

Central Agency Section (CAS)

The **Central Agency Section (CAS)** was set-up in the year 1950. It is a specialized unit functioning under the **Department of Legal Affairs**, Ministry of Law and Justice, Government of India. Located within the **Supreme Court Compound**, CAS plays a crucial role in the legal representation and litigation management of the Union of India before Hon'ble Supreme Court of India. This office is responsible for conducting litigation on behalf of all the Ministries/Departments of the Central Government and also on behalf of the National Capital Territory of Delhi, Union Territories (excluding Puducherry and Jammu & Kashmir), the office of the Comptroller & Auditor General of India and all field offices under the CAG. Special Leave Petitions/Appeals/Review Petitions & other petitions on behalf of Union of India are filed after obtaining opinion of Ld. Law Officers on the feasibility of filing Special Leave Petitions/Appeal/Review petitions etc. in the Supreme Court of India through Central Agency Section. Central Agency Section is headed by a Senior Government Advocate (a Joint Secretary Level Officer) and he is assisted by Additional Government Advocates, Deputy Government Advocates and Assistant Government Advocates. There are 16 Law Officers and around 1200 Government Panel Counsels.

The Government Advocates in the Central Agency Section require the qualification of Advocate on record of the Supreme Court. They act, plead and appear before the Supreme Court in matters pertaining to the Union of India, NCT of Delhi, C&AG and Union Territories as per the Supreme Court Rules.

Key Functions:

1. Representation of the Union of India:

- On receiving of references directly from CBEC and CBIC for SLPs/Appeals/Review Petitions etc. the same are examined and sent to Ld. Law Officers for opinion and thereafter processed and filed by CAS.
- Obtaining opinion of the Ld. Attorney General of India, Ld. Solicitor General of India and the Ld. Additional Solicitor Generals in various cases on the references of the Ministries/Departments of the Government of India received through the Department of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Law and Justice.
- The CAS coordinates the legal representation of the Union of India and its various Ministries/Departments in all matters before the Supreme Court.
- It facilitates the engagement of Ld. Law Officers and Central Government Counsels for various cases.

2. Litigation Management:

- CAS oversees the handling of all litigation involving the Union of India, NCT of Delhi, U.T's (excluding Puducherry and Jammu & Kashmir) and CAG in the Supreme Court.
- The Advocates-on-Record (AoR's) ensures timely drafting of the cases. CAS ensures timely filing of Special Leave Petitions (SLPs)/Civil Appeals/Review Petitions, Counter Affidavits, Rejoinders, Written submissions etc., on behalf of the Union of India, NCT of Delhi, U.T's and CAG after proper verification by the Advocates-on-Record.

3. Liaison and Coordination:

- CAS acts as a nodal agency between the government departments, the Supreme Court Registry, the Ld. Law Officers and the Panels Counsels.
- It ensures effective communication and prompt follow up on court directions, compliance matters, and obtaining requisite instructions from concerned Ministries/Departments of the Union of India, NCT of Delhi, U.Ts and CAG etc.

4. Scrutiny and Vetting:

- Draft pleadings prepared by the Central Government Counsel are scrutinized by the CAS to ensure legal consistency and alignment with government policy.
- It ensures that submissions made before the court reflect the considered position of the Union of India.

5. Monitoring of Sensitive and High-Profile Matters:

- CAS keeps track of and provides special attention to matters of constitutional significance, high public interest and national importance.
- It maintains liaison with the concerned Ministries to ensure thorough preparation and appropriate legal strategy.

6. Record Maintenance and Payment of fee Bills:

- CAS maintains systematic records of all cases involving the Union of India in the Supreme Court.
- Payment of professional fee bills of the Ld. Law Officers, Panel Counsels, etc. is also done by CAS after proper verification.

The Central Agency Section serves as the legal backbone of the Government of India in the highest court of the country. Through efficient coordination and representation, it upholds the Union's legal

interests and ensures that the government's stance is effectively presented and defended in the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India.