



Government of Assam

Extracts from Manual of Office Procedure Secretariat 1981

**for day to day use of officers and Assistants
in the Assam Secretariat**

Compiled by the Advisor to the Government of Assam

(Administrative Reforms)

July, 2015

PREFACE

Since efficiency of the Government depends on prompt disposal of office works, the Assam Administrative Reforms Commission 2005 inter alia recommended that extracts of the most relevant provisions of the Manual of Office Procedure: Secretariat 1981 should be printed in a handy booklet form and should be made available to secretariat officers and staff for ready reference. State Government accepted the recommendations and in fact Hon'ble Chief Minister desired that this booklet should be a Hand Book for officers and staff working in the secretariat. But till date no such booklet has been produced for distribution in the Secretariat.

This booklet has been compiled in my office for the benefit of the officers and assistants working in the Assam Sachivalaya. In this connection it may be mentioned that to make the booklet handy only few relevant chapters of the Manual are incorporated, but it is desirable that the officers and assistants should go through the Manual to acquaint themselves with the different aspects of secretariat administration. **The Manual of Office Procedure: Secretariat 1981** along with the Final Report of the AARC 2005 are available on the website assam.gov.in



Assam Sachivalaya, Dispur
Block 'A', 4th Floor

Jatin Hazarika
Advisor to Government of Assam of Assam
Administrative Reform

Contents

(Extracted from Manual of Office Procedure Assam Secretariat 1981)

Chapter	Subject	Page
CHAPTER IV	Registration and Perusal of Dak	1-6
CHAPTER V	Action on Receipts Notes and Orders	7-22
Chapter VI	Drafting	23-25
CHAPTER IX	Filing System	26-36
CHAPTER XII	Checks on Delays	37-40
CHAPTER XVI	Security of Official Information and Documents	41-43
CHAPTER XVII	Inspections	44-46
Miscellaneous Extracts from the Manual	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Office Hours,• Punctuality in office attendance,• Businesslike activity in Secretariat• Cleanliness in Secretariat	47-48

CHAPTER IV REGISTRATION AND PERUSAL OF DAK

32. Opening of dak in Departments

32.1. Cover (received in ordinary postal dak or by hand) addressed to an officer and received in the Department will be sent unopened forthwith to him or in his absence to the officer looking after his work.

32.2. Covers bearing security markings which are not addressed to an officer by name will be opened by the Superintendent and will be dealt with by him in accordance with the security instructions indicated in Chapter XVI.

32.3 All other covers will be opened by the Diarist.

33. Receipt of Dak by the diarist On opening the dak. The Diarist will:-

- a) Check the enclosures, and in case of any found missing, make a note of the fact on the body of the receipt.
- b) Stamp all receipts as in the facsimile in the margin and note the date and receipt in the Branch. The time of receipt in the Branch will be noted only in important cases. He will not enter the diary number at this stage: and (c) forward all receipts to the Branch Officer according to paragraph 34.

Department/Branch.....

.....

(Date of receipt)

(Time of receipt)

Diary No./U.O.

File No.....

34. Perusal of dak by officers:

34.1. Perusal of dak by officers and careful scrutiny at dak stage with directions for disposal are important for prompt disposal. A Branch Officer will peruse at dak stage all official dak received in the Branch.

3.4.2. The Branch Officer will:

- a) Keep receipts which he himself can dispose of or on which he desires specific instructions to be given to the office.
- b) forward important receipts to the higher officers which in his opinion should be seen by them at dak stage; and
- c) Indicate the course, of action on important receipts. He may call the Superintendent or the dealing Assistants and give them directions for disposal of receipts.

34.3. The Joint Secretary or Deputy Secretary may forward important receipts to the Secretary which in his opinion should be seen by him at dak stage. The Secretary, Joint Secretary or Deputy Secretary may retain such receipts which he would like to handle personally and return the rest of the dak to the next subordinate officer with necessary instructions. He may also call any subordinate officer or staff and give him directions for disposal.

34.4. Every officer going on tour or on casual leave will make arrangements for the receipt and disposal of dak addressed to him during his absence. In the absence of such an arrangement the next below officer will, ordinarily, be responsible for this.

34.5. An officer through whom dak passes will initial every receipt in token of having seen it. He may indicate priority markings if necessary.

34.6. The dak will be sent to the Branch Officer and higher officer without diarizing, in separate distinctive pads bearing the words "DAK" and the name of the Department

35. Perusal of dak by Superintendent

The Superintendent will go through the dak immediately on receipt from the Branch Officer and will :

- a) Sort out important and priority receipts, telegrams and reminders. He will determine priority for action on receipts according to paragraph 40.1 and mark the priority in ink on the receipt itself.

NOTE: The actual affixing of the priority marking label, etc., may be done by the Assistants.

- b) Call for the dealing Assistants and give them directions regarding disposal of the receipt: in case of a reminder, he will put up the file immediately to the Branch Officer, explaining why timely action was not taken;
- c) Mark all receipts other than those at (d) to the dealing Assistants according to the subjects allotted to each. He will take action on important receipts himself;
- d) sort out receipts, if any, which are misspent to the Department or the subject matter- of which does not pertain to it and arrange for their transfer to the Department concerned, where necessary, with the orders of the Branch Officer;
- e) Hand over the dak to the diarist for diarizing.

36. Diarizing of receipts

36.1. The Diarist will then 'diarize'. i.e., enter the receipts in the Diary or Receipt Register in the form given in Appendix I, Part 2. He will at this stage complete columns (1) to (5) of the Receipt Register and enter the diary number of the receipt in the space provided for the purpose in the stamp put on the receipt (Paragraph 33). When diarizing he will comply with the following: -

- a) Telegrams and other receipts bearing priority markings will be separated from the other dak and attended to first.
- b) Receipts mis sent to the Department will not be diarized but returned promptly to the Department concerned.
- c) Telegrams and communications from the Government of India will be entered in the register in red ink.

36.2. After diarizing, the Diarist will distribute the receipts to the Assistants concerned.

37. Types of receipts which should be diarized:

Subject to the exceptions given in paragraph 39, the following types of receipts should be entered in the Receipt Register

- a) All communication received from outside the Department including unofficial references received from other Departments of the Secretariat, Heads of Departments and other offices.
- b) All independent notes received from any Minister or of ficer.

- c) Extracts from notes retained from files, or from .minutes of meetings, tour notes, inspection reports, etc., on which action is necessary.

38. Receipt of inter-departmental references:

Papers received unofficially from other Departments/Offices and to be returned in original and all Files received from outside will be entered in the Register of Files Received Unofficially in the form in Appendix I, Part 3A and will be submitted in dak to the officer concerned as in the case of other dak.

39. Types of receipts which should not be diarized:

The following types of receipts should not be diarized.

- (a) Unsigned communications on which no instructions have been recorded by officer and on which no action is called for.
- (b) Extra copies of one and the same representation by the same person addressed to the same or different authorities.
- (c) Post copies of telegrams except those which contain any additional information or instruction.
- (d) Copies of routine circulars extracts, etc., which are received in the course of circulation for general information (i.e. list of holidays, list of telephones, tour programmes) .
- (e) Casual leave applications of departmental staff.
- (f) Any other type of receipts which by an office order need not be diarized.

40. Priority markings and time limits for submission of cases

40.1. The following kinds of priority markings only will be used:-

- (a) Immediate.
- (b) Urgent.
- (c) Fixed Date

40.2. Each of these priority markings has a distinctive use and should be used indiscriminately.

40.3. The receipts or cases with priority markings will be disposed of as follows:—

- (a) "Immediate" cases should be taken up immediately on receipt by stopping all other work and should be put up on the day of receipt or the next day.
- (b) "Urgent" cases should be put up within 3 (three) days.
- (c) "Fixed Date" cases should be given precedence over others of ordinary nature. to which no priority labels have been attached and should indicate the date, by which action should be taken.

40.4. Cases bearing no priority marking should be put up not later than 7 days.

40.5. The subordinate staff and officers are to put up receipts according to the priority indicated to them. The higher officers on their part should give such marking carefully. They should besides taking the nature of receipt into consideration, also keep in view the total priority work sent down to the office.

40.6. The Superintendent will ensure that the priority labels are removed or changed when no longer required or the priority is changed. The Branch officer will check this.

40.7. The priority marking, given within a Branch to a file will be examined by the Superintendent at the time of making an unofficial reference to another branch and removed or revised if necessary.

