

3.1. The broad functions and responsibilities of various functionaries in the Secretariat of a Ministry/Department are given in the succeeding paragraphs. To maximize governance, it is necessary to delegate powers to various functionaries.

- (i) **Secretary:** A Secretary to the Government of India is the administrative head of the Ministry/Department. He/she is the principal adviser of the Minister on all matters of policy and administration within his/her Ministry/Department, and his/her responsibility is complete and undivided. She/he is the Chief Accounting Authority of the Ministry/Department.
- (ii) **Special Secretary/Additional Secretary/Joint Secretary:** Such a functionary is normally vested with the maximum measure of independent functioning and responsibility in respect of the business falling within his/her wing, subject to the overall responsibility of the Secretary for the administration of the Department.
- (iii) **Director/Deputy Secretary:** Director/Deputy Secretary is an officer who acts on behalf of the Secretary, holds charge of a Secretariat Division and responsible for the disposal of Government business dealt with in the Division under his/her charge. He/she should ordinarily be able to dispose of the cases as per the powers delegated or as per the channel of submission of the Department.
- (iv) **Under Secretary:** An Under Secretary is in charge of a Branch in a Ministry /Department consisting of one or more Sections/ Units/ Cells and exercises control both in regard to the disposal of business and maintenance of discipline. As Branch Officer, he disposes off as many cases as possible at his own level but he/she takes the orders of Deputy Secretary or higher officers on important cases. He/she is inter-alia responsible for development and maintenance of aids to processing as tools of manual and electronic knowledge management.
- (v) **Desk Officer :** An Under Secretary or senior Section Officer functions as Desk functionary depending on nature of the responsibilities attached to the Desk. He/she examines and submits cases independently to the next higher officer, and has the power of decision making as that of an Under Secretary. The Desk Officer can also sign Orders, Financial Sanctions and affirm affidavits in courts.
- (vi) **Section Officer:** A Section Officer is in-charge of a Section, the primary unit of a Department in the Secretariat, comprising a team of Assistant Section Officers, Senior Secretariat Assistants as Dealing Officers and Junior Secretariat Assistants and MTS as supporting staff. A Section Officer

has overall responsibility for supervising the activities and performance of the Section with the help of dealing officers and clerical support besides;

- a) distribution of work among staff, training, helping, advising them in the matter of work, maintenance of discipline and team spirit in the Section;
- b) monitoring of efficient and expeditious disposal of cases;
- c) timely submission of reports and returns to higher officers and other concerned units and;
- d) managing effective person-independent information management and records management in the Section;

[Detailed responsibilities of Section Officer are at Appendix – 3.1]

(vii) **Personal Staff Members of Officers** : Principal Staff Officer/Senior Principal Private Secretary/ Principal Private Secretary

- a. Preparing executive summary on the important issues/important files facilitating decision making, and summary of previously asked/replied Starred questions and briefing the Officer accordingly;
- b. Management of Personal Section, providing leadership;
- c. International/National level liaison and networking, coordination with Parliament, Ministries/Departments, and other offices, handling visitors, facilitating meetings/conferences, etc;
- d. Keep himself/herself aware of the key performance areas, vision, mission of the Ministry/Department;
- e. Security of personal and official information of the officer with whom he is working with and facilitating grievance handling;
- f. Maintaining engagement diary;
- g. Managing tours including foreign and domestic tours/managing office while the Officer is away from office in meeting, on tour or on leave.

(viii) **Private Secretary, Personal Assistant and Stenographer Grade 'D'**:

- a. taking dictation/transcribing, handling telephone calls, receiving visitors, tour programme/travel arrangements, maintaining the papers required to be retained by the officer and maintaining engagement diary, etc.

