribed in the relevant record retention schedule.

5.0 Compliance with provisions of suo motu (Proactive Disclosure) under the RTI Act.

5.1 In order to ensure monitor and enforce compliance with suo motu disclosure provisions both the public authorities and Information Commissions should share the responsibility. At the level of public authority responsibility should be given at senior levels for ensuring that information is proactively disclosed and regularly updated as per the provisions of the Act. Information Commissions would need to develop mechanisms to monitor whether action is being taken as per the provisions of the Act and, if weaknesses are found, they are already authorized to issue directions to public authorities under Section 25(5) of the Act. The following guidelines are for improving compliance with the provisions of the RTI Act regarding proactive disclosures.

5.2.1 Proactive Disclosure Scheme

5.2.1 Each Ministry/Department of government should prepare a proactive disclosure scheme for their Ministry/Department which should also include the proactive disclosures to be made by attached and subordinate offices of that Ministry/Department. This is necessitated as many of the clauses of Section 4(1)(b) would need to be specifically detailed for a specific Ministry/Department and their offices. For example, under Section 4(1)(b)(iii) the procedure followed in the decision making process needs to be detailed and which decisions should be covered for proactive disclosures. This would be different for different Ministry and should be carefully detailed in the scheme specific to that Ministry. Similarly, how the budgets of the Ministry/Department are to be put up in the user-friendly manner as recommended elsewhere in these guidelines would be different for different Ministries/Departments. The norms set by public authority for discharge of its functions would also be specifically detailed for each public authority/Ministry/Department. It is in this context that need for a Ministry/Department specific proactive disclosure scheme which conforms to the provisions of RTI Act is felt.

5.2.2 It is recommended that this scheme would be prepared by all Ministries/Departments first time and filed to the Central Information Commission by 30th September 2012. This would also be in consonance with the implementation of the national data Sharing and Accessibility Policy. Subsequently, while preparing the annual compliance report Ministry/Department would be expected to review the scheme itself on an annual basis and make appropriate changes. That may become necessary with time. This proactive disclosure scheme would become the bench mark for evaluating compliance with the requirements of the Act. It is also expected that Information Commissions would be authorized to review the scheme and to comment on its completeness. In case there are gaps it would send appropriate recommendations to Ministry/Department for revisions which would need to be complied with as per the provisions of the Act.

5.2 Nodal Officer

4.3.1 Each Central Ministry/Department would appoint a senior officer not below the rank of a Joint Secretary and not below rank of Additional HOD in case of attached offices for ensuring compliance with the proactive disclosure scheme. Officers of similar seniority

should be appointed in State Government. Nodal Officer would work under the supervision of the Secretary of the Ministry/Department or the HOD of the attached office as the case may be. Nodal Officers of Ministry/Department and HOD separately would also ensure that the formations below the Ministry/Department/Attached Office also disclose the information as per the proactive disclosure scheme. The Task Force recommends that once the above recommendation is accepted capacity building programmes for the nodal officers be organized by DOPT to sensitize them with the provision of the Act and also to facilitate their working.

5.3 Annual Report to CIC

4.4.1 All Ministries/Departments/Attached Offices would submit an annual report to CIC within three months of the close of the year detailing compliance made with the approved proactive disclosure scheme and also list out any changes in the scheme which are deemed to be appropriate.

5.4 Annual Reports to Parliament/Legislatures

4.5.1 Government has recently issued directions to all Ministries/Departments to include a chapter on RTI Act in their Annual Reports submitted to the Parliament. Details about compliance with proactive disclosure scheme should mandatorily be included in the relevant chapter in Annual Report of Ministry/Department.

5.5 Inclusion in RFDs

5.5.1 Proactive disclosure has been included in the RFDs as a mandatory indicator. This maybe strictly adhered to.

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**Comments/responses received and yet to be received from various
Ministries/Departments**

1. Ministry of Commerce & Industry (O.M. No.R-11(3)/2011-RTI dated 18th December, 2011) at page 140/cor.
2. Ministry of Heavy Industry & Public Enterprises (O.M. No.R-9/2011-RTI dated 20th December, 2011) at page 141/cor.
3. Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (O.M. No.Z-21022/33/2011-PH-II dated 26th December, 2011) at page 142/cor., 223/cor. and page 229/cor.
4. Ministry of Earth Sciences (F.No.MoES/20.21/2011-ICC dated 23rd December, 2011) at page 143/cor.
5. Ministry of Agriculture (Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying & Fisheries – O.M. No.I-8/2011-RTI (AH) dated 19th December, 2011) at page 144/cor.
6. Department of Space (O.M. No.E.20012/2/2005-IV (Vol.III) dated 3rd January, 2012) at page 145/cor.
7. Ministry of Communications & IT (Department of Telecommunications – O.M. No.10-4/2010-RTI dated 8th December, 2011) at page 146/cor. And page 228/cor.
8. Ministry of Environment & Forests (O.M. No.4-2/2010-RC(pt.) dated 5th January, 2012) at page 183/cor.
9. Department of Expenditure (No.16/52011-RTI dated 10th January, 2012) at page 184/cor. & page 217/cor.
10. Department of Economic Affairs (Ministry of Finance – O.M. No.11/4/2011-PPP dated 31st January, 2012) at page 214/cor.
11. Ministry of Textiles (O.M. No.16/13/2011-C&P dated 7th February, 2012) at page 221/cor.
12. Ministry of Mines (O.M. NO.8/7/2011-PI dated 14.2.2012) at page 225/cor.
13. Department of Chemicals & Fertilizers (O.M. No.28011/2/2011-Coord. Dated 10th February, 2012) – page 243/cor.
15. Ministry of Home Affairs (O.M. No.A-43020/81/2012-RTI dated 16th February, 2012) – page 234/cor.
16. Department of Pension & Pensioners' Welfare (O.M. No.6/3/2011-Coord. Dated 10th February, 2012) – page 232/cor.