40.8. A case which is not ready within the prescribed time limit will be shown to the Branch Officer or a higher officer for obtaining extension of time limit. The officer concerned will indicate the further time allowed for submission of the case.

41. Priority in movement of dak. - A11 officers will give the highest priority to the perusal of dak. Personal assistants and stenographers should treat the receipts moving: up and down as 'Immediate'. The Branch officer and the Superintendent should keep a careful watch on any hold up in its movement

42. Note book for important receipts

42.1. Dealing Assistants, Superintendents and higher officers will keep a note in their Engagement Lists or in a similar note book, of important receipts requiring prompt action or on which action is required to be completed by a specified date.

42.2. If the Minister or a higher officer has indicated action on a receipt by a specific date, the subordinate officers, Superintendent and dealing Assistant will ensure that the action. is taken by that date and intimated.

43. Scrutiny of the Register of Receipts

The diarist will be responsible for the maintenance of the Receipt Register. The Superintendent will scrutinize it at least once a week to see that it is properly maintained and that the distribution and issue of receipts is done promptly and initial it with date after the scrutiny.

CHAPTER - V

ACTION ON RECEIPTS NOTES AND ORDERS

44. Action on receipts by officers:

44.1. The initial examination of receipts and U.O Files will be done by an officer not below the rank of the Branch Officer, as indicated in paragraph 34. In a case where action on a receipt or file is taken directly by an officer without consulting the intermediary levels, the receipt or file on return should be routed through all officers dealing with the subject.

44.2. The "level jumping" is permitted only in the following cases:-

- a) When a higher officer calls for the papers directly,
- b) Where by a specific order, it has been laid down that certain categories of cases will be put up directly to higher officers without passing through the specified intermediary levels.

45. Initial examination of receipts by Assistants:

45.1. The Assistant will sort out the receipts according to priority. The priority receipts will be taken up first.

45.2. The Assistant will check the enclosures and if any is found short of missing, he/she will take action for obtaining the missing papers.

45.3. If any other Branch is concerned with any part or aspect of a receipt, the Assistant will send relevant extracts through the Superintendent to the Branch concerned for necessary action.

46. Collection of relevant materials:

The office will then collect the material required for taking action on a receipt. This will ordinarily consist of (i) the file on the subject if one already exists, (ii) any other material of the nature described in items (c) and (d) of paragraph 53. For this purpose the Assistant will consult the File Register, Precedent Register, Standing Guard File, if any, and relevant Acts, Rules, Regulation etc. He will take the advice of the Superintendent in difficult or doubtful cases.

47. Bearing a receipt on a file:

A receipt will be brought on to a current file if it relates to a subject on which a file already exists. If not, it will be necessary to open a new file for initiating action on the receipt if further correspondence is anticipated. The miscellaneous papers may be filed suitably in a miscellaneous file. Before placing a receipt on a file, all unnecessary pins and clips will be removed. The receipt will then be docketed and referenced in the manner described in Chapter IX.

48. Log Book for Assistants:

Every Assistant will maintain a Log Book indicating his/her day to day disposal of receipts and files in the Form given in Appendix I, Part 4. The U.O. Files received from outside the Departments or returned for further action such as draft, and endorsement or further examination within the Department will be entered in it

49. Maintenance of Registers:

49.1. Each Branch will maintain registers so that the file work can be reduced and the basic data regarding the jobs performed in the Branch is readily available. The Organization and Methods Division will devise registers of common use in the Departments. For special registers to be maintained in a department, it will consult the Organization and Methods Division before introducing them. A Department will make any modification in the common or special registers in consultation with the Organization and Methods Division.

49.2. The Register together with the receipt containing information to be entered in the register will be sent to the Branch Officer for his/her initials. If no further action on the receipt is called for, it will be filed after an entry in the register. If, however, further action on the receipt is necessary, it will be dealt with like any other receipts in addition to the entry in the register.

50. Cancellation of Stamps:

50.1.1. Section 30 of the Court Fees Act, 1870 reads as follows: “ No document requiring a stamp under this Act shall be filed or acted upon in any proceeding in any Court or Office until the stamp has been cancelled.

Such officer as the Court of the Head of the Office may from time to time appoint shall, on receiving any such document, forthwith effect such cancellation by punching out the figure head so as to leave the amount designated on the stamp untouched, and the part removed by punching shall be burnt or otherwise destroyed.”

50.1.2. When a document liable to stamp duty under the Court Fees Act is submitted, it will be punched with a punch so as to remove the whole of the figure head but not affect the printed value or stamp. It must not be merely torn or punched with a small punch intended for tagging or filling papers.

50.1.3. If the document is insufficiently stamped, the following action may be taken :-

- a) The document may be returned to the party concerned to be stamped sufficiently.
- b) The party may be informed to make good the difference: or
- c) Reject the document as in the case of tenders.

In any case, no action on the document will be taken until it duly stamped.

50.1.4. If the document is partly concerned with a certificate or is stamped where no stamp is required. The stamp will be punched and returned to the stamped in excess of legal requirements in the form given in Appendix 1, Part 6 so as to enable him to apply for renewal or refund. If it bears two or more stamps, only so many stamps as will render it properly stamped are to be retained, beginning with those of the lowest value and arrest will be returned; but if it bears single stamp of a higher value than retained.

50.1.6. Before sending the files to the Record Room, the Superintendent will see that all the Court Fees Stamps have been duly punched.

50.2. The record keeper will, when the record is consigned to his custody, punch a second hole with a triangular punch distinct from the first, and at the same time note upon the fly-leaf the date of his doing so. The second punching will be made on the day the records are received in the Records Room, or as soon after as possible and should not be kept pending till the inspection or examination of the records is due to take place.

50.3. The Department issuing copies, certificate or other similar documents liable to stamp duty will, before issue, punch the stamps with a square punch in the manner described

above. As an additional precaution, the signature of the officer attesting the document with the date should be written across the stamped in excess of legal requirements the party concerned with stamp and upon the paper on either side of it, as is frequently done by persons signing stamped receipts. The stamp will be punched at the time of attesting the document.

50.4 These directions apply only to adhesive labels used Court fees need not be cancelled or punched otherwise than as required by Section 30 of the Court Fees Act.

51. Notes

51.1. 'Note' are the written remarks recorded on a paper under consideration to facilitate its disposal. They may consist of a précis of previous papers, a statement or an analysis of the question or questions requiring decision, suggestions as to the course of action and orders passed on them.

51.2. The dealing assistant will append his initials with the date of the leftside just below his note. The Superintendent will also likewise put his dated initials on the left side just below his not or below the note of the Assistant, except when disposing of a paper within his powers in which case he will sign his name in full on the right hand side.

51.3 In recording the date with initials or signatures appended to notes, the month and the year should also be indicated along with the date.

51.4 A suitable margin on all sides of the note –sheet will be left. Notes sheets will preferably be bound in bundies of 100 sheets each by the Government Press with the margin printed on it.

51.5 Care should be taken to see that notes submitted to higher for orders do not end at the bottom of and note sheet in such a way as would leave not sufficient space at the bottom for short orders to be passed. A blank note sheet should always be attached to the 'Notes' portion of the file.

51.6. In writing notes or in preparing drafts, the observation made in Appendix V "Style in Notes and Drafts" will be kept in view.

52. General instructions regarding noting

52.1. All notes should be concise and to the point. Excessive noting is an evil and should be avoided. It is to be assumed that the 'Paper Under Consideration', or the "P.U.C.", and the previous notes, if any will be read by the officer to whom a case is submitted. The reproduction verbatim of extracts from or paraphrasing of the P.U.C. or of notes of other Departments on the same file should be avoided.

52.2. Any officer who has to note upon a file on which a running summary of facts' or précis is available should, in drawing attention to the facts of the case, refer to the summary or précis without repeating any part of the facts in his note.

52.3. If apparent errors in the note of another Department have to be pointed out or if the opinion expressed there has to be criticized, care should be taken that the observations are couched in courteous and temperate language free from personal remarks.

52.4. If the Branch officer or higher officer has made any remarks on a receipt these should first be copied out in the note sheet before writing a note. No note should be written on the receipt itself except in a routine matters.

52.5. When a higher officer passes an order or calls for important information on a slip of paper, the slip should be pasted on the note-sheet concerning the file and the note given under it.

