

**MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC
GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS
SYSTEM OF REDRESSAL OF
GRIEVANCES**

**ESTIMATES COMMITTEE
1992-93**

TENTH LOK SABHA



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

TWENTY FOURTH REPORT ESTIMATES COMMITTEE (1992-93)

(TENTH LOK SABHA)

MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS SYSTEM OF REDRESSAL OF GRIEVANCES

[Action Taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the First Report of Estimates Committee (Tenth Lok Sabha) on the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions—System of Redressal of Grievances]



Presented to Lok Sabha on 31 March, 1993

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

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CORRIGENDUM TO THE 24TH REPORT OF
 ON THE ACTIVITY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC
 GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE SYSTEM OF REDRESSAL OF
 CONCERNS

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**COMPOSITION OF THE ESTIMATES COMMITTEE
(1992-93)**

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**COMPOSITION OF SUB-COMMITTEE ON ACTION TAKEN
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(1992-93)**

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INTRODUCTION

1. The Chairman of the Estimates Committee having been authorised by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, present this Twenty-Fourth Report on action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the First Report of the Estimates Committee (Tenth Lok Sabha) on the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions — System of Redressal of Grievances.

2. The First Report was presented to Lok Sabha on *13th Dec., 91*. Government furnished their replies indicating action taken on the recommendations contained in that Report on 31st August, 1992. Thereupon the Committee while considering the report for adoption took evidence of Cabinet Secretary to seek clarifications on certain points raised in the action taken report. The draft Report was considered and adopted by the Estimates Committee (1992-93) at their sitting held on 4th January, 1993. The Committee authorised the Chairman to finalise the report in the light of fresh evidence tendered by the Cabinet Secretary.

3. The Report has been divided into following Chapters:—

- I. Report
- II. Recommendations/Observations which have been accepted by Government.
- III. Recommendations/Observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of Government's reply.
- IV. Recommendations/observations in respect of which replies of Government have not been accepted by the Committee.
- V. Recommendations/Observations in respect of which final replies of Government are awaited.

4. An analysis of action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the Twenty-Fourth Report of the Estimates Committee (Tenth Lok Sabha) is given in Appendix I. It would be observed therefrom that out of 29 recommendations made in the Report, 16 recommendations *i.e.* 55.1 percent have been accepted by the Government and the Committee do not desire to pursue 6 recommendations *i.e.* 20.7 percent in view of Government replies. Replies have not been accepted in respect of 7 recommendations *i.e.* 24.2 percent.

NEW DELHI;
March 26, 1993

Chaitra 5, 1915 (S)

MANORANJAN BHAKTA,
Chairman,
Estimates Committee.

CHAPTER I

REPORT

1.1 This report of Estimates Committee deals with action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in their First Report (Tenth Lok Sabha) on System of Redressal of Grievances which was presented to Lok Sabha on 13th December, 1991.

1.2 Action Taken notes have been received in respect of all the 29 recommendations in the Report.

1.3 Action Taken notes on the recommendations of the Committee have been categorised as follows:—

(i) Recommendations/Observations which have been accepted by the Government:

Sl. Nos. 1, 2, 4, 7, 12, 13, 15, 16, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 27, 28 and 29.

(Chapter II, Total 16)

(ii) Recommendations/Observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of Government replies:

Sl. Nos. 3, 6, 9, 17, 19 and 25.

(Chapter III, Total 6)

(iii) Recommendations/Observations in respect of which Government's replies have not been accepted by the Committee:

Sl. Nos. 5, 8, 10, 11, 14, 18 and 26.

(Chapter IV, Total 7)

(iv) Recommendations/Observations in respect of which final replies are still awaited:

—NIL—

(Chapter V, Total Nil)

1.4 The Committee will now deal with action taken by Government on some of the recommendations.

Statistics on Comprehensive Scale

Recommendations (Sl. No. 1, Para No. 1.31)

1.5 The Committee in their first report had stated that the Government should maintain statistics in regard to public grievances on a comprehensive scale, with proper distinction between long pending complaints and recent complaints. They had further stated that the Department of Public Grievances should pick up a larger sample of

grievances/complaints for detailed examination and follow up action so as to draw more realistic conclusions about the nature and prevalence of public dissatisfaction with the government departments.

1.6 In their action taken reply the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions has stated that this department has advised all ministries/departments of the Government of India to set up Management Information System (MIS) and evolve procedures which are necessary for monitoring public grievances and their redress.

1.7 Further the Ministry have stated that grievances arise out of the working of innumerable agencies of government spread all over the country. Being mostly local in nature, most of them are received and have necessarily to be disposed of at the local level. Also, many a grievance are made orally and disposed of by the officers concerned without keeping record of them. Therefore, it may not be practicable to keep a centralised record of grievances received by all the agencies of government spread all over the country.

1.8 However, a large number of grievances are also received by the central ministries and departments direct from members of the public or client groups. Statistics of such grievances are maintained by the ministries and departments. Quarterly statements of these statistics are obtained from them by the Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances which consolidates them into an aggregate statement.

1.9 The scheme of things provides for the maintaining of entries with reference to the date on which a complaint or a grievance is received. As a matter of fact, there is a special provision for dealing in a special way with grievances and complaints which are pending for more than three months. The grievance redress officer, usually called the Director of Grievances, can be empowered to take up such cases, examine them at his own initiative and with the assistance of such of persons in the organisation as deal with them or are conversant with them and recommend steps to the head of office for the disposal of such grievance.

1.10 It has also been stated that the Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances is not equipped, nor can it possibly be effectively equipped, with the necessary organisation that can dispose of a large enough number of grievances/complaints at its own initiative. Therefore, there seems to be no alternative to one's depending on the organisation concerned dealing with most of the grievances arising from their work.

1.11 It has also been argued by the Ministry that the small sampling of grievances, made by this department with a view to monitoring their disposal by the organisations or agencies concerned, is intended primarily to give this department an idea of the nature of causes that give rise to such grievances—systemic or procedural deficiencies or human error or whatever. Even so, in deference to the suggestion of the Estimates Committee, this department has recently raised the percentage of

grievances being so monitored by it from 3.2% of the total number received by it as in December, 1991 to 5.3% as in June, 1992. Within the limitations of shortage of personnel to which a reference has been made in the previous statements, efforts are being made to raise this figure still higher to around 6% to 7%.

1.12 It may, however, be mentioned here that while selecting individual grievances/complaints for monitoring, the department does keep in view the nature of the grievances concerned as well as the frequency of similar grievances arising in any particular field of Government's work. Besides, every year some new types of grievances, not monitored before, are also taken up for monitoring.

1.13 **The Committee** welcome the fact that the Ministry of Personnel, **Public Grievances Pensions** have begun to draw a larger sample of **complaints** for their disposal, study and analysis. They are however, **dismayed** to note that though more than six months have elapsed the **Ministry** have failed to state explicitly whether **Management Information Systems** have been actually set up in different **Ministries/Departments** of Government of India. They would like to be informed in clear terms about the actual progress achieved in this regard. They would also like to know the details of the procedures adopted for monitoring **Public Grievance** and their redressal. Further, it was expected of the Ministry to issue **appropriate** guidelines so as to set minimum parameters for a **Grievance Management Information System** that the **Ministries** could emulate in keeping with their own requirements.

1.14 **The Committee** also desire that immediate steps should be taken to **empower** Directors of **Public Grievances** to examine cases **delayed beyond a specified period** say six months for redressal in an **expeditious manner**.

1.15 **Further**, the **Committee** would like to reiterate their **recommendation** for **maintenance** of statistics with regard to public grievances on a **comprehensive scale**. While it is not the intention of the **Committee** that such statistics should be maintained in a centralised manner it would certainly be useful if such information is maintained by the **Ministries/Departments/Undertakings/Organisations** and an annual statistical picture projected to the Ministry of Personnel, **Public Grievances & Pensions** for analysis and study. The **Committee** are of the view that in the absence of such a statistical picture the **Ministry** can neither effectively **monitor** the **Government policy** in this regard nor undertake **useful study of grievance prone areas/procedures**.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 4, Para No. 1.34)

1.16 **Instructions** may be issued to all **Secretaries** to the Government of India advising them to devote at least one or two days in a month exclusively for redressal of public grievances. **Also appropriate powers** may be delegated to **Directors of public grievances in ministries/departments** for granting immediate relief to the complainant. **The official position and**

status of Directors, grievance may be suitably upgraded wherever it is likely to make him more effective. The Committee recommend that the complaint should be acknowledged and a receipt of the same be given to the complainant.

1.17 The Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions in their action taken replies stated that the instructions are already in force for observing Wednesday as meetingless day in the Central Secretariat Offices. Officers of the levels of Deputy Secretary and above are to be available in their seats from 10.00 hours to 13.00 hours to receive and hear public grievances on that day. Field level offices having contact with the public have also been advised to designate some day of the week as meetingless day. Any member of the public can meet any officer, of the levels of Deputy Secretary and above including the Secretary in any ministry/department, on the meetingless day without prior appointment.

1.18 Periodic review with the officials of the ministries/departments indicate that these instructions are by and large being followed. The Director of Grievances is the nodal officer for the ministry/department concerned. Action on a complaint can usually be taken only, or at any rate primarily by the officer concerned with the subject matter of a complaint. For, dealing effectively with a complaint requires familiarity with the subject on the part of the officer concerned. Where immediate relief to the complainant can be given, this has to be given usually by the officer or the unit concerned. But the Director of Grievances keeps a watchful eye on it. Instructions issued by the Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances already envisage that the Director of Grievances may call for the relevant papers/files if a case is not disposed of within 3 months and take a decision thereon with the approval of the Secretary of the ministry/department or head of the department/organisation. The official status of the Director Grievances seems to be sufficiently high, he being a Deputy Secretary or a Director in the department or ministry, as the case may be.

1.19 Provision for acknowledging the receipt of complaints already exists in the Central Secretariat Manual if Office Procedure and have also been reiterated by this department from time to time.