17. Department of Atomic Energy (O.M. No.36/1/2012-SCS/934 dated 15th February, 2012) – page 233/cor.
19. Department Economic Affairs (O.M. No.1/11/2010-RTI dated 23rd February, 2012) – page 240/cor.
20. Department of Revenue -- (U.O. No.50/5/2012-RTI Cell dated 23rd February, 2012) – page 239/cor.
21. Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (O.M. No.)I-11016/191/2010-P&C dated 21st February, 2012) - page 230 & 231/cor.
22. Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment (O.M. No.6-3/FC&PG/2011 dated 27th February, 2012) – page 242/cor.
23. Ministry of Urban Development (O.M. No.A-077/2011/PIC dated 2nd February, 2012) – page 241/cor.
24. Department of Information Technology (O.M. No.1(32)/2010-RTI dated 14.11.2011) at page 112/cor.
25. Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances (O.M. No.K-11022/84/2011-AR dated 17th October, 2011) at page 108/cor.
26. Prime Minister's Office (No.GF.627/2011-PME dated 29th February, 2011) – page 244/cor. — Pps in different context. p 244-45 send for the file.
27. Ministry of Environment & Forests – under process. (12/11/12)
28. Department of Higher Education – no comments. 108/55/2012
29. Ministry of Panchayat Raj – under process

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GOVERNMENT OF INDIA/BHARAT SARKAR
CABINET SECRETARIAT/MANTRIMANDAL SACHIVALAYA
RASHTRAPATI BHAVAN

New Delhi dated 26th September, 2012

Subject: Implementation of Recommendations of Task Force for strengthening Compliance with Provisions for Suo Motu / Proactive Disclosures under Section 4 of the RTI Act, 2005.

Reference this Secretariat's O.M. of even number dated 13th September, 2012, on the subject matter.

2. The meeting of Committee of Secretaries scheduled to be held at 03.30 P.M. on 14th September, 2012 but postponed, will **now** be held **at 3.30 P.M. on 17th October, 2012.** Agenda and venue will remain the same.

3. It is requested to kindly make it convenient to attend the meeting.

(R. Anand)
Director

Tele No: 2301 6576

To

Shri P. K. Misra, Secretary, D/o Personnel & Training.
Shri R.K. Singh, Home Secretary, M/o Home Affairs.
Dr. K. Radhakrishnan, Secretary, D/o Space.
Dr. R.K. Sinha, Secretary, D/o Atomic Energy.
Dr. Tishyarakshit Chatterjee, Secretary, M/o Environment & Forests.
Shri R.S. Gujral, Finance Secretary & Secretary, D/o Expenditure
Shri Arvind Mayaram, Secretary, D/o Economic Affairs.
Shri J. Satyanarayana, Secretary, D/o Electronics & Information Technology.
Shri Anil Goswami, Secretary, D/o Social Justice & Empowerment.
Shri B. A. Agarwal, Secretary, D/o Legal Affairs.
Shri B. A. Agarwal, Secretary, Legislative Department.

Copy forwarded to: -

Shri B.B. Srivastava, Secretary, Central Information Commission w.r.t this Secretariat's OM of even number dated 13th September, 2012, with the request to kindly make it convenient to attend the meeting.

Copy also forwarded to: -

Principal Secretary to Prime Minister.

Internal circulation

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Copy No. _____

No.501/2/13/2011-CA.V
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA/BHARAT SARKAR
CABINET SECRETARIAT/MANTRIMANDAL SACHIVALAYA
RASHTRAPATI BHAVAN

New Delhi dated 17th October, 2012

Subject: Implementation of Recommendations of Task Force for strengthening Compliance with Provisions for Suo Motu / Proactive Disclosures under Section 4 of the RTI Act, 2005.

Reference this Secretariat's O.M. of even number dated 26th September, 2012, on the subject matter.

The meeting of Committee of Secretaries scheduled to be held at 03.30 P.M. on 17th October, 2012 has been rescheduled and will now be held at 3.30 P.M. on 31st October, 2012. Agenda and venue will remain the same.

3. It is requested to kindly make it convenient to attend the meeting.



(V.P. Arora)
 Deputy Secretary
 Tele No: 2301 4378

Shri P. K. Misra, Secretary, D/o Personnel & Training.
 Shri R.K. Singh, Home Secretary, M/o Home Affairs.
 Dr. K. Radhakrishnan, Secretary, D/o Space.
 Dr. R.K. Sinha, Secretary, D/o Atomic Energy.
 Dr. Tishyarakshit Chatterjee, Secretary, M/o Environment & Forests.
 Shri R.S. Gujral, Finance Secretary & Secretary, D/o Expenditure
 Shri Arvind Mayaram, Secretary, D/o Economic Affairs.
 Shri J. Satyanarayana, Secretary, D/o Electronics & Information Technology.
 Shri Anil Goswami, Secretary, D/o Social Justice & Empowerment.
 Shri B. A. Agarwal, Secretary, D/o Legal Affairs.
 Shri B. A. Agarwal, Secretary, Legislative Department.

Copy forwarded to: -

Shri B.B. Srivastava, Secretary, Central Information Commission w.r.t this Secretariat's OM of even number dated 26th September, 2012, with the request to kindly make it convenient to attend the meeting.



(V.P. Arora)
 Deputy Secretary

Copy also forwarded to: -

Principal Secretary to Prime Minister.

Internal circulation
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No.501/2/13/2011-CA.V
 GOVERNMENT OF INDIA/BHARAT SARKAR
 CABINET SECRETARIAT/MANTRIMANDAL SACHIVALAYA
 RASHTRAPATI BHAVAN

New Delhi dated 7th November, 2012

CS-4928/2512
08/11/2512
Noted 8/11
Subject: Implementation of Recommendations of Task Force for strengthening Compliance with Provisions for Suo Motu / Proactive Disclosures under Section 4 of the RTI Act, 2005.

Reference this Secretariat's O.M. of even number dated 30th October, 2012, on the subject matter.

2. The meeting of Committee of Secretaries scheduled to be held at 03.30 P.M. on 31st October, 2012 but postponed will **now** be held at **05.00 P.M. on 23rd November, 2012.** Agenda and venue will remain the same.

3. It is requested to kindly make it convenient to attend the meeting.

(V.P. Arora)
(V.P. Arora)
Deputy Secretary
Tele No: 23014378

axc
2/11 To
USCIR
Dir (IT)
may kindly see.
DS (IT)
Q
9/11
 Shri P. K. Misra, Secretary, D/o Personnel & Training.
 Shri R.K. Singh, Home Secretary, M/o Home Affairs.
 Dr. K. Radhakrishnan, Secretary, D/o Space.
 Dr. R.K. Sinha, Secretary, D/o Atomic Energy.
 Dr. Tishyarakshit Chatterjee, Secretary, M/o Environment & Forests.
 Shri R.S. Gujrai, Finance Secretary & Secretary, D/o Expenditure
 Shri Arvind Mayaram, Secretary, D/o Economic Affairs.
 Shri J. Satyanarayana, Secretary, D/o Electronics & Information Technology.
 Shri Anil Goswami, Secretary, D/o Social Justice & Empowerment.
 Shri B. A. Agarwal, Secretary, D/o Legal Affairs.
 Shri B. A. Agarwal, Secretary, Legislative Department.