52.6. When arising out of a single case there are several points requiring orders, each point should be noted upon.

53. Scope and purpose of nothing by office

The office note will cover the following

- a) To see whether all the facts, so far as they are open to check, are correct.
- b) To point out any mistakes or mis-statements of facts.
- c) To draw attention, where necessary, to the statutory or customary procedure and to point out the law and rules and where they are to be found.
- d) To supply other relevant facts and figures available in the Department and to put up the Standing Guard File, if any, or other papers containing precedents or previous ;
- e) To state the question or questions for consideration and to bring out clearly the points requiring decision ; and
- f) To avoid any opinions or comments regarding the action or officers or other Departments and also to avoid noting any personal views on the case.

54. Action by Superintendent

54.1. The Superintendent is responsible for the accuracy of the note and draft of an Assistant who submits them through him and, therefore, should carefully scrutinize the statements and references made by him. In case the note of an Assistant is not satisfactory, he should require him to re-write the note. He should as far as possible, avoid writing another note after the note written by the Assistant. He may add his remarks or suggestions regarding a course of action here necessary and submit the case to the branch officer or higher officer, if so required or laid down.

54.2. The Superintendent will also check the correctness of facts stated in any note or draft, which might have been added to the file by an officer it has been submitted for orders, as soon as it returns to the Branch and before the draft is issued or the case is passed on to another Department.

54.3. Superintendents will independently take action in the following types of cases:-

- a) Intermediate routine action on all cases, e.g., issuing reminders, acknowledgements, etc.
- b) Final disposal of routine cases, e.g., those in which factual information of a non-confidential nature has to be called for from, or to be supplied to a Department; and
- c) Any other action which by a general or specific office order, a Superintendent is authorized to take independently.

54.4. The delegations under clause (c) above should be made in terms of specific items of work done in each Branch and should be reviewed from time to time taking into account the nature of work and the individual capability of the Superintendent. Due regard should also be paid to the statutory and other limitations.

54.5. While signing official communications relating to matters within his powers, the Superintendent may use his name and designation.

55. Notes and orders by officers

55.1. Responsibility of Branch Officers regarding office notes and drafts – The Branch officer will be responsible for the accuracy of the facts stated in the notes and drafts put up to the higher officers and will therefore satisfy himself that the office has brought out the facts in the notes and drafts fully and correctly.

55.2. Subject to any general or special orders in force, a Branch Officer or higher officer should ordinarily dispose of the majority of cases coming up to him on his/her responsibility.

55.3. An officer will confine his/her note to the actual points without repeating the contents of the previous notes. When he/she agrees with the recommendations made in the preceding note, he/she will merely append his signature.

55.4. There should not ordinarily be more than two notes by officers including the note by the Branch officer, in addition to the office note. This can be achieved by officers at different subordinate level discussing the important cases with their higher officers. After discussion an officer will take action as follows:

- a) Where a subordinate officer agrees with his/her higher officer, he/she may pass the order and take responsibility for such a decision; or
- b) Where he/she does not agree with the higher officer, he/she will send the file with his views to the higher officer for passing order; or
- c) In important cases, that file, after discussion, may be handed over to the higher officer for giving a note or passing order.

55.5. An officer should generally follow the instruction regarding noting contained in paragraph 52 and 53 while putting up a note.

56. Channel for submission of cases

56.1. The channel for submission of cases will ordinarily be Superintendent-Branch Officer-Deputy Secretary/Joint Secretary/Additional Secretary-Secretary-Minister, cases moving up to the stage necessary.

56.2. Selected Assistants may be authorized to submit cases direct to Branch Officer.

56.3. Superintendent may be permitted to submit certain types of cases direct to Deputy Secretary/Joint Secretary and Branch Officer to the Secretary, Similarly, Deputy Secretary/Joint Secretary may in special cases, deal with direct with the Minister. In a Branch where there is no Deputy / Joint Secretary, an Under Secretary may put up papers direct to the Minister in accordance with paragraph 7, 2.2.

56.4. After orders have been passed by a competent officer, the file and receipts should go back to the Branch through all officers at intermediate stages dealing with the subject to keep them informed of the decision taken.

57. Office order:-

57.1. An office order is a means of communicating a decision internally among the members of a Department. It may be passed by the Branch Officer or higher officer for efficient disposal of business in the Department.

57.2. The office orders will be serially numbered and will be written or pasted in a register.

57.3. Some of the illustrative subjects on which office orders may be issued are as follows:

- a) Distribution of work amongst the Assistants and Officers.
- b) Manner of disposal of work, e.g., level jumping, putting up of files to Minister.
- c) Instructions regarding attendance, cleanliness, etc.
- d) Prescribing the departmental registers, forms and return.
- e) Removal of any particular defect noticed in the Department.
- f) Any other office procedure considered necessary for improving the disposal.

58. Running Summary of facts

58.1. A "running summary of facts" or a précis should be prepared and placed in the file in a separate folder, labeled accordingly, in a case in which it is evident that such a summary would contribute to its speedy disposal. When the précis is prepared in an old case where there may not be much scope to add subsequent action, it may be placed in the notes portion. Otherwise it may be placed in a separate folder labeled accordingly.

58.2. It will be the duty of the Superintendent and the Branch Officer to see:-

- a) That a summary is prepared at the earliest appropriate stage in suitable cases, and
- b) That the summary is kept up-to-date by making suitable additions as further factual developments occur.

58.3. Opinions of individual officers should not be incorporated in the summary. However, when a case is referred to another Department/Office for advice or concurrence, the advice or views of the Department/Office consulted should be treated as constituting a material part of the facts of the case and added to the summary.

58.4. The summary will be signed by the assistant and Superintendent. The Branch Officer will be responsible to check that all the facts have been fully and correctly brought out in it. He will also sign it. A higher officer making use of the summary may initial it as a note of having made use of that summary.

59. Personal discussions and use of telephone

The officers provided with telephone should avoid inter-changing of notes or sending of files or letters when the matter can be disposed of by a discussion across the table or on telephone.

60. Record of verbal discussion, orders and instructions

All points emerging from discussion between two or more officers and the conclusions reached should be recorded on the file by the officer authorizing action and where necessary confirmed by the other participants. Similarly, all verbal orders or instructions given by any officer and where necessary, the circumstances leading to such orders or instructions should be recorded on the file and in important matters should be confirmed.

61. Standing Guard File

61.1. A Standing Guard File will be prepared in each branch and will be maintained in different parts subject-wise. The subjects which will be included in the Standing Guard File will be determined by the Branch Officer or higher officer. Each part of the Guard File will consist of three sections, namely:-

Section I - An index containing the date and number of decisions or orders as given in Part II of the Guard File.

Section II - Full copies of the decisions or orders referred to placing in chronological order.

Section III - Model Forms to be used in the issue of orders, notifications, etc.

61.2. Whenever any new decision is taken on the subject it will be suitably incorporated in the relevant section of the Guard File by the Superintendent or under his direction by the dealing assistant. The Branch Officer or Superintendent will indicate the circulars and decisions to be placed in the Guard File by giving initial "GF" on it.

61.3. As soon as a new officer joins a Department, it will be the duty of the Superintendent to bring the Standing Guard File of the Department to the notice of the officer concerned. The officer should study the file carefully.

62. Correction slips for Codes, Manual, etc

62.1.1. Responsibility of Superintendents, Stenographers, Personal Assistants etc.- Each Branch is responsible for keeping all its books of reference corrected up-to-date. It will maintain an up-to-date list of its books of reference. One copy of this list will be furnished to the Government Book Depot for preparation of distribution lists of correction slips.

62.1.2. It will be the responsibility of the Superintendent to see that correction slips are pasted in all the books on the list immediately on receipt and satisfy him that the dealing assistant has performed his duty.

62.1.3. The personal assistants or stenographers attached to the Ministers etc. and officers are responsible for pasting correction slips on all the books kept for reference at the offices as well as at the residences of the Ministers and officers. They will maintain an up-to-date list of the books, one copy of which will be kept in the room of the Minister/officer, another copy sent to the Book Depot for the distribution list and the third copy retained by them. In case there is no Stenographer attached to an officer, it will be the responsibility of the Branch to keep a list of books with the officer and to maintain them up-to-date.

62.1.4. It is like-wise the responsibility of the Librarian to keep all books in the Library corrected up-to-date. He will also furnish a list of all such books to the Book Depot.

62.1.5. When the books are no longer required by a Minister or officer they will be sent to the Library and the Librarian will then be responsible for keeping such books corrected.

62.1.6. Whenever a book is ordered from the Book Depot, it should be entered on the distribution list for correcting slips unless the order is for replacement of a copy for which correction slips are already being received. This should be clearly stated on the requisition slip.

62.2. Preparation of Correction Slips

62.2.1. The correction slips will be prepared, as soon as orders are passed with at the approval of the Branch Officer or higher officer.

