

INDIAN COUNCIL OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH (ICAR)



**MINUTES OF THE INTERACTIVE MEET OF AS&FA,
DARE/ICAR WITH THE FINANCE HEADS OF ICAR
INSTITUTES OF NORTH ZONE**

VENUE: LIBRARY ANNEXE, IARI, NEW DELHI

DATE: OCTOBER 08, 2015

TIME: 1000 HRS

**INDIAN COUNCIL OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH
KRISHI BHAVAN: NEW DELHI**

F. No. 22/26/2012/CDN (A&A)

Dated the 12th October, 2015

**MINUTES OF THE INTERACTIVE MEET OF THE AS&FA, DARE/ICAR WITH
FINANCE OFFICERS OF ICAR INSTITUTES LOCATED IN NORTH ZONE
SCHEDULED FOR 8th OCTOBER 2015, 10.00 A.M. AT IARI, NEW DELHI.**

The Interactive meeting of the Finance Heads of ICAR Institutes/ZPDs located in North Zone in the Chairmanship of the AS&FA, DARE/ICAR was convened on 8th October 2015, 10.00 a.m. onwards in the IARI, Library Annexes', New Delhi.

The officers who attended the Interactive meet is attached as Annexure: I of this minute.

At the outset, Dr. Mrs Ravinder Kaur Director i/c, IARI, welcomed the AS&FA, DARE/ICAR to IARI. Officers attending the Interactive meet from various ICAR Institutes from North Zone introduced themselves to the AS&FA, DARE/ ICAR. Thereafter the following agendas were discussed:

1. OPENING REMARKS BY AS&FA, DARE/ICAR

AS&FA, DARE/ICAR in his opening remarks emphasized on the role and responsibility of the Finance Officers in an organization who, he said, must help the organization to meet its objectives and ensure growth of agricultural research in the country in a transparent manner. The Finance Officers, who is required to concur a financial proposal, should be guided by high standards of financial propriety. He should ensure that financial rules and orders are observed scrupulously and decisions are taken in a transparent manner. He also remarked that the present meet has been convened to convey a message to the Finance Heads of ICAR institutes that he is required to work in tandem with the management and at the same time it is also his duty to work within the frame of the Rules. Finance Officers must refrain from obeying oral orders and ensure that whatever decisions are being taken are well recorded since, in this era of RTI, all information are in public domain and every decision of the management is open to scrutiny by public. He observed that Finance Officers must be firm but also polite in their bearing. He further added that there is no discretion in use of public funds which must be utilized as per rule. The job of management is to frame rule in a transparent, unambiguous and clear manner so that there is no scope of any wrong interpretation or mis-interpretation. However, once rules are framed, the role of finance comes in which, as the keepers of rules in an organization, are entrusted with the responsibility to ensure their strict compliance. Prudent financial management is the key to the sound financial health of an organization- he concluded.

2. POSITION OF OUTSTANDING AUDIT PARAS

AS&FA expressed his satisfaction at the fact that in ICAR there is no PAC audit Paras. However, at the same time he expressed his concern over the audit paras in various units as reported by the local audit offices in their report. This he felt is indicative of the fact that the internal audit mechanism should be further strengthened.

The position of outstanding audit paras of the 34 ICAR Units were thereafter discussed. A total of 201 audit paras from up to year 2004-2005 and till the current financial year are outstanding as per the latest audit report received for these Units from the various office of Audit. Out of these 201 outstanding audit paras, 47 paras are of current period (i.e. two years or less) and the rest 154 audit paras are pending for over two years

Each Finance Head of the participating Institutes present in the meeting briefed the AS&FA about the outstanding audit paras pertaining to their institute, their content and issues involved and assured of taking all possible measures to settle these paras at an earliest.

F&AO, NRC PB, New Delhi informed that the details of the 8 paras pertaining to the period prior to 2003-2004 were not available in the Institute since these paras pertain to the period when NRC PB functioned as a Division of IARI. It was decided to get these details from the office of the Audit in two days and take necessary actions for their settlement.

F&AO, DCFR, Bhimtal informed that the one para pertaining to the period prior to 2003-2004 pertains to non-supply of book and journals by a firm and the case is presently in the court. AS&FA stated that the case was not an issue of Court and excuse of matter being *sub-judice* is not tenable. He asked the officer to take up the matter and ensure for speedy settlement of old para.

