

Central Information Commission  
August Kranti Bhawan  
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Subject : 1. Roles of CPIO and Transparency Officer (TO)  
2. Level of Transparency Officer (TO)  
3. Job Chart of Transparency Officer (TO)

Reference: [D.O.No.CIC/AT/D/10/000111 dated 15.11.2010](#)

Apropos the subject and reference cited, certain public authorities have requested clarification regarding the roles of the Transparency Officer (T.O.) vis-à-vis the CPIO, and the level of the Transparency Officer.

2. It is clarified that the institution of Transparency Officer is in fact an administrative arrangement for promotion of institutional transparency within the public authority through proactive and effective implementation of the provisions of Section 4 of the RTI Act, 2005. These include effective record management, digitization of records, networking and incremental proactive disclosures.

3. The CPIO and the Appellate Authority, on the other hand, are parts of the RTI-regime and, in that sense, are statutory officers under the RTI Act. Their functions shall be as defined in Sections 7 and 19(1) of the Act respectively.

4. Within the public authority, a CPIO will be free to seek guidance from the Transparency Officer about disclosure-norms — both in its general and specific aspects.

5. The level of Transparency Officer, in any public authority, may vary depending on the availability of personnel of a requisite level. However, to be effective, a Transparency Officer should be of sufficiently high seniority in the organization, having uninterrupted and free access to the head of the public authority. He should also be able to effectively communicate and liaise with Divisional Heads of the public authority.

It is, therefore, desirable that T.O. is either No.2 or No.3 behind the head of the organization, in the official hierarchy.

## 6. Job Chart of Transparency Officer

Transparency Officer (TO) shall be the main centre of all actions connected with promotion of institutional transparency commensurate with the letter and spirit of the RTI Act. In performing this role, the TO shall:

- i. Act as the interface for the Commission vis-à-vis the public authority on the one hand, and on the other vis-à-vis the public authority and the general public/information seeker.
- ii. Engage continuously, in implementing the Commission's directive dated 15.11.2010 regarding pro-active disclosures under section -4 of RTI Act, vis-à-vis the public authority concerned.
- iii. Regularly monitor decisions of the Central Information Commission (<http://cic.gov.in>) with a view to identify areas of openness both generic and specific as a result of such decisions.

Ensure that all levels of employees of the public authority are sensitized about these decisions and their implications.

Be responsible for issuing advisories, to officers/staff about need for sensitivity to institutional transparency and act as a change agent.

Be responsible for sensitizing the officers/staff that the time limit stipulated in the RTI Act are outer limit for matters raised under RTI Act and officers/staff are required to be mentally tuned to disclose all informations, predetermined as open, within the shortest possible time on receiving request.

- iv. Be the contact point for the CPIO/FAA/Divisional Heads in respect of all RTI related matters of the Organisation. He will be the clearing house in all matters about making transparency the central point of organizational behaviour.
- v. Constantly remain in touch with the top management in the public authority about the strategy and the action to promote transparency within the organisation.

Promote good management practices with the organisation centered on transparency.

- vi. Devise transparency indices for various wings of the public authority in order to introduce healthy competition in promoting transparency.

- vii. Help set up facilitation centres within the premises of the public authority, where members of the public can file their requests for disclosure of specific information and can inspect the records and documents etc.
- viii. Work out, in consultation with the departmental officers, the parameters of record management- its classification and indexing, plan of action for digitization of documents and records, networking etc and oversee and help implement the functions laid down in section 4 (1) (a) and 4 (1) (b) of the RTI Act.
- ix. Prepare information matrix based on analysis of RTI applications filed before the public authority and response thereof and, suggest to the top management the need for process reengineering, wherever necessary, as well as work out modalities of suo motu disclosure of such information.
- x. Be responsible for creating condition(s) in the organisation to establish an information regime, where transparency/disclosure norms are so robust that the public is required to have only the minimum resort to the use RTI Act to access information.
- xi. Be responsible for operating a user-friendly website for various information relating to the public authority concerned, including inter alia search option.
- xii. With the help of the appropriate wing of the public authority, set-up arrangements for training of the personnel to promote among them higher transparency orientation away from intuitive reflex towards secrecy, now common.
- xiii. Establish dialogue with the top management and key officials of the public authority regarding prevention of unnecessary confidentiality classification of documents and records under the Official Secrets Act and to check over classification.

( B.B. SRIVASTAVA )  
Secretary