62.2.2. A correction slip will be as brief as possible. When any order which forms the subject matter of a correction slip were issued, such reference should be changed in the correction slip a quotation of the chapter, Section and the rule or paragraph of the book of reference in which the orders issued in the communication in question have been embodied.

62.2.3. Correction slips will be numbered serially and each book of reference will have a separate series for numbering the correction slips. A new series will be started as soon as a new Edition is published.

62.2.4. A new rule or paragraphs to be inserted by a correction slip will be give n same n umber of the rule or paragraph which it follows, but with the addition of a letter to distinguish it from the preceding rule or paragraph e.g., a new rule or new rules after rule 15 should be rule 15 A. 15 B.

62.2.5 Every correction slip will quote the n umber of the file in which the draft correction slip was approved. This number will be quoted at the bottom of the slip enclosed by brackets.

62.2.6. For each book a register for pasting of the correction slips issued up-to-date will be maintained by the Branch issuing the correction slips will be pasted in their serial order. The

first few pages of the register will from index to the rules affected by the correction slips in the following from:

Correction Slip No.

Rule or Paragraph amended.

62.2.7. An annual list of correction slips in respect of each book administered by a Branch will be issued that Branch by the first week of July. This list should contain the numbers of the correction slips issued up-to-date and the rules modified copies of the list will be issued to all concerned.

62.3.1 Printing and distribution of correction slips –Soon after draft correction slips is approved, the Superintendent will take action to have it printed at the Government Press. The total number of copies to be printed for distribution by the Book Depot will be according to the standing distribution list maintained by the Book Depot.

62.3.2. The printed slips will be handed over by the Press to the Book Depot for distribution.

62.4.1 Mode of correction – The books will be corrected immediately on receipt of the correction slips.

62.4.2. Intelligence should be exercised in doing the corrections. If a slips cancels or modifies a part of standing order or any Manual, the part cancelled or superseded should be scored out and the number of correction slip should be noted in red in the margin against it. The same rule applies when one correction slip cancels or modifies the previous one.

62.4.3. When an isolated work or an isolated sentence is introduced in a paragraph, it may be convenient to enter it in manuscript in addition to the pasting of the correction slip.

62.4.4. In case of any doubt as to the correct place of pasting of a slip, advice of the Superintendent should be obtained.

62.4.5. When a book is corrected, the number of the correction slip, with its date and the rule or paragraph amended will be entered in the printed form at the end of the book for noting such details or, if there is no such form, in a blank sheet paste at the end of the book.

63. Copies of Acts received from Press : Copies of Acts received from the Superintendent, Government Press, should be scrutinized, the amending Acts sorted out and the amendments incorporated in all copies of the original Acts in the rooms of officers and in the Branch including spare copies in the Department.

64. Precedent Register

A Precedent Register will be maintained in every Branch in the form in Appendix I, Part-7. A note of all important decisions and ruling made in the Branch will be made in it. In making entries in the register the following instructions will be noted:

- a) The Catch-word is most important word that is placed first in the title of the subject and on it primarily depend the possibility of finding a file on the subject. This must be a word or word which will normally occur to anyone who is in search of the decision. Sometimes it may be necessary to enter a decision under two or three catch-words for facility of search.
- b) The subject should be filled up in alphabetical order of the each word.
- c) The Superintendent will ensure that a entry in the Precedent Register is made correctly soon after an important decision is taken.

- d) The register will contain references to matters only of such nature for which it is intended. It should not be relegated to the position of a File Register by entering each and every case, nor should it be made a compendium of decisions by entering the decisions made in the other branches/Department.

64.2. The Precedent Register is a guide to find out important decision taken in the department. Every decision is not recorded in this register. It only records important decisions. A decision which is not recorded in the Precedent Register can also be quoted as a Precedent.

64.3. The Branch Officer or the Superintendent will mark the words "P.R" on the file or receipt if the decision taken in it is to be incorporated in the Precedent Register. The register will be maintained by the Superintendent or by an Assistant under his direction.

65. Personal files

65.1. A Personal file will be maintained for every member of the service administered by a Department. It will contain all establishment orders, like appointment, leave, transfer, posting, punishment, etc., relating to the Government servant starting from his entry into service.

65.2. The personal files will be numbered by a separate set of series maintained in a separate File Register called Personal File Register for each service. The series will be indicated by giving the abbreviated name of the service in bracket after the initial letters of the branch e.g., the Personal Files of members of the Finance Service under Establishment Branch of Finance Department will bear the initials FEG (FS).

65.3. On transfer from one service to another the personal file of the incumbent will be transferred to the Department concerned or in the same Department to the service concerned. In such a case, the personal file number will be changed according to its serial number in the Personal File Register for that service.

65.4. The Personal File Register for a service will be permanent register of the Department so long as the incumbents, whose names are included in the register, are in that service.

65.5. All Personal Files of members of different services not numbered according to this procedure will be renumbered.

66. Proposals from and correspondence by Heads of Departments

66.1. The officers in the Secretariat and in offices of Heads of Departments should maintain close personal contact. An important proposal or scheme should be formulated, as far as possible, after joint consultation and discussion at the lowest competent level. When proposals so formulated are referred to the Department, they should ordinarily be dealt with by the officer who discussed and should not be subjected to a detailed examination at lower levels as a matter of course.

66.2. The Heads of Departments may correspond directly with their counterparts in other States only in matters of routine and non-controversial nature. Correspondence on all important and policy matters and matter of controversial nature should be done by the administrative Department and not the Heads of Department.

66.3. The Heads of Departments may make official references direct to any Head of the Department of the State in matters of purely technical or routine nature or for furnishing factual information. They may also furnish routine or factual information direct to the Secretariat Departments.

67. Processing of cases when a number of outside bodies are consulted

When a number of outside authorities are consulted in any matter, the date by which their replies are required will be indicated in the circular letter. The preliminary examination and, where necessary, tabular, consolidation of the replies will be started as soon as replies begin to arrive and not held over till the receipt of all the replies or the expiry of the target date. The file together with the consolidated statement of replies will be submitted to the appropriate senior officers for information at regular intervals. On expiry of the target date, it will be examined whether the time for receipt of replies may be extended or the matter may be produced with or without waiting for the outstanding replies.

68. Acknowledgements or interim replies

68.1. Acknowledgements: -

68.1.1. All communications from Members of Parliament, Members of State Legislature, recognized associations, public bodies and responsible members of the public which cannot be answered promptly, should ordinarily be acknowledged in the form given in Appendix-I Part-8.

68.1.2. When a communication is wrongly addressed to a Department, the receiving Department will, while transferring it to the Department concerned, indicate whether or not its receipt has been acknowledged by the first Department, the sender will also be informed of the fact of transfer.

68.2. Interim Replies:-

68.2.1. If delay is anticipated in sending put final answer an interim reply may be sent to the party concerned.

68.2.2. An Interim reply should immediately be sent to all Demi-Official letters which cannot be answered promptly.

69. Spare copies of important communications

Spare copies of important communication issued by a Branch will be kept in separate bundles. A list indicating the number and date of such communication will be maintained.

70. Correspondence between Government of India, State Government and Foreign Governments and International Organization

Correspondence between the State Government on the one hand and Foreign Governments and International Organization on the other should generally be channelized through the Ministry of External Affairs. In certain cases and subject to certain conditions, however, State Governments are authorized to communicate direct with the Foreign Government and International Organizations. Detailed instructions in this regard are contained in Appendix – VI.

71. Noting on inter-departmental reference

For noting on inter-departmental references, further instructions are in Chapter XI "Inter departmental References".

CHAPTER—VI

DRAFTING

72. Draft when and by whom to be prepared and approved

72.1. Except when the lines of action on a case is obvious, a draft of the communication proposed to be sent out will be prepared after orders have been passed by the competent officer indicating the terms of the reply to be sent.

72.2. A Branch officer or a higher officer, where necessary, will himself prepare a draft and authorize its issue or submit it to the next higher officer for approval. In other cases a draft will be prepared by the office.

72.3. All important drafts such as pertaining to policy matters, having financial implications, requiring increase in the sanctioned strength of staff, major change in a scheme and important communications to M. L. As. M. Ps. Chairman, Municipal Boards and presidents of Mohkuma Parishads should not be approved at a level lower than that of the Deputy Secretary. In some cases, it may be necessary to take approval of the Secretary or of Minister to the draft.