Copy forwarded to: -

Secretary, Central Information Commission w.r.t this Secretariat's OM of even number dated 30th October, 2012, with the request to kindly make it convenient to attend the meeting.

(V.P. Arora)
(V.P. Arora)
Deputy Secretary

JS (AT & IT)
my
8/11
 Copy also forwarded to: -

Principal Secretary to Prime Minister.

hm
9/11/12
SO (IR)
Internal circulation
CS/Secy(C)/AS(G)/Dir.(RA)

20 Copies

(272)
Secret

F.No.1/6/2011-IR
Government of India
Ministry of Personnel, PG and Pensions
Department of Personnel & Training

North Block, New Delhi
Dated the November, 2012.

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Subject:- Implementation of the Recommendations of Task Force for strengthening Compliance with Provisions for Suo Motu / Proactive Disclosures under Section 4 of the RTI Act, 2005.

The undersigned is directed to refer to this Department's O.M. of even number dated the 10th July, 2012 forwarding therewith a Note for the Committee of Secretaries regarding implementation of the Recommendations of Task Force for strengthening compliance with provisions for Suo Motu / Proactive Disclosures under Section 4 of the RTI Act, 2005. In the said note approval of the CoS has been sought for the guidelines for implementation of the suo-motu disclosure under RTI Act, 2005.

2. Pending receipt of the approval of CoS, the matter has been reconsidered in this Department. Since RTI Act, 2005 came into existence, DOPT has been issuing several guidelines and instructions aiming at effective implementation of various provisions of RTI Act with the approval of the Competent Authority in DOPT.

3. As was done on earlier occasion, it has been decided to issue the guidelines proposed in the CoS Note under reference after obtaining the approval of the competent authority in DOPT.

4. The Report of the Task Force has been circulated among Ministries/Departments and the suggestions received have been incorporated and in the proposed guidelines. There are no irreconcilable difference(s) of opinion between DOPT and other Ministries warranting the intervention of CoS.

5. Accordingly it is requested that DOPT may be allowed to withdraw the CoS Note dated 10.7.2012 submitted to Cabinet Secretariat.

6. This issues with the approval of_____.

(Anuradha S.Chagti)
Director(IR)

Cabinet Secretariat
(Shri R.Anand, Director)
Rashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi.

A 1873
Annex-1

3
No. 89/1/1/95-Cab
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA (BHARAT SARKAR)
CABINET SECRETARIAT (MANTRIMANDAL SACHIVALAYA)

New Delhi, the 9th May, 1995.

Subject:- Procedure regarding preparation and submission of papers for consideration of the Committee of Secretaries.

Instructions have been issued from time to time by the Cabinet Secretariat regarding the procedures to be followed in the preparation and submission of papers for consideration of the Committee of Secretaries (COS). The instructions have been revised wherever necessary in the light of past experience and are circulated herewith in consolidated form for the guidance of and compliance by all concerned.

General and attendance

1. Purpose of COS Meetings: The COS meets in the Cabinet Secretariat to discuss important issues referred to them by Departments/Ministries.

2. Who is to attend meetings of COS: Since the meetings of COS are fixed generally after ascertaining the convenience and availability of the participating Secretaries, they are expected to be attended appropriately by the invitee Secretaries in person and not with or through their representatives. In case an invitee Secretary is not in a position to attend the meeting on account of unforeseen circumstances and for compelling reasons, he may depute a senior representative (not below the rank of a Joint Secretary) of his Department, after prior approval of the Cabinet Secretary. In such cases, the officer attending the meeting should be fully briefed so that he can enter into necessary commitments on behalf of the Secretary.

3. It may be necessary, in rare cases, for the invitee-Secretary to be accompanied by another officer to assist him. In such cases also Cabinet Secretary should be kept informed in advance by the invitee-secretary.

Types of Cases that can be brought before COS

4. All cases of the nature specified below can be brought before the COS:-

- a. Cases pursuant to a specific direction of Prime Minister/Cabinet/Cabinet Committee/GOM;
- b. Cases specifically referred to COS for discussion;
- c. Cases where there is/are irreconciled difference(s) of opinion between the sponsoring Department and the Ministries/Departments consulted at official level and where discussion in COS would be of help in resolving or narrowing down the differences;
- d. Cases of very urgent nature requiring direction on policy or course of action within a prescribed time limit regarding which a consensus among the concerned Ministries/Department is considered necessary;

74)

- e. Cases where decisions taken in a particular Ministry/ Department could have repercussions on matters dealt with in other Ministries/Departments concerned and a discussion in COS for evolving a coordinated approach is necessary;
- f. Cases in which a Secretary of a Department desires advice of COS on a subject assigned to his charge; and
- g. Cases of new policy initiatives or change in policy where discussions in COS concerned may be helpful/fruitful.

Types of Cases NOT TO BE submitted to COS

- 5. The following cases are NOT TO BE brought before the COS:-
 - a. Those cases which are within the scope of the various Committees of the Government, like PIB, FIPB, etc.;
 - b. Those cases which concern one or two Ministries only and where the issues could be resolved bilaterally;
 - c. Cases where the issues could be resolved through inter-Ministerial meeting(s); and where instructions already exist for consulting specific Departments/Agencies, e.g. Department of Banking, Reserve Bank of India, etc.;
 - d. Cases of routine nature relating to creation of posts etc.;
 - e. Cases involving large financial allocation in which Ministry of Finance has not concurred.

Preparation of Notes for COS

- 6. The essential procedural requirements which should be complied with for the preparation and submission of Notes for COS are as under:-
 - a. The Notes should bear the name of the Ministry/Department at the top. It must also carry File Number and date. The words "Note for the Committee of Secretaries" should appear below the name of the Ministry or Department;
 - b. The note must be Security Graded (Secret or Top Secret as the case may be), and the copies of the note be serially numbered. The Security Grading must appear on all pages of the note;
 - c. A brief subject heading indicative of the proposals contained in the paper be given in all cases;
 - d. All the pages of the note, including the Annexures, should carry consecutive serial numbers on the bottom extreme right hand corner of the pages, simultaneously indicating total number of pages, in the manner "Page x of y", where "x" is the running serial number of the page and "y" is the total number of pages in the note.

