

**MINUTES OF THE 100th MEETING OF THE EXPORT INSPECTION COUNCIL
31 MAY 2007**

Chairman : **Shri O.P. Arya,**
**Additional Secretary, Ministry of Commerce
& Industry, New Delhi.**

Member Secretary : **Ms. Shashi Sareen,**
Director (Insp. & Q/C)

Members Present : **As per list given at Annex 1**

ITEM 1 **GENERAL**

Item 1.1 **Welcome by Director**

Director, EIC extended a very warm welcome to Chairman and the members to the adjourned hundredth meeting of the Council which had been reconstituted vide Govt. of India notification dated 25.5.2007. She informed that the meeting had been fixed at short notice, which was due to a large number of pending issues as the last meeting of the Council had been held around a year and a half back.

Item 1.2 **Opening remarks by Chairman**

Chairman, EIC in his opening remarks expressed that the meeting was being held immediately after the reconstitution of the Council, since there were many important issues which needed immediate decisions of the Council. He also thanked members of the Council for attending the meeting, despite the short notice.

Item 1.3 **Leave of absence**

Leave of absence was granted to following members of the Council:

1. Shri Sayan Chatterjee, Director General, Bureau of Indian Standards, Delhi
2. Shri Umesh Kr. Singh Chauhan, Agricultural Marketing Adviser to the Govt. of India, Delhi
3. Shri V.J. Kurien, Chairman, Spices Board, Kochi
4. Shri A. Sakthivel, Chairman, Poppy Knitwear, Vice President of FIEO, Tirpur

ITEM 2 **99th meeting of the Export Inspection Council**

Item 2.1 **Confirmation of the Minutes**

The Council confirmed the minutes of the 99th meeting of Export Inspection Council held on 14th February 2006.

Item 2.2 **Action taken report on minutes of the 98th & 99th meetings of the**

Export Inspection Council held on 18 January 2006 & 14th February 2006

The Council members noted the actions taken on the items of the 98th & 99th meeting. With regard to item no. 3.1 & 3.2 pertaining to 99th Council meeting, the following issues were discussed:

3.1 (99th meeting) Manpower requirement in EIC/EIAs

While discussing the action taken on this item, Chairman, EIC informed that the issue is with the Government at present and it is being resolved. He also expressed the need to have another SIU study of the organisation in order to assess its manpower keeping in view the antiquity of the earlier SIU study and new role envisaged for this organisation. As far as applicability of ADRP to EIC is concerned, it was informed that matter has already been taken up with the concerned departments in the Government and a decision is expected shortly.

3.2 Professional analysis of activities of EIC/EIAs

It was expressed by Shri Elias Sait, Secretary General, Seafood Exporters Association that Marine industry is very agitated over the monitoring fee being charged for F&FP sector. He expressed that industry is ready to give fee commensurate to the services rendered by EIC/EIAs but not to subsidize the additional manpower in EIC.

The Chairman clarified that the Government was already seized of the matter and a further decision would be taken in this regard. The issue of role of EIC was being addressed in a meeting fixed for 6th June after which this aspect would be looked into. On the request of Council members, it was also decided that copies of the professional analysis carried out by M/s.A.F.Ferguson's & Co. be made available to all members of the Council.

ITEM NO. 3 ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION AND DECISION OF THE COUNCIL

Item 3.1 Proposal for Increase in Daily Allowances of Employees of EIC/EIAs while on tour

Item in detail, as given in Agenda was explained to the Council members. It was also mentioned that this matter was also placed before Commerce Secretary during his visit to EIC on 12.5.2007. After detailed discussions and keeping in view the reasons given in the Agenda. Council approved the rates being followed by BIS for its employees on tour to EIC/EIA employees w.e.f. 1st July 2007.

It was also decided that the decision be sent to the Government for information.

Item 3.2. Delegation of Financial Powers to the Incharge of Sub-Offices of EIAs- Revision/review thereof.

The Council decided that financial powers upto Rs.2,000/- be delegated to Assistant Directors & Technical officers who are exercising the duties as Incharges of Sub-Offices to incur contingent and miscellaneous (recurring) expenditures.

Item 3.3 Filling up of vacant post under Group-C cadre by way of promotion from the feeder cadre, Agency wise.

It was explained that the matter is already pending for decision by the government and after deliberations, Council decided to send a note in this regard to the Chairman for taking up with the government.