73. Wording of a draft

73.1. A draft should convey the exact intention of the order passed. The language used should be clear, concise and incapable of misconstruction besides being precise. Lengthy sentences, abruptness, redundancy, circumlocution, superlatives and repetition, whether of words, expressions or ideas, should be avoided. Communications of some length or complexity should generally conclude with a summary.

73.2. The forms of communications and the circumstances under which they should be used are described in Chapter VIII.

73.3. The persons and offices to which the copies are to be endorsed with instructions regarding action to be taken by them should be included in the draft.

74 Authentication of Government orders.

All orders and other instruments made and executed in the name of the Governor will be signed by an officer authorized to authenticate such orders under the Assam Rules of Executive Business.

75. General instructions

75.1. A draft will be prepared in Assam Schedule V Form No.66 or 67 (and draft continuation sheet when necessary) and written or typed in double space in half margin and on both sides of the paper. Obsolete forms, or papers restricted from old records, blank on one side, may also be used for drafts and rough calculations.

75.2. A slip bearing the words "Draft for approval" or "D.F.A" will be attached to the draft. If two or more drafts are put up on a file, the drafts will be numbered "D.F.A.I.", "D.F.A.II", "D.F.A. III" and so on.

75.3. All references mentioned in the draft will be pointed out in pencil in the margin with reference to their page number in the file.

75.4. The number and date of the communication replied to or of the last communication in the series of correspondence on the same subject will be referred to. Where it is necessary to refer to more than one communication or a series of communications this will be done in the margin of the draft. The subject will be mentioned in all communications including reminders.

75.5. A draft will show clearly the enclosures to the fair copy. To draw the attention of the typist, the comparers and the dispatcher, a diagonal stroke will be made in the margin. The number of enclosures will also be indicated at the end of the draft on the left side bottom of the page as "Enclose Nos."

75.6. If copies of an enclosure referred to in the draft are available and are, therefore, not to be typed, the fact will be stated in the margin of the draft for the guidance of the typists.

75.7. All drafts put up on a file will bear the number of the file and the page number of the correspondence portion e.g., ABP. 56/68/10.

75.8. Where other State Governments or Departments etc. are consulted on any matter, time limit for replies will ordinarily be specified.

75.9. The officer concerned will initial on the draft in token of his approval. An intermediary officer approving the draft will also initial it before forwarding it to a higher officer.

75.10. Complimentary slips or rubber stamp will be used instead of separate forwarding letters for circulating stenciled, printed or other literature.

76. Standard Forms

For communications of routine nature, approved standard skeleton forms will be drawn up, and cyclostyled or printed. Organization and Methods Division will prepare forms for common use in Departments. These forms will be submitted to the officer concerned with a fair copy for signature.

77. Addressing communications to officers by name

A communication may be addressed to an officer by name when it is intended that the matter should receive the personal attention of the officer either because of its secret nature or special urgency/importance or because some ground has already been covered by personal discussion and the officer to whom the paper is being marked would be in a position to record his views or give his decision straightaway. When a paper is so marked to an officer by name, reminders pertaining thereto may also be sent to the same officer (or he has since been transferred, to his successor) or a higher officer by name. A demi official letter will, however, always be addressed to an officer by name.

78. Priority and security markings on drafts

The drafts of all communications with priority or security markings will be so marked on the top right-hand corner under the orders of the Superintendent or higher officer.

CHAPTER - IX FILING SYSTEM

111. Constituents of a file

111.1. Notes and Correspondence: - two main parts of a file are (a) 'Notes' and (b) 'Correspondence'. The former contains notes recorded on a "Paper under Consideration" or independently on the same subject from time to time. The "Correspondence" contains all communications received and office copies of outgoing communications.

111.2. The correspondence part is arranged according to the date of receipt of the correspondence the earliest communication received being at the top. For convenience, the correspondence will be twilled over so that paper under consideration lies at the top of the correspondence.

111.3. When the 'notes' or the 'correspondence' portion of a file becomes bulky (say, exceeds about 100 pages on tiny side), it will be kept in a separate cover and marked 'Volume I'. Further action on the subject will be continued on a new volume of the same file, the cover of which will be marked 'Volume II' and so on.

111.4. The "notes and correspondence" parts of a file are covered by a file cover in Assam Schedule V, Form No. 7. It contains details of file number name of Department and Branch and the Subject. The subject and the file number mentioned on the file cover must be the same as given in the File Register. If any correction in the subject of the file cover is made at any time, the Superintendent will see that a corresponding correction in the File Register is made.

112. Punching of papers

Every paper will be punched the left hand top corner to the correct gauge (3/4 of an inch from either at side) before it is tagged to the correspondence or notes.

113. Serial numbers and page numbers

113.1. According to the existing instructions, every communication whether receipts or issue together with its enclosures kept in the "Correspondence" should be given a serial number which is different from the page number. If the first communication which is Serial 1 contains 5 pages, the communication at the 6th page of the correspondence should be Serial 2. It has, however, been observed that the serial number and the page number are confused with each other and, therefore, the instructions regarding giving serial number are modified. There will be only page numbers in the correspondence part of the file as also for the notes portion. There will be no serial number in the file.

113.2. Every page in each part of the file will be consecutively numbered in separate series. Blank intervening pages, if any, will not be numbered. The receipts or notes written or typed on both sides should be numbered on both the sides. The numbering will be done in ink at the top right hand corner of the pages.

113.3. The page number once allotted to either part of the file will not ordinarily be changed. If however, it becomes necessary to do so the orders of an officer not below the rank of the branch officer will be taken in the notes portion of the file.

114. Docketing

Docketing is the process of making entries in the "Notes" portion of a file about each receipt or issue, number and date of the letter and from whom received or to whom issued. A receipt or issue will be docketed between two lines by writing across the page. The receipt will be entered in red and issue in blue-black ink. The page number of the communication will be shown just outside the margin.

115. Opening and numbering of a new file

115.1. A new file will be opened in a branch with the orders the Superintendent or higher officer. Its title will be given by the Superintendent. A new file will be given a fresh file number. The file number consists of (a) initial letters used for identifying the Branch and the group of subjects; b) the serial number of the file in the File Register (paragraph 116) ; and (c) the year in which the file is opened.

Illustrations: -

- a) File No.GAC.25/69 will indicate that it is the 25th file opened in the year 1969 in the General Administration Department and relates to the group of subjects under cinema".
- b) File No.HLA.15/68 indicates that it was the 15th file opened in the year 1968 in the (A) Branch of Health and Family Welfare Department.

115.2.1. A list of the old and new initials allotted to Departments and Branches is given in Appendix X. The general principles followed in allotting initial letter to Secretariat Departments are as follows: -

- a) The initial letters allotted will indicate the name of the branch.
- b) As far as possible, one set of initial letters will be allotted for each branch.
- c) In branches where more than one set of initial letters is necessary due to diversity of functions, the first two initial letters will remain the same. The third letter only will be modified for different collections under groups of subjects.

An exception to this general principle has become necessary regarding TAD, P.W.D. (R&B.) and P.W.D. (F. C & I.)

In case of T.A.D., there are many groups of subjects and the first three letters namely, "T.A.D." or "T.A.R." has been uniformly retained before letters in bracket indicating the detailed subjects.

In case of P.W.D. (R.&B.) and P.W.D. (F.C.&I), however, first two letters have been kept common for all their respective branches. The third letter only has been varied for a branch. Hence the detailed subjects under a branch have been shown in brackets.

In case of Development (A) and (B) branches and Establishment (A) and (B) branches under P.W.D. (R.&B.), however, the number of member of initial letters allotted to the branch has been increased to four to specify (A) and (B) in addition to Development or Establishment subjects.

- d) A section under a branch will be indicated by drawing a stroke between the initial letters of the Branch and the separate letters for the section e.g., Family Planning Section under Health (B) Branch will be represented as HLB/FP.

115.2.2. In the branches in which more than one set of initial letters is used, the file register will be only one for facility of maintenance of the register and handling it, e.g.' in Appointment (A) Department, the first file opened in 1968 may be AAP.1/68, while the second file may be AAM.2/68.

115.3. A new file will be opened at the beginning of a calendar year if previous papers in the file have been finally disposed of or a similar new cause of action has arisen e.g., recommendation of Assam Public Service Commission for another batch, arrear lists beginning from a new calendar year or annual returns.

115.4. In the event of transfer of work from one branch to another or division of work of one branch into two, all files connected with that work will be transferred to the branch to which the work has been transferred. In such a case, the Branch taking over the records of 'another Branch will not renumber the files already closed and/or recorded. In the case of current files, however, that Branch will try to close them as early as possible and open new files of its own.