No.501/2/13/2011-CA.V
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA/BHARAT SARKAR
CABINET SECRETARIAT/MANTRIMANDAL SACHIVALAYA
RASHTRAPATI BHAVAN

New Delhi dated 23rd November, 2012

Subject: Implementation of Recommendations of Task Force for strengthening Compliance with Provisions for Suo Motu / Proactive Disclosures under Section 4 of the RTI Act, 2005.

Reference this Secretariat's O.M. of even number dated 7th November, 2012, on the subject matter.

2. The meeting of Committee of Secretaries scheduled to be held at 05.00 P.M. on 23rd November, 2012 in the Committee Room, Cabinet Secretariat, Rashtrapati Bhawan, New Delhi has been **postponed**. Fresh date and time will be intimated separately.

3. Inconvenience caused is regretted.



(V.P. Arora)
Deputy Secretary
Tele No: 23014378

To
Shri F. K. Misra, Secretary, D/o Personnel & Training.
Shri R.K. Singh, Home Secretary, M/o Home Affairs.
Shri K. Radhakrishnan, Secretary, D/o Space.
Dr. R.K. Sinha, Secretary, D/o Atomic Energy.
Dr. Tishyarakshit Chatterjee, Secretary, M/o Environment & Forests
Shri R.S. Gujral, Finance Secretary & Secretary, D/o Expenditure
Shri Arvind Mayarani, Secretary, D/o Economic Affairs.
Shri J. Satyanarayana, Secretary, D/o Electronics & Information Technology.
Shri Anil Goswami, Secretary, D/o Social Justice & Empowerment.
Shri E. A. Agarwal, Secretary, D/o Legal Affairs.
Shri B. A. Agarwal, Secretary, Legislative Department.

Copy forwarded to:-

Secretary, Central Information Commission.



(V.P. Arora)
Deputy Secretary

Copy also forwarded to:-

Principal Secretary to Prime Minister.

Internal circulation

CS/Secy(C)/AS(G)/Dir.(RA)

20 Copies

Copy No.

876


New Delhi dated 4th December, 2012

Subject: Implementation of Recommendations of Task Force for strengthening Compliance with Provisions for Suo Motu / Proactive Disclosures under Section 4 of the RTI Act, 2005.

Reference this Secretariat's O.M. of even number dated 23rd November, 2012, on the subject matter.

2. The meeting of Committee of Secretaries scheduled to be held at 05.00 P.M. on 23rd November, 2012 but postponed will now be held at **12.00 Noon on 12th December, 2012**. Agenda and venue will remain the same.

3. It is requested to kindly make it convenient to attend the meeting.



(V.P.Arora)
Deputy Secretary
Tele No: 23014378

343

Shri P. K. Misra, Secretary, D/o Personnel & Training.
Shri R.K. Singh, Home Secretary, M/o Home Affairs.
Dr. K. Radhakrishnan, Secretary, D/o Space.
Dr. R.K. Sinha, Secretary, D/o Atomic Energy.
Secretary, M/o Environment & Forests.
Shri R.S. Gujral, Finance Secretary & Secretary, D/o Expenditure
Shri Arvind Mayaram, Secretary, D/o Economic Affairs.
Shri J. Satyanarayana, Secretary, D/o Electronics & Information Technology.
Shri Anil Goswami, Secretary, D/o Social Justice & Empowerment.
Shri B. A. Agarwal, Secretary, D/o Legal Affairs.
Shri B. A. Agarwal, Secretary, Legislative Department.

Copy forwarded to: -

Secretary, Central Information Commission w.r.t this Secretariat's OM of even number dated 23rd November, 2012, with the request to kindly make it convenient to attend the meeting.


(V.P. Arora)
Deputy Secretary

Copy also forwarded to: -

Principal Secretary to Prime Minister.

Internal circulation
CS/Secy(C)/AS(G)/Dir.(RA)

20 Copies

1877
Secret

F.No.1/6/2011-IR
Government of India
Ministry of Personnel, PG and Pensions
Department of Personnel & Training

North Block, New Delhi
Dated the 7th December, 2012.

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Subject:- Implementation of the Recommendations of Task Force for strengthening Compliance with Provisions for Suo Motu / Proactive Disclosures under Section 4 of the RTI Act, 2005.

The undersigned is directed to refer to this Department's O.M. of even number dated the 10th July, 2012 forwarding therewith a Note for the Committee of Secretaries regarding implementation of the Recommendations of Task Force for strengthening compliance with provisions for Suo Motu / Proactive Disclosures under Section 4 of the RTI Act, 2005. In the said note approval of the CoS has been sought for the guidelines for implementation of the suo-motu disclosure under RTI Act, 2005.

2. Pending receipt of the approval of CoS, the matter has been reconsidered in this Department. Since RTI Act, 2005 came into existence; DOPT has been issuing several guidelines and instructions aiming at effective implementation of various provisions of RTI Act with the approval of the Competent Authority in DOPT.

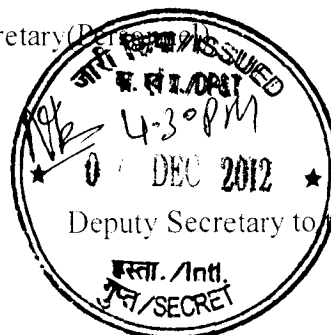
3. It is stated that there are seven categories of cases that can be referred to CoS by a Ministry/Department. This case falls in the category in which a Secretary of a Department desires advice of CoS on a subject assigned to his charge.

4. The Report of the Task Force has been circulated among Ministries/Departments and inter-ministerial consultation has already been held and views of Ministries/Departments have been incorporated in the draft guideline. There are no irreconcilable difference(s) of opinion between DOPT and other Ministries warranting the intervention of CoS. The issue of guidelines is an RFD target to be achieved by 31st December, 2012.

5. As was done on earlier occasion, it has now been decided to issue the guidelines proposed in the CoS Note under reference after obtaining the approval of the competent authority in DOPT.

6. Accordingly it is requested that DOPT may be allowed to withdraw the CoS Note dated 10.7.2012 submitted to Cabinet Secretariat.

7. This issues with the approval of Secretary (Personnel)



(Sandeep Jain)
Tele: 23092755

Cabinet Secretariat
(Shri R. Anand, Director)
Rashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi.

Secret

F.No.1/6/2011-IR
 Government of India
 Ministry of Personnel, PG and Pensions
 Department of Personnel & Training

North Block, New Delhi
 Dated the December, 2012.

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Subject:- Implementation of the Recommendations of Task Force for strengthening Compliance with Provisions for Suo Motu / Proactive Disclosures under Section 4 of the RTI Act, 2005.