1.20 The Committee note that officers of the levels of Deputy Secretary and above are to be available in their seats from 1000 hours to 1300 hours on Wednesdays which is kept as a meetingless day to receive and hear public grievances on that day. The Committee urge the Government to explicitly state their stand whether the Secretaries of the Government of India actually devote atleast one or two days in a month exclusively for redressal of public grievances. The Committee would also like to reiterate its earlier recommendations and urge the Ministry to widely publicise. The fact of officers being available on Wednesday to hear public grievances. They should apprise the Committee of the action taken in this regard within a period of three months.

Acknowledgement of Complaints
Recommendation (Sl. No. 5, Para No. 1.35)

1.21 A System should be evolved in each areas of the public administration whereby complaints are duly acknowledged and progress made in their settlement reported periodically to the complainant.

1.22 The Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions stated in their action taken reply that as already stated, there is provision for duly acknowledging the receipt of a complaint or a grievance in the ministries, departments and major organisations of the Government of India. This is also reiterated at the periodic meetings held by this department with the officials of all Ministries and departments. However, it may not be practicable to give periodic reports to the complainant about the progress in the disposal of his complaint. Even so in specific cases which may be long pending or which have many complexities, reports are given from time to time to the complainant. It may not be practicable to make a general rule of this dispensation.

1.23 The Committee emphasize that procedural provisions for acknowledging the receipt of complaints should not only be followed unflinchingly but also with due promptitude. They again urge the Government to introduce in the Government departments the procedure of giving quarterly progress of pending cases to the complainants. This, they hope, will not only reduce the frustration of the ordinary citizen but also induce the Government Officers and staff to show greater alacrity in removing complaints.

1.24 The Committee is distressed to note that the public is not getting adequate response from public dealing departments. The Committee would like to be apprised of the concrete measures taken in this regard.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 8, Para No. 2.39)

1.25 The staffing pattern of the Department of Public Grievances may be reviewed to make it more officer oriented and to facilitate periodical induction of the professional experts from the open market.

1.26 The Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions in their action taken replies as a matter of fact, the present work arrangement for the Public Grievance Wing of the Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances is already officer oriented even though the wing is very small in size. There are three officers earmarked exclusively for doing this work. Their work is supervised by a Deputy Secretary who devotes part of his time to the work of Public grievances.

1.27 As mentioned earlier in reply to the two sets of questionnaire sent by the Estimates Committee, the main work of the wing does not and was never intended to take a hand in the disposal of individual grievances/complaints. Certain individual grievances/complaints are kept for the purpose of monitoring their disposal by the concerned agencies of government in order to enable this department to form an ideal of the nature of grievances that arise from specific fields of work of government.

In view of this, not much is likely to be gained by bringing in many more officers to the Public Grievance Wing of the department.

1.28 The need for professional experts to study the systems, management procedure etc. which give rise to grievance, is taken care of by the internal expertise which the Administrative Reforms Wing of the department has or tries to acquire. The question of strengthening the professional skills of this wing has been discussed in another context.

1.29 The Committee express their unhappiness over the reply which is not consistent with the views of the Ministry expressed during the evidence. They would like to draw the attention of the Ministry to the evidence tendered by the representatives of the Ministry whereby they were informed that the study of organisation, procedure and method of various constituent agencies of the Government of India is increasingly becoming a specialised job with increasing specialisation in the agencies of the Government of India. It is, therefore, necessary to build up, over a period of a few years, strong expertise in clearly identifiable, broad sectors of Government which can permanently or for a long enough time, be available to the DARPG for studying, with a greater degree of professionalism, the problems of various agencies of Government. The Committee do not agree with the view now expressed that the need for professional experts to study the systems, management procedure etc. which give rise to grievance, is taken care of by the internal expertise which the Administrative Reforms Wing of the Department has or tries to acquire. The Committee urge the Government to explicitly state their stand regarding review of the staffing pattern to make it more officer oriented and to facilitate periodical induction of professional experts from the open market.

Co-ordination between DARPG and other Ministries

Recommendation (Sl. No 10, Para No. 2.41)

1.30 The Committee had in their report, desired that Government at the highest level should deliberate upon the existing lack of synergy between the efforts of the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances and those of various other ministries/departments towards redressal of public grievances and evolve a mechanism under which study reports made by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances are examined and acted upon by other ministries/departments with full seriousness. It should also be ensured that such examination is carried out in a time-bound manner and a final view about the acceptance of these study reports taken expeditiously.

1.31 In their Action Taken reply the Ministry of (PPPG) Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions stated that there is an established system of coordination between the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances and other ministries/departments for redress of public grievances. While the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public

Grievances lays down the broad policy guidelines for all ministries/ departments, specific procedures and methods of work are designed by each ministry/department in the light of the specific nature of the subject. Measures taken by ministries/departments to strengthen the grievance redress machinery are reviewed by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances in periodic meetings with the Director of Grievances of various ministries/departments.

1.32 The system of examination of the study reports of the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances by ministries/ departments concerned has been institutionalised. The study reports are sent to the Secretary of the ministry/department or the head of the organisation concerned, who is expected to get them examined at a sufficiently high level. These reports contain a variety of recommendations including those which require inter-ministerial consultation or change in policy for their implementation. Recommendations, for which decision has to be taken by only the ministry/department concerned are generally processed quickly. Recommendations involving inter-ministerial consultations are to be examined by an Empowered Committee to be constituted by the ministry/department primarily concerned with the implementation of the report. Though the instructions issued by this department stipulate that the processing of reports by the Empowered Committee should be completed within three months of the receipt of the report, it has not generally been possible to adhere to this time limit, because inter-ministerial consultations are a time consuming process. There also arise differences of opinion, in many cases, about the feasibility of implementation of some of the recommendations and the likely implications of such implementation. A final decision in such cases takes much longer than is normally envisaged. Nevertheless, this department keeps in continuous touch with the Ministries/departments concerned till a final decision on its recommendation is taken.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 11, Para No. 2.42)

1.33 The recommendations made in the Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances study reports should be implement within an appropriate but fixed time limit. In cases where these are not acceptable the reasons therefore should be reported within a reasonable time.

1.34 The Ministry in their action taken replies referred to the reply of recommendation No. 10 (Para 2.41).

1.35 The Committee are disappointed at the position taken by the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions in regard to its recommendation calling for establishment of mechanism under which various Ministries/Departments examine and implement the recommendations made by that Ministry in its various standing reports on redressal of public grievances. They would like to point out that the Ministry itself had pointed out that while 52.5% of the recommendations

made by it were pending consideration 9.4% recommendations though accepted were yet to be implemented. It was with the intent of strengthening the position of the Ministry in the interest of improving the existing situation that the Committee had emphasized the need for time-bound action. The Committee would, therefore, like the Ministry to take the recommendation in its proper spirit and apprise the Committee of concrete steps taken to implement their recommendation.

1.36 The Committee also fail to understand why the processing of reports by the Empowered Committee are 'generally' not completed within the stipulated period of three months. They would like to know on what basis this period for finalisation of the report has been fixed. The Committee desire that every effort should be made to see that all the reports are finalised within a specified period.

Fixing of Responsibilities

Recommendation (Sl. No.12, Para No. 3.37)

1.37 The Committee had desired that all Secretaries to the Government of India should be made personally responsible for prompt action in matters relating to public grievances particularly in regard to availability of relevant record to Directorate of Public Grievances and the action upon the recommendations made by the Directorate.

1.38 The Ministry of (PPPG) Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions in their action taken replies stated that the Cabinet Secretary has from time to time brought to the notice of all concerned Secretaries that records/reports should be made available to the directorate within the stipulated period of six weeks. Further, recommendations made by it should be implemented within 30 days. There has been some improvement in the position. However, there are quite a good number of cases in which reports are not received in time and recommendations are not implemented within the stipulated period of 30 days. The following additional steps ought to be taken by Secretaries of the departments to effect further improvement in the position:

- (i) The Secretaries of the departments should hold periodic meetings, say, at least once in three months in which they should review the references received from the Directorate of Public Grievances which are pending with the departments or organisations under them. An officer of the Directorate of Public Grievances should attend such review meetings. Such meetings should enable them to identify the reasons for delay in submission of records/reports and also take corrective action. Copy of the records of such meetings should be sent to the Directorate of Public Grievances.
- (ii) In such meetings, they should also review the position of implementation of the recommendations made by the directorate.

- (iii) In the event of delay in sending reports/records to the directorate or implementing its recommendations, responsibility should be fixed on the officer/officers concerned and action should be taken against them for dereliction in duty.

1.39 While the Committee have noted that the instructions issued by Cabinet Secretary to the Secretaries of some Ministries which are more grievance prone, they fail to understand why these instruction have not been sent to the Secretary, Ministry of Defence in whose administrative sphere fall a major share of public grievances. They also desire that such instructions should be issued to the Secretaries of other Ministries/ Departments as well.

1.40 The Committee would also like the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions to emphatically pursue the Grievance prone Ministries to implement the steps proposed by the former to further improve promptness of action in redressal of grievances. The Committee hardly need to emphasize that instructions issued should be followed up to ensure there implementation. They would like to be apprised of the progress made in this regard.

1.41 The Committee note that in quite a good number of cases records/ reports are not made available to the Directorate of Public Grievances and that its recommendations are not implemented within the prescribed time-schedule. The Committee deprecate this sorry state of affairs which defeats the very purpose for which this Directorate has been created. The Committee desire that in cases where the records/reports are not made available and recommendations not implemented within the specified time limit a serious view should be taken by the Cabinet Secretariat and responsibility fixed without any exception.

Ministerial Staff to Directorate of Public Grievances

Recommendation (Sl. No. 14, Para No. 3.39)

1.42 The existing time lag in granting relief to the complainant need to be reduced and for this purpose the Directorate of Public Grievances should be sanctioned the ministerial staff necessary to support an otherwise officer oriented organisation.

1.43 The Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions in thier action taken replies stated that:

“A proposal to sanction some ministerial staff for the Directorate of Public Grievances was under consideration and recently some posts were sanctioned. However, in view of economy in administration, these posts have since been abolished.

A post of Director in the Directorate of Public Grievances which fell vacant with effect from 1st February, 1992 has also been abolished.”