115.5. As soon as a new file is opened, the "reference to former cases" on the same subject at the back of file cover will be filled in. Such a reference will also be given on the first note sheet for facility of reference and also as a check against any loss of or damage to the file cover.

116. Title of a file:

116.1. The subject given to a file is called its "title". It should be as brief as possible but should give at a glance sufficient indication of the contents of the file so as to serve as an aid to its identification. The 'title' will be divided into (a) 'Head' (b) 'Sub-Head' or 'Sub-Heads' and (c) 'content' in the following manners :

- a) **Head:** The important word that is placed first in the title by which its alphabetical position in the index to the File Register is determined and on which primarily depends the possibility of finding the title in the index is called the 'head'. The 'head' must be a word that will naturally occur to anyone who wants the paper. It must , not be too general.
- b) **Sub-Head:-** The 'head' will be followed by a 'sub-head' or 'sub-heads', which should be more indicative of the precise subject of the file than the 'head'. In selecting 'sub-heads' the consideration to be borne in mind will be the same as in selecting the 'head', viz., that the word or words selected should be such as are likely to strike anyone in need of the papers contained in the file. Where it is necessary to have more than one subhead in a title, the wider and more abstract should generally come before the narrow and more concrete.
- c) **Content:** - After the 'head and 'sub-head' will come the 'content'. This must be brief and compatible with expressing clearly the exact subject of the file. If content shows at a glance, like a newspaper head-line, the exact subject of the paper, it is a good content. A content worded in general terms is of little practical use, for if it does not distinguish a file from others relating to dopey similar but not identical subjects,- time may be %wasted in taking and examining several files.

116.2. If more than one aspect of questions are dealt with in the same file and they are inter connected, two or more complete titles may be applicable. The criterion for selection of the title is its appropriateness and facility of location. A title which is less general should, therefore, be selected.

Illustration: - whether it is necessary to consult the Assam Public Service Commission in a proposal regarding extension of service of officers holding tenure posts. Title I, as follows, is preferred as it is more specific.

Title I: - Tenure Posts, Extension of Service, whether consultation with Assam Public Service Commission necessary.

Title 2:- Assam Public Service Commission mission Consultation, Tenure Posts, Extension of service, whether necessary.

117. Separate file for each distinct subject

Here should be a separate file for each distinct subject, if the subject of a file is too wide or too general. There will be a tendency to place in it receipts dealing with different aspects of - the matter which apart from making the file unwieldy will impede business. If the issues rose in a receipt or in the notes or in me orders are beyond the original subject, relevant extracts will be taken and dealt with separately in new files. In some cases, however, it may become necessary to open a miscellaneous file to contain miscellaneous unimportant papers, on which further correspondence is not likely to arise.

118. Standard "heads" and "sub-heads"

118.1. Consistency is essential in the selection of both heads and sub-heads. For example, files dealing with questions of pay should be indexed always under the head "Pay" and not sometimes under 'Pay' and sometime under 'Salary' or 'Emoluments'. This can be secured by maintaining a list of standard heads and sub-heads for recurring subjects and adhering to them.

118.2. The Organization and Methods Division will prepare heads and sub-heads for a few departments and circulate them as the basis for preparation of such heads and sub-heads in other departments.

119. Wording and Articulation

The whole title-'Head', 'sub-head' and 'content' will consist mainly of substantives, adjectives (where necessary) and participles. Minor parts of speech will be excluded s far as possible to make alphabetical arrangement practicable. The title should be articulated, or broken up into members each consisting f as few words as possible, and each expressing an element in the subject matter. Each will begin with a capital letter and separated from the preceding one by a bold dash.

120. Examples of titles

120.1. A few examples of titles are given below:—

Subject dealt with	Title prepared
1. Question whether it is necessary to consult the Assam Public Service Commission in proposals regarding extension of service of officer holding tame posts.	TENURE POSTS- Extension of Services- Whether Assam Service Commission consultation necessary.
2. Question whether merit should be regarded as the sole criterion in making promotion and confirmations to selection posts.	SELECTION POSTS- Promotion and Confirmations- Whether Merit sole criterion.
3. Enquiry whether it is necessary to communicate adverse remarks in the confidential reports to person concerned in certain circumstances.	CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS Adverse Remarks- Circumstances in which communication necessary.

120.2. In the above 'titles' the words in block letters are 'heads' those in italics are 'sub-heads' and the rest of the 'title' is 'content'

121. Part File

121.1. A part file may be opened only when the main file is not likely to be available for some time or when it is desired to consult simultaneously other branches or officers and it is necessary for them to see the "Paper Under Consideration" and other connected papers.

121.2. A part file will normally consist of: -

- a) The original "Paper Under Consideration" or its copy and other essential papers on the "Correspondence" side; and
- b) The Notes on the "Paper under Consideration" or their copy on the "Notes" side.

121.3. The reference and page numbers in a Part File will be given in pencil. The part file will be amalgamated with the main file as soon as the latter becomes available. On amalgamation the references will be revised and the page numbers will be given in ink.

121.4. When more than one part file is opened, each one of them, should be given a distinct number, thus HPL.15/67(Pt.1), HPL.15/67. (pt.II).

122. File Register

122.1. A record of files opened during the calendar year and their movement will be recorded in the File Register maintained in the form at Appendix I, Part 13

122.2. Each page of the File Register will be consecutively numbered and this number will be the same as the serial number of file entered on that particular page e.g. File No. ABP.16/68 will be at page 16 of the File Register of '1968.

122.3. The first few pages will contain the index to the Register. They will be thumb-indexed down the side with the letter of the alphabet. It will be maintained alphabetically subject-wise in the following form:-

Subject of file	File No.	Page No. in the file register	Date of recording
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)

122.4. The catchwords in the index will be carefully selected. Sufficient pages in this form for entering the main and supplementary titles of files likely to be opened in the course of the year will be provided for.

123. Movement of File

123.1. All movements of a file will be entered in the File Register. Subject to the provisions of paragraph 87, all files will be routed through the Diarist.

123.2. On receipt of a file, the assistant officer receiving it will note the date and if necessary, the time of receipt also, in the margin of the note-sheet, opposite the last note. Similarly, a Superintendent marking a file for dispatch to another department will mark it in the marking of the note-sheet opposite the last, note.

124. Register of File Received Un-officially

Files and papers received from other Departments/ Offices will be entered in the Register of Files Received Un-officially as mentioned in paragraph 38. The movement of such files will also be recorded in this Register.

125. Register of Files Issued Un-officially

125.1 File issued un-officially to other departments or offices will be entered in the Register of Files Issued Un-officially which will be in the form given in Appendix I, Part 3B. The Diarist will, before issuing the file, make entries in the Register and also note the movement of the file in the File Register. It will be the responsibility of the Assistants to check this Register and issue timely reminders for return of file which is out for over 14 days. The Superintendent examine this Register at regular interval to satisfy himself that return of files is not delayed in spite of reminders.

125.2. A reminder for return of U.O. file will be issued by the Superintendent under Assam. Schedule II Form No. 47 in the form given in Appendix I, Part 14.

126. Routine notes on papers

Notes or casual discussion on points of secondary importance, routine correspondence like reminders, acknowledgements, and notes to intend to elucidate minor points of detail, which are of an ephemeral nature should not clutter up the main file. They should be treated as "routine papers" and placed below the file but on the same file board in a separate cover and destroyed when the file is closed.

127. Filing of official, semi-official and un-official communication

127.1. Official and semi-official communications will be included in the "correspondence" portion of a file.

127.2. Un-official communications: - Self contained un-official references and replies to them will be included in the correspondence portion of the file. Un-official references which are to be returned in original will not be brought on to a file. A copy or a summary of the un-official reference together with a copy of the note recorded on the file of the originating Department in reply, will be retained, when necessary, and placed in the "Notes" part of the file.

128. Referencing and use of Slips

128.1. Referencing is the process of putting and referring to connected records, precedents, rules, regulation books or any other papers having a bearing on a case. Such papers will be flagged with alphabetical slips to facilitate their identification.

128.2. The slip will be pinned neatly on the inside of the page. When a number of files or papers on the same case are to be flagged the slips will be spread over the whole width of the file so that every slip is easily visible.

128.3. The slip "P. U. C." will be attached to the paper which is under consideration.

128.4. No. slip other than "P.U.C." will be attached to any paper on a current file. Reference to such a paper will be made by quoting the number of the page in the margin in pencil (e.g.P/6n, p6c.)