The undersigned is directed to refer to this Department's O.M. of even number dated the 10th July, 2012 forwarding therewith a Note for the Committee of Secretaries regarding implementation of the Recommendations of Task Force for strengthening compliance with provisions for Suo Motu / Proactive Disclosures under Section 4 of the RTI Act, 2005. In the said note approval of the CoS has been sought for the guidelines for implementation of the suo-motu disclosure under RTI Act, 2005.

2. Pending receipt of the approval of CoS, the matter has been reconsidered in this Department. Since RTI Act, 2005 came into existence; DOPT has been issuing several guidelines and instructions aiming at effective implementation of various provisions of RTI Act with the approval of the Competent Authority in DOPT.

3. It is stated that there are seven categories of cases that can be referred to CoS by a Ministry/Department. This case falls in the category in which a Secretary of a Department desires advice of CoS on a subject assigned to his charge

5 [4] As was done on earlier occasion, it has^{now} been decided to issue the guidelines proposed in the CoS Note under reference after obtaining the approval of the competent authority in DOPT.

4 [5] The Report of the Task Force has been circulated among Ministries/Departments and inter-ministerial consultation has already been held and views of Ministries/Departments have been incorporated in the draft guideline. There are no irreconcilable difference(s) of opinion between DOPT and other Ministries warranting the intervention of CoS. The issue of guidelines is an RFD target to be achieved by 31st December, 2012

6. Accordingly it is requested that DOPT may be allowed to withdraw the CoS Note dated 10.7.2012 submitted to Cabinet Secretariat.

7. This issues with the approval of Secretary(Personnel).

(Sandeep Jain)
 Deputy Secretary to the Government of India
 Tele: 23092755

Cabinet Secretariat
 (Shri R.Anand, Director)
 Rashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi.

1279

RTI MATTER

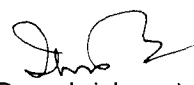
No. R-11(2)/2013-RTI
Government of India
Ministry of Commerce & Industry
Deptt. of Commerce
RTI Cell

Udyog Bhavan, New Delhi,
Date: the 9th May, 2013

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Subject: Implementation of Guidelines on suo motu disclosure under Section 4 of the RTI Act, 2005 - regarding.

The undersigned is directed to enclose a copy of O.M. No. 1/6/2011-IR dated 15.04.2013 received from Deptt. of Personnel & Training (DOP&T), alongwith a copy of guidelines on suo motu disclosure under Section 4 of the RTI Act, 2005, for compliance.



(N. Ramakrishnan)
Deputy Secretary(RTI)

Encl: As above

To

1. All CPIOs in DoC (As per list).
2. All Public Authorities under DOC (As per list).

✓ Copy to:- DOP&T (Shri Manoj Joshi, Joint Secretary-IR), North Block, New Delhi – for information.


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No.10-3/2013-RTI
Ministry of Communications & IT
Department of Telecommunications
(RTI Section)

....

20 Ashoka Road, Sanchar Bhawan,
New Delhi -110001 dated 13th May, 2013

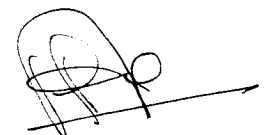
OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Subject : Implementation of suo motu disclosure under Section 4 of RTI Act,
2005 – Issue of guidelines- regarding.

....

The undersigned is directed to forward herewith a copy of Department of Personnel & Training's O.M. No. 1/6/2011-IR dated 15th April, 2013 on the above subject and to request that compliance of the guidelines of Department of Personnel in respect of the concerned points may be ensured.

Encls : As above



(A.K. Singh)

Under Secretary(C&A) & APIO
Tele : 23096073

3/17/13

To

DS (C&A)
20/5

All CPIOs/Appellate Authorities in DoT(As per list enclosed) .

Copy for information to :

1. CPIOs of BSNL/MTNL/C-DoT/TRAI/TDSAT/TEC/ITI/TCIL
- ✓ 2. Shri Manoj Joshi, Joint Secretary, Department of Personnel & Training, North Block, New Delhi – w.r.t.their O.M. referred above.
3. Sr. PPS/PPS/PS to Secretary(T)/AS(T)/JS(A)/DDG(C&A)

17/5/13
Hk 44

No.1/6/2011-IR
Government of India
Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions
Department of Personnel & Training

North Block, New Delhi
Dated the 15th April, 2013

OFFICE MEMORANDUM


Subject: Implementation of *suo motu* disclosure under Section 4 of RTI Act, 2005 – Issue of guidelines regarding:

Section 4(1)(b) of the RTI Act lays down the information which should be disclosed by Public Authorities on a *suo motu* or proactive basis. Section 4(2) and Section 4(3) prescribe the method of dissemination of this information. The purpose of *suo motu* disclosures under Section 4 is to place large amount of information in public domain on a proactive basis to make the functioning of the Public Authorities more transparent and also to reduce the need for filing individual RTI applications.

2. Since the promulgation of the Act in 2005, large amount of information relating to functioning of the government is being put in public domain. However, the quality and quantity of proactive disclosure is not up to the desired level. It was felt that the weak implementation of the Section 4 of the RTI Act is partly due to the fact that certain provisions of this Section have not been fully detailed and, in case of certain other provisions there is need for laying down detailed guidelines. Further there is need to set up a compliance mechanism to ensure that requirements under section 4 of the RTI Act are met.

3. In order to address the above, Government of India constituted a Task Force on *suo motu* disclosure under the RTI Act, 2005 in May 2011 which included representatives of civil society organizations active in the field of Right to Information, for strengthening compliance with provisions for *suo motu* or proactive disclosure as given in Section 4 of the RTI Act, 2005. Based on the report of the Task Force, the Government have decided to issue guidelines for *suo motu* disclosure under section 4 of the RTI Act.

4. Guidelines for Central Government Ministries/Departments are on:
 - i. *Suo motu* disclosure of more items under Section 4.
 - ii. Guidelines for digital publication of proactive disclosure under Section 4.
 - iii. Detailing of Section 4(1)(b)(iii), 4(1)(b)(iv), 4(1)(b)(xi) and 4(1)(b)(xiv)
 - iv. Compliance mechanism for *suo motu* disclosure (proactive disclosure) under the RTI Act, 2005.
5. The above guidelines are enclosed. However, it may be kept in mind that proactive disclosure should be done in the local language so that it remains accessible to public. It should be presented in a form that is easily understood and if technical words are used they should be carefully explained. As provided in section 4, disclosure should be made in as many mediums as feasible and disclosures should be kept up to date. The disclosure of Information may be made keeping in mind the provisions of Section 8 to 11 of the RTI Act.
6. Central Government Ministries/ Departments should undertake *suo motu* disclosure and ensure compliance based on these guidelines.
7. The enclosed guidelines may be brought to the notice of all for compliance.