Bringing More Ministries/Departments Under the Purview of Directorate of Public Grievances

Recommendation (Sl. No. 18, Para No. 3.43)

1.44 The Committee had also desired that keeping in view the actual intensity of Public Grievances in different ministries/departments more ministries/departments should be brought under the purview of the Directorate of Public Grievances.

1.45 The Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions in their reply stated that:

“The Directorate of Public Grievances at present constituted will not be able to take additional load of work in respect of new departments proposed to be added. At present there are only four officers who have to deal with eight departments/organisations. Besides, the Director of the Directorate, who holds the rank of Secretary to the Government of India, there are only two Deputy Secretaries and two Under Secretaries. Recently, one post of Director in the scale of Director has been abolished which has already affected adversely the working of the directorate. Therefore, it may not be practicable to bring more ministries/departments under the control of the directorate.”

1.46 While considering the report the Committee in their sitting held on 4th January, 1993 desired further clarifications of the stand taken by the Cabinet Secretariat especially in the light of their action in reducing the staff support to Directorate of Public Grievances. It was therefore, decided that the Cabinet Secretary be requested to appear before the Committee on 8th January, 1993 for suitably clarifying the position.

1.47 The Cabinet Secretary, while giving background as to why some posts which were sanctioned were abolished, subsequently, stated:

“As soon as the new government took over, one of the major programmes which it undertook was the reduction of expenditure of the Central Government. One of the major action points in this respect was that at least 10% of the staff should be reduced. Now we have taken action and are aiming at reducing 10% of the staff. But that is not today's subject. Certain Departments where 10% reduction of staff has been effected at the senior level have come back to us pleading that they would give an overall reduction in terms of expenditure but that cuts should not be imposed at key senior levels. Now, I have directed them to see whether it is possible to effect reduction in expenditure in the whole of the Cabinet Secretariat.”

He further added:

“Secondly, the disposal of public grievances is actually undertaken at three levels. The first level is internal grievances redressal machinery of the different departments, the second would be monitoring activity which is done by the Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms and the third one is the specialised agencies and all such Ministries where public interface is maximum. If we decide to add more Ministries, then we will certainly give more staff at that time. But, I would beseech the indulgence of the Committee that we should, perhaps, take a review after some more time, because I, personally, am not happy by the way in which the redressal is being done now. Now, on an average, it takes 155 days. Today, ideally in special cases we should perhaps give a response time of not more than three months. This is what we should achieve for the departments which we have at the moment. For that we are going in for computerisation. If we reach this position, it may be possible for us to think of adding more Ministries.”

He summarized:

“So far as the reduction of staff is concerned, I have asked them to immediately check whether economy can be effected in some other areas and restore this position especially in view of the Committee recommendation and secondly I would request the Committee to go along with us and that we would like to conduct a review after the computerisation process is over.”

1.48 The Committee are distressed at the manner in which inverse logic has been applied by the Government in responding to their recommendations at Sl. No. 14 and 18. On the one hand the Government instead of providing more staff to the Directorate of Public Grievances have actually abolished one post of Director besides reducing the staff. On the other hand it has been argued that in absence of adequate staff it would not be practicable to bring more Ministries/Departments under the purview of Director Public Grievances. After further clarification by the Cabinet Secretary of the circumstances in which staff were reduced, the Committee felt that it is absolutely necessary that the administration at grassroot level should be made responsive to public grievances. The Committee were assured by the Cabinet Secretary during evidence that the matter would be reviewed to restore the status quo-ante. They are of the firm view that the Public Grievances redressal machinery needs to be strengthened. They would also lay stress on introducing and strengthening of modern methods of administration and communication like computerisation and providing other necessary hardware etc.

1.49 The Committee would like to be apprised of the specific action by the govt. to restore the status quo in the Directorate of Public Grievances and introduction of modern techniques of the administration.

Simplification and Rationalisation of Procedures

Recommendation (Sl. No. 21, Para No. 4.71)

1.50 The Government should consciously move away from a situation of excessive and cumbersome laws. Towards this end it should undertake a thorough review of all the statutes that affect the common citizen in his day-to-day life so as to make it simple and easy to comply. The drafting of bills should also reflect the same concern for the common citizen.

1.51 The Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions stated that:

“Instructions have been issued by this department to all Ministries/ Departments of the Government of India to review, in the light of the recommendations made by the Committee, the statutes being administered by them.”

1.52 The Committee have noted the fact that instructions have been issued to all Ministries/Departments to review the statutes being administered by them, in the light of the recommendations made by them. They hope further appropriate action will be taken by the concerned Ministries/Departments to delete such provisions of the statutes which cause harassment to public and encourage corruption. They also desire Department of Public Grievances should monitor the progress achieved by different Ministries/Departments in this regard on a continuous basis and to apprise the Committee to be of the concrete steps taken in this regard.

Imparting Training to Middle Level Supervisory and Non-supervisory Staff

Recommendation (Sl. No. 26, Para No. 4.76)

1.53 The Committee had desired that the Government should draw up a comprehensive plan of imparting training to middle level supervisory and non-supervisory government staff so that apart from acquiring the necessary office skills they also understand the importance of their work and the perspective from which such importance is derived. The Committee would like the training programme to be so devised as will emphasize the attitudinal aspects as a part of the technical aspects of the work.

1.54 The Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions has stated in their action taken replies that:

“The Government has been keenly aware of the need for universalising training programmes for its functionaries, particularly those who are at the middle level and the so-called cutting edge level of the administration. While much work has already been done for training Group ‘A’ officers, the task of training middle level officers—supervisory as well as non-supervisory is enormously large.

Therefore, the coverage of these levels under structured training programmes has been relatively small. There are constraints of resources as well as trained manpower and organisation which are needed to provide periodic training—functional, motivational as well as perspective giving—to these levels. In view of these limitations, efforts are also being made to provide in-house training to many groups of middle level supervisory and non-supervisory functionaries. The need for stepping up efforts towards this direction is well appreciated and the recommendations of the Committee have been brought to the notice of different Ministries and Departments so that they can make utmost effort to maximise the benefit of training that can be derived from the limited available resources.”

1.55 The Committee well appreciate the limitations like constraints of resources, trained manpower and organisation needed to provide periodic training which stand in the way of imparting training to middle level supervisory and non-supervisory government staff. The Committee, however are of the view that such limitations are not a justifiable ground for not formulating suitable training models and plans. The Committee fail to understand how in the absence of a well thought out strategy and a definite plan, any Ministry can expect to derive maximum benefits from the available resources. The Committee, therefore, reiterate its earlier recommendation asking the Government to draw up a comprehensive plan for imparting training to middle level supervisory non-supervisory Government staff. The Committee would also expect the Department of Personnel to take an active interest in promoting and monitoring this activity for categories other than Group ‘A’ officers as well. They would also like to be apprised of the progress achieved in this endeavour.

Implementation of Recommendations

1.56 The Committee would like to emphasise that they attach the greatest importance to the implementation of the recommendations accepted by the Government. They would, therefore, urge that Government should ensure expeditious implementation of the recommendations accepted by them. In case where it is not possible to implement the recommendations in letter and spirit for any reason the matter should be reported to the Committee in time with reasons for non-implementation.

CHAPTER-II

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT

Recommendation (Sl. No. 1, Para No. 1.31)

The government should maintain statistics in regard to public grievances on a comprehensive scale. Distinction between long pending complaints and recent complaints should be maintained. Further the Department of Public Grievances should pick up a larger sample of grievances/complaints for detailed examination and follow up action so as to draw more realistic conclusions about the nature and prevalence of public dissatisfaction with the government departments.

Reply of Government

This department has advised all ministries/departments of the Government of India to set up Management Information System (MIS) and evolve procedures which are necessary for monitoring public grievances and their redress.

It may be mentioned that grievances arise out of the working of innumerable agencies of government spread all over the country. Being mostly local in nature, most of them are received and have necessarily to be disposed of at the local level. Also, many a grievance are made orally and disposed of by the officers concerned without keeping record of them. Therefore, it may not be practicable to keep a centralised record of grievances received by all the agencies of government spread all over the country.

However, a large number of grievances are also received by the central ministries and departments direct from members of the public or client groups. Statistics of such grievances are maintained by the ministries and departments. Quarterly statements of these statistics are obtained from them by the Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances which consolidates them into an aggregate statement.

The consolidated statement pertaining to the previous five years is as follows:-

Year	No. of complaints/grievances received	No. of complaints/grievances disposed of	Remarks
1986-87	11,59,062	10,82,097	48 ministries/deptts.
1987-88	12,34,341	9,95,323	43 ministries/deptts.
1988-89	12,69,510	10,61,239	45 ministries/deptts.
1989-90	5,55,688	4,65,134	46 ministries/deptts.
1990-91	1,10,232	91,323	40 ministries/deptts.

The scheme of things provides for the maintaining of entries with reference to the date on which a complaint or a grievance is received. As a matter of fact, there is a special provision for dealing in a special way with grievances and complaints which are pending for more than three months. The grievance redress officer, usually called the Director of Grievances, can be empowered to take up such cases, examine them at his own initiative and with the assistance of such of persons in the organisation as deal with them or are conversant with them and recommend steps to the head of office for the disposal of such grievance.

As mentioned in the two earlier statements submitted before the Committee, the Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances is not equipped, nor can it possibly be effectively equipped, with the necessary organisation that can dispose of a large enough number of grievances/complaints at its own initiative. For, apart from the widely dispersed sources of grievance to which a reference has been made above, there is also the fact that redress of different kinds of grievances requires intimate knowledge of the subject matter of grievance and familiarity with the relevant rules, procedures, etc. Therefore, there seems to be no alternative to one's depending on the organisation concerned dealing with most of the grievances arising from their work. The small sampling of grievances, made by this department with a view to monitoring their disposal by the organisations or agencies concerned, is intended primarily to give this department an idea of the nature of causes that give rise to such grievances—systematic or procedural deficiencies or human error or whatever. Even so, in deference to the suggestion of the Estimates Committee, this department has recently raised the percentage of grievances being so monitored by it from 3.2% of the total number received by it as in December, 1991 to 5.3% as in June, 1992. Within the limitations of shortage of personnel to which a reference has been made in the previous statements, efforts are being made to raise this figure still higher to around 6% to 7%.