Scientist in charge of Finance from NCIPM informed the difficulty in settling audit paras in absence of regular F&AO. He was advised by AS&FA to seek the assistance from Council.

A number of participants informed that the replies in respect to audit paras have already been submitted and once confirmation of their acceptance is received from Audit the matter shall be reported to Council.

AS&FA emphasized that there is an urgent need to review and settle audit paras in each institute by a Committee of Senior Officers from Administration, Scientist and Finance and the Director who should monitor and get the audit paras settled in phased manner by constant pursuance.

3. POSITION OF OUTSTANDING ADVANCES AND ISSUES IN THEIR SETTLEMENT

The position of outstanding advances for the quarter ending 30th June 2015 received from each participating units was discussed. Following Institutes have old outstanding advances pertaining to a period prior to 2000, as under:

1. IISR, Lucknow: prior to 1993-1994: Rs. 3.23 lakhs to DGS&D.
2. CPRI, Shimla: prior to 1999-2000: Rs. 1.47 lakhs Contingent Advance to Departmental officer.

These institutes were directed to get these old advances settled.

An issue of concern was the outstanding advances of Rs. 271.38 lakhs in favour of CPWD of the completed works. Of this Rs. 238.27 lakhs pertain to IIPR, Kanpur. The institute needs to take up the matter with the CPWD for settlement of such advances pertaining to civil works already completed. A compliance report may be forwarded by them. Further Deputy Director (F-I) advised the officers that the Statement of Outstanding Advances may be sent in the prescribed format on quarterly basis positively by 15th of the succeeding month after the end of a quarter.

AS&FA, DARE/ICAR stressed upon the need for expeditious settlement of outstanding advances including advances to CPWD especially where the work has already been completed and the building have been put to use. He stressed upon the need for prompt settlement of outstanding advances in favour of Departmental officers on account of Contingent Advance, T/A, TTA, LTC and Medical which are lying unadjusted for years together which he said must be recovered forthwith along with penal interest. Accordingly, he directed that the Finance Heads must monitor and recommend for stern measures for settlement of advances lying pending with Departmental officers.

4. BANK RECONCILIATION RELATED ISSUES

The position of Bank Reconciliation Statement for the month ending August 2015 was reviewed in respect to each institute.

AS&FA, DARE/ICAR expressed his concern at huge amount lying unsettled for more than 3 months.

As per the Bank Reconciliation Statement of CPRI, Shimla, an amount of Rs. 3, 41, 83,933/- debited by Bank are lying un-reconciled for over three months. F&AO, CPRI, Shimla informed that this pertained to debits made by bank for payment of pension. However, it was pointed out that pension is debited by bank every month and hence one particular amount lying un-reconciled for over three months was not justified. The F&AO, CPRI, Shimla was directed to look into the matter and settle the same at an earliest and report to Council.

F&AO, NRC Equines informed that in one case the Bank has misplaced the Bank Draft which was submitted to it for crediting to Institute's account. AS&FA observed that this is a criminal neglect of duty on part of Bank and the matter must be reported to the highest authority of the Bank to get

back the credit. The F&AO may also approach the Council to get its assistance in settling the issue with the concerned Bank.

After discussion on the first three Agenda was over, it was decided that each of the participating units of ICAR shall make all possible effort for settlement of audit paras, outstanding advances particularly old outstanding advances and those against departmental officers and all pending issues of the Bank Reconciliation Statement in the next three months and submit the progress report in first week of January for further review at Council Hqrs.

5. ISSUES IN IMPLEMENTATION OF FMS-MIS

F&AO, IGFRI raised the issues in implementation of FMS-MIS which he said often does not generates desired reports and bills. AS&FA also observed that he has received similar complaints of delay in responding to problems by the helpdesk of FMS-MIS maintained at IASRI, from institutes in South and felt that there is a need to make the package more user friendly. To ensure this matter may be taken up with the P.I. & HOD of the project Dr. Chaubey.

6. BUDGET, RELEASE OF FUNDS AND UTILIZATION OF FUNDS:

The utilization of funds under Non-Plan was seen to be satisfactory. However, the utilization of funds under Plan in respect to a number of ICAR unit were not satisfying.

F&AO, IIWBR, Karnal informed that proposals are pending in SMD and he expenditure target would be met once these gets cleared.