 (Manoj Joshi)
 Joint Secretary
 Tele : 23093668

1. All the Ministries/Departments of the Government of India
2. Union Public Service Commission, Lok Sabha Secretariat, Rajya Sabha Secretariat, Cabinet Secretariat, Central Vigilance Commission, President's Secretariat, Vice-President's Secretariat, Prime Minister's Office, Planning Commission, Election Commission.
3. Central Information Commission.
4. Staff Selection Commission, CGO Complex, New Delhi
5. O/o the Comptroller & Auditor General of India, 10, Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg, New Delhi.

Copy to : Chief Secretaries of all the States/UTs.

Guidelines on *suo motu* disclosure under Section 4 of the RTI Act

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17
8847

Guidelines on *suo motu* disclosure under Section 4 of the RTI Act

1.0 *Suo motu* disclosure of more items under Section 4

Sub-section 4(2) of the RTI Act, 2005 requires every public authority to take steps in accordance with the requirements of clause (b) of sub-section 4(1) to provide as much information *suo motu* to the public at regular intervals through various means of communication, including internet, so that the public have minimum resort to use the Act to obtain information. Accordingly, the Public Authorities may proactively disclose the following items also under the *suo motu* disclosure provisions of Section 4:

1.1 Information related to Procurement

1.1.1 Information relating to procurement made by Public Authorities including publication of notice/tender enquiries, corrigenda thereon, and details of bid awards detailing the name of the supplier of goods/services being procured or the works contracts entered or any such combination of these and the rate and total amount at which such procurement or works contract is to be done should be disclosed. All information disclosable as per Ministry of Finance, Department of Expenditure's O.M. No 10/1/2011-PPC dated 30th November, 2011 on Mandatory Publication of Tender Enquiries on the Central Public Procurement Portal and O.M. No. 10/3/2012- PPC dated 30th March, 2012 on Implementation of comprehensive end-to-end e-procurement should be disclosed under Section 4. At present the limit is fixed at Rs. 10.00 lakhs. In case of procurements made through DGS&D Rate Contracts or through Kendriya Bhandar/ NCCF, only award details need to be published. However information about procurement which fall within the purview of Section 8 of the RTI Act would be exempt.

1.2 Public Private Partnerships

1.2.1 If Public services are proposed to be provided through a Public Private Partnership (PPP), all information relating to the PPPs must be disclosed in the public domain by the Public Authority entering into the PPP contract/concession agreement. This may include details of the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV), if any set up, detailed project reports, concession agreements, operation and maintenance manuals and other documents generated as part of the implementation of the PPP project. The documents under the ambit of the exemption from disclosure of information under section 8(1)(d) and 8(1)(j) of

the RTI Act would not be disclosed *suo motu*. Further, information about fees, tolls, or other kinds of revenue that may be collected under authorization from the Government, information in respect of outputs and outcomes, process of selection of the private sector party may also be proactively disclosed. All payments made under the PPP project may also be disclosed in a periodic manner along with the purpose of making such payment.

1.3 Transfer Policy and Transfer Orders

1.3.1 Transfer policy for different grades/cadres of employees serving in Public Authority should be proactively disclosed. All transfer orders should be publicized through the website or in any other manner listed in Section 4(4) of the Act. These guidelines would not be applicable in cases of transfers made keeping in view sovereignty, integrity, security, strategic, scientific or economic interests of the State and the exemptions covered under Section 8 of the Act. These instructions would not apply to security and intelligence organizations under the second schedule of the RTI Act.

1.4 RTI Applications

1.4.1 All Public Authorities shall proactively disclose RTI applications and appeals received and their responses, on the websites maintained by Public Authorities with search facility based on key words. RTI applications and appeals received and their responses relating to the personal information of an individual may not be disclosed, as they do not serve any public interest.

1.5 CAG & PAC paras

1.5.1 Public Authorities may proactively disclose the CAG & PAC paras and the Action Taken Reports (ATRs) only after these have been laid on the table of both the houses of the Parliament. However, CAG paras dealing with information about the issues of sovereignty, integrity, security, strategic, scientific or economic interests of the State and information covered under Section 8 of the RTI Act would be exempt.

1.6 Citizens Charter

1.6.1 Citizens Charter prepared by the Ministry/Department, as part of the Result Framework Document of the department/organization should be proactively disclosed and six monthly report on the performance against the benchmarks set in Citizens Charter should also be displayed on the website of public authorities.

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1.7 Discretionary and Non-discretionary grants

1.7.1 All discretionary /non-discretionary grants/ allocations to state governments/ NGOs/Other institutions by Ministry/Department should be placed on the website of the Ministry/Department concerned. Annual Accounts of all legal entities who are provided grants by Public Authorities should be made available through publication, directly or indirectly on the Public Authority's website. Disclosures would be subject to provisions of Section 8 to 11 of the RTI Act.

1.8 Foreign Tours of PM/Ministers

1.8.1 A large number of RTI queries are being filed on official tours undertaken by Ministers or officials of various Government Ministries/Departments. Information regarding the nature, place and period of foreign and domestic tours of Prime Minister are already disclosed on the PMO's website.

1.8.2 As per DoPT's OM No. 1/8/2012-IR dated 11/9/2012, Public Authorities may proactively disclose the details of foreign and domestic official tours undertaken by the Minister(s) and officials of the rank of Joint Secretary to the Government of India and above and Heads of Departments, since 1st January, 2012. The disclosures may be updated once every quarter.

1.8.3. Information to be disclosed proactively may contain nature of the official tour, places visited, the period, number of people included in the official delegation and total cost of such travel undertaken. Exemptions under Section 8 of the RTI Act, 2005 may be kept in view while disclosing the information. These instructions would not apply to security and intelligence organisations under the second schedule of the RTI Act, 2005 and CVOs of public authorities.

2.0 Guidelines for digital publication of proactive disclosure under Section 4

2.1 Section 4 lays down that information should be provided through many mediums depending upon the level of the public authority and the recipient of information (for example, in case of Panchayat, wall painting may be more effective means of dissemination of information), and that more and more proactive disclosure would gradually be made through Internet. There is need for more clear guidelines for web-based publication of information for disclosure.