It may, however, be mentioned here that while selecting individual grievances/complaints for monitoring, the department does keep in view the nature of the grievances concerned as well as the frequency of similar

grievances arising in any particular field of government's work. Besides, every year some new types of grievances, not monitored before, are also taken up for monitoring.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 2, Para No. 1.32)

The data about public grievances may be maintained, department-wise, subject-wise, region-wise and state-wise so as to facilitate a systematic and critical analysis of public dissatisfaction as well as adoption of suitable corrective measures.

Reply of Government

As already mentioned, grievances/complaints which are received by the Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances are computerised subject-wise and department-wise. In addition, grievances pertaining to the state governments are also classified state government-wise. The latter broadly takes care of the need for region-wise and state-wise classification of grievances. However, it is possible that a particular grievance received from the complainant of a particular state or region may have wider applicability than the state or region concerned. There is, therefore, likely to be a certain amount of overlap between different categorisations of grievances. Considering the enormity of the variety and number of grievances/complaints involved, this is possible unavoidable.

It may also be noted that most grievances arise locally and they relate to acts of omission and commission of the authorities in the local area concerned. Since such local grievance—arising in innumerable units of government dispersed all over the country—cannot all be consolidated meaningfully for any operational use, introduction of region-wise classification of grievances may not be very helpful.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 4, Para No. 1.34)

Instructions may be issued to all Secretaries to the Government of India advising them to devote at least one or two days in a month exclusively for redressal of public grievances. Also appropriate powers may be delegated to Directors of public grievances in ministries/departments for granting immediate relief to the complainant. The official position and status of Directors, grievance may be suitably upgraded wherever it is likely to make him more effective. The Committee recommend that the complaint should be acknowledged and a receipt of the same be given to the complainant.

Reply of Government

Instructions are already in force for observing Wednesday as meetingless day in the Central Secretariat Offices. Officers of the levels of Deputy Secretary and above are to be available in their seats from 10.00 hours to 13.00 hours to receive and hear public grievances on that day. Field level offices having contact with the public have also been advised to designate some day of the week as meetingless day. Any member of the public can

meet any officer, of the levels of Deputy Secretary and above including the Secretary in any ministry/department, on the meetingless day without prior appointment.

Periodic review with the officials of the ministries/departments indicate that these instructions are by and large being followed. The Director of Grievances is the nodal officer for the ministry/department concerned. Action on a complaint can usually be taken only, or at any rate primarily by the officer concerned with the subject matter of a complaint. For, dealing effectively with a complaint requires familiarity with the subject on the part of the officer concerned. Where immediate relief to the complainant can be given, this has to be given usually by the officer or the unit concerned. But the Director of Grievance keeps a watchful eye on it. Instructions issued by the Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances already envisage that the Director of Grievances may call for the relevant papers/files if a case is not disposed of within 3 months and take a decision thereon with the approval of the Secretary of the ministry/department or head of the department/organisation. The official status of the Director Grievances seems to be sufficiently high, he being a Deputy Secretary or a Director in the department or ministry, as the case may be.

Provision for acknowledging the receipt of complaints already exists in the Central Secretariat Manual of Office Procedure and have also been reiterated by this department from time to time.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 7, Para No. 1.37)

Vigorous efforts may be made to ensure that complainants feel encouraged to approach heads of government organisations for settlement of their problems before routing their complaints to public grievance machinery.

Reply of Government

As a matter of fact, the present scheme of things envisages that it is only if a complainant has failed to get redress from the normal, established agency dealing with the particular subject matter of grievance, that he should come to the public grievance redress machinery of this department. It assumes that the complainant has sought redress from the organisation concerned and if necessary from its highest level, before he comes to this department. With this end in view, Wednesday has been earmarked as the meetingless day when all officers of the levels of Deputy Secretary and above are to be available at their desks during 10 AM to 1 PM. Any complainant can meet him/her without any prior appointment. This arrangement includes the official head of the ministry or the department, as the case may be.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 12, Para No. 3.37)

All Secretaries to the Government of India should be made personally responsible for prompt action in matters relating to public grievances

particularly in regard to availability of relevant record to Directorate of Public Grievances and the action upon the recommendations made by the Directorate.

Reply of Government

Cabinet Secretary has from time to time brought to the notice of all concerned Secretaries that records/reports should be made available to the directorate within the stipulated period of six weeks. Further, recommendations made by it should be implemented within 30 days. There has been some improvement in the position. However, there are quite a good number of cases in which reports are not received in time and recommendations are not implemented within the stipulated period of 30 days. The following additional steps ought to be taken by Secretaries of the departments to effect further improvement in the position:

- (i) The Secretaries of the departments should hold periodic meetings, say, at least once in three months in which they should review the references received from the Directorate of Public Grievances which are pending with the departments or organisations under them. An officer of the Directorate of Public Grievances should attend such review meetings. Such meetings would enable them to indentify the the reasons for delay in submission of records/reports and also take corrective action. Copy of the records of such meetings should be sent to the Directorate of Public Grievances.
- (ii) In such meetings, they sould also review the position of implementation of the recommendations made by the directorate.
- (iii) In the event of delay in sending reports/records to the Directorate or implementing its recommendations, responsibility should be fixed on the officer/officers concerned and action should be taken against them for dereliction in duty.

Copies of instructions issued by Cabinet Secretary are annexed at Annexure-I.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 13, Para No. 3.38)

There should be an institutionalised mechanism for resolution of difference of opinion between the Directorate of Public Grievances and other ministries/departments so as to make sure that the effectiveness of directorate is not lost in inter-ministerial wrangles.

Reply of Government

Guidelines for settlement of differences between government departments have been laid down. Such cases are to be referred to the Committee of Secretaries for decision. However, there has been no occasion in the directorate so far to refer any case to this Committee as majority of the recommendations made by the directorate have been implemented. In some cases in which departments have not been able to

implement for specific reasons, the recommendations have been suitably revised after discussion with them and in other cases the points of view of the departments have been accepted.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 15, Para No. 3.40)

The practice of giving personal hearing to the complainant by the Directorate of Public Grievances as also by the ministry/department concerned may be given due encouragement so as to make the entire process of grievance redressal quick and purpose oriented.

Reply of Government

The complainants have the option of being heard in person in the Directorate of Public Grievances on any working day. The complainants residing in Delhi and adjoining areas avail themselves of this opportunity. However, difficulty arises in cases of complainants of out-lying stations as it is expensive for them to come to Delhi for being heard. In some selected cases officers of the directorate are deputed to out-lying stations for hearing complainants, as also the representatives of the departments concerned.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 16, Para No. 3.41)

A record of the nature, source and magnitude of grievances which tend to get repeated should be maintained to gauge the on the ground effectiveness of grievance redressal machinery or measures.

Reply of Government

A subject-wise record of complaints is maintained in the Directorate of Public Grievances in computer. These are discussed with the concerned heads of departments to improve the system so that complaints on these accounts are reduced. The Directorate of Public Grievances has also made a number of suggestions to the concerned departments for their consideration to make the grievance redressal machinery more effective. The cases requiring in-depth study are referred to the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances in the Ministry of Personnel for a detailed study. This arrangement is working satisfactorily.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 20, Para No. 4.70)

The existing delegation of powers at different levels of administrative hierarchy may be reviewed. Also a mechanism may be evolved whereby such a review can be carried out at regular intervals in order to readjust the structure of delegated powers in accordance with changing situation.

Reply of Government

As a matter of fact, a certain institutional arrangement for this purpose already exists. Delegation of powers takes two broad forms: (i) inter-departmental delegation of powers, and (ii) intra-departmental

delegation of powers. Nodal ministries like Finance and Personnel delegate powers to the administrative ministries/departments. The latter in their turn delegate powers to their constituent units working within their functional jurisdiction.

Delegation of powers made by the ministries/departments is reviewed from time to time and suitable adjustments made in the light of the developing situation. Under the scheme of Responsive Administration being pursued since 1985, instructions have been issued to every ministry/department to institute a mechanism for periodic re-examination of delegation of powers for decision making and implementation. Ministries and departments have also been asked to identify classes of cases, and levels at which they can be disposed of without reference to any.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 21, Para No. 4.71)

The government should consciously move away from a situation of excessive and cumbersome laws. Towards this end it should undertake a thorough review of all the statutes that affect the common citizen in his day-to-day life so as to make it simple and easy to comply. The drafting of bills should also reflect the same concern for the common citizen.

Reply of Government

Instructions have been issued by this department to all ministries/departments of the Government of India to review, in the light of the recommendations made by the Committee, the statutes being administered by them.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 22, Para No. 4.72)

The government should step up efforts towards simplification of rules and procedures in different fields of public administration to ensure visible relief to the public.

Reply of Government

As has been submitted before the Committee earlier, much work has been done by way of simplification of rules and procedures in different fields of public administration, particularly those in which the common man has frequent contact with the administration. However, this is a continuing process. Success achieved already as well as tasks that remain to be completed are not easily quantifiable. Periodic review of rules and procedures is done by individual ministries and departments. The Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances in its turn reviews them with the concerned ministries and departments.

Greater stress on this issue has been given in the context of the implementation of the current policy of deregulation and liberalisation.

Apart from all that is being done by the individual ministries and departments in coordination with the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances, selected ministries and departments are being taken up for examination of their rules and procedures by a Committee of Secretaries to be presided over by the Cabinet Secretary. The idea is to see that the work in this field done in individual ministries and departments, which are intimately involved in the implementation of the policy for deregulation and liberalisation, is examined more thoroughly.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 23, Para No. 4.73)

The Department of Public Grievances should ensure the involvement of individual ministries/departments in carrying out studies of their concern so as to enhance the final acceptability of consequential recommendations made by the department. An appropriate scheme of interaction with various ministries/departments may be drawn.

