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

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5th Floor, Sardar Patel Bhawan, New Delhi
Dated the 22 March, 2022

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Subject: Knowledge/ Information Systems in Ministries/Departments of Government of India – reg.

Ministries/Departments issue instructions, including orders, notifications, guidelines etc., on various subject matters falling under their domain from time to time. Original instructions issued by them are also amended/updated, as per requirement. It has been observed that often the original instructions and subsequent amendments/updates are not available at one place and a clear understanding of the subject matter by internal users as well as external stakeholders is hampered due to the multiple OMs etc. that have to be referred to. It has, therefore, been felt that efforts may be made to organize the instructions issued by Ministries/Departments in an easily comprehensible and accessible manner.

2. In this regard, some Ministries/Departments/Organizations of Government of India are following the system of Master Circulars. These Master Circulars provide all current operative instructions on a particular subject at one place. Some of the good examples are Master Circulars published by Reserve Bank of India (RBI), Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) etc. on their websites.

3. Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances has undertaken a study of Master Circulars being issued by various organizations like RBI, SEBI and some Ministries/Departments and has also studied good practices being followed by them in this regard. A summary of findings of the study is at **Annexure**.

4. In order to improve the existing Knowledge/Information Systems in Government, it has been decided that:-

- (i) Ministries/Departments may review the instructions issued by them on each subject from time to time and consolidate the instructions on a given subject into a self-contained single document in the form of Master Circular. References of source instructions and amendments thereto may be listed and hyperlinked at the end of Master Circular so as to facilitate a user to see changes/updates introduced over time.

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- (ii) Whenever new instructions/orders are issued or modification/amendment is carried out in any existing instructions on a subject the relevant Master Circular may be updated on the above lines. Such updated Master Circular shall supercede the previous Master Circular on the subject.
- (iii) Master Circulars may be published on the website with well thought out content design and positioned prominently on the website within the broad framework of Guidelines for India Government Websites.

5. All Ministries/Departments are requested to take appropriate action on the above lines in a time bound manner. Ministries/Departments may consider setting up a dedicated Cell for adoption of system of Master Circulars and for organizing, maintaining and updating information on their websites on regular basis. The progress of implementation of the above measures may be reviewed by Secretary of the Ministry/Department regularly in Senior Officers Meetings.

6. Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances would organize a Workshop on introduction of system of Master Circulars shortly. Schedule of the proposed Workshop will be shared in due course.



(V. Srinivas)

Secretary to the Government of India

To

All Secretaries of Ministries/Departments

SALIENT FEATURES OF SEVERAL BEST PRACTICES OF INFORMATION SYSTEMS

1. Master Circular system of RBI (<https://www.rbi.org.in/>)

- Master Circular/ Master Direction of RBI provides all current operative instructions on a particular subject in a single self-contained and comprehensive document. Relevant orders/ circulars/ are duly hyperlinked so that the references are easily accessible to the stakeholders.
- Master Circulars are usually updated in the beginning of the financial year. Any amendments in Master Circular in the interim period are highlighted in different color. Every new master circular supersedes the previous Master Circular on the subject.
- Master Circulars are arranged year wise and placed on the main menu at home page under notification section on their websites.
- Old circulars which are no more in operations are withdrawn with date stamp before archival.
- RBI has a dedicated team to oversee information on their website.

2. Master Circulars of SEBI (<http://www.sebi.gov.in/>)

- SEBI Master Circulars too compiles all operational orders on a particular topic in a single document and publish PDF of Master Circular on the website
- Relevant circulars on each topic are referenced in the footnote and list of all such referenced circulars along with the date of issue are attached at Annexure.

3. Master Circulars of M/o Railways:

(https://indianrailways.gov.in/railwayboard/view_section.jsp?lang=0&id=0,1,304,366,555,1430)

- Rates Master Circulars of Railways are organized on their website in drill down manner in order of date of issue.
- Circulars are listed on the webpage along with the corrigendum number, date of issue and subject. In case of a change in circular the new corrigendum is added in the list.

4. **M/o Corporate Affairs (<https://www.mca.gov.in/>)**

- Ministry of Corporate Affairs have an integrated website which also provides transactional facility for MCA Services.
- Information on complex subjects is presented in simple and easily understandable manner with the support of FAQs, illustrations and tutorials.
- MCA has a dedicated wing supported by professional service providers to design and maintain the websites of the Ministry.

5. **Income Tax Department (incometaxindia.gov.in)**

- This website is repository of information for all income tax related rules/ orders/ instructions. Information is explained with the help of step by step guide, tutorials, FAQs, illustrations etc.
- The information is updated every year with new Act and rules and related material in a time bound manner. The website is designed for huge traffic and peak load.
- The website is managed by a core team of Managed Service Provider (MSP) consisting of technology and subject matter experts. A full-fledged Directorate under DG (Systems) manages the IT applications and websites of Income Tax Department.

6. **Department of Pension (<https://pensionersportal.gov.in/>)**

- D/o Pension maintains "Pensioners' portal" where useful information from a pensioner's perspective are organized on the portal.