128.5. Not more than one alphabetical slip will be attached to a recorded file or paper put up for reference.

128.6. The slips are merely a temporary convenience for the quick identification of papers and should, therefore, be removed as soon as they have served their purpose.

128.7. To facilitate the identification of references after the removal of slips, the number of the file and its page referred to will be quoted in the body of the note and the number of the letter of the attached slip indicated in the margin, thus:-

In the body of notes

In the margin of notes

(p3/n of File No. ABP.12/64)

Rag G.

128.8. Similarly a description of the Rules, Regulations, Act. etc. and the number of the relevant paragraph or clause referred to will be quoted in the body of the note while the alphabetical letters of the slip and the page number will be indicated in the margin.

128.9.1. Books of Rules etc. referred to need not be put up on a file if copies are available with the officer to whom a case is submitted. This should, however, be indicated in the margin of the notes in pencil.

128.9.2 When a book or a copy of rule etc, referred to is required to be put up on a file, it will not be kept inside the file cover but will be placed on top of the flap of the file board just below the string. The reference to the book is made by referring to its page number but no slip is pinned on the book. For facility of reference, however, a slip may be placed between the pages referred to.

129. Linking of files

129.1. Linking of files on which action is in progress will, as far as possible are avoided. As a general rule this will be done only when the files are inter-connected and orders have to be passed on them simultaneously. In such a case, it will be indicated on a slip pinned on the top file as to which of the linked files are for orders.

129.2. If any paper on a .current file is required for reference only in connection with the disposal of another file, relevant extracts will be taken, from the former and placed on the latter.

129.3. When files are linked, strings of the file-board of the lower file but not its flaps will be tied round the upper file. The strings of the file board or flap of the upper file will be tied underneath it in a bow out of the way. Each file will thus be intact with all its paper properly arranged on its file-board.

130. Arrangement of papers on a case

A case consists of a current file, any other files, papers and books etc., put up for reference.. The papers on a current case will be placed in the following order from top downwards:-

- a) Notes ending with the note for consideration
- b) Draft or drafts for approval
- c) Other paper referred to (e.g. extracts from notes or correspondence of other files, resolutions, gazettes, etc.) arranged in chronological order, the latest being placed on the top
- d) Correspondence containing the "P.U.C."
- e) Routine notes or papers in a cover as mentioned in paragraph 126.
- f) Records files arranged in chronological order, the latest being placed on the top.

CHAPTER - XII CHECKS ON DELAYS

160. Consequences of delay in decisions and responsibility of officers

160.1. Prompt disposal is essential for efficient administration. The officers and staff are, therefore, responsible to see and ensure that office work is disposed of expeditiously. They should attempt to dispose of all cases on the date of the receipt.

160.2. An officer within his powers should exercise full authority over his sub-ordinate staff and should see that papers move and decisions are taken promptly. He should not depend on papers being put up to him nor should complain of papers being not put up to him. He must supervise and direct his subordinate staff and must regularly and frequently inspect their work. There should be a general sense of purpose and promptness in the Secretariat.

160.3. Secretary should make monthly review of pending cases by 5th of each month, following the month for which the review is to be made, give suitable direction to staff for clearance of pending cases, as necessary, and ensure that the entire department in his charge functions efficiently. A report on the monthly review together with his remarks/directions given to staff for clearance of arrears should be sent to the Chief Secretary for information by 10th of each month.

161. Weekly Arrear List 'A'

161.1. The Weekly Arrear List 'A' gives a statistical picture of the number of receipts and files received and dealt with by each Assistant during a Week. This enables the Superintendent, Branch Officer and other higher officers to keep a watch on the progress of disposal of work in the Branch and to take suitable steps to expedite action on delayed cases.

161.2. The Arrear List 'A' will be prepared every week in the form given in Appendix I, part 22. This list will show all receipts and files pending for disposal in the Branch. The Diarist will initiate action by completing the heading and columns 1 to 3 of the form. The figures shown in column 6 of the arrear list of the preceding week will be repeated in column 3, Column 4 will be filled up with the help of the Receipt Register of the Branch. The list will then be placed at the Superintendent's table for filling of columns 5 to 8 by every Assistant before leaving office on the last working day of the week. Figures of arrears to be shown in columns 6 and 7 will be determined by the Assistants by a physical count of receipts pending action with them. Explanation in respect of receipts or files in hand for over seven days will be given by the Assistants in columns 1 to 6 of the annexure to the form. For this purpose, the period of pendency of a paper with an Assistant will count from the date of its receipt by him.

161.3. The Diarist will submit the consolidated list to the Superintendent on the morning, of the first working day of the next week. The Superintendent will scrutinize the list, give his remarks in the list or the file as necessary and submit it to the Branch Officer on the 2nd working day of the same week.

161.4. The Superintendent will indicate the position in respect of the receipts he dealt, within the list before submitting it to the Branch Officer.

162. Monthly Arrear List 'B'

162.1. This is a monthly list and is prepared in the form given in Appendix I, Part 23. It will show particulars of all live cases pending disposal for over a month in the Branch since their respective dates of opening of files, whether the case, is in office or with an officer, on the last day of the month. A case will be treated as a live case until it is "Gnally disposed of" according to paragraph 88.

162.2. This list will be prepared by every Assistant and submitted to the Superintendent before leaving office on -the first Friday of each month or the next working day. After scrutiny, the Superintendent will submit it to the Branch Officer on or before the 3rd of each month. The Branch Officer will submit it to higher officers as necessary or directed. The officers will give such remarks as they consider necessary regarding the latest position of a case or causes of delay including directions or suggestion for expediting action.

162.3. One or more sheets as may be necessary will be kept for each live case until its final disposal. Cases will be arranged in the list assistant wise in chronological order the oldest case being at the top. The sheet relating to a case finally disposed of will be removed from the list after it has been seen by the, Branch Officer.

163. Reminder Diary

163.1. Every Assistant will maintain a Reminder Diary in which he will enter date-wise:-

- a) All cases which have been marked for resubmission on a particular date.
- b) Cases on which reminders are to be issued on specified dates; and
- c) Case which has been ref erred un-officially to other Departments and the return of which is awaited.

163.2. The Government of Assam Engagement List, if supplied, will be used for this purpose. Entries will be made under the relevant date. Otherwise, a reminder dairy will be opened by each Assistant consisting of a few foolscap pages folded into two, containing entries of file number or receipt number on which action is to be taken under the relevant date.

163.3. The Assistant will examine the Reminder Diary every morning and will take necessary action in the file. If a file is not available, the Assistant will consider whether he can send a reminder or take any other action without the file or with the orders of the Branch officer mark the file to be brought forward to a subsequent date. He will score off entries in the diary as he takes action on them.

163.4. The Superintendent will check the reminder diaries from time to time to ensure that timely action is taken by the Assistants. In important cases, he will himself keep a note in his reminder diary.

163.5. A reminder diary in a suitable form will also be maintained by every officer to make a note of important cases required to be submitted by or to him on a particular date.

164. Audit objections

Disposal of audit objections should be watched carefully, A Register of Audit objections will be maintained in the Departments and care will be taken to forward periodical returns regarding disposal of outstanding objections to Finance Department as prescribed by instructions.

165. Lists of periodical returns

165.1. To ensure punctual receipt, preparation and dispatch of periodical reports and returns each Branch will maintain two check lists, one for outward returns and the other for

incoming returns. The forms in which the two check lists will be, maintained are given at Appendix I, Part 24A and Appendix I, Part 24B.

165.2. The check list for out ward returns will, as far as possible be prepared, in duplicate for all returns on a single sheet and will be signed by the Branch Officer. Entries will be made in chronological order, according to periodicity, fortnightly returns being entered first, monthly returns next and so on. In respect of each fortnightly return specified in column I, two sets of parallel entries will be made in columns 2-15 in two consecutive rows. One copy of check list will be put up in the office room and the other in the room of the Branch Officer. It will be prepared afresh for a calendar year. The dealing Assistant will be responsible for making entries in both the copies.

165.3. The weekly returns in the Secretariat are very few and, therefore, may be included in the same check list as mentioned above. But in case of large number of weekly returns they may be included in a separate check list.

165.4. The Superintendent will go through the check list every week or frequently as necessary and take suitable action on items requiring attention during the next week or so.

165.5. The check list for inward returns will be maintained on the relevant file for each inward return. As soon as returns (for a particular period) begin to come in, necessary entries will be made in the check list under the appropriate columns. Where a return has, not been received from an officer on due date and consequently a reminder has been issued, an entry e.g. R.9/9 will be made in respect of a reminder issued on 9th September.