Reply of Government

As a matter of fact, the prescribed mechanism largely incorporates this provision. The subject matter for a study is often chosen either at the instance of or in consultation with the ministries or departments concerned. This is in addition to subject matters that are chosen by the Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances for study in the light of its own perception of their importance. Whenever a subject matter of study pertains to a ministry or department or any other important organisation of government, the officials concerned of that organisation are invariably associated with the study. They have to collect materials, compile data, etc., under the guidance of the study team of the Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances. Besides this, the study team holds detailed discussion with the officials concerned. The departments concerned are usually associated with the study from its inception to the time of the submission of the report. As a matter of fact, the degree of association of the concerned department is often reflected in the quality of the study report that is prepared. However, in the light of the Committee's recommendations, fresh instructions on the subject will be issued to all ministries and departments.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 24, Para No. 4.74)

The department should review the position in regard to involvement of voluntary agencies for monitoring the grievance redressal performance of field offices/agencies of various ministries/departments and explain to the Committee why 12 departments which had initially responded positively in the matter have later failed to set up Standing Committee of Voluntary Agencies for this purpose. The Committee will also like to know how successfully such standing committees have been functioning in other departments. They also desire that while constituting SCOVA suitable

guidelines should be issued to involve only genuine and reputed voluntary agencies.

Reply of Government

The Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances has reviewed the position about the involvement of SCOVA in different spheres of administration. By the time written statements were submitted by the department of the Estimates Committee in 1990, 12 ministries/ departments of the Government of India had said that they felt that they would benefit from an institutionalised interaction with voluntary agencies. We have since received responses from these ministries and departments. Some of them on reconsideration feel that the nature of the work done by them being what it is, there is little or no scope for involvement of voluntary agencies in it. Some other ministries and departments have mentioned that they associate non-official bodies of consumers, client groups and elected representatives of the people and so on, who are involved periodically or on a continuing basis in those activities which have a direct bearing on the consumers' interests. In such cases, the associations concerned may not strictly come within the ambit of the definition of voluntary agencies as the term is understood in general parlance, but it seems that the spirit behind the suggestion for involving voluntary agencies is substantially embodied in the extant arrangement. For example, users of the railways may not have formed themselves into a voluntary agency. But it is a collective body formed for the specific purpose of securing redress of the grievances of railway users. A statement outlining the responses of the various ministries and departments concerned is given in Annex II.

It may be noted here that the concept of SCOVA came up in the background of there being in existence a sizeable number of voluntary associations in a specific area of a governmental organisation's activities. Where such voluntary associations do not exist at all or where they do not exist in sufficient number, the idea of having a Standing Committee of their representatives to assist the ministry or department concerned may be premature. However, as the statement given in Annex II indicates, ministries and departments whose work involves substantial interaction with the member of the public or client groups, do have some form of non-governmental agencies to interact with them periodically. Keeping in view the spirit behind the Estimates Committee's recommendations, efforts are being made to impress upon all these ministries and departments to strengthen the institutional system of interaction where it exists and to introduce it where it is possible to introduce it but does not yet exist.

As for the four ministries/departments which had earlier reported that they had SCOVAs assisting them in their work, two have indicated that their interaction with the SCOVAs has been continuing effectively. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has mooted a proposal for restructuring the institution. The details of this may be seen at Annex III.

A summary of the responses received from the ministries and departments concerned is given in Annex III.

Of the ministries which had earlier stated that they had institutional arrangement akin to the SCOVA pattern, three have confirmed that this arrangement still continues. The details may be seen at Annex IV.

The Estimates Committee's recommendations for issuing suitable guidelines for constitution of SCOVA, emphasising the need for involving only genuine and reputed voluntary agencies has been taken note of. Fresh guidelines to this effect has been issued. As already stated above, the difficulty in having a SCOVA in every sphere of government's work where voluntary agencies may be involved is that there are no sufficient number of voluntary agencies, not to speak of effective and genuine ones, in every such sphere to warrant as yet the setting up of a Standing Committee of them. This is a matter where the initiative for sufficient number of voluntary agencies has to come from non-governmental sources.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 27, Para No. 4.77)

The training of Group 'A' level officers, apart from focussing on technical skills of management ought to lay an equal stress on leadership.

Reply of Government

As a matter of fact, this is already being done. Training of Group 'A' level officers focuses not only on the improving and updating of professional skills, but also on strengthening leadership qualities. As far as the Indian Administrative Service and the Central Secretariat Service are concerned, the Training Division of the Department of Personnel & Training takes a hand at determining the course contents of the training programmes, preparing the requisite capsules and modules. These focus not only on improving the technical skills of management, but also on behavioural aspects as well. The department is also reviewing the course contents of the training programmes for the Central Secretariat Service officers with a view to laying greater stress on developing their leadership qualities. While similar efforts in varying degrees are made by cadre controlling authorities for various Group 'A' Central Services, the Department of Personnel & Training as the nodal agency has already issued instructions in the light of the Estimates Committee's recommendations laying greater stress on leadership and team building qualities.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 28, Para No. 4.78)

As a step towards modernisation of government offices the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances should first operationalise the concepts of modernisation in their own offices so as to serve as a model for other ministries/departments. In this regard while

the Committee are assured by the efforts which are already underway and they desire that the department should show results. The government should also inform the concerned agencies.

Reply of Government

As earlier submitted before the Committee, the Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances not only promotes modernisation of government offices in other ministries and departments of government but has also made considerable efforts for modernising its own office. For example, use of computer is being made in a big way for monitoring redress of grievances selected by the department for their disposal being watched. Use of modern office equipments like Xerox machines, electronic typewriters is being made for quickening the preparation of documents.

It may, however, be appreciated that use of gadgets and equipments is only one aspect, often the less important one of modernisation. The more substantial aspect is the creation of the right environment in the office in which the functionaries and the client groups or members of the public, as the case may be, can have legitimate interaction with each other without too many physical and procedural constraints. This is being done in the Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances in a substantial way. It may, however, be appreciated that the nature of the work in this department is qualitatively different from that of other ministries and departments of the Government of India and each organisation's move for modernisation in this intangible, but crucial aspect, will have to be designed in the light of the specificities of the organisation and its work.

As for modernisation of the Government of India offices in general, the efforts made so far have been limited owing largely to paucity of resources. The physical part of modernisation involves not only introduction of modern equipments and gadgets, but often the relaying of the office premises. This require redesigning of office buildings, furnishing etc. —a task that can be barely taken up now, when there is a resource crunch. However, the need for maximising the benefit of modernisation within all constraint of resources is repeatedly being emphasised upon all ministries, departments and other organisations of the Government of India.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 29, Para No. 4.79)

The government should take immediate steps to make effective use of the electronic medium and other in educating general public about the public redressal machinery available in various ministries/departments and to particularly enhance awareness about the role of Director of Public Grievances.

Reply of Government

The media are already being made use of by ministries/departments for educating the public about the services rendered by them and the public grievance redress machinery set up by them. Organisations of government having frequent inter-action with the members of the public put out advertisements on the Radio, Television and in the Press about the specific arrangements made by them to look into the complaints of the public. To mention a few examples, the Department of Telecommunications, Delhi Transport Corporation, Delhi Electric Supply Undertaking, etc. periodically advertise the Adalats being held by them for redress of grievances pertaining to their respective spheres of activity. The Directorate of Public Grievances under the Cabinet Secretariat has also repeatedly issued advertisements informing the general public that it provides redress to grievances complaints relating to areas like banking, insurance, posts, telecommunications, civil aviation, etc. Ministries and departments rendering services to the public also publicise their activity through booklets, pamphlets, brochures, etc. issued by them from time to time. The Consumer Disputes Redressal Fora which have been set up throughout the country for the redress of consumer grievances are being given wide publicity to generate awareness among the consumers. Towards this end a multi-media approach has been adopted. Doordarshan is telecasting a fortnightly programme 'Sanrakshan Upabohkta ka'. The Ministry of Civil Supplies also proposes to start soon a weekly programme 'Apne Adhikar' from all the commercial centres of the All India Radio.

Educating the general public and bringing in them an awareness of the grievance redress machinery in government is an on-going process. The Director-General, All India Radio as well as the Director-General, Doordarshan have advised all the All India Radio stations and Doordarshan Kendras to provide appropriate publicity to the public redress machinery available in various ministries/departments of the Government of India.

CHAPTER III

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS WHICH THE COMMITTEE DO NOT DESIRE TO PURSUE IN VIEW OF THE GOVERNMENT REPLIES

Recommendation (Sl. No. 3, Para No. 1.33)

The government should lay special emphasis on redressal of grievances of those ministries/departments which have relatively larger public dealing and are, therefore, grievance prone. Immediate consultations should be initiated particularly with the Ministries of Finance, Department of Revenue and the Banking Division, Defence, Railways and Communications to evolve appropriate strategies for minimising public grievances in these ministries/departments.

Reply of Government

The ministries/departments having relatively large public dealings, which come within the purview of the Directorate of Public Grievances, are Railways, Banking and Insurance Divisions of the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Communications. Internal Grievance Redressal Machinery has been set up at various organisational levels in all these ministries/departments. Such a machinery has also been set up in various units of the banks and insurance companies. They are working on a regular basis for quite some time. The Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances has from time to time issued guidelines for the strengthening of this machinery which are being generally followed.

The Directorate of Public Grievances, while interacting with these departments/organisations, also goes into the question of the functioning of the Internal Grievance Redressal machinery set up by them. Periodic meetings are held by the directorate with these organisations and emphasis is laid on its effective functioning. During the field visits by the officials of the Directorate the functioning of the Internal Grievance Redressal machinery of these departments is also reviewed and remedial measures suggested, wherever considered necessary.

A number of measures to streamline the procedure with a view to minimising the grievances are also suggested to the concerned departments/organisations and these suggestions, by and large, have been accepted by them.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 6, Para No. 1.36)

Each ministry/department may set up a small committee headed by a Member of Parliament and the concerned Secretary as its member-secretary, to study the volume of public grievances and to suggest a simplified system of disposing public grievances. Appropriate guidelines should be issued by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances for constitution of such committees.

Reply of Government

The system of keeping record of grievances received in the ministries and departments is reasonably streamlined. Grievances that are received by the ministries and departments are computed on a quarterly basis and the number sent to the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances. That is how the annual computation of grievances which usually total around a million a year, is done. In view of this, it may not be necessary to set up a committee to study the volume of grievances. However, the Internal Grievance Machinery in ministries/departments, about which mention has been made in the reports sent to the Committee in reply to their questionnaires, could be headed by an officer in the rank of Joint Secretary.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 9, Para No. 2.40)

The government should issue strict instructions to all ministries/departments to ensure that officers not below the rank of Joint Secretary take part in the meetings convened by the Department of Public Grievances. In fact each ministry/department should designate specific officers of appropriate level for this purpose.