Item 3.4 Closure of unviable Sub-Offices

(a) *Sub-office: W/Island under EIA-Kochi*

The Council ratified the decision taken by the Chairman on the closure of Sub-Office: W/Island under EIA-Kochi.

(b) *Sub-office: Mandapam under EIA-Chennai.*

Shri Elias Sait expressed that as there were a few industries in the fishery sector being serviced by the Mandapam SO of EIA, SEAI would like to take their views and requested that further decision about closure of this office should be deferred till the next meeting.

Item 3.5 Provisions of certain need based facilities for officials of EIC/EIAS

The Council noted the information given under item 3.5 of the Agenda. Director, EIC further informed the Council that subsequently the government had taken a view that Director, EIC also be governed by the Government rules which are applicable to Joint Secretary equivalent level officers and for the past the matter to be placed before the Council for ratification. The Council ratified the past expenses for mobile phone. With regard to credit card, it decided that rental charges would not be admissible and the rental charges paid by the Council for the credit cards, whether held by the Director, EIC or any other official should be paid by the concerned officers to the Council. For future, the Council decided that personal credit cards may be used for official purposes and official expenses may be got reimbursed from EIC. For future implementation, the limits as are applicable to the Joint Secretary equivalent level officers in the Government of India regarding phones, would also be applicable to the Director, EIC. In addition, as it was absolutely necessary for Dir, EIC to be accessible while traveling, national & international calls made by using roaming facility would be reimbursable on actuals. For, facilities of telephone and mobile phones with regard to other officers, orders of the government as applicable to government officers would apply to officers of the Council.

3.6 Medical Scheme for employees of EIC/EIAs

The Council considered the proposal regarding enhancing the maximum limit for OPD from private hospitals/registered medical practitioners to Rs 10,000 per annum and also simplify the procedures for claiming reimbursement. After detailed discussions, the Council decided that a note comparing the present provisions, provisions under CSMA rules as well as medical rules adopted by BIS & APEDA may be prepared and submitted to Chairman, EIC. The Council authorized Chairman, EIC to take a final decision in this regard which could be placed before the next Council meeting for information.

3.7 Permission to fill up vacant posts meant for Direct Recruitment pertaining to the years 2000-2001 and 2001-2002

It was decided that as the issue related to direct recruitment, the issue be once again referred to MoC&I through Chairman, EIC who would follow up with the Government.

3.8 Standing Committee for conformity assessment for basmati rice

It was informed that the issue for which Standing Committee was proposed to be formed has since been resolved, and therefore, no further decision was needed and the item was withdrawn from the Agenda.

3.9 Budget Estimate 2006-2007, Revised Estimate 2006-2007 and Budget Estimate 2007-2008 of Export Inspection Agencies and Export Inspection Council

The Council approved the Budget and Revised Estimate 2006-2007 and Budget Estimate 2007-2008 of Export Inspection Council. The Council also noted the information wrt EIAs as given under item 3.9 of addendum to the Agenda.

3.10 Procurement of space for EIA-Kolkata Lab

The Council approved the proposal of procurement of space for EIA-Kolkata lab from Kolkata Metropolitan Development Authority on the terms and conditions as given in the Agenda.

3.11 Shifting of office accommodation of EIA-Delhi

The Council considered the proposal given under item 3.11 of the Agenda and decided that a rent certificate be obtained. Subject to the market rent assessed by CPWD being higher than the rent quoted by Bharatiya Adim Jati Sevak Sangh (BAJSS), the Council approved the proposal regarding shifting of office accommodation to the building offered by BAJSS at Jhandevallan, Delhi on lease basis, not exceeding 3 years (lease to be renewed on yearly basis thereafter, if needed) and with provision of a three month notice period for termination of lease included in the lease deed.

3.12 Restructuring of EIC/EIAs

Chairman, EIC apprised the Council that a meeting has been fixed by him on 6.6.2007 to have discussions in the area of role clarity among different certification bodies where role of EIC vis-à-vis other regulatory/promotion bodies would be discussed. It was decided to await the outcome of that meeting and defer discussions on this item to the next meeting of the Council. It was also decided to work out the proposal based on the Ferguson report as well as the proposal in the Agenda.

