

FAQs on Foreign Assignments

Q. 1 What are the categories of Foreign Assignments?

A. Long Term Assignments (Period over 90 days)

(1) Foreign posts of the Government of India. These are posts in the Embassies/High Commissions of India under the administrative control of various Ministries/Departments of the GoI (other than the Ministry of External Affairs). These posts carry tenure of three years. These are filled through the Civil Services Board procedure by the E.O. Division in the Department of Personnel & Training after due circulation of the vacancy.

(2) Captive posts of the GoI. These include the posts of Executive Directors in the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund(IMF), the Asian Development Bank(ADB) etc., Advisers and Technical or Executive Assistants to the Executive Directors and other similar posts where recruitment is restricted to Indian experts. These are also filled through the Central Staffing Scheme of the GoI by the E.O. Division in the Department of Personnel & Training after due circulation of the vacancy.

(3) International Assignments to the UN and its agencies: Selections to these assignments are secured by the officers themselves either through open advertisements or being directly offered such positions by the International Bodies and by nomination by the GoI for competitive selection by the International Body. Maximum tenure limits to such assignments is 5 years at a stretch and 7 years in the entire career.

Short Term Consultancies (period up to 90 days)

(4) Short Term Consultancies offered by International Bodies for a period of up to 90 days. Officers below the level of Joint Secretary are entitled to take up such short-term consultancies. There is a ban on JS and above level officers for taking up short-term consultancy assignments. Tenure limits for Short-term consultancy assignments are 90 days in a calendar year and 25 months in the entire career. However, officers of Joint Secretary and above levels can only take up 'pro-bono' short term teaching assignments for a period of one month in a year. Officers have to take leave due and admissible (other than Extra Ordinary leave) for such assignments.

Q. 2 What is the procedure for getting cadre clearance of DOP&T for the foreign assignments mentioned in (3) above?

A. The procedures laid down in para 3 of the Consolidated Deputation Guidelines for All India Service Officers contained in DOP&T's letter No. 14017/33/2005-AIS (II)(Pt.I) dated 28.11.2007 and para 2.1 of the Consolidated Deputation Guidelines for Organized Group 'A' & 'B' Services contained in DOP&T's O.M. No. AB-14017/2/07-Estt.(RR) dated 29.2.2008 are applicable.

Q. 3 Whether clearance of DOP&T is required for officers working under the Central Staffing Scheme to take up foreign assignments?

A. Yes. All the proposals for grant of cadre clearance in respect of AIS officers (whether in the cadre or working at the Centre) for taking up foreign assignments are required to be sent to DOP&T for approval. All the proposals for grant of Cadre Clearance in respect of Joint Secretary and above level officers belonging to Organized Group 'A' & 'B' Services (whether in the cadre or working at the Centre) for taking up foreign assignments are also required to be sent to DOP&T for approval. However, all proposals for grant of Cadre Clearance to officers of below JS level, belonging to Organized Group 'A' & 'B' Services to take up foreign assignment will be processed by the

Cadre Controlling Authority. However, for curtailing the tenure of Group 'A' service officers below the level of Joint Secretary and working under the Central Staffing Scheme approval of the ACC through DOP&T would be required.

Q.4 What are the restrictions on officers dealing with International Organizations in their official capacity?

- A. There are no restrictions on officers up to the level of Director. However, for JS and above levels, in case the officer has had official dealing with the international organization and the Secretary of the concerned Ministry categorically certifies that the officer did not use his official position to get the foreign assignment, such cases will be considered by the Committee of Secretaries based on the merits of each individual case and appropriate recommendations made if the assignment has been offered by applying against an open advertisement.

Q.5 Is there a cooling off requirement?

- A. After every period of deputation there shall be a mandatory "Cooling off" period of three years for JS and below levels, one year for Addl. Secretary level and 'Nil' for Secretary level.

Q.6. Is there a prescribed format for submitting proposals of foreign assignments to DOP&T?

- A. Yes, separate checklists have been devised for submitting long term foreign assignment proposals to DOP&T for AIS & Group 'A' & 'B' services. The same are available on the Departmental website.

Q. 7 Whether the foreign assignment can be taken up while on Central deputation with the GoI? If yes, what is the prescribed tenure limit?

A. An officer who is on Central deputation with the GoI after having completed his normal 'cooling off' in the cadre, may be permitted to proceed on a foreign assignment subject to the tenure limits mentioned in Question No. 1. However, overall absence from the cadre will be limited to 7 years, in both the stints put together. Cadre clearance at the time of such shifting would be required.

Q. 8 Can I shift from one foreign assignment to another foreign assignment?

A. Yes, with the prior approval of the Competent Authority. However, this will be subject to the overall tenure limits of 5 years at a stretch and 7 years in the entire career.

Q. 9 I proceeded on foreign assignment before issue of the Consolidated Deputation Guidelines issued on 28.11.2007 and 29.2.2008. Will I be governed by the earlier instructions or whether the new Guidelines would apply?

A. Tenures approved by the Competent Authority prior to the issue of the Consolidated Deputation Guidelines would not be affected. However, extension of tenure of foreign assignment beyond the approved periods would be governed as per the new Deputation Guidelines dated 28.11.2007 and 29.2.2008.