Reply of Government

Since the time when the department made its deposition before the Estimates Committee, much effort has been made for securing representation of various ministries and departments at sufficiently high and appropriate levels in the quarterly review meetings conducted by this department. This department has insisted upon the need for maintaining continuity in the administrative arrangements for the public grievance redress apparatus set up in each ministry and department and for ensuring that a knowledgeable officer of sufficient seniority, who works in this apparatus, attends the quarterly meetings conducted by this department. In every ministry and department, the Director of Public Grievances is usually an officer of the rank of Director or Deputy Secretary, but his work is usually supervised by a Joint Secretary who devotes part of his

time to this work. An analysis of the level of representation of various ministries and departments made in the recent months shows considerable improvement not only in the level of representation but also continuity in the arrangements maintained by departments and ministries for disposal of public grievances. However, there is still much room for improvement and the department has been pursuing the matter steadily with the ministries and departments concerned.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 17, Para No. 3.42)

The government should re-examine the desirability of keeping matters relating to policy, service conditions, commercial contracts or cases which have been decided at the Ministers level or cases which are sub-judice, outside the purview of the Directorate of Public Grievances. The Committee should be informed about the result of such re-examination.

Reply of Government

This recommendation, read in the context of paragraph 3.35 of the main report, would seem to imply that the specific action points suggested by the Committee are as follows:—

- (a) The question of keeping commercial contracts outside the purview of the Directorate of Public Grievances needs to be reconsidered; and
- (b) Matters relating to policy, which may have a bearing on public grievances, should be within the purview of the Directorate of Public Grievances.

As for (a), it may be mentioned here that commercial contracts are subject to the usual laws of the land relating to contracts. The terms of the contract as well as the laws of the land themselves would indicate the kind of action that can be taken or cannot be taken. The intervention of an outside agency like the Director of Public Grievances, who is unlikely to have any specialised knowledge or experience in the handling of commercial contracts, may be seen as affecting the free and unobstructed implementation of the terms of contract or enforcement of contractual obligations. However, should the terms of contract be found to have an adverse effect upon one of the parties or the members of the general public, a petition dealing with this issue and sent to the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances can always be considered with a view to examining if any further change in the extent form or terms of the contract is called for in the future. In that view of the matter, it may not be desirable to extend the jurisdiction of the Directorate of Public Grievances to the sphere of commercial contracts.

As for (b), the intervention of the Directorate of Public Grievances in policy issues may not be necessary having in view the fact that the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances has jurisdiction over the entire gamut of the Government of India's organisations, in so far as consideration or reconsideration of policy issues

are concerned. In any case, important findings of the Directorate bearing on the question of policy/procedure are brought to the notice of the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances for it to examine them. These issues are further examined as and when necessary for providing inputs for change of policy, procedure and methods. It may not be out of place to mention here that since the main purpose of the formation of the Directorate of Public Grievances was to give justice in specific cases of complaints of injustice or malpractice, it really functions more or less on the lines of a judicial body. While its inputs of findings can always be taken into account in formulation of policy, as indeed judicial pronouncements are done in another context, its direct involvement in examining the policy issues may not be in line with the tradition in the Government of India.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 19, Para No. 3.44)

The government should examine, *de-novo*, the question of converting the Directorate of Public Grievances into a statutory authority on the pattern of the Ombudsman.

Reply of Government

The pros and cons of converting the Directorate of Public Grievances into a statutory authority on the pattern of Ombudsman has been discussed at some length in the depositions made earlier before the Committee. Government has not yet found it necessary to provide statutory authority to the Directorate of Public Grievances for a variety of reasons which include the following main ones:—

An exercise for the setting up of an institution of Lokpal has been going on for quite some time. On more than one occasion, this exercise led to the formulation of a draft Bill and its submission to Parliament. The statutory authority of Lokpal—if and when it comes—would obviate the need for a statutory Directorate of Public Grievances to be formed on the pattern of the Ombudsman.

The Directorate of Public Grievances has been operating for only four years. Steps have been taken for improving its effectiveness. It is desirable that institution in its present form is given time to establish itself to make its impact.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 25, Para No. 4.75)

In the present situation where government has critical role in every sphere of life and whereby its inefficiencies as dispenser of services and provider of welfare get shielded behind the omnipotency of the State and the public feeling about the insensitivity of the government department to their grievances is widespread, the committee would like the government to at least move in a direction in which it can progressively shed responsibilities which do not fall strictly within the traditional role of the

State. Simultaneously they would like the government to encourage legal action under Consumers Protection Act by citizens or their bodies against such of its departments as are clearly engaged in distinctly service oriented and commercial activities.

Reply of Government

The current policy of deregulation and liberalisation embodies the essence of the recommendations of the Estimates Committee. Many activities, undertaken by government in the past, which did not fall strictly within the sphere of the conventional duties of the State, are being either shed or whittled down gradually. For example, air services run by government are being supplemented by private services. The private sector is being encouraged to enter the hotel and tourism industry in a big way so that the State's role in this field does not have to be widened. Even in sectors like power generation, more and more private entrepreneurial initiative is being encouraged.

Complaints against government departments, organisations, industrial, commercial and service undertakings in the public sector are made every now and then. Government has made it clear time and again that it has no intention to exempt any of the government organisations from the purview of the Consumer Protection Act and no restrictions have been imposed on the filing of complaints against government.

CHAPTER IV

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH GOVERNMENT'S REPLIES HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COMMITTEE

Recommendation (Sl. No. 5, Para No. 1.35)

A system should be evolved in each area of the public administration whereby complaints are duly acknowledged and progress made in their settlement reported periodically to the complainant.

Reply of Government

As already stated, there is provision for duly acknowledging the receipt of a complaint or a grievance in the ministries, departments and major organisations of the Government of India. This is also reiterated at the periodic meetings held by this department with the officials of all ministries and departments. However, it may not be practicable to give periodic reports to the complainant about the progress in the disposal of his complaint. Even so in specific cases which may be long pending or which have many complexities, reports are given from time to time to the complainant. It may not be practicable to make a general rule of this dispensation.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 8, Para No. 2.39)

The staffing pattern of the Department of Public Grievances may be reviewed to make it more officer oriented and to facilitate periodical induction of professional experts from the open market.

Reply of Government

As a matter of fact, the present work arrangement for the Public Grievance Wing of the Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances is already officer oriented even though the wing is very small in size. There are three officers earmarked exclusively for doing this work. Their work is supervised by a Deputy Secretary who devotes part of his time to the work of public grievances.

As mentioned earlier in reply to the two sets of questionnaire sent by the Estimates Committee, the main work of the wing does not and was never intended to take a hand in the disposal of individual grievances/complaints. Certain individual grievances/complaints are kept for the purpose of monitoring their disposal by the concerned agencies of government in order to enable this department to form an idea of the nature of grievances that arise from specific fields of work of government.

In view of this, not much is likely to be gained by bringing in many more officers to the Public Grievance Wing of the department.

The need for professional experts to study the systems, management procedure etc. which give rise to grievance, is taken care of by the internal expertise which the Administrative Reforms Wing of the department has or tries to acquire. The question of strengthening the professional skills of this wing has been discussed in another context.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 10, Para No. 2.41)

Government at the highest level should deliberate upon the existing lack of synergy between the efforts of the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances and those of various other ministries/departments towards redressal of public grievances and evolve a mechanism under which study reports made by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances are examined and acted upon by other ministries/departments with full seriousness. It should also be ensured that such examination is carried out in a time-bound manner and a final view about the acceptance of these study reports, taken expeditiously.

Reply of Government

There is an established system of coordination between the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances and other ministries/departments for redress of public grievances. While the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances lays down the broad policy guidelines for all ministries/departments, specific procedures and methods of work are designed by each ministry/department in the light of the specific nature of the subject. Measures taken by ministries/departments to strengthen the grievance redress machinery are reviewed by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances in periodic meetings with the Director of Grievances of various ministries/departments.

The system of examination of the study reports of the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances by ministries/departments concerned has been institutionalised. The study reports are sent to the Secretary of the ministry/department or the head of the organisation concerned, who is expected to get them examined at a sufficiently high level. These reports contain a variety of recommendations including those which require inter-ministerial consultation or change in policy for their implementation. Recommendations, for which decision has to be taken by only the ministry/department concerned are generally processed quickly. Recommendations involving inter-ministerial consultations are to be examined by an Empowered Committee to be constituted by the ministry/department primarily concerned with the implementation of the report. Though the instructions issued by this department stipulate that the processing of reports by the Empowered Committee should be completed

within three months of the receipt of the Report, it has not generally been possible to adhere to this time limit, because inter-ministerial consultations are a time consuming process. There also arise differences of opinion, in many cases, about the feasibility of implementation of some of the recommendations and the likely implications of such implementation. A final decision in such cases takes much longer than is normally envisaged. Nevertheless, this department keeps in continuous touch with the ministries/departments concerned till a final decision on its recommendations is taken.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 11, Para No. 2.42)

The recommendations made in the Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances study reports should be implemented within an appropriate but fixed time limit. In cases where these are not acceptable the reasons therefor should be reported within a reasonable time.

Reply of Government

Please see reply to recommendation No.10 (Para 2.41).

Recommendation (Sl. No. 14, Para No. 3.39)

The existing time lag in granting relief to the complaint need to be reduced and for this purpose the Directorate of Public Grievances should be sanctioned the ministerial staff necessary to support an otherwise officer oriented organisation.

Reply of Government

A proposal to sanction some ministerial staff for the Directorate of Public Grievances was under consideration and recently some posts were sanctioned. However, in view of economy in administration, these posts have since been abolished.

A post of Director in the Directorate of Public Grievances which fell vacant with effect from 1st February, 1992 has also been abolished.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 18, Para No. 3.43)

Keeping in view the actual intensity of Public Grievances in different Ministries/Departments more ministries/departments should be brought under the purview of the Directorate of Public Grievances.