2.2 The Department of Information Technology has been working on setting of technical standards for government websites and the Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances has published guidelines for websites of Government Departments. These guidelines prescribe the manner in which websites need to be designed and how information should be disclosed. While adhering to the standards of government guidelines as laid down by Department of Information Technology and Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances, the following principles additionally should also be kept in view to ensure that websites' disclosures are complete, easily accessible, technology and platform neutral and in a form which conveys the desired information in an effective and user-friendly manner.

- a) It should be the endeavor of all public authorities that all entitlements to citizens and all transactions between the citizen and government are gradually made available through computer based interface. The 'Electronic Delivery of Services Bill, 2012' under formulation in Government of India would provide the necessary impetus.
- b) Websites should contain detailed information from the point of origin to the point of delivery of entitlements/services provided by the Public Authorities to citizens.
- c) Orders of the public authority should be uploaded on the website immediately after they have been issued.
- d) Website should contain all the relevant Acts, Rules, forms and other documents which are normally accessed by citizens.

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- e) Websites should have detailed directory of key contacts, details of officials of the Public Authority.
 - f) It is obligatory under Section 4(1)(b)(xiv) of the RTI Act for every Public Authority to proactively disclose 'details in respect of the information, available to or held by it, reduced in an electronic form'. The website should therefore indicate which digitally held information is made available publicly over the internet and which is not.
 - g) As departments reorganize their systems and processes to enable themselves for electronic service delivery, it is recommended that the requirement of bringing due transparency as provided in the RTI Act is given adequate consideration at the design stage itself.
 - h) To maintain reliability of information and its real time updation, information generation in a digital form should be automatically updated on the basis of key work outputs, like a muster roll and salary slip (NREGA in Andhra Pradesh) or formalization of a government order (Andhra Pradesh). Such an approach will lead to automation of proactive disclosure.
 - i) Information must be presented from a user's perspective, which may require re-arranging it, simplifying it etc. However, original documents in original formats should continue to be made available because these are needed for community monitoring of government's functioning.
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- j) The 'National Data Sharing and Accessibility Policy' by the Department of Science and Technology is based on the principle that all publicly funded information should be readily available. The policy has been notified in March, 2012 and the schedule should be strictly adhered to.
 - k) Information and data should be presented in open data formats whereby it can be pulled by different Application Protocol Interfaces to be used in different fashions more appropriate to specific contexts and needs. Information/ data can, for instance, be presented in powerful visual ways using visualisation techniques. Such visual representation of information/ data can give insights that may remain largely

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hidden in a textual or tabular presentation of data. In some contexts, pictures and audio/videos recordings etc may be more useful. There have been moves in some parts of the country to video record Gram Sabha meetings. A picture of a NREGA worksite, for instance, may tell much more than words can. All such different media and forms should be used for proactive disclosure.

- 1) Every webpage displaying information or data proactively disclosed under the RTI Act should, on the top right corner, display the mandatory field 'Date last updated (DD/MM/YY)'.

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3.0 Guidelines for certain clauses of Section 4(1)(b) to make disclosure more effective

3.1 The elements of information listed in the various sub-clauses of Section 4(1)(b) must be disclosed in an integrated manner. For example, the functions and responsibilities of a public authority cannot be understood in isolation from the powers and functions of its employees, the norms that inform its decision making processes and the rules, instructions and manuals that are used in the discharge of its functions. Description of one element presupposes the existence of another. So every public authority must endeavour to integrate the information mentioned in these sub-clauses while preparing voluntary disclosure materials.

3.2 Considering that disclosure in regard to certain sub-clauses have been relatively weak, detailed guidelines for four sub-clauses are given below:

3.3 Guidelines for section 4(1)(b)(iii) - "the procedure followed in the decision-making processes, including channels of supervision and accountability".

3.3.1 All government departments have specific duties and responsibilities under the respective Allocation of Business Rules (AOB) issued by the appropriate Government. The constitutional provisions and statutes each department is required to implement are clearly laid down in the AOB. The manner of disposal of matters assigned to each Department/Ministry is described in the Transaction of Business Rules (TOB). Additionally, every department would have a specific set of schemes and development programmes which they are required to implement directly or through their subordinate offices or other designated agencies. These documents contain the specific operations that every Public Authority is required to undertake in the course of implementing the programme or scheme. Every operation mandated under the AOB read with the TOB would be linked to a specific decision-making chain. All government officers have to follow laid down office procedure manual or the other rules which gives details of how representations, petitions and applications from citizens must be dealt with. Templates, formats, and basic steps of decision-making are briefly explained in such manuals. These descriptions constitute the elements of decision-making processes in general.

3.3.2 Additionally, in the routine work of governance, government functionaries are required to make decisions in a discretionary manner but broad guiding principles are laid down in some rule or the other. For example, the General Financial Rules lay down procedures for a variety of operations relating to government finances. How sanction must be accorded for incurring expenditure; how losses to government must be reported; how responsibility for losses may be fixed on any government servant; how budgets, demand for grants are prepared and submitted; how public works must be sanctioned and executed; how commodities and services may be procured by a public authority; are all explained in these manuals which are updated from time to time. The challenge is to present a simplified version of the decision-making procedure that is of interest to a common citizen.

3.3.3 In view of the above, the guidelines for detailing the decision making processes are as follows:

- (a) Every public authority should specifically identify the major outputs/ tangible results/ services/ goods, as applicable, that it is responsible for providing to the public or to whosoever is the client of the public authority.
- (b) In respect of (a) above, the decision-making chain should be identified in the form of a flow chart explaining the rank/grade of the public functionaries involved in the decision-making process and the specific stages in the decision-making hierarchy.
- (c) The powers of each officer including powers of supervision over subordinates involved in the chain of decision-making must also be spelt out next to the flow chart or in a simple bullet-pointed format in a text-box. The exceptional circumstances when such standard decision-making processes may be overridden and by whom, should also be explained clearly. Where decentralization of decision-making has occurred in order to grant greater autonomy to public authorities, such procedures must also be clearly explained.
- (d) This design of presentation should then be extended to cover all statutory and discretionary operations that are part of the public authority's mandate under the AOB read with the TOB.

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(e) In the event of a public authority altering an existing decision-making process or adopting an entirely new process, such changes must be explained in simple language in order to enable people to easily understand the changes made.

3.4 Guidelines for Section 4(1)(b)(iv) - "the norms set by it for the discharge of its functions".

3.4.1 Primarily, the intention of this clause is that every public authority should proactively disclose the standards by which its performance should be judged. Norms may be qualitative or quantitative in nature, or temporal or statutory norms. In order to ensure compliance with this clause, public authorities would need to disclose norms for major functions that are being performed.