Sr. F&AO, NBPGR informed that the low expenditure is on account of non-finalization of "Proposal related to Gene Bank" for which global tender has been floated and opened just yesterday. Hence the expenditure target would be met, shortly.

AF&AO, NBFGR informed that one of the proposal of civil work is pending in Council Hqrs and after getting clearance from council the expenditure target would be met. He was informed that the proposal has already been cleared from IFD and he may approach the SMD for orders.

F&AO, CIRG, Makhdoom informed that works related items are in final stage of award of work and hence the expenditure target would be met.

AS&FA, DARE/ICAR stressed upon the need to expedite Plan expenditure so the instructions of the MoF on utilization of Plan funds every quarter, at the end of September 2015, December 2015 and during March 2015 are honoured.

7. ISSUES RELATED TO PENSION AND RETIREMENT BENEFITS INCLUDING NEW PENSION SCHEME

F&AO, IGFRI raised the issue of authorization of Gratuity to the Casual Labours granted Temporary Status (TSCL) by the Pension Authorizing Unit. He informed that the Pension Authorizing Unit, IVRI has refused to authorize gratuity in respect to TSCL. Deputy Director (Finance II) clarified that Gratuity in respect to TSCL are to be sanctioned by the Head of Institutions and not by the Pension Authorizing Office. The matter has already been clarified by IVRI to IGFRI, he informed.

8. INTERNAL FINANCE RELATED ISSUES: DIFFERENCE OF OPINION BETWEEN DIRECTOR OF INSTITUTE AND THE FINANCE HEAD

It was informed that of the 34 ICAR units whose Finance Heads are participating today requisite report has been received from 23 Units while it is pending from 11 units. Institutes were directed to submit the report at an earliest.

AS&FA, DARE/ICAR expressed his surprise that till now reports received from Institutes have all reported 'NIL' difference which, he observed, was indicative of the fact that either the situation in institute are very conducive or quite alarming. This implies that both the Director and the Finance Head have been interpreting the rules in the same manner which is quite an extraordinary situation. On the contrary if both the Director and the Finance Head are interpreting the rules wrongly it is a matter of grave concern. He added that the purpose of getting the report was to analyze the interpretation of Rules being done by Finance Officers at the Institute level. A nil report rules out any such analysis.

9. ANY OTHER ISSUE:

The following matters were discussed:

- (i) AS&FA, DARE/ICAR pointed out that about 50% of the expenditure in ICAR pertain to Civil Works. With regard to getting civil works executed by an agency other than CPWD, AS&FA advised that work should be carried out through CPWD because the CPWD have approved DSR and it does not charge PMC charges as other agencies like the NPCC, NBCC etc. do. He informed that though MoUD has declared NBCC as Public works Department (PWD), it has not clarified about the PMC to be charged by it and whether it will also not charge PMC alike CPWD. In such a situation works may be entrusted to CPWD only.
- (ii) With regard to procurement, AS&FA said that monopolistic procurement is allowed only in case of proprietary item and in an event of *force majeure*. Other than these two conditions, monopolistic procurement is not permissible. Procurement from a single vendor

has drawn adverse comments from the Supreme Court, the CVC and the C&AG and hence it is very important that the Finance Heads do not become a part of such practices. He further added that the specifications of Scientific Equipment must be generic in nature and not be product specific. The specification should be based on the principle of "Highest Common Factor" and not on the principle of "Lowest Common multiple."