Reply of Government

The Directorate of Public Grievances at present constituted will not be able to take additional load of work in respect of new departments proposed to be added. At present there are only four officers who have to deal with eight Departments/organisations. Besides, the Director of the Directorate, who holds the rank of Secretary to the Government of India, there are only two Deputy Secretaries and two Under Secretaries. Recently, one post of Director in the scale of Director has been abolished which has already affected adversely the working of the directorate.

Therefore, it may not be practicable to bring more ministries / departments under the control of the directorate.

Recommendation (Sl. No. 26, Para No. 4.76)

The Government should draw up a comprehensive plan of imparting training to middle level supervisory and non-supervisory government staff so that apart from acquiring the necessary office skills they also understand the importance of their work and the perspective from which such importance is derived. The Committee would like the training programmes to be so devised as will emphasize the attitudinal aspects as a part of the technical aspects of the work.

Reply of Government

Government has been keenly aware of the need for universalising training programmes for its functionaries, particularly those who are at the middle level and the so-called cutting edge level of the administration. While much work has already been done for training Group 'A' officers, the task of training middle level officers—supervisory as well as non-supervisory is enormously large. Therefore, the coverage of these levels under structured training programmes has been relatively small. There are constraints of resources as well as trained man-power and organisation which are needed to provide periodic training—functional, motivational as well as perspective giving—to these levels. In view of these limitations, efforts are also being made to provide in-house training to many groups of middle level supervisory and non-supervisory functionaries. The need for stepping up efforts towards this direction is well appreciated and the recommendations of the Committee have been brought to the notice of different ministries and departments so that they can make utmost effort to maximise the benefit of training that can be derived from the limited available resources.

CHAPTER V

**RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH
FINAL REPLIES ARE STILL AWAITED**

—NIL—

NEW DELHI;
March 26, 1993

Chaitra 5, 1915 (S)

MANORANJAN BHAKTA,
Chairman,
Estimates Committee.



ANNEXURE-I

**केन्द्रीय सचिव
CABINET SECRETARY
NEW DELHI**

DO No.37/10/1/90-CA.V

28th March, 1990.

My Dear Secretary,

The Directorate of Public Grievances (DPG) was set up in 1988 in the Cabinet Secretariat for the purpose of entertaining grievances from the public if their complaints failed to get satisfactory redressal from the Ministries/Departments within a reasonable period of time. As per the instructions issued, the Ministries/Organisations are required:

- (i) to send to DPG within 6 weeks the reports/files wanted by them.
- (ii) to implement within a period of 30 days the recommendations made by the DPG.

2. The enclosed statement shows the pendency of grievances as on 28.2.90. It seems the instructions which have been issued in regard to the time-frame within which the Ministries/Departments have to take action are not being followed. You may appreciate that if the time schedule given by the Cabinet Secretariat is not adhered to, the very purpose of the Directorate of Public Grievances and its effectiveness would be lost.

3. You are, therefore, requested to kindly ensure that the instructions which have been issued are followed. Action may also kindly be taken to ensure that all pending references given in the statement attached are disposed within a month from the date of receipt of this letter, under intimation to me.

Yours sincerely,

Sd/-
(V.C. Pande)

- (1) Shri R.K. Saiyed, Secy, D/o Posts.
- (2) Dr. Bimal Jalan, Finance Secy.
- (3) Shri K.C. Sivaramakrishnan, Secy, MUD
- (4) Shri A.V. Ganesan, Secy, M/o Civil Aviation.
- (5) Shri P.M. Abraham, Secy, M/o Surface Transport.
- (6) Shri M.N. Prasad, Chairman, Railway Board.
- (7) Shri S.G. Pitroda, Chairman, Telecom. Commission.



मंत्रिमण्डल सचिव
CABINET SECRETARY
NEW DELHI

DO No.6/27/89-DPG

25th February, 1991.

My Dear Secretary

As you are aware, the Directorate of Public Grievances was established on 1st April, 1988, for dealing with public complaints pertaining to Ministries/Departments, as per list annexed. [This is an independent authority established to receive and investigate grievances and make recommendations which have, as a rule, to be accepted. This Directorate has been authorised to call for files and reports from the concerned Offices which should be made available within six weeks. The decision of the Directorate on a particular case should, as a rule, be implemented within 30 days.] Copy of Government Resolution setting up this Directorate is enclosed.

2. It has been brought to my notice that these time schedules have not been adhered to in several cases. I would request you to issue suitable instructions to all concerned so that files and reports required by the Directorate of Public Grievances are made available and recommendations implemented within the prescribed time-schedule. You may also like to nominate an officer to act as the Director of Public Grievances in respect of your Ministry to monitor compliance with these instructions.

Yours sincerely,

Sd/-
 (Naresh Chandra)

Finance Secretary
 Chairman, Railway Board.
 Secretary, D/o Telecommunications.
 Secretary, Deptt. of Posts.
 Secretary, M/o Civil Aviation.
 Secretary, M/o Urban Development.
 Secretary, M/o Surface Transport.

ANNEXURE II

Summary of responses received from Ministries / Departments which had earlier responded that they would benefit from an institutionalised interaction with voluntary organisations.

1. **Department of Agriculture and Cooperation** The Department is not a public dealing Department. Voluntary organisations not involved in monitoring grievance redressal performance. The question of setting up of SCOVA does not arise.
2. **Ministry of Commerce** There is no voluntary organisation for revitalisation of administration. No SCOVA in the Ministry.
3. **Ministry of Defence** Areas for association of voluntary agencies are limited. 3 associations of ex-servicemen are already members of SCOVA set up by the Department of Pensions. Thereafter, separate SCOVA not deemed necessary.
4. **Department of Revenue** SCOVA not necessary because collectors of Customs and Central Excise are in constant touch with the Chambers of Commerce and other trade organisations to sort out their grievances.
5. **Civil Aviation** No voluntary agency involved in any of the activities of this Department.
6. **Ministry of Labour** Ministry involve voluntary agencies in implementation of various schemes. Grants-in-Aid and financial assistance is given to voluntary agencies.
7. **Ministry of Railways** The Ministry has an institutionalised system of interaction with users associations at the national, zonal as well as divisional level. Committees like National Railway Users Consultative Committee, Zonal Railway Users Consultative Committee have been constituted with Members of Parliament, Members of State Legislatures and representatives of users associations as their members. Such Committees have useful interaction with the railway administration in matters relating to users interests.

8. Department of Fertilizer The objective for setting up of SCOVA is not directly applicable to this department. There is no proposal to set up SCOVA.
9. Information & Broadcasting This Department does not deal with any voluntary agency and there is no scope for associating voluntary agencies in the programmes of the department. No scope for setting up SCOVA.
10. Department of Coal They have reconstituted the Coal Advisory Council to advise Government in regard to all matters pertaining to coal particularly the planning, production, transportation and distribution of coal. The council has representatives of chambers of commerce and industry, manufacturers' associations, trade unions and consumers associations etc. as its members.
11. Ministry of Textiles There is no move to set up SCOVA.
12. Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas Reply still awaited.

ANNEXURE III

Summary of responses received from Ministries/Departments which have already set up SCOVA.

1. **Department of Pension & Pensioners' Welfare** SCOVA exists since 1986. It is reconstituted every year and comprises of representatives from prominent pensioners' associations. Meetings of the Committee are held two to three times in a year. Efforts to get a feedback on the implementation of the plans of Government as well as to discuss the new policy initiatives is well appreciated by the pensioners. The Department is making efforts to explore the potential of making use of senior citizens in the development programmes of the country.
2. **Department of Youth Affairs & Sports** The National Advisory Committee was set up through a resolution dated 27th October, 1986. Its meetings were held on 18.12.86, 13.1.87, 3.11.87, 19.1.88 and 11.1.89. National Advisory Committee had not been effective, especially as a sounding board for new ideas. The Department has recently set up a Committee for National Youth Programme (CONYP) which will function as SCOVA.
3. **Ministry of Health & Family Welfare** In 1986 a high powered Committee known as Standing Committee for Support to Voluntary Organisations was set up. Its term expired in 1989 and it has not been reconstituted. Sometime back the Department of Family Welfare proposed setting up an independent body to be called Voluntary Action for Family Welfare and Health (VAFAH). The proposal was sent to the Plan Finance Division of the Department of Expenditure and the Planning Commission. The Expenditure Finance Committee has made some observations and asked the Department to reconsider the proposal. As an alternative to

VFAFH, the Expenditure Finance Committee has recommended that the Department of Family Welfare may consider the setting up of a Committee within the Department with enhanced powers.

4. Department of
Electronics

Reply still awaited.

Summary of responses received from Ministries/Departments where bodies akin to SCOVA are functioning

1. **Department of Women & Child Development** No need for setting up of SCOVA as the objectives of setting up such a Committee is already fulfilled by the department by having regular interactions with voluntary agencies in implementation of various schemes of the department.
2. **Department of Rural Development** Arrangements for interaction with voluntary organisations is already institutionalised through CAPART. They have decided not to set up SCOVA.
3. **Department of Civil Supplies** Central Consumer Protection Council has been constituted in which various voluntary organisations have been given adequate representation. The council meets periodically and deliberates on various consumer issues. The Ministry also interact with voluntary organisations through workshops and training programmes. Thus voluntary organisations are involved in the implementation of Consumer Protection Act and policy behind it.
4. **Department of Environment & Forests** Reply awaited.
5. **Ministry of Welfare** Reply awaited.

APPENDIX I
(Vide Introduction)

*Analysis of Action Taken by Government on the 1st Report of the
Estimates Committee (10th Lok Sabha).*

I.	Total number of Recommendations	29
II.	Recommendations/Observations which have been accepted by Government (Nos. 1, 2, 4, 7, 12, 13, 15, 16, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 27, 28 and 29).	16
	Percentage to total	55.1%
III.	Recommendations/Observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of Governments reply (Nos. 3, 6, 9, 17, 19 and 25).	6
	Percentage to total	20.7%
IV.	Recommendations/Observations in respect of which Government's replies have not been accepted by the Committee (Nos. 5, 8, 10, 11, 14, 18 and 26).	7
	Percentage to total	24.2%
V.	Recommendations/Observations in respect of which final replies are still awaited.	
	NIL	NIL

APPENDIX II
ESTIMATES COMMITTEE
(1992-93)

MINUTES
17TH SITTING

4.1.1993

The Committee sat from 1100 to 1315 hours.