3.4.2 Citizen Charters, which are mandatory, for each central Ministry/Department/Authority, are good examples of vehicles created for laying down norms of performance for major functions and for monitoring achievements against those standards.

3.4.3 Wherever norms have been specified for the discharge of its functions by any statute or government orders, they should be proactively disclosed, particularly linking them with the decision making processes as detailed earlier. All Public Authorities should proactively disclose the following:

- a) ~~Defining the services and goods that the particular public authority/office provides directly (or indirectly through any other agency/contractor).~~
- b) Detailing and describing the processes by which the public can access and/or receive the goods and services that they are entitled to, from the public authority/office along with the forms, if any prescribed, for use by both the applicant and the service providing agency. Links to such forms (online), wherever available, should be given.
- c) Describing the conditions, criteria and priorities under which a person becomes eligible for the goods and services, and consequently the categories of people who are entitled to receive the goods and services.

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- d) Defining the quantitative and tangible parameters, (weight, size, frequency etc,) and timelines, that are applicable to the goods and services that are accessible to the public.
 - e) Defining the qualitative and quantitative outcomes that each public authority/office plans to achieve through the goods and services that it was obligated to provide.
 - f) Laying down individual responsibility for providing the goods and services (who is responsible for delivery/implementation and who is responsible for supervision).

3.5 Guidelines for Section 4(1)(b)(xi)- "the budget allocated to each of its agency, indicating the particulars of all plans, proposed expenditures and reports on disbursements made".

3.5.1 The public authorities while disclosing their budgets shall undertake the following:

- (a) Keeping in view of the technical nature of the government budgets, it is essential that Ministries/Departments prepare simplified versions of their budgets which can be understood easily by general public and place them in public domain. Budgets and their periodic monitoring reports may also be presented in a more user-friendly manner through graphs and tables, etc.
- (b) Outcome budget being prepared by Ministries/Departments of Government of India ~~should be prominently displayed and be used as a basis to identify physical targets~~ planned during the budgetary period and the actual achievement vis-à-vis those targets. A monthly programme implementation calendar method of reporting being followed in Karnataka is a useful model.
- (c) Funds released to various autonomous organizations/ statutory organizations/ attached offices/ Public Sector Enterprises/ Societies/ NGOs/ Corporations etc. should be put on the website on a quarterly basis and budgets of such authorities may be made accessible through links from the website of the Ministry/Department. If a subsidiary does not have a website then the budgets and expenditure reports of

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such subsidiary authority may be uploaded on the website of the principal Public Authority.

- (d) Wherever required by law or executive instruction, sector specific allocations and achievements of every department or public authority (where feasible) must be highlighted. For example, budget allocation and target focusing on gender, children, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and religious minorities should be specially highlighted. The sector-wise breakup of these targets and actual outcomes must be given in simplified form to enable the vulnerable segments of society to better understand the budgets of public authorities.

3.6 Guidelines for Section 4(1)(b)(xiv) – details in respect of information, available to or held by it, reduced in an electronic form.

3.6.1 On the one hand, this clause serves as a means of proactively disclosing the progress made in computerizing information under Section 4(1)(a) of the RTI Act in a periodic manner. On the other, it provides people with clarity about the kinds of electronic information that, although not held by the public authority, is available to them. For example the stocks of ration available with individual fair price shops may not be held by the District Civil Supplies office, but may be available at a subordinate formation.

3.6.2 Keeping in view the varied levels of computerization of records and documents in public authorities, data about records that have been digitized may be proactively disclosed ~~on the respective websites, excluding those records /files /information that are exempted~~ under Section 8. The data about digitized record may include the name of the record and any categorization or indexing used; the subject matter and any other information that is required to be compiled in relation to a file as prescribed by Manual of Office Procedure (and to be prescribed by MOP for electronic records that is under finalization by DARPG), the division/ section/ unit/ office where the record is normally held; the person, with designation, responsible for maintaining the record; and the life span of the record, as prescribed in the relevant record retention schedule.

4.0 Compliance with Provisions of *suo motu* (proactive) disclosure under the RTI Act

4.1 Each Ministry/Public Authority shall ensure that these guidelines are fully operationalized within a period of 6 months from the date of their issue.

4.2 Proactive disclosure as per these guidelines would require collating a large quantum of information and digitizing it. For this purpose, Ministries/Public Authorities may engage consultants or outsource such work to expeditiously comply with these guidelines. For this purpose, the plan/non-plan funds of that department may be utilized.

4.3 The Action Taken Report on the compliance of these guidelines should be sent, along with the URL link, to the DoPT and Central Information Commission soon after the expiry of the initial period of 6 months.

4.4 Each Ministry/ Public Authority should get its proactive disclosure package audited by third party every year. The audit should cover compliance with the proactive disclosure guidelines as well as adequacy of the items included in the package. The audit should examine whether there are any other types of information which could be proactively disclosed. Such audit should be done annually and should be communicated to the Central Information Commission annually through publication on their own websites. All Public Authorities should proactively disclose the names of the third party auditors on their website. For carrying out third party audit through outside consultants also, Ministries/Public Authorities should utilize their plan/non-plan funds.

4.5 The Central Information Commission should examine the third-party audit reports for each Ministry/Public Authority and offer advice/recommendations to the concerned Ministries/ Public Authorities.

4.6 Central Information Commission should carry out sample audit of few of the Ministries/ Public Authorities each year with regard to adequacy of items included as well as compliance of the Ministry/Public Authority with these guidelines.

4.7 Compliance with the proactive disclosure guidelines, its audit by third party and its communication to the Central Information Commission should be included as RFD target.

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5.0 Nodal Officer

5.1 Each Central Ministry/ Public Authority should appoint a senior officer not below the rank of a Joint Secretary and not below rank of Additional HOD in case of attached offices for ensuring compliance with the proactive disclosure guidelines. The Nodal Officer would work under the supervision of the Secretary of the Ministry/Department or the HOD of the attached office, as the case may be. Nodal Officers of Ministry/Department and HOD separately should also ensure that the formations below the Ministry/Department/Attached Office also disclose the information as per the proactive disclosure guidelines.

6.0 Annual Reports to Parliament/Legislatures

6.1 Government has issued directions to all Ministries/Departments to include a chapter on RTI Act in their Annual Reports submitted to the Parliament. Details about compliance with proactive disclosure guidelines should mandatorily be included in the relevant chapter in Annual Report of Ministry/Department.