- (iii) AS&FA also stressed upon the need to refrain from according ex-post facto concurrence to proposals.
- (iv) AF&AO, CITH, J&K informed the difficulties in finalizing Security Contract at Institute and its center at Mukteshwar. It was informed that sister institutions in Mukteshwar have security contract in place. In such a case CITH needs to re-look into the terms and conditions of its tender whether these are restrictive in nature causing prospective bidders to stay away from submitting their bids.
- (v) Scientist in charge of Finance at NRC IPM requested that post of Finance Officers at the Institute may be filled. AS&FA informed that already the matter is under process for recruitment of Finance & Accounts Officers and matter is also being pursued at their end.
- (vi) F&AO, CIRC raised the issue of revision of ICAR Audit Manual. It was informed that ICAR Audit Manual is under revision and the document is in final stage. The Delegation of Powers in ICAR is also under revision and the revised text with comments of IFD have been submitted. The revised version will be placed before the Governing Body meeting in December for its approval.
- (vii) F&AO, IGFRI, Jhansi drew the attention of the House towards issues in settling medical claims for outdoor treatment. Comptroller, IARI observed that instructions in the CS (MA) Rules with regard to referral cases are quite clear and there is no ambiguity in these rules. F&AO, IGFRI was advised to deal the cases strictly as per the CS (MA) Rules which is *mutatis mutandis* applicable in ICAR. If still any issue persists with regard to any specific issue not covered and clarified in the CS (MA) Rules, he may refer the same along with his interpretation of rules to the Council for clarification.
- (viii) AF&AO, NBFGR suggested that there should be an online mechanism for replying to queries of Institutes on financial matters. AS&FA stated that FAQs are not advisable and instructions should be minimal. Fresh instructions should be issued only if it tends to improve upon previous instructions.
- (ix) AF&AO, NBFGR raised the issue of regulating expenses related to organization of Foundation Day etc. Director (Finance) observed that orders on ceiling of expense for individual items like refreshments, stationery etc. have been issued. The Finance Officer should take cue from the advice of AS&FA that they should apply their common sense and

the existing guidelines in concurring such proposals. AS&FA further added that the Finance Officers should see that there is budgetary provisions for the purpose and the rules for expenditure ceilings should be adhered to.

- (x) F&AO, CIRC, F&AO, IGFRI and F&AO, DKMA raised the issue of procurement of Library Books & Journals including e-journals. After discussion it was decided that a Committee in the Chairmanship of Comptroller, IARI with Comptroller, IVRI, NDRI, NAARM, Deputy Director (Finance-III), ICAR Hqrs and Sr. F&AO (I), ICAR Hqrs may examine the entire gamut of issues involved and submit a comprehensive guidelines in 15 days.
- (xi) F&AO, IGFRI raised the issue of accounting of Software, Progeny of Livestock, Computers and e-journals. Deputy Director (Finance-III) informed pointed out that ICAR is still not carrying out actuarial accounting with regard to "Pension and Other Retirement Benefits". AS&FA directed that a Committee headed by Director (Finance) along with other Senior Officers from ICAR Hqrs may examine the issue of "Significant Accounting Policies of ICAR" (SAP) of ICAR and submit its report with suggestions for its revision. This report will be circulated to invite comments from Finance Officers. Thereafter the matter shall be placed before the Governing Body for its approval.
- (xii) AS&FA also assured the officers present that in case of any doubt they may refer the matter to him for advice.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the chair.

— 2. 11. 2015
12/10/2015
(R. Sahay)
Sr. F. & A.O.

Distribution:

1. Assistant/Senior/Finance & Accounts Officer of participating Units.
2. Director, ICAR Institutes of participating ICAR Units.
3. Comptroller, IARI/IVRI/NDRI/NAARM.
4. Deputy Director (Finance) I/II/III, ICAR Hqrs.
5. Sr. F. & A.O. I/II/III, ICAR Hqrs.
6. F&A.O. I/II/III/IV/V/VI, ICAR Hqrs.
7. HOD/PI-FMS-MIS, IASRI, New Delhi.
8. PPS to AS&FA, DARE/ICAR.
9. PA to Director (Finance), ICAR.
10. Media Unit, Krishi Bhavan, New Delhi.

Participants of the Interactive Meet of Finance Heads of ICAR Institutes located in North Zone with AS&FA, DARE/ICAR held on 8th October 2015, 10.00 a.m. at IARI, New Delhi.