- b. Handling confidential and secret letters/dak/files, handling parliamentary work, security of information, facilitating meetings/conferences.
- (ix) **Assistant Section Officer/ Senior Secretariat Assistant:** He/she works as Dealing Officer under the supervision of the Section Officer. Each Dealing Officer is allocated subjects out of the subject areas allocated to the Section and he/she is expected to deal with all matters allocated or any other work assigned to him/her from time to time.
- (x) **Junior Secretariat Assistant:** Provides miscellaneous support to the Section /Unit /Desk in carrying out day to day work like photocopying /record handling and maintenance, registration of Dak, marking / sending Receipts / files and other associated tasks or any other work assigned from time to time. He/she may be assigned case work of repetitive nature.
- (xi) **Multi-Tasking Staff (MTS):** Erstwhile Group 'D' posts of Peon, Daftary, Jamadar, Junior Gestetner Operator, Farash, Chowkidar, Safaiwala, Mali etc. are now designated as MTS. An illustrative (but not exhaustive) list of duties of MTS are:
- (i) Physical maintenance of records of Section.
 - (ii) General cleanliness & upkeep of the Section/Unit.
 - (iii) Carrying of files & other papers within the building.
 - (iv) Photocopying, sending of FAX etc.
 - (v) Other non-clerical work in the Sections/Unit.
 - (vi) Assisting in routine office work like diary, dispatch etc. including on computer.
 - (vii) Delivering of Dak (inside & outside the building)
 - (viii) Watch & ward duties.
 - (ix) Opening & closing of rooms.
 - (x) Cleaning of rooms.
 - (xi) Dusting of furniture etc.
 - (xii) Cleaning of building, fixture etc.
 - (xiii) Work related to his ITI qualification, if it exists.
 - (xiv) Driving of vehicles, if in possession of valid driving license.
 - (xv) Upkeep of parks, lawns, potted plants etc.
 - (xvi) Any other work assigned by superior authority.

Note: Duties of untrained Multi Tasking Staff (MTS) have been provided at Annexure-II of the Department of Personnel & Training's O.M. No.AB-14017/6/2009-Estt(RR) dated 30th April, 2010 at website (www.persmin.nic.in)

Detailed responsibilities of Section Officer

A. General Duties –

- (i) Ensure e-file system is implemented and sustained;
- (ii) Distribution of work among the staff as evenly as possible;
- (iii) Training, helping and advising the staff;
- (iv) Management and co-ordination of the work;
- (v) Maintenance of order and discipline in the section;
- (vi) Maintenance of a list of residential addresses of the Staff.

B. Responsibilities relating to Dak –

- (i) to go through the receipts;
- (ii) to submit receipts which should be seen by the Branch Officer or higher officers at the dak stage;
- (iii) to keep a watch on any hold-up in the movement of dak; and
- (iv) to scrutinize the section register once a week to know that it is being properly maintained.
- (v) Ensure digital registration of dak
- (vi) Review category of receipt and ensure correct labelling (VIP/MP, RTI, PG...)

C. Responsibilities relating to issue of draft –

- (i) to see that all corrections have been made in the draft before it is marked for issue;
- (ii) to indicate whether a clean copy of the draft is necessary;
- (iii) to indicate the number of spare copies required;
- (iv) to check whether all enclosures are attached;
- (v) to indicate priority marking;
- (vi) to indicate mode of dispatch.

D. Responsibility of efficient and expeditious disposal of work and checks on delays-

- (i) to keep a note of important receipts with a view to watching the progress of action;
- (ii) to ensure timely submission of arrear and other returns;
- (iii) to undertake inspection of dealing officer table to ensure that no paper or file has been overlooked;
- (iv) to ensure that cases are not held up at any stage;
- (v) to go through the list of periodical returns every week and take suitable action on items requiring attention during next week.

E. Independent disposal of cases –

He/she should take independently action of the following types –

- (i) issuing reminders;
- (ii) obtaining or supplying factual information of a non-classified nature;
- (iii) any other action which a Section Officer is authorized to take independently as laid down in the departmental instructions.

F. *Duties in respect of recording and indexing –*

- (i) to approve the recording of files and their categorisation ;
- (ii) to review the recorded file before destruction;
- (iii) to order and supervise periodic weeding of unwanted spare copies;
- (iv) ensuring proper maintenance of registers required to be maintained in the section;
- (v) Ensuring proper maintenance of reference books, Office Orders etc. and keep them up-to-date;
- (vi) Ensuring neatness and tidiness in the Section;
- (vii) Dealing with important and complicated cases himself;
- (viii) Ensuring strict compliance with Departmental Security Instructions.