165.6. Recurring items like Arrear 'A' and 'B' lists on which action has to be completed by a particular date but which may not involve the sending or receipt of a return will not be included in these check lists.

CHAPTER—XVI SECURITY OF OFFICIAL INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTS

197. General provisions with regard to security of Government documents and information:

Under the Assam Civil Services (Conduct) Rules, 1965, a Government servant should not, unless empowered by a competent authority, communicate to another Government servant or to a non-official person or to the Press, any document or information which has come into his possession in the course of his public duties. Under the provisions of the Indian Official Secrets Act, 1923, it is a criminal offence (a) to possess or communicate without proper authority such information or document, (b) to receive any such information or documents, with the knowledge or with reasonable ground for the belief that it is communicated in contravention of the orders, and (c) to attempt to commit or abet the commission of an offence as aforesaid. In other words, it should be clearly understood that all communications received in a Department as well as the papers connected with it are to be regarded as confidential so far as the public and Government employees, other than those who are required to handle them in the course of their duties, are concerned and Government servants are prohibited from communicating or making any reference, direct or indirect to any information acquired by them in the course of their official duties to anyone unless its communication is authorized by a competent authority

198. Instructions regarding confidential document

The Instructions regarding security grading of classified documents, responsibility of Government servants in connection with such documents, their treatment, custody and movement and other related matters are contained in a separate booklet. All Government servants must observe these instructions carefully. A list of Security DO's and DONTs is given in Appendix XV

199. Official Reports, Pamphlets, Compilations, etc

199.1 No restrictive classification should be assigned to any printed reports, pamphlets, compilation etc. , issued by Departments or their subordinate offices, except under orders of an officer not lower in rank than a Deputy Secretary or Head of Department/office.

199.2 Government Departments and offices are in the habit of restricting the circulation of printed reports, pamphlets, compilations, etc., issued by them by marking them as "FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY". As a rule, such restriction is justified only if they contain information which it would not be desirable in the public interest to disclose. All other printed matters should ordinarily, be made available to educational institutions, public bodies or members of the public.

199.3 A useful guide in this matter is furnished by fact that all the information laid before the Assembly becomes public property. In a doubtful, case, the test can always; be applied whether a report, whose circulation it is proposed to restrict, is such that the Minister would be justified in refusing to lay it before the Assembly. Where the answer to this question is not clear, the orders of the Secretary of the Department should be obtained.

200. Communication of information to Press

Only Ministers and Officers specially authorized by the Minister may be accessible to the representatives of the Press. Any other officer, if approached by a representative of the Press, should refer him to the Minister, the Director of Information and Public Relations or the authorized officer. For further instructions regarding publicity in the Press see Chapter XV.

201. Responsibility of Branch Officers, superintendents and other Officers

201.1. It is the duty of all officers to keep them acquainted with the morale and conduct of the staff working under them. In addition to this general responsibility, the Branch Officers have a special responsibility of ensuring, by frequent surprise checks and visits to office rooms, that the instructions for maintenance of security in the Secretariat are understood and complied with by all persons working in the Branch. It is the duty of the Superintendents to bring immediately to the notice of their superior officers any cases in which members of their Branch offend against security instructions or are guilty of misconduct of such a nature as to give rise to doubts regarding their reliability from the security point of view.

201.2. It is also the duty of all Government servants to bring immediately to the notice of their superior officers any breach of security instructions in general and, in particular, any disclosures of confidential information, of which they may obtain knowledge.

201.3. No Superintendent or Assistant, etc., will take office papers to his house or elsewhere out of the office without the express permission of the Branch Officer in each case.

202. Access to Secretariat Buildings and Departments

202.1. Entry to Secretariat Building is controlled by the issue of permanent and temporary passes.

202.2. Members of the public are not allowed to visit the Departments and see members of staff. If they have any business pending in a Department they may call on the Branch Officer or other higher officer concerned. Government servants visiting other Departments or Branches on official business should only see the Superintendent. For any personal visit, the member of the establishment should go outside the Department to meet the visitor with the permission of the Superintendent.

203. Treatment of specified cases

In addition to any general instructions in the matter, the following instructions cover the treatment of specified cases.

203.1. Treatment of papers regarding appointments and postings: - All correspondences dealing with appointments and postings should be treated as confidential.

203.2. Treatment of agenda for Cabinet meetings and of notes and decisions on subject discussed:- The agenda for the Cabinet meetings "Notes for the Cabinet" on subjects for discussion at a meeting and Cabinet decisions should be treated as confidential.

203.3. Treatment of punishment and appeal cases:- When the case of any officer is put up to Government for punishment or a previous punishment comes up on appeal, the case should be treated as confidential.

203.4. Treatment of papers relating to matters of "news value".—Cases relating to matters of "news value" which are ready to be released to the Press should be treated as confidential.

CHAPTER-XVII INSPECTIONS

204. Purpose

The purpose of inspection is: -

- a) To find out the state_ of affairs existing in each unit and how it can be improved;
- b) To see whether the prescribed procedure and instructions are understood properly and followed intelligently;
- c) To find out whether proper attention is being paid to quality of performance by officers and staff during the discharge of duties; and
- d) To test the intrinsic soundness and utility of the procedures and to get reliable data for planning improvements.

205. Inspection Questionnaire

205.1. The form of Inspection questionnaire to be used in the Secretariat is given in Appendix XVI. The questionnaire form should be taken as a model and such additions or alterations as may be considered necessary to suit the requirements of a particular branch may be made by the Inspecting Officer. Remarks of findings of the Inspecting Officer on any point not covered by the form may be noted on a separate sheet of paper and attached to the inspection note.

205.2. Besides carrying out an inspection as per the questionnaire, the Inspect/:.g Officer should also take up analytical case studies. He may pick out, say, half a dozen or so files and critically examine the course of action revealed by those files so as to bring out information on the following :—

- a) Whether the matter was at all stages dealt with as speedily as possible;
- b) Whether there was unnecessary noting;
- c) Whether references sent to or received from other Departments were unnecessarily delayed
- d) Whether different persons dealing with the file could have exercised more responsibility appropriate to their level;
- e) Whether guidance was given to subordinate personnel which may have reduced unnecessary noting and made it purposeful:
- f) Whether routine matters of the type dealt with in the file could be disposed of at a lower level as a rule; and
- g) Any other procedural faults observed which from a commonsense point of view could have been rectified and, if so the manner in which this could be achieved.

206. Authorities responsible for inspections:-

206.1. A Branch Officer will inspect the Branch in detail according to the Inspection Questionnaire at least once in six months. He will in addition from time to time check a few tables of the Assistants, typists and diarist to ensure prompt disposal of the business in the Department and also to ensure that the registers, statements, returns etc., are properly maintained. The Deputy Secretary/Joint Secretary in-charge of the Branch will inspect it at least once a year. Secretary of the Department will select at least one Branch or Department under him for inspection in a year. The officers at higher level, viz., Deputy Secretary

and above will give special reference at the time of inspection to the prompt disposal of the business and maintenance of basic data in the Department.

206.2. In addition to the inspection by Departmental Officers, the Organization and Method Division will take up inspection of a few Departments in a year with a view to find out special defects pertaining to a Department or defects common to most of the Departments. The report of the Organization and Methods Division will be circulated amongst the Departments. The Departments will take action on these reports promptly and inform the Organization and Methods Division.

207. Inspection reports

207.1. The inspecting Officer will submit his report to his immediate superior. The inspection reports will be pasted in a register. The interim compliance of the inspection reports from time to time will be noted in a file. The final compliance will be recorded in the Annexure to the inspection report as shown in Appendix XVI.

207.2. The Inspecting Officer should also bring to the notice of the Organization and Methods Division any important points on office procedure of general or special application. The Organization and Methods Division should examine them and devise suitable measures to prevent their recurrence.

208. Programme of inspection

In order to avoid dislocation work, a programme of branches should be drawn up in advance every year after taking into account the periods of seasonal rush of work. Thus, for example, the two half yearly inspections in Departments may be conducted after the Budget Session of Legislative Assembly in June or July and in December or January after the Winter Session of Legislative Assembly.

209. Follow-up action on Inspection reports

One of the most important aspects of inspections is the follow-up action on the points brought out in the inspection notes. The follow-up action should be regular and vigorous. The Inspecting officer will ensure that the defects pointed out are removed and the modifications recommended are implemented.