S. No.	Name	Designation
1.	Sri. S. K. Singh,	AS&FA, DARE/ICAR
2.	Sri. Devendra Kumar	Director (Finance), ICAR Hqrs
3.	Sri. Sanchal Bilgrami	Comptroller, IARI, New Delhi.
4.	Sri. K. K. Kulshreshtha	Chief Administrative Officer, IARI, New Delhi.
5.	Smt. Rashmi R. Rao	Deputy Director (Finance), ICAR Hqrs
6.	Sri. O. P. Nagar	Deputy Director (Finance), ICAR Hqrs
7.	Sri. S. K. Pathak	Deputy Director (Finance), ICAR Hqrs
8.	Smt. Bharati Zade	Deputy Director (Finance), IARI, New Delhi.
9.	Smt. Sanjeevan Prakash	Deputy Director (Finance), IARI, New Delhi.
10.	Sri. Rajesh Sahay	Senior Finance & Accounts Officer, ICAR Hqrs
11.	Sri. P. K. gupta	Finance & Accounts Officer, ICAR, Hqrs.
12.	Sri. K. K. Sharma	Finance & Accounts Officer, ICAR, Hqrs.
13.	Sri. S. K. Sharma	Finance & Accounts Officer, ICAR, Hqrs.
14.	Sri. Ashwani Garg	Finance & Accounts Officer, ICAR, Hqrs.
15.	Sri. R. K. Singh	Senior Finance & Accounts Officer, CSWCR&TI, Dehra Doon
16.	Sri. D. S. Bisht	Senior Finance & Accounts Officer, NBPGR, New Delhi
17.	Dr. Jitendra Singh	Sr. Scientist, Actg F&AO, NRCIPM, New Delhi
18.	Sri. Jagdish Chander	Finance & Accounts Officer, IIWBR, Karnal
19.	Sri. M. K. Mulani	Finance & Accounts Officer, IGFRI, Jhansi
20.	Sri. Raja Ram	Finance & Accounts Officer, IISR, Lucknow
21.	Sri. Mohan singh	Finance & Accounts Officer, NRC-PBT, New Delhi
22.	Sri. P. K. Tiwari	Finance & Accounts Officer, Dte Rapeseed Mustard, Bharatpur
23.	Smt. Shakku Goswami	Finance & Accounts Officer, VPKAS, Almora
24.	Sri. B. C. Pandey	Finance & Accounts Officer, Dte. CWF, Bhimtal
25.	Sri. Ashish Srivastav	Finance & Accounts Officer, CISH, Lucknow
26.	Sri. Tez Singh Bhati	Finance & Accounts Officer, CPRI, Simla
27.	Sri. P. K. Singh	Finance & Accounts Officer, CIRG, Makhdoom
28.	Sri. Sunil Kumar	Finance & Accounts Officer, NBAGR, Karnal
29.	Sri. Mahesh Verma	Finance & Accounts Officer, CIRB, Hisar
30.	Sri. T. C. Sharma	Finance & Accounts Officer, IIFSR, Modipuram
31.	Sri. S. K. Gupta	Finance & Accounts Officer, DKMA, N. Delhi
32.	Smt. Aruna Sharma	Finance & Accounts Officer, ZPD- Jodhpur
33.	Smt. Shammi Tyagi	Assistant Finance & Accounts Officer, NRCE, Hissar
34.	Sri. D. S. Verma	Assistant Finance & Accounts Officer, CIRC, Meerut
35.	Sri. Anil kumar Marwari	Assistant Finance & Accounts Officer, IASRI, New Delhi

36.	Sri. Ravi Bhadra	Assistant Finance & Accounts Officer, NBFGR, Lucknow
37.	Sri. Fayaz Ahmed Dar	Assistant Finance & Accounts Officer, CITH, Srinagar
38.	Sri. J. R. Mangale	Assistant Finance & Accounts Officer, DMR, Solan
39.	Sri. Mani Lal	Assistant Finance & Accounts Officer, CIPHET, Ludhiana
40.	Sri. Kailash Chand	Assistant Finance & Accounts Officer, CARI, Izatnagar
41.	Sri. D. C. Sati	Assistant Finance & Accounts Officer, ZPD: Ludhiana
42.	Sri. S. B. Sharma	Assistant Finance & Accounts Officer, CAFRI, Jhansi
43.	Sri. Kanta Prasad	Assistant Finance & Accounts Officer, ZPD- Kanpur
44.	Sri. Vinod Rai	Assistant Finance & Accounts Officer, NIAEPR (NCAP), ND
45.	Sri. Chaman Singh	Assistant Finance & Accounts Officer, IARI, New Delhi
46.	Sri. S. Mahendru	Assistant Finance & Accounts Officer, IARI, New Delhi
47.	Sri. A. K. Singh	Acting F&AO, IIMR, New Delhi
48.	Sri. R. N. Sahoo	UDC, PD on FMD.
49.	Sri. N. K. Vaid	I/C F&AO, CSSRI, Karnal