3.13 Regularisation of the services of Group ‘C’ employees appointed on Adhoc/Contract/Daily wage basis in EIAs

The Council observed that as the employees in Group C have continued to remain on the rolls of EIC/EIAs for the last 10-20 years on adhoc / contract and daily wage basis, their regularization should also be considered on similar lines as in the case of Gr. ‘D’ officials. Accordingly, it decided that the Ministry may be requested to expedite its decision in this matter.

3.14 Grant of ACP benefits to non-qualified but deserving employees of EIC/EIA – relaxation of educational qualifications.

The Council considered the item as given under item 3.14 of the Agenda. The members were very sympathetic to the hardships faced by these non-qualified but deserving employees of EIC/EIAs, in view of the fact that these officers would neither get their promotions nor ACP benefits due to the rule position given in RRs. Taking a compassionate view, as a special case and one-time measure, the Council decided that these employees may be allowed benefits of financial upgradation in terms of provisions of ACP scheme in relaxation of the provisions thereof with regard to qualification. However, it was decided that legal opinion may be taken whether this one time exception would not entitle the beneficiaries to claim promotion to the higher posts. This decision will be implemented only after legal advice is received in the matter and the same is put up to the chairman.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION OF COUNCIL

4.1 One more option to switchover from CPF to GPF (Pension) to the employees of EIAs/EIC still under CPF

The Council noted the information.

4.2 Introduction of Five days week in EIC & EIAs

The Council was informed that introduction of a 5-day week in EIC/EIAs has been agreed to by the Government. The Council further decided that the 5-day week be implemented from 1st July 2007 onwards and all the conditions of five days working as applicable in the government will be observed by the EIC. The Council also decided that all stakeholders utilizing EIC/EIAs services be suitably informed to prevent any hardships to them.

4.3 Management of Pension Fund of EIC/EIAs

Director EIC informed that the decision to outsource management of pension funds to LIC had since been implemented. A trust fund had been set up and an initial amount of Rs. 25 crores deposited in it.

Items no. 4.4 to 4.22 The Council noted the information given under Items No.4.4 to 4.22 of the Agenda.

ITEM NO. 5 ANY OTHER MATTER WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE CHAIR.

The following additional points were also discussed/ raised:

1. The issue regarding non availability of land-use certificate for land for EIA Delhi was of concern. Chairman, EIC desired that a note requesting for a meeting between Commerce Secretary, Secretary, Urban Development and Chairman, DDA may be moved immediately by EIC so as to resolve the problem of land use in case of EIA-Delhi building.
2. Shri Elias Sait apprised the members that the study visit under EU TIDP had been very useful. The image of EIC with both the EC FVO and health authorities of other Member States was observed to be very good. There were however, two issues of concern, the first relating to destruction of consignments in UK and the second on Alert procedures. It was decided to organize a meeting at a senior level with the EC to sort out these issues.
3. Shri Elias Sait also raised the issue regarding antibiotics. It was decided that a review meeting would be taken by Chairman EIC with all stakeholders.
4. It was proposed by the members that the next Council meeting should be held outside Delhi and it was agreed that next meeting would be held at Chennai sometime in the second week of July.

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

LIST OF MEMBERS PRESENT AT THE 100TH MEETING OF THE EXPORT INSPECTION COUNCIL HELD ON 31 MAY, 2007

1. Shri Nilachal Ray, Director General, Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Directorate General of Commercial, Intelligence and Statistics, 1, Council House Street, Kolkata-700001.
2. Shri Harpal Singh, Deputy General Manager, Agricultural & Processed Food Products Export Development Authority, NCUI Building, 3, Siri Institutional Area, August Kranti Marg, New Delhi-110016.
3. Dr. Debjani Roy, Executive Director, Shellac Export Promotion Council, International Trade Facilitation Centre, 1/1 Wood Street, 2nd Floor, Kolkata – 700016.
4. Shri S. Biswas, Manager, NAFED NAFED House, Sidhartha Enclave, Ring Road, Ashram Chowk, New Delhi -110014
5. Shri Rakesh M.Gupta, Director, (Representative of FICCI) Banaras House Ltd., LPG House, E-10, B-1, Extension Block, Mohan Cooperative Industrial Estate, Mathura Road, New Delhi -110044.
6. Shri Elias Sait, Secretary General, Seafood Exporters Association, AF-54, 11th Main Road, Anna Nagar, Chennai.