PRESENT

Shri Manoranjan Bhakta—*Chairman*

MEMBERS

2. Shri A. Charles
3. Shri Rajendra Agnihotri
4. Shri Mumtaz Ansari
5. Shri Ayub Khan
6. Shri Somjibhai Damor
7. Shri Santosh Kumar Gangwar
8. Smt. Girija Devi
9. Shri Nurul Islam
10. Shri Manjay Lal
11. Shri Hannan Mollah
12. Shri G. Devaraya Naik
13. Shri Rupchand Pal
14. Shri Harish Narayan Prabhu Zantye
15. Shri Amar Roypradhan
16. Shri Ebrahim Sulaiman Sait
17. Shri Manabendra Shah
18. Shri Mahadeepak Singh Shakya
19. Shri Rajnath Sonker Shastri
20. Shri Braja Kishore Tripathy

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri K.K. Sharma—*Joint Secretary*
2. Shri B.B. Pandit—*Director*
3. Shri K.L. Anand—*Under Secretary*
4. Shri R.C. Gupta—*Assistant Director*

3. The Committee considered and adopted the following draft Reports with certain amendments and modifications:

- (i) * * * * *
- (ii) * * * * *

4. The Committee also considered the following draft reports with certain amendments/modifications and remarks as indicated in Annexure I:

(i) * * * * *

(ii) Draft Report on action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the first report of the Estimates Committee (10th Lok Sabha) on the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions System of Redressal Grievances.

5. The above Reports were however not adopted by the Committee as they desired further clarifications from the Ministries concerned on some recommendations. It was therefore decided to invite representatives of the Ministries concerned for oral evidence before the Committee in the current week itself.

6. The Committee authorised the Chairman to finalise the draft Reports mentioned in para 3 above in the light of factual verification received from the respective Ministries and also to make verbal and consequential changes therein and present them to Lok Sabha.

The Committee then adjourned.

AMENDMENT/MODIFICATIONS MADE BY THE ESTIMATES COMMITTEE IN THE DRAFT REPORT ON ACTION TAKEN BY GOVERNMENT ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THE FIRST REPORT OF THE ESTIMATES COMMITTEE (10TH LOK SABHA) ON THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS—SYSTEM OF REDRESSAL OF GRIEVANCES

Para No. Line	Amendment/Modification/Remarks
	After Para 1.23 add the following: "The Committee is distressed to note that the public is not getting adequate response from public dealing departments. The Committee would like to be apprised of the concrete measures taken in this regard."
1.35	7 <i>Delete</i> the word 'fixed'
1.38	3 <i>After</i> 'Ministries' <i>add</i> 'Which'
	7 <i>After</i> 'Secretaries, <i>add</i> 'of other'
1.45	The Committee were of the view that stand of the Cabinet Secretariat when considered in the light of their action in reducing the staff support to Directorate Public Grievances, is unacceptable. It was therefore decided that the Cabinet Secretary be requested to appear before the Committee on 8th January, 1993 for suitably clarifying the position.

**ESTIMATES COMMITTEE
(1992-93)**

MINUTES

22nd SITTING

8.1.1993

The Committee sat from 1000 to 1030 hours.

PRESENT

Shri Manoranjan Bhakta—*Chairman*

MEMBERS

2. Shri A. Charles
3. Shri Mumtaz Ansari
4. Shri Ayub Khan
5. Shri Sartaj Singh Chhatwal
6. Shri Somjibhai Damor
7. Shri Nurul Islam
8. Shri R. Jeevarathinam
9. Shri C. K. Kuppuswamy
10. Shri Dharampal Singh Malik
11. Shri Hannan Mollah
12. Shri Moreshwar Save
13. Shri Manabendra Shah
14. Shri Mahadeepak Singh Shakya
15. Shri Rajnath Sonker Shastri
16. Shri Manku Ram Sodhi
17. Shri Braja Kishore Tripathy

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri G. L. Batra—*Additional Secretary*
2. Shri K. K. Sharma—*Joint Secretary*
3. Shri B. B. Pandit—*Director*
4. Shri K. L. Anand—*Under Secretary*

WITNESSES

1. Shri S. Rajagopal—Cabinet Secretary, Cabinet Secretariat, New Delhi.
2. Shri B.B. Sahai —Secretary, Public Grievances.
3. Shri Mohandas Moses—Secretary (Coordination), Cabinet Secretariat.

6. The Committee took up evidence of the Cabinet Secretary on the subject of system of Redressal of Grievances for further clarifications on some of the recommendations.

Bringing more Ministries/Departments under the purview of Directorate of Public Grievances

7. The Cabinet Secretary while giving background as to why some posts which were sanctioned were abolished, subsequently, stated:

“As soon as the new Government took over, one of the major programmes which it undertook was the reduction of expenditure of the Central Government. One of the major action points in this respect was that at least 10% of the staff should be reduced. Now we have taken action and are aiming at reducing 10% of the staff. But that is not today's subject. Certain Departments where 10% reduction of staff has been effected at the senior level have come back to us pleading that they would give an overall reduction in terms of expenditure but that cuts should not be imposed at key senior levels. Now, I have directed them to see whether it is possible to effect reduction in expenditure in the whole of the Cabinet Secretariat.”

He further added:

“Secondly, the disposal of public grievances is actually undertaken at three levels. The first level is internal grievances, redressal machinery of the different departments, the second would be monitoring activity which is done by the Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms and the third one is the specialised agencies and all such Ministries where public interface is maximum. If we decide to add more Ministries, then we will certainly give more staff at that time. But, I would beseech the indulgence of the Committee that we should, perhaps, take a review after some more time, because I personally, am not happy by the way in which the redressal is being done now. Now, on an average, it takes 155 days. Today, ideally in special cases we should perhaps give a response time of not more than three months. This is what we should achieve for the departments which we have at the moment. For that we are going in for computerisation. If we reach this position, it may be possible for us to think of adding more Ministries.”

He summarized:

“So far as the reduction of staff is concerned, I have asked them to immediately check whether economy can be effected in some other areas and restore this position especially in view of the Committee recommendation and secondly I would request the Committee to go alongwith us and that we would like to conduct a review after the computerisation process is over.”

8. After the witnesses withdrew the Committee briefly deliberated upon the evidence and authorised the Chairman to finalise the report in the light of fresh evidence adduced at adoption stage and factual verification received from the respective Ministries. He was also authorised to make verbal and consequential changes therein and present the report to the Lok Sabha.

The Committee then adjourned.

**LIST OF AUTHORISED AGENTS FOR THE SALE OF LOK SABHA
SECRETARIAT PUBLICATION**

Sl. No.	Name of Agent	Sl. No.	Name of Agent
ANDHRA PRADESH		UTTAR PRADESH	
1.	M/s. Vijay Book Agency, 11-1-477. Mvlargadda, Secunderabad-500 306.	12.	Law Publishers, Sardar Patel Marg, P.B. No. 77, Allahabad, U.P.
BIHAR		WEST BENGAL	
2.	M/s. Crown Book Depot. Upper Bazar, Ranchi (Bihar).	13.	M/s. Madimala, Buys & Sells, 123, Bow bazar Street, Calcutta-1.
GUJARAT		DELHI	
3.	The New Order Book Company, Ellis Bridge, Ahmedabad-380 006. (T.No. 79065)	14.	M/s. Jain Book Agency. C-9, Connaught Place, New Delhi, (T.No. 351663 & 350806).
MADHYA PRADESH		15.	M/s. J.M. Jaina & Brothers, P. Box 1020, Mori Gate, Delhi-110006. (T. No. 2915064 & 230936).
4.	Modern Book House, Shiv Vilas place, Indore City. (T.No. 35289)	16.	M/s. Oxford Book & Stationry Co., Scindia House, Connaught Place, New Delhi-110001. (T.No. 3315308 & 45896).
MAHARASHTRA		17.	M/s. Bookwell, 2/72. Sant Nirankari Colony, Kingsway Camp, Delhi-110009. (T.No. 7112309).
5.	M/s. Sunderdas Gian Chand, 601, Girgaum Road, Near Princes Street, Bombay-400 002.	18.	M/s. Rajendra Book Agency, IV-DR59, Lajpat Nagar, Old, Double Storey, New Delhi-110 024. (T.No. 6412362 & 6412131).
6.	The International Book Service, Deccan Gymkhana, Poona-4.	19.	M/s. Ashok Book Agency. BH-82, Poorvi Shalimar Bagh, Delhi-110 033.
7.	The Current Book House, Maruti lane, Raghunath Dadaji Street, bombay-400 001.	20.	M/s. Venus Enterprises, B-2/85, Phase-II, Ashok Vihar, Delhi.
8.	M/s. Usha Book Depot, 'Law Book Seller and Publishers' Agents Govt. Publications, 585, Chira Bazar, Khan House, Bombay-400 002.	21.	M/s. Central News Agency Pvt. Ltd., 23/90, Connaught Circus, New Delhi-110 001. (T.No. 344448 322705, 344478 & 344508).
9.	M & J Services, Publishers, Rep- resentative Accounts & Law Book Sellers, Mohan Kunj, Ground Floor, 68, Jyotiba Fuele Road Nalgaum, Dadar, Bombay-400 014	22.	M/s. Amrit Book Co., N-21, Connaught Circus, New Delhi.
10.	Subscribers Subscription Service India, 21, Raghunath Dadaji Street, 2nd Floor, Bombay-400 001.	23.	M/s. Books India Corporation Publishers, Importers & Exporters, L-27, Shastri Nagar, Delhi-110 052. (T. No. 269631 & 714465).
TAMIL NADU		24.	M/s. Sangam Book Depot, 4378/4B, Murari Lal Street, Ansari Road, Darya Ganj, New Delhi-110 002.
11.	M/s. M.M. Subscription Agencies, 14th Murali Street, (1st Floor), Mahalingapuram, Nungambakkam, Madras-600 034. (T.No. 476558)		