MESSAGE

Dear colleagues,

It is an age of Twitter and social media where instant communication is the order of the day and the identity of an organization is forged by its online presence, therefore we need to constantly engage with each other and the ecosystem around us. I however wanted to initiate action on a blueprint for the Department before I say anything. It has been appropriately articulated that be the change that we wish to seek. Accordingly, I thought that change in the governance structures should begin from my desk. Administrative Powers which dated back to the nineties have been reviewed and I have empowered the Additional CGDA level officers in the Headquarters office by delegating powers to them. The process of obtaining approvals by Controllers offices for IT projects has been streamlined. CGDA office organizational structure has been revamped by delineating vertical areas of domain expertise and to bring visibility about the specific organizations being handled.  Other measures are also on the anvil.

Over the last three months it was really heartening to reconnect with so many of you. The undercurrent of enthusiasm when I broached the issue of need for change in the approach to deal with the existing regulatory environment was

quite palpable. We need to ask this question not only to ourselves but to the entire ecosystem - how relevant are the regulatory provisions which were required with manual processes in today's technology-driven and fast changing technological environment. We are at the stage when the question before us is not "when" but "now". It is as urgent as change or perish.

With this intent, one of the first steps taken was to prepare a "Technology Road map" for the Department which was uploaded on the website and the views of all the field offices were sought. I am happy to note that the response has been tremendous and based on feedback the roadmap has since been finalized. The Department has to keep pace with "Digital India" initiative of the Government and technology has to become the backbone of our regulatory systems. It is also quite evident that we cannot do patchwork automation. With the large volumes of data handled by the Department, there has to be integration of systems and a centralised data centre particularly to handle pay and pension systems. The take-off point has been the Department's website and we soon hope to have a spanking new look with much more content and visibility. We are also set to implement "Tulip", an in house developed office automation system from 1$^{st}$ April 2016.

E-governance has to be the changed paradigm in which the Department has to operate and also take a lead.  We have already taken steps to reach out to all stakeholders to integrate with their systems for seamless integration of our audit and finance processing. This has been followed by interactive meetings with the services and other organizations. We have recently held a conference with Navy and are shortly going to hold one with the Army.  E-Procurement is an important plank of e-governance and the Department has played an important role in coordinating its implementation by the services.  E-Concurrence and E-Audit has

already commenced, after a pilot project, in Air Force and efforts need to be stepped up to introduce it with the Navy and Army so that major activities are done in a seamless manner and manual handling of documents is reduced substantially.

Decentralized governance and enhanced delegation of financial powers has given an added responsibility to the Department. It has changed the profile of the Department as our officers have an important role to ensure a balance between operational needs of the services and research and production organizations and financial accountability. It is a tough job which needs deft handling and expertise. At the same time there is a change in the civil military paradigm with greater synergy amongst various stakeholders.

Capacity building and skill development in various areas handled by the Department has been given a thrust. To equip our personnel to handle the integrated financial advice function we have initiated training programmes with a totally new approach in methodology and I am happy to inform that the feedback has been positive.

Another area where the Department has proved to be a game changer is the re-orientation of internal audit. We have moved from compliance and regulatory audit to a risk based audit framework. Our Department will provide assurance to the executive on the robustness of internal control systems. A concept note on the "New Functional Paradigm of Audit" has been uploaded to elicit views from the environment and finalize it.

Remember that ultimately organizational goals have to emerge as a collective and shared vision of each and every one of us, because only then will it

sustain over time. The systems we build should endure. Innovation should be the buzzword and it should also emerge from the field offices. One such innovative idea has been the Integrated Voice Response System (IVRS) in PAO (AMC).Many more such ideas should be generated.

The Department should uphold a value system which gives credence to what is correct and temper it with a humane and responsive approach so that we inspire confidence not fear, we value professional competence and not sycophancy, truthfulness not expediency, and ultimately we should display humility and etiquette and not egotism and discourtesy in our demeanour. I extend greetings for the New Year to each member of the Defence Accounts Department. Let the year 2016 be a year of transformation with E-governance, innovation and capacity building as the trajectory guiding this change.

(SHOBHANA JOSHI)